

## Resources for engaging further

- View the Sunday message online at [vcclive.org](http://vcclive.org).

- For further reflection

There is often an either/or line drawn between the “True Gospel” and the “Social Gospel.”

“Now that the evangelical church has entered a new millennium, it must jettison the either/or construct that has shaped, defined, and plagued us. It is time to re-embrace the both/and that alone gives us a clear strategy of how to build strong churches that serve as bridges of irresistible influence—bridges that are supported by the steel girders of truth and proof, of proclamation and incarnation; bridges allowing for the transport of common grace to the needy as well as amazing grace to the receptive.”

*The Church of Irresistible Influence*, Robert Lewis

- For further reading

*Generous Justice*, by Tim Keller

*The Hole in Our Gospel*, by Richard Stearns

- Websites

[cityservetrivalley.org](http://cityservetrivalley.org)

[livermorehomelessrefuge.org](http://livermorehomelessrefuge.org)

[tradeasone.com](http://tradeasone.com)

[callandresponse.com](http://callandresponse.com)

- Prayer support

**How can this group support you in prayer this coming week?**



## **The Poor & Oppressed**

Isaiah 1:10-20, 58:5-9a, Amos 4-8,

James 1:22-27

Danny Hall • January 27, 2013

**The foundation for justice**

**The consequences of injustice**

**The pursuit of justice**



### **The Poor & Oppressed**

Isaiah 1:10-20, 58:5-9a, Amos 4-8,

James 1:22-27

Message-based Group Lesson

#### **Overview**

As we continue in our new series, "The Least of These," today we focus on the issue of caring for the poor and oppressed. It's very clear in scripture that this is an issue dear to the heart of God. As Danny Hall reminds us, "For too long we as Christians have ceded the care of the hurting and marginalized to people who don't care about their souls." How are we to respond? How can our perspectives about this issue impact our worship of God? The main thing for us to understand is that right-living is not defined by religious activities, but by living justly and acting mercifully towards all human beings.

#### **Engaging with each other**

1. Was there a time in your life when religion was meaningless to you? What changed your thinking, or is your opinion the same?
2. Would you say your spirituality is defined more in personal moral terms, or more in terms of the way you love others, including the poor and oppressed?

#### **Engaging with the Bible**

1. Read Isaiah 1:10-20, Amos 4:1-5 and 5:7-13. What has the Lord so upset in these passages?
2. Read Amos 5:18-24. Why do we think that others deserve judgment? How can our moral living give us a false sense of security that we as followers of God will not be judged in the same manner?
3. What would it look like if justice were to "roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream?" (v. 24)

4. Read James 1:22-27. What is acceptable "religion" in God's eyes? Which part of this is most difficult for you?
5. How does the world corrupt us? How can we keep this from happening?
6. Read Luke 10:25-37. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus expands the definition of who our neighbor is by telling the story of an unrecognizable and unclothed victim, and the responses of those who saw him. The question we often ask when we encounter someone in need is "what will happen to me when I help?" What would be a better question for us to ask ourselves?

#### **Engaging with our lives**

1. In light of this study, what of your current or past perspectives have been most-challenged? How will you respond? What step can you take to live out the perspective of Christ in your life?
2. What are some of the different ways we can approach these issues as women? How about as men?
3. What have you learned from this study that would make your worship more meaningful?