**WOODLANDS CHURCH**

**March 3rd 2019. City of Hope**

**Discussion notes:** Rebuilding broken walls - Isaiah 58, Nehemiah 1-3

Last month our preaching series was on the topic of *False Friends* when we looked at issues of personal wholeness. This month we are looking at the purpose of being whole people, we are to bring God’s kingdom on earth as it is in heaven! We live in a city that has a great reputation as one of the top cities to live in. But for many, beneath the surface, it is a broken city. Not only are there social and political injustices across some of the poorer parts of Bristol, but there are hundreds of thousands of people who do not have a meaningful relationship with God and are unaware that Jesus died so that they could be forgiven and enjoy eternal life. As a group of Churches, we want to see the city of Bristol transformed with the love and power of God. Are you willing to play your part in this great vision?

**Read Isaiah 58**

1. Isaiah identifies that there is a problem with people doing as they please, exploiting workers, and quarrelling and strife that leads to violence (v 3-4). How do you think these attitudes and actions affect our city life?

2. If we are going to be people who cooperate with God to see the city rebuilt (v12), what does it mean for us practically to “Loose the cords of injustice, set the oppressed free, share our food with the hungry and provide shelter for the homeless? (v 6-7)?

3. If we put these things into practice, what does God promise to do? (v8-12)

4. The inspiring story of the book of Nehemiah is all about rebuilding a broken city. If you have ever read the book you will know that it starts with Nehemiah having his heart broken by news of the state of Jerusalem. How can you let God break your heart for the people of Bristol?

5. In chapter 3 the rebuilding work starts and everyone has a part to play. What part do you think you can play in seeing the city of Bristol transformed for good? Eg Some people have jobs that serve the city, some live in communities where they can be good neighbours, some volunteer for projects to serve the most vulnerable in our city etc.

If you would like to volunteer for a project that is trying to make a positive impact on our city, here are a few projects that you might have heard about

**Foodbanks** - Providing emergency food for those in crisis. Contact Andy Irwin at East Bristol Foodbank <https://eastbristol.foodbank.org.uk/> or Matt Dobson at North Bristol Foodbank <https://northbristol.foodbank.org.uk/>

## Beloved - they offer support to women working in massage parlours in Bristol and surrounding areas. Contact Hannah Hughes or Rachel Riddall <https://beloved.org.uk>

**Crisis Centre** - Providing hot meals and advice for the homeless https://www.crisis-centre.org.uk/

**CAP money** - Money management advice and help for those struggling with debt and money issues. https://www.woodlandschurch.net/cap

**TLG (Transforming Lives for Good)** - one to one coaching for children on the edge of education. One child, one hour each week. https://www.tlg.org.uk/

**The Noise** – An annual opportunity for serve some of the most needy communities of Bristol with community action projects, free family fun afternoons and senior citizen’s events. [www.thenoise.org.uk](http://www.thenoise.org.uk)

**Bristol Soup Run** – Provides sandwiches and hot soup to those living on the streets. Once a fortnight on Sunday evenings Contact Dave Cussans

**Homes for Good** – support group for families who are fostering or adopting children <https://www.homeforgood.org.uk/> There are around 300 children in Bristol that require fostering at the moment.

**Life Recovery Group** – A support group for those struggling with addictions or in recovery contact Dave@thecommunitychurch.net

6. How can sharing your faith and seeing people become Christians change a city for good?