

CANADIAN
BAPTISTS

Together in Mission



Reflecting Light

QUESTIONS FOR GOING DEEPER

MARCH, 2024

Presence

Reflection by
Dr. Martin Accad



INTRODUCTION

There's a growing urgency for the presence of Christ and his Church among us as the issues of the world become more complex and uncertain with each passing day. This month, Dr. Accad takes us through what it means to be the Church amid the real-time conflict that has the eyes of the world focused on Israel and Hamas. As polarizing as this series of events has been in recent times, Dr. Accad reflects on the presence of the Church. He examines what it means to be present politically, economically, spiritually, socially, and personally through a biblical lens.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Many CBM staff have been 'present' in times of immense political upheaval. How can their example be an inspiration to us in Canada? When and where can we demonstrate the same form of engagement?
2. Do you agree or disagree that "active presence is political"? What are the consequences for us, as Christians in Canada, as we seek faithful presence?
3. Have you ever experienced firsthand a time of deep civil unrest, of violence or of upheaval? What was your initial reaction? Did you want to run away, or as we read, 'to take refuge in self-protectionism' or did you want to become actively involved in helping heal the wounds?
4. Can you think of a time when you were able to incarnate the hope of Christ in a situation of hopelessness?
5. David Fitch, in his book, *Faithful Presence* (IVP, 2016), asks this question: "Does the church have anything to offer the world full of injustice? Can the church reach out to the worlds around me in a way that doesn't judge them, alienate them, or ask them in some way to come to us?" Can you give some concrete examples of the way we can be more fully present in the world?

EXCERPT

The Church practices its presence in the world as we give heed again to the words of God through his prophet Hosea: "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6).

As we look with compassion at all those who have been beaten and stripped and left half dead, we are called to "take pity" on them, bandage their wounds, "pouring on oil and wine" (Lk 10:25-37). The Church is possessed with the power of the Holy Spirit, the comforter in the midst of hopelessness, the advocate of the dispossessed.

We encourage you to share your own reflections using #CABA150, as well as follow along for the latest news and events on our website.

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