

OCF Small Groups: *passionately pursuing God, healthy relationships with each other, and people who don't know Jesus, as part of a Gospel Community.*

Isaiah 56:1-8

(Sunday, May 15)

1. Have you ever moved into a new neighborhood or met someone new who just moved into your neighborhood? How long did it take you to settle down and become a full member of the community? Or how long did it take for the new individual(s) to be accepted in your neighborhood?

2. Would you describe church as a gathering place for sinners, or a fortress to protect those "inside" from those "outside"? What kind of gathering place should the church be?

3. a. Try seeing OCF church services from the viewpoint of someone from a totally different background. What "inside" practices or beliefs might prevent outsiders from regarding it as a place for them to meet God?

b. What can be done to make an appropriate, positive change?

c. What is your role in bringing about such a change?

4. a. One clear means of "doing righteousness" (v.1) involves keeping the Sabbath. What is Sabbath? How do you observe a Sabbath rest with the Lord Jesus Christ?

b. Look up and read Hebrews 4 and notice the emphasis on the "grace-faith-rest life in Christ" and the biblical examples used. What personal insights do you gain for your own life and daily practice of following Jesus?

5. a. When Isaiah refers to eunuchs (v.4), he has in mind those human beings who were physically mutilated; this is why they can't have children. God tells them not to feel ashamed or think he won't accept them. They, too, can find redemption and reconciliation with him. In what ways would a physical abnormality or other kind of physical or mental condition cause someone to feel embarrassed or ashamed in some way?

b. How do we appropriately help that person know God loves them and accepts them no matter what their physical or mental condition is and wants that person to come to Him (vv.4-5)?

6. a. Would you characterize OCF as a "house of prayer for all peoples"? Why or why not?

b. What would it look like for OCF to become and be called "a house of prayer for all peoples"?

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION Isaiah 56: 1 - 2

Thus says the LORD: "Keep justice, and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my righteousness be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

PRAY

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me no matter what I look like on the outside or on the inside. Thank you for dying for my sins and clothing me in your righteousness. Help me to be an extension of your grace to all peoples. Teach me how to pray and how to help OCF be known as a house of prayer for all peoples. In Jesus name I pray, AMEN.