

Title: SEEKING THE WELFARE OF THE CITY

Teacher: STAN ARCHIE

CONVERSATION STARTER

- What is your favorite city to visit? Why? When you think of a city, what comes to your mind? What do you think the essential features of a city are?
- Read Jonah 4:1-11. What was Jonah's view of the city? Why do you think God needed to tell Jonah what he told him? What reasons does God give for why he cares about the great city of Ninevah? What can we infer about God's heart for cities from this passage?
- Read Acts 18:1-11. How did Paul's ministry change in Corinth? Why do you think it was important for Paul to hear that there were people of God in the city of Corinth? How did this encourage him? Why might it have been important for Paul to stay in Corinth as long as he did?
- Read the excerpt below: What are some examples of "the undeniable presence and influence of the city" on our own lives? Do you agree that these influences are of greater importance than the problems associated with the city? Why or why not? What do you think Jacques Ellul means by "the construction of man's closed world"? What do you think representing God in the heart of the city entails?
- In what ways have you seen Christ Community seek the welfare of the city? What are some concrete ways you could engage, both individually and communally, in seeking the welfare of Kansas City. How might your perspective on the city affect your ability/willingness to engage in seeking its welfare?

EXCERPT FROM: *The Meaning of the City*

BY: Jacques Ellul

We are in the city, and this is one of the most important facts of our generation. It is absolutely indispensable that we realize what that means for us, for our actual life: the undeniable presence and influence of the city are of infinitely greater importance than the urban problem in itself. No added comforts, no adaptation, can in any way vary this relationship. Have the Scriptures perchance taught us something decisive concerning the concrete situation in which we find ourselves?... For we have our job to do in the city. We have seen that down through history God's answer to the construction of man's closed world was to move in just the same. And if he is there by his hidden presence, he is also there by those whom he sends. Our task is therefore to represent him in the heart of the city.