

Enjoy God's Word

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn for a little again to the chapter we read in Isaiah, chapter 55. Just read from the beginning, but it's verse 2, we're going to look at in particular, but we will look at some of verse 1.

Come, or sometimes it says, Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. And he who has no money, come buy and eat. Come buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Then it says, listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in rich food.

Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in rich food. Now, as we've often said it before, and it's what we all know, that Isaiah has often been termed the gospel prophet, and rightly so.

His prophecies regarding the Lord Jesus Christ are quite remarkable. At one level, we shouldn't be surprised at that, because it is the Lord God who has revealed this to the prophet, and his writings have been through this inspiration.

[1 : 2 3] And of course, that is simply foretelling what is to be, what is to happen. But you'd almost think that Isaiah was an eyewitness of the life of Christ, particularly when you come to read the likes of Isaiah 53.

It's just quite remarkable how, and again we shouldn't be surprised, but just remarkable how accurate the prophecies are regarding the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the reason that Isaiah has looked on as a gospel prophet is, is the scope of the invitations that come from his pen.

Because as we know, in the Old Testament, largely, God was dealing with his people, the Jews. And so much seemed to home and to focus in on them primarily.

But when you come to Isaiah's writings, not the only one, but there is so much of Isaiah's writings that go far, far further than Israel or Judah or Jerusalem.

[2 : 2 5] But that they encompass the whole world. It talks of the isles, it talks to the furthest ways of this world. Look unto me and be ye saved. All the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none other.

So Isaiah has, as it were, like he's reached right out. All the barriers or all the boundaries that were there before are gone.

And Isaiah, his writing is reaching out into the whole world. A taste, of course, of what is to come in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, of course, way back, we go back to Genesis.

The Lord had promised Abraham that through Abraham and his seed, that all the nations of the world would be blessed.

And, of course, it took a long time for this to be fulfilled. But there were always, the Jews, the Hebrews, the Jews, they were always very sort of insular in their way of thinking.

[3 : 30] And they couldn't see how the privilege of having the living and true God, all the blessings of that, were going to go to the whole world. That was a great problem in the New Testament.

That was a great problem that some of the early church wrestled with when the likes of the Apostle Paul, the great missionary to the Gentiles, a lot of the Jews struggled with this concept of the gospel going way out.

But right throughout the Old Testament, God would very often with an individual, the likes of Ruth the Moabites, because Moab was a country that Israel weren't really to have dealings with.

And yet Moab, and here the Lord was plucking her. And we find instances of this all throughout, that the Lord is reaching beyond the scope of Israel to take people in.

But, of course, this was all going to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. And so that's why Isaiah is termed the gospel prophet, because of his writings are so far-reaching. And there is like this universal call in the gospel.

[4 : 38] Come, everyone who thirsts. This is not just to Jew, but to Gentile. It's to everyone, everywhere. We have this great call of the gospel.

But another thing that you will see in Isaiah's writings is, and Hebrew scholars will tell us it's the most beautiful writing. That is found in Hebrew literature is Isaiah's.

It is believed that he was of royal blood. He was a prophet to the kings, but it is believed that he himself was of royal blood. And maybe he had a great education, because there is, even in our own languages, there's a beauty about the language in Isaiah.

But Hebrew scholars will tell us that there isn't literature anywhere in the Hebrew language to equal the actual language that is found in Isaiah's writings.

But there's also a passion in his writings. And you can almost hear that if he was, if I say I was speaking rather than writing, where he says, and there's almost this arrest at the beginning, come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters.

[5 : 56] And he who has no money, come by. And he'd come by wine and milk without money and without price. You can sense this passion, this sense of urgency, that there's somebody who really believes the message that he has.

And that is always how the gospel should be presented. We should never seek to present the gospel in a kind of a lethargic way, or a kind of a kumukuyuu way, but there should always be this sense of, this is the most important thing for your life.

There is nothing greater. You cannot have anyone greater for your life than the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a message that everyone should hear. It's a message that everybody should stop and think about.

