

Worship development

Starter: *[In pairs]*

Which news story in the last 7 days had the most impact on you?

Reading: A major news story of the week.

Provide everyone with a copy. Read aloud, then allow time for everyone to re-read it for themselves along with the comment and the personal focus questions – and reflect alone.

Comment: The world isn't working. Things are unraveling, and most of us know it. Mohandas K. Gandhi warned us against what he called the seven social sins. He named them as politics without principle, wealth without work, commerce without morality, pleasure without conscience, education without character, science without humanity and worship without sacrifice. These social sins today provide an apt description of our leading institutions and cultural patterns; they are the accepted practices of the life of modern nations.

Several thousand years ago, the writer of the Proverbs warned, 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' Without a vision, we are indeed perishing. From the violent carnage of our inner cities to the empty consumerism of our shopping malls, from the shanty towns to our stock exchanges, from the muffled cries of our children in poverty to our twenty second media sound bites, from our toxic wastes to our wasted time watching television, from our religion of entertainment to our entertainment of religion, from all the substances we abuse to the economic and political institutions that abuse us—we are societies who have lost our way.

[The Soul of Politics. Jim Wallis]

Personal Focus Questions:

1. What thoughts come to mind as you read this news story and comment? What Bible passages might link to the news story? What might God be saying to you through this story?
2. How do you distinguish fact from opinion when you read a newspaper or see the TV news?

5. Theological Reflection

3. Do you nearly always start your sermon from a Biblical base? What are the advantages and disadvantages of starting from the present world instead?

Share together in threes the results of your individual reflection.

When you have finished your discussions, return together as a group and share any insights. Now share together in these applications.

Applications:

1. What skills and knowledge are needed to be able to reflect theologically on current affairs?
2. Read another short news story and consider different ways it could be used in worship. (*Leader could read a story of their choice.*)

Review (*individual thought*)

As an individual how will you use the ideas you have heard in this session?

Follow up

If you would like to develop these ideas further then you could organize a workshop with

Useful books are: -

The Soul of Politics by Jim Wallis

Worship

End with a time of worship that uses some of your reflections on news stories in an imaginative way.