



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

### *SMALL GROUP SESSION 3 - SHARING MORE*

#### **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 creation justice? Which of the spiritual practices associated with creation justice have you engaged in?

#### **Reading: Mark 10:17-27**

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not defraud. Honor your father and mother.' " He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." They were greatly astounded and said to one another, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

- 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

### Content Study

- Dr. Hope Jahren states in her book *The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here*, "All of the want and suffering in the world—all of it—arises not from the earth's inability to produce but from our inability to share. What was only a faint drumbeat as I began to research this book now rings in my hear like a mantra: *Use Less and Share More*. ... Curbing consumption will be the ultimate trial of the twenty-first century. Using less and sharing more is the biggest challenge our generation will ever face. It is a bewilderingly difficult proposition, and therefore unlikely. It is also the only surefire way that we can start to ourselves out of this mess."
- Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer in her book *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World* writes, "In a gift economy, the currency in circulation is gratitude and connection rather than goods or money. A gift economy includes a system of social and moral agreements for indirect reciprocity, rather than a direct exchange. So, the hunter who shared a feast with you today could well anticipate that you would share from a full fishnet or offer your labor in repairing a boat in the future. The prosperity of the community grows from the flow of relationships, not the accumulation of goods. When the natural world is understood as a gift instead of private property, there are ethical constraints of the accumulation of abundance that is not yours to own. Gifts are not meant to be hoarded, and thus made scarce for others, but given away, which generates sufficiency for all."

### Reflection Questions

- Consider the story of the rich young man from Mark's gospel in light of the selections from Dr. Jahren and Dr. Kimmerer. How might Jesus be instructing his disciples about the importance of sharing and a gift economy?

- According to a report from 2023, if you make \$34,000 a year or more, you're in the global 1%. Put another way, 99% of the population in the world live on less than \$34,000 a year, and half of the world's population—3.4 billion people—live on less than \$5.50 a day (\$2007.50 a year).<sup>1</sup> As disciples of Jesus, how might we respond to his declaration that it's hard for the wealth to enter the kingdom of God? What might we need to do differently?
- Jahren writes, "Curbing consumption will be the ultimate trial of the twenty-first century. Using less and sharing more is the biggest challenge our generation will ever face. It is a bewilderingly difficult proposition, and therefore unlikely." Give three reasons for what makes curbing consumption difficult. Give two examples of what you can do in your daily life to accomplish this.
- Kimmerer states, "When the natural world is understood as a gift instead of private property, there are ethical constraints of the accumulation of abundance that is not yours to own." Discuss the distinction you see in viewing the natural world as gift rather than private property. How might that impact how we understand property as congregations or as a diocese?
- How might you use less and share more?

## 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.*