And in fact, there's almost a kind of a stop, look and listen about this very message, where there's almost a shout to people like, stop, stop for a moment.

And that's the way that Isaiah begins it. It's arresting, the way he shouts out, stop. Oh, just like, hold on a minute, listen to this, stop. That's so important in the world that we're living in today, because we're rushing.

[7 : 12] Everybody is rushing. Nobody has time. But the thing is, we're all rushing to eternity. And one day it's going to be all over. And you know, every so often you stop and you think, we've just got to slow down.

Now I know that we're living in an age that the very spirit of the age has created demands that cause us to rush. And it's as it says in the book of Daniel, when we come to the end times, that knowledge will be increased and everyone will run to and fro.

And that's exactly where we are today. Everybody's running. Everybody's in a hurry. There's just so much in your day. And time is moving so fast.

You'll even hear kids talking about it today, the speed of time. When we were young, a summer holiday seemed to last forever. And now you'll hear even children talk about how quickly it's flying by.

And it's something about the speed of the age that we're living in. But it doesn't matter the speed of the age. There's still a call to stop. Hey, just stop, reflect, think.

[8 : 24] Where are you going? Where am I going? You know, it's important for us to stop and to face up. But people today don't want to sometimes think about that. But we need to.

Where am I going? Well, we know we're not going to be living here forever. And there's a great eternity coming. And so we have to stop.

And again, we have to look. Because Isaiah, that seems to be what he's saying. He says, Oh, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. And he who has no money, come by and eat.

And it's very important that we take our eyes heavenward. And that is the importance of proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That here is a passion.

And the only suitable passion for this mad world that we're living in. A world that we often feel is going out of control. A lot of people today are filled with fears and anxieties.

[9 : 22] Because they feel they're losing control of the world. And they don't know what's going to happen. Well, none of us are in control of the world. You know, we all like to be in control of our lives.

That's a basic thing. And in a sense, that is one of the biggest struggles that people have in becoming Christians. Is because they have to hand control of their life over to the Lord.

And a lot of people don't want to do that. They want to hold on. It's my life. I want to be in control. But that's why there's part. There's so many people today. They feel that this world is out of control.

Well, it might be to them. But it's not out of the control of the Lord. And how thankful we are. That he is in supreme control of everything. Every single thing.

And there are many people who will tell us. There's various theories and all sorts of things about climate change. And about what's going to happen. And the disasters that are ahead.

[10 : 22] But the Lord is in control of everything. And the one thing he has told us. There's going to come a time. When this world. You know, people are going to say. The world is going to end. The world is going to.

The Lord says, yes, you're right. Because the elements are going to melt with fervent heat. This world as we know it is going to be burnt up. All that is ahead.

But it gives such a comfort to know. That the Lord is in control of everything. It's his world. He made it. And he has a time when he will bring this world as we know it to an end.

So we're to stop. And we're to look. And we're to listen. To listen to this word. To this great invitation. As we said, look unto me. All the ends of the earth.

Look unto me and be ye saved. All the ends of the earth. Now one of the beautiful things also. That the first verse here. Opens out before us. Is the freeness.

[11 : 19] Of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That it's without money. And it's without price. And the gospel is God's great gift.

To the undeserving. And we have to ask ourselves in here. This is a question you ask yourself. Do I deserve to be saved? Well the question.

The answer to that is no. There isn't one person anywhere in this world. That is deserving. Of the salvation. That God gifts. God's salvation.

Is a gift to the undeserving. That's what grace is. Undeserved. Unmerited favor. Where God gives us. What we don't deserve.

Because God would have been. Completely right in himself. To have allowed this world. Just to go. The way it went in the fall. And to have left it.

[12 : 16] All alone. But the wonderful thing is. That he had made plan. He had made. He had purposed. And planned. Even before. The foundation of this world.

Of what was going to happen. And what he was going to do. And of course. There's the great. This is where the whole work. Of salvation comes in. But the point is. That none of us.

Deserve. This salvation. And the other thing is. None of us. Have the ability. To save ourselves. You see. Our sin. Disqualifies us. From.

