

## PREPARING AT HOME

March 18-24, 2019

*Focus reading:* Isaiah 55:1–9 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=138351066>)

*Other lectionary readings:* Psalm 63:1–8; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13; Luke 13:1–9

*Theme:* Fed by the Glory

Bruce Springsteen’s song “Glory Days” captures the human longing for the extraordinary life, for something that affirms our worth. The people of Isaiah’s time had the same longing, and – much like today – they thought it could be satisfied in the marketplace. The people are exiles in Babylon. The Babylonian marketplace was filled with the trappings of glory. The exiles were tempted by the marketplace of their captors, just as people are attracted to a “Prosperity Gospel” today. Being able to purchase the goods of the marketplace is often interpreted as a sign of God’s favor and blessing; yet the cost is higher than one might imagine. To produce those goods, the earth and its people are often being exploited, and we adopt a consumer mentality. Isaiah warns the people that this kind of glory does not satisfy. Isaiah calls the people to return to their covenant relationship with God. It is God who “has glorified you” (verse 5). Note that this is not some future glory awaiting in the afterlife. Isaiah speaks in the past tense. God has glorified the exiles. It is up to them to claim that glory and live into it. It is a glory that does not fade. It does not come at others’ expense. It is free and available to all. It satisfies the emptiness that people so desperately and unsuccessfully try to fill. It comes, not from the marketplace, but from the abundant love, generosity, and goodness of a just God.

### NEEDS VS WANTS

We so freely use the word “need” in our conversations and in our own thinking. Talk with your child about the difference between a need and a want. Make a pact to sound the alarm whenever either of you uses the word “need” about something that is more accurately a “want.”

### ARE YOU SATISFIED?

We’ve all had the experience of longing for something only to discover that it did not live up to our expectations. Share some examples. How was that desire like hunger and thirst? Why was it not satisfying?

### GOD’S FREE GIFTS

Draw a picture of yourself surrounded by the gifts that God freely gives you.

### PRAYER

Loving God,  
You give us more than we need;  
yet, we ask for more, thinking more will make us happier.  
Forgive us.  
Open our eyes and hearts to all of the good gifts around us,  
for surely they are signs of how much you love us.  
Amen.

*Prospect Presbyterian Church, Maplewood, NJ, [www.prospectchurch.org](http://www.prospectchurch.org)*

*Rita Boyer, [rita@prospectchurch.org](mailto:rita@prospectchurch.org)*