

God's Powerful Word | Isaiah 55:1-13

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“My word that comes from my mouth will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish what I please and will prosper in what I send it to do.”

— Isaiah 55:11

Introduction

- Our culture is facing a crises of confidence in the words of others. A recent Gallup poll shows that our confidence as Americans in the words of our culture's major institutions is at historical lows
- In a culture of empty words, we've never been more in need of a voice we can build our lives on. We need a word that is reliable enough to build our life upon. A word that won't let us down. In a world of empty words, we need a Word with power. With substance. A word we can count on.
- In a world of empty words, why is God's Word worth listening to?
- Text: Isaiah 55 (The Need for God's Word - The Invitation of God's Word - The Certainty of God's Word)

Body

- **The Need for God's Word:** God's Word is the only remedy for the perpetual problem of human dissatisfaction
 - We have a satisfaction problem (We're starving despite all our attempts to obtain a bread that will fill us)
 - "Bread" is a stand in for whatever thing you believe will bring you life in this world outside of God. The default human condition is to run ourselves into the ground pursuing that thing we think will finally satisfy only to find out upon getting it, that it leaves us more hungry than before. (C.S. Lewis Quote)
 - Our spiritual hunger is the result of our rejection of God's word (We've traded his voice for ours. This is arrogance, not foolishness)
 - The writer implores us to listen three times. Why?
 - Because we're listening to the wrong voice. Our own voices!
 - This is the sin of the garden / This is the sin that led to Israel's exile in Babylon (5:24, 30:9)
 - Our dissatisfaction is so great because our ways and thoughts are so far below the ways and thoughts of God
 - Isaiah says the gap between our ways and the ways of God is as great as the gap between the earth and heaven (7-9). We're out of touch with reality and when you're out of touch with reality, things don't go well.
 - SUMMARY: God's Word is the only remedy to the perpetual problem of human dissatisfaction
- **The Invitation of God's Word:** God's Word invites us to find pardon, satisfaction, and

hope at his table

- The Word of God captured for us in the scriptures, says many things. But in this chapter, God's Word takes the form primarily of an invitation. In the first 7 verses of this chapter, there are 13 imperatives, but these are stern commands. It's God inviting a hungry people to come and find a seat at the feast we all crave.
- Come and eat! Come and drink! I'm throwing a great feast and you're invited!
- We're offered three things at this banquet table:
 - *Pardon (The feast is for everyone who knows they are poor)*
 - The invitation is universal: "Come everyone" / This is written to a rebellious, unjust, idolatrous people / The invitation goes out to the wicked and the unrighteous
 - How is this pardon possible? Pastor Jason preached on it last week. This offer in Isaiah 55 only possible because of Isaiah 53. There we learn of this shrouded figure that God promises Israel would one day come and make a way for their sins to be forgiven, not by waving a magic wand and erasing the record of Israel's wrongdoing, but by paying the price of their sins himself so that they could have life (53:4-6).
 - And yet, we know that not everyone will sit at the table of God's feast (Verse 6: Seek the Lord while he may be found / implies that there is a time coming where the door to the feast will be closed)
 - It's universal, but not everyone finds their way in. What's the difference? We learn the only term of admission is admitting you have nothing to pay (The price of admission is your poverty). And for all who will admit that, God offers pardon.
 - Many people think Christians are people who think they have the special favor of God because they're morally superior to others. While there are many Christians who believe that, that's not the Christianity of the Bible. In fact, Christianity says the one thing you must not do when you come to God is try to clean yourself up. Love without parting is available to everyone as long as you don't try to pay for it.
 - Verse 7: A Christian is someone who comes to the Lord and says, I have nothing to offer. Following my ways, my thoughts through life has left me starving. I have nothing to offer. But I'm trusting in your compassion. Your desire to abundantly pardon me for my sin.
 - USS Michael Monsoor: Because of the suffering servant, pardon is available.
 - (But this isn't just a feast where we're let off the hook and sent away free from guilt. We're welcomed in)
 - *Satisfaction (The main course is an eternal relationship of love with God)*
 - This feast is satisfying (2b-3a)
 - The thing that satisfies is the "everlasting covenant" (3b)

- A covenant is always between persons or groups of people / It's relational language
- The nature of this covenant is everlasting love and peace with God (54:8-10)
- The human soul is far too magnificent to be able to be fully satisfied by created things. We were made for the creator (C.S. Lewis Quote)
- *Hope (God's restoration of a broken humanity back to himself points to a time when he will restore all of creation)*
 - This is a portrait of the joy of the new creation
 - The joy of God's people has spread to the whole material world
 - All the effects of the curse have been undone

The Certainty of God's Word: Jesus gives us the ultimate confidence we can trust God's Word

- OBJECTION: This is an amazing invitation, but how do I know these aren't just empty words? How do I know God will make good his promises? This invitation seems a little too good to be true.
- The author anticipates this and goes on to reassure us that God's Word is reliable (10-11)
 - Illustration: We love to garden, and the packets of seeds tell you exactly when your seeds will sprout. They're confident because if you add water to a seed in the ground, it will reliably produce growth.
 - God reassures his people in these verses that just like rain fulfills its purpose 100% of the time, my Words will fulfill their purpose.
 - And yet church, we have something more. We have reasons for confidence in God's Word that far surpasses what the original audience of Isaiah would have had.
 - We have the promises of God made flesh in Jesus. He is the ultimate expression of God's Word
 - **APPLICATION: Come feast on the life-giving Word of God.**
 - And when I say, Word of God, I mean the Bible, but the Bible only as a means to encounter the living Word of God, Jesus.
 - See, we make a mistake when we see this book as mainly an invitation into more information. Now, the scriptures are full of important truths, but more than an invitation into more information, the Bible is primarily an invitation into a relationship with the Word made flesh. (John 5:39)
 - This book is an invitation to feast on the life-giving Word of God. It's an invitation to find pardon, satisfaction, hope. The things we need most. The question is, will you heed the call? Will you come?
 - It's the same call to all of us whether you've been following Jesus your whole life or you've never responded to his offer of life. The same call goes out to us all. Come and feast on the life-giving Word of God.
 - Non-Christian: Maybe you're hear and you've never known the invitation was on offer to you. Maybe your here and you're

exhausted from working for bread that is no bread at all. If that's you, to respond to this call looks like verse 7. Forsake Your False Bread & Run to the True Bread of Life

- Christian: How loud is the voice of God in your life? If it's not loud, how can you turn it up? How much more life is available to us in God's word if we listen. "Hear, that your soul may live." / Are you consuming God's word like a marathon runner or like a hungry guest on Thanksgiving day? (The words of God are meant to lead us to the Word of God)