Any ability. To. Save ourselves. Or to save anybody. Whom we love. We can't. But this is the great message. Of the gospel. This is a wonder. Of God's grace.

Is that he sent. His only begotten son. Into this world. In our place. To do the things. For us. That we can't do ourselves. One of the things. Jesus did.

[13 : 12] Was. Every single moment. Of his life. Fear. He gave perfect. Obedience. To God. He fulfilled. The command of God. Every day. And every night.

As our representative. And then he went. To the cross. Where he laid down. His life. As a sacrifice. As our substitute.

For our sin. So that God. On Christ. He placed. All our sin. This is. The amazing thing.

It's where the. The slate. Was wiped clean. Where God's wrath. Was turned away. Because we're all under. The wrath of God. All have sinned. And come short.

Of the glory of God. And God's wrath. Is revealed. From heaven. Against all. But that's one of the things. That Jesus did. On the cross. By taking God's wrath. On himself.

[14 : 05] He turned. God's wrath. Away. From us. So that's what happens. When we come to. Faith in Jesus Christ. God's wrath. Has been removed. Our sins.

Have been. Cancelled out. They've been wiped clean. And that's the beauty of it. It's free. All the doing. Has been done. We don't have to do anything.

We're not required. To do something. Incredible. Imagine. If we were told. You know. You know. What you got to do. You got to pay the church. A million pound. In your lifetime. In order to be saved.

You're saying. You're saying. That's beyond me. You'd be having to take out. Huge loans. Or that you have to. Every single person. Has to make a pilgrimage.

To Jerusalem. And it doesn't matter. How disabled you are. It doesn't matter. What problems you have. Unless you make your way. To Jerusalem. You won't find salvation. That's not what we're asked. We're not told.

[15 : 03] That we've got to climb. The highest mountain. In the world. And go to the top of Everest. Or row across the Atlantic. Or do something like that. No. This is a salvation.

Where all the doing. Has been done. Jesus did everything. And all he asks us. Is to receive. To accept. To believe. And that's a problem.

That so many people have. They seem to think. That they have to do something. Well all they have to do. Is believe. To accept. To accept. And say Lord. Lord.

Grant me the grace. If I haven't already done so. Grant me the grace. To accept you. As my Lord. To rest my life.

Upon you. Upon the finished work. Of Jesus. And by doing so. You can't be in a better. Or safer place anywhere. For. And so. Having said that.

- [16 : 00] Verse 2 then. Is following on from that. And is highlighting. At the start. The folly. Of spending. Like all our money.
- All our resources. Why do you spend your money. For that which is not bread. And your labor. For that which does not satisfy. Now. Just to make clear. What the Lord is not saying here is.
- He's not saying that. If you're not satisfied. In your work. Then. You're wrong. There are loads of people. And they're doing a job. And they have to be honest.
- And say that there is no real job. Satisfaction in it. Lots of people. Will say. Do you know. I. This is what I've done. But I don't really like it. My uncle.
- When he came home from sea. He was a weaver. All his life. And he hated it. Because when he retired. I said. Did you enjoy weaving? He said. I hated every day of it. But it's what he did. And there's probably.
- [16 : 56] A lot of people who. Now. That's not what this verse is saying. That you have to be really. Really satisfied. In what you're doing. That's. That's not the indication.
- And. Again. It's not ruling out. And your labor. For that. And it's not. It's not a sort of thing. Against work. If at all. We're able to work.
- We should work. In fact. Work is one of the blessings. God has given. Remember in Psalm 128. It says. Blessed is everyone. That feareth the Lord.
- And walketh in his ways. For he shall eat. The labor of his hands. Happy shall he be. And it shall be well with him. It's a great blessing that. And I tend to think of that.
- Even nationally. That if we were nationally walking in the ways of the Lord. Then. I believe that. That. The whole employment thing would be different. Because it's.
- [17 : 50] We're living in difficult times. So. That's. What. It's not saying. That we shouldn't be working. Or that we have to be satisfied. In our. In the work that we're doing.
- What it's really. Talking about here is. That we're spending all our resources. And spending everything in our life. On that which is. Not ultimately going to last.
- Now that doesn't mean also. That we are never to buy anything. In this life. But that which is absolutely essential. In other words. We are never to buy a luxury in life. Never. That's not.
- That's not what it's talking about here. But it's. Talking about. Don't give your life. Don't put all your resources. And all your energies. And all the things. Into things.
- Which are just going to pass with the using. Because. There is something. Much more important. As the Bible says. Seek first the kingdom of God. And his righteousness.
- [18 : 44] And all these other things. Will be added to you. The primary purpose. Is. Of seeking the Lord. And so. The Lord is saying. Listen.
- Diligently to me. And eat that which is good. And delight your soul. In rich food. Now of course. At one level. This is definitely speaking to those.
- Who are still outside the kingdom. And those who need. To come into the kingdom. And receive Jesus Christ. And discover. Just the glory. And the wonder. Of what it is to be a Christian.
- But it also speaks to the Lord's people. Because it's all too easy. To be sidetracked. And. To be. Taken up. With other things.
- And to lose our focus. And we need to be reminded. Over and over and over again. How important it is. To have the Lord. As our focus.
- [19 : 39] One of the. Essentials in teaching. Any teacher will tell you. That it's not. That you don't. That you aren't. Every moment. Teaching some new fact.

