

Awesome forgiveness discussion guide

based on **Isaiah 1.1-20** (Linked to sermon of 22/10/17)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series

This was the first part of a series on Isaiah, "God is bigger than you think." For a bit of an introduction to Isaiah, see the blog post www.stjamesbythepark.org/blog/god-is-bigger-than-you-think

Intro: Have you ever been in court?

Court is a pretty daunting place for most people, even if you are not in trouble. That is the setting for this passage.

God charges His people with the crime of rebellion. In this passage he outlines what this looks like – largely sins of omission:

v4 "turning their backs on God" - what does that look like for you? In what ways do we turn our back on God?

v11-15 God takes issue with their formalism (paying lip service to worship). In what ways are we guilty of this?

v17 God is angry with His people for their attitude to others, particular those weaker and more in need. This is closely linked to worship.

Read Ps 51:16 and Romans 12:1-2. What is sacrifice and worship from God's perspective? How can we live this out?

God hates sin because He is Holy (Hebrew word "kadosh" means sacred, set apart), and because he knows it harms us.

Read Isaiah 6:3. Why do you think holy is repeated 3 times?

We are all guilty of sin, whether that be doing the wrong thing or not doing the right thing. Thanks be to God, He has the answer in v18. He plans to take the punishment that should be ours.

Further reading: James 1v19-27 (esp 27) What does God want from us, in terms of "religion" (worship)? What might that look like for us a) as church b) as individuals?

Up: Reflect on the awesomeness of God's forgiveness and ask Him to remind you of the cost to Him.

In: How could you keep each other accountable so you don't fall into similar sins of omission?

Out: How would you explain the concept of 'sin' to a friend who isn't a Christian in a way they'll be able to understand? What misconceptions about 'sin' do you need to break down?

Pray: that as we look at different bits of Isaiah, our vision of God would grow and stir us to worship him more fully.