

Small Group Discussion Guide

Sermon Date: October 17, 2021, 9 AM

Men's day theme: Fishers of Men

Speaker: Mr. Wes Moore

Sermon Title: WE ARE NOT PROMISED EASY, WE ARE PROMISED GLORY

Sermon Text: James 1:12

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Sermon Summary

The sermon featured the testimony of personal struggle, a career of exceptionalisms and multiple successes in the life of author, Rhodes Scholar and Maryland gubernatorial candidate Wes Moore. The sermon exhorted us to consider the idea, "we are not promised easy, we are promised glory. Mr. Moore recounted the significance of the text in the lives of his great-grandfather and grandfather who as ministers of the gospel endured racism and xenophobia. His grandfather, committed to overcoming racism by persevering to become the first black minister in the Dutch Reformed Church, the same church that gave theological sanction to the racist ideology of apartheid. Despite the racism his grandfather experienced, the ideas of *blessed is the one who perseveres under trial* and the *promise of glory but not an easy life* were intergenerationally passed on to Mr. Moore, who lost his father at the early age of four.

Moore's personal story explains the intersections of the sermon's theme, receiving the Rhodes Scholarship and the title of his book, The Other Wes Moore. After becoming the first African American Rhodes Scholar to graduate Johns Hopkins University, Moore was preparing to travel to London when a major robbery took place involving another young man with the name Wes Moore. The "other" Wes Moore went to prison but our speaker and author wrote a letter and has since developed a twenty plus year relationship with the prisoner. The Other Wes Moore and the sermon draws upon the ideas of perseverance under trial and the ultimate promise of glory to encourage us all to commit to serving the "other" as a means of loving and serving God who has promised glory to those who love and serve Him.

Questions

1. How has the theme "*Fishers of Men*" been relevant in your life?
2. Describe a situation in which you have felt like the "other."
3. What challenges do we face when advocating for others?
4. Is racism declining in significance or has it become more prevalent in recent years?
5. Does the social-gospel of serving others bring about salvation in the recipients?
6. How does the sermon improve your understanding of the text?