A lot of teaching. Is reinforcing. Things that have already been taught. Sometimes you do it. Coming from another direction. But what you're trying to do. Is instill.

Into the pupils. Facts. And these things. And so. A lot of teaching. Involves. Having to reinforce. These truths. These facts. And so it is.

Under the. Under the word of God. God is coming to us. So often. And says. I know you've heard this before. In fact. You've heard it often before. And there have been times.

That you've faced up to it. And there's been times. That you have. Even asked for my grace. To help you to walk in this way. But then you forget it again. You're way back. And you know.

[20 : 33] This is where the Lord's patience. Is incredible. Do you ever stop. And think of how patient. The Lord is with you. Lessons that you've learned.

Over. And over. And over. And over again. But you still need to learn them. Because you're back. And you say. Oh Lord. I can't believe.

What I'm like. And yet. His patience with us. Is quite extraordinary. And so that's why. We need to be hearing this. Again and again.

And so. We're given this invitation. Where we see the. The richness. And the generosity. Of the Lord. Because he's giving us. All this for free. You know. There are many people.

Who are incredibly rich. Now I know. The day we're living in. Some of these. Absolute. Mega billionaires. They're becoming. Great philanthropists. And they're giving.

[21 : 29] Huge. Vast. Amount of their money. Away. Which is. Which is. Laudable. Which is wonderful. Helping. Sort of. Many of the.

The needs of this world. And that's. That's very. Very. Very good. But. There are some. Some people. Who are very rich. And they. They have made. Becoming rich.

The goal. And they won't part. With anything. Some of the. Some of the richest people. Are the most miserable. Because they're just hoarding everything. Well. The Lord has riches. That are beyond anything.

But he's. Absolutely generous. He gives. And gives. And he gives. And he gives. Liberally. And he gives freely. And he loves to give. And he wants to. Give us.

Of the finest. Of the food. Now again. In a. Natural. World. We often. Will. Eat things. Which we know. Are good for us.

[22 : 22] Even if we don't. Particularly. Like the taste of them. You know. Sometimes. Sometimes. When the children are there. And you have food in front of them. And they say. Okay. You say to them. Eat that. And you can see.

They don't want to eat it. It's good for you. You often say. That. That's. That's nourishing. That's. That's food. That'll make you grow. It's strong. Because sometimes. Kids just want to eat rubbish. And you've got to say to them.

No. That you've got to eat good food. And so it is. Through. Spiritually. We need good food. Because the Lord wants us.

To be eating that. Which will. Develop us. And strengthen us. And enable us to. To grow. And so the Lord wants. Us to.

