

Study Guide

This study guide is designed to accompany Struggling with Judgement, a film series for individuals or small groups exploring what the Bible tells us about how our God of love can also be a God of judgement. We hope that the guide will particularly be a prompt and discussion starter to help small groups who are using the series.

Episode 1 – beginning the journey

- How do you react to the idea of God’s judgement?
- *Read Psalm 98v4-9*
 - Does it surprise you that the Psalmist worships God for his judgement?
- Have you ever thought that judgement might have a positive dimension?
- Is judgement necessary to end suffering?
- “The cross is the ultimate expression of God’s judgement” – what do you think?

Episode 2 – fixing what is broken

- Why do we find the idea of judgement so hard to accept?
- What is your understanding of sin?
- *Read Genesis 3v7-12*
 - How has Adam and Eve’s sin left them broken?
 - Does that help you to understand your own sin better?
- How has sin impacted your life?
- How do you feel about the idea of salvation as being fixed?
- Does reflecting on sin and judgement help you understand the cross better?

Episode 3 – poison!

- Does the image of poison help you understand sin better?
- *Read Judges 2v10-16 and 21v25 (cf. Deuteronomy 29v18)*
 - why is turning away from God so disastrous?
- “every good and perfect gift comes from above” (James 1v17) How is this true?
- Does understanding sin better change the way that you think about judgement?
- How does the image of the cross as a cure for poison help you understand it better?

Episode 4 – getting emotional

- how do you *feel* about judgement?
- *Read Ezekiel 23v1-22 and v48-49*
 - how do you react to that passage?
 - how do you feel about the comparison of our sin to prostitution?
 - does that change the way you feel about sin and judgement?
- have you ever thought about how God feels about our sin? What difference does that make to you?
- How does the cross impact how you feel about judgement?

Episode 5 – the cross

- do you agree that if we want to understand the cross we need to understand judgement?
- *Read Romans 3v22-26*
 - why do we need to be 'justified'? (v24)
 - why can't God just continue 'to leave sins...unpunished'? (v25)
 - does it matter that God is just? (v26)
- Do you ever think about judgement and justice from the perspective of the victims?
- Do the images of a debt being paid off and of Jesus bearing our punishment help you understand the cross better?
- In what ways is forgiveness better than forgetfulness?

Episode 6 – the end

- How do you feel about the idea of final judgement?
- *Read 119:84 (cf. Revelation 6v9-11)*
 - In the film David suggests that one reason why God judges is because he loves us, and what has been done to us matters. How do you react to that idea?
- *Read Revelation 19v11 to 20v8*
 - How do you react to the idea that judgement and salvation are inextricably linked?
- How does the good news of the cross impact how you feel about God's judgement?
- Looking back on the whole series, has your reaction to God's judgement changed in any ways?
 - If yes, how?
 - In what ways do you still struggle? You may want to pray about these, or to discuss them further with your pastor.