



## **ZIMZUM DISCIPLESHIP VIDEO LESSON #3: CREATION JUSTICE**

### *SMALL GROUP SESSION 1 - GENERAL OVERVIEW*

#### **GATHERING**

##### Opening Prayer:

O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Begin with brief check-ins and the opening questions below:*

##### Opening Questions:

How has it been practicing zimzum discipleship and *lectio divina*? Have you been able to find space in your life and make time for the reading of scripture?

#### **Content Study**

- Watch the Creation Justice video from +Phil LaBelle on the [ecwww.org/zimzum-discipleship](http://ecwww.org/zimzum-discipleship) website.
- Reflect on the video together. What did you notice? What caught you?

#### **Reading: Psalm 104:1, 10-25 (BCP)**

Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness! You are clothed with majesty and splendor. You send the springs into the valleys; they flow between the mountains. All the beasts of the field drink their fill from them, and the wild asses quench their thirst. Beside them the birds of the air make their nests and sing among the branches. You water the mountains from your dwelling on high; the earth is fully satisfied by the fruit of your works. You make grass grow for flocks and herds and plants to serve mankind; That they may bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden our hearts, Oil to make a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen the heart. The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted, In which the birds build their nests, and in whose tops the stork makes his dwelling. The high hills are a refuge for the mountain goats, and the stony cliffs for the rock

badgers. You appointed the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows the time of its setting. You make darkness that it may be night, in which all the beasts of the forest prowl. The lions roar after their prey and seek their food from God. The sun rises, and they slip away and lay themselves down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work and to his labor until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are your works! in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

- Use *lectio divina* ("divine reading") for this passage.
- Read the text slowly aloud. Sit for a time and notice where your heart takes you.
- Meditate on a word or phrase that has caught your attention. Or imagine taking on a role in this narrative and playing it over again in your mind.
- Pray the passage aloud slowly again, or simply pray the word or phrase that has taken your attention.
- Quietly consider how this passage might lead you to live more faithfully as a disciple of Jesus, and let the Spirit guide you as to next steps for contemplative living.

## Reflection Questions

- Compare the language of Eucharistic Prayer C—"From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation."—with the selection from Psalm 104. What do you see as connections or disconnections? How might we "rule creation" while also recognizing God's hand in creation?
- Brian McLaren writes, "Perhaps, in the interests of sustainability, we should speak less of an *environmental crisis* and speak more of an *over-consumption crisis*. That way, we'd focus our attention on the source of the problem, not its victim—the source being human beings, particularly in the global North, who are living an unsustainable life, oblivious to the limits, destroying their natural wealth in pursuit of financial wealth." What, if any, difference would this change in language mean for you personally? Do you see it the same way as McLaren? Why or why not?
- Dr. Seuss in *The Lorax* describes the Once-ler saying to the Lorax: "Now listen here, Dad! All you do is yap-yap and say, Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad! Well, I have my rights, sir, and I'm telling you I intend to go on doing just what I do! And, for your information, you Lorax, I'm figgering on biggering and Biggering and BIGGERING and **BIGGERING!**" In what ways has this been the model in our country? Might there be times when getting bigger is a good thing? How does this connect with the call to consume less?

- The spiritual practices we are focusing on these next two months are to seek ways to curb our consumption through eating less meat, pausing before purchasing items, and/or engaging in a Green Sabbath (see [www.greensabbathproject.net/](http://www.greensabbathproject.net/)). Which of these appeals to you and would be something you could pursue in your own life? Do you think something small like this could impact the environment?

### **Final Reflections**

- What has captured your heart or your imagination in today's discussion?
- Where have you seen God—or Love—recently?
- What might you intentionally do over the next 2-4 weeks to bring you closer to God?

### **Closing Prayer**

Almighty and Eternal God, you sacrificially withdrew from a place within yourself in order to create the entirety of the cosmos so that you might be in relationship with us and all of creation. Help us to embrace zimzum discipleship and make space in our own lives, that we might more faithfully follow in the way of Jesus who gave of himself for the salvation and healing of the whole world. All this we ask in the name of the Risen Christ, who dwells endlessly with you and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*