

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“RELINQUISHING EMPTY RELIGION”

For individual study or discussion

“...if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday” (v. 10).

The book of Isaiah has as its central theme God’s message of salvation. Isaiah’s name actually means “Jehovah saves.” Throughout the book, we see that God is in control, God has a people, and God will deliver his people.

In today’s passage, God appoints Isaiah to “lift up your voice like a trumpet”(v.1) and call his people to relinquish their empty religion.

- Read vv. 1-2. Describe the outward manifestations of Judah’s empty religion.
- Where did they go wrong if they were seeking God daily and delighting to know his ways? See vv. 2-4.

The people of Judah had a high opinion of their own performances, so much so that they grumble to God, “Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?” But God rebukes their religion that is void of compassion (vv. 3b-4).

- Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. What are the parallels between the church-goers in Paul’s letter to Timothy and the people of God in Isaiah?
- Take some time today in prayer, asking God to reveal a heart that is hiding behind an external shell of empty religion. Meditate on Psalm 51 and Isaiah 57:15.

Empty religion is an unrepentant religion. Its essence is self-serving. We are in need of renewal, and the road to renewal begins with repentance. The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q 87, asks:

Q: What is repentance unto life?

A: Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

- 2 Corinthians 7:10 states, “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.” How do we know when our repentance is real? Read Isaiah 58:5-6.
- In many ways our culture lies in ruins around us. Look at Is. 58:11. How might those springs of water start flowing in our church and community?

Ray Ortlund states in his commentary on Isaiah that, “Revival always includes confession before God and reconciliation with one another. Revival thrives amid an honest reappraisal of ourselves and our weaknesses...It’s safe now to get real with him. The fastest way into the new heavens and the new earth is the triumph of that grace in the world. And the fastest way to the triumph of grace in the world is the triumph of that grace in the church.”¹

- Pray and ask God how he can use you to bring revival and renewal.

DATE: September 26

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: Isaiah

PASSAGE: Isaiah 58: 1-14

Family Dinner Table

God wants our behavior to tangibly demonstrate our faith to those around us. Our love for God should result in loving our neighbor, sacrificially.

- Talk about the possible parallels between the people of Judah in Isaiah’s day and the church today. What would empty religion look like in our day?
- Read Isaiah 58 and discuss how we might be hiding a self-centered hypocrisy in the way we interact with others on our social media accounts or in our day to day relationships.
- In verse 7, God instructs his people “not to hide yourself from your own flesh.” Did you know that the phrase, “your own flesh” means the human race? (For comparison, read Job 34:15.)
- Discuss ways you as a family can get involved and serve those with needs in your community.
- A good starting point would be to take advantage of the [volunteer opportunities at LMPC](#).

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Fellows Program, Chattanooga

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Eowyn & David Stoddard,
supported missionary partners

¹Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., *Isaiah: God Saves Sinners*, 394