To take. The food that he provides. Very interesting. How often. In the Bible. We find the references. To eating. And to drinking. At a spiritual level.

[23 : 16] In fact. Even. The greatest. Thing. That we are given. To remember. The Lord. Jesus Christ. What he has done. For us. Involves. Eating and drinking. The Lord's supper.

The Lord has given us this. And he says. Take this bread. As often as you eat. This bread. And drink.

This cup. You remember. The Lord's death. Until he comes. So it is. By a way of. Eating something. And of drinking. Something. That the Lord wants us.

Above all. To remember. And this is why. We call this communion. Because. There's a wonderful bonding. You see. That's one of the things. About eating. That's one of the.

I suppose. It's one of the successes. Of restaurants. And hotels. Is people go out. To eat. Now. When a person. Goes out to eat.

[24 : 10] They expect to get a good meal. But most people. Don't go out to eat alone. They go out to eat. With others. To enjoy company. And fellowship. At the same time.

And that is. That is a very heart. Of. Like the communion. Is that. The Lord wants us. To gather. Around. His table.

And to eat. What he has. Remind. To eat. What he wants us. To be reminded. Of his body. And to take. Of what he wants us. To remember him.

By the blood. The wine. But it's communion. Yes. With him. That's our number one. Focus is with him. But it's also. With one another. That's why we share.

We share the plate. We pass the plate. Of bread. And that's why. We have a. What we term. The common cup. Now. I know some congregations. Of individual glass. I don't like that.

[25 : 07] Because I. There is. The actual cup. Where we. We take the drink. And we pass it. To the person. Beside us. There's. This is part of the communion. And I think that's.

How it should be. And so. This is speaking to us. Of. Of our bonding together. There's a. You know. At the table. It brings a. A bond. A love.

For one another. In Christ Jesus. And that's what Jesus meant. When he. When he. Gave us. This communion. So. But not only. Has the Lord. Prepared.

His own table. The Lord's table. But also. The gospel table. And he has prepared. This beautiful. Meal. And that's what we do. When we preach. The gospel.

We're inviting people. To come. And to eat. Of Jesus. To taste. And to see. That God is good. And you know. It's the greatest. Insult. To the Lord.

[26 : 02] Is when we. Reject. That. When you think. Of all the people. Who. Are invited. By the Lord. To taste. And to see.

Can you imagine. If somebody. Prepared this. Beautiful. Absolutely. Beautiful meal. With. The finest. Delicacies. Food. That is rich.

In quality. And in taste. And in texture. And it's this. Massive meal. And invites. Yes. Never. Everybody. Just now. Not interested.

Don't even acknowledge. Well you know. That's what people are doing. With the Lord. Because the Lord. Has prepared. This meal. That's remember. In Luke chapter 14.

With the. The great. Invitation. To come. The. The. The. The great. Feast. Had been made. And one. After another. Began.

[26 : 56] To make excuse. And so many people. Are making excuses. For not eating. And tasting. And seeing. That God is good. What an insult. What an offense. To the almighty God.

But if you have tasted. And you have seen. Then. You have entered into the most. The wonderful place. So. As we know. Food. Food is something.

That is given to us. To strengthen. And so it is. Spiritually. There is nothing. That lifts. Our flagging. Spirits.

Like the word of God. Have you not come. Sometimes. Sometimes you might come. It might be midweek. Or come to God's house. And you are at a period. Where you are really. Really tired.

Your body is tired. Your mind is tired. Your soul is tired. Everything is tired. And you feel down. And you feel. It is not just. In your soul. And your mind.

[27 : 51] But your body. You feel exhausted. You know. You come under the word. And God. Brings that word. To bear. Upon your soul.

In such a way. That you are strengthened. So that when you go out. It is not just. That your mind. Is uplifted. But your very body.

It is like. It says in Isaiah. That. Those that wait. Upon the Lord. They shall renew. Their strength. And there they were. They were. They were. They were out of strength. But their strength.

Is renewed. And they mount up. With wings. Like eagles. They run. And they are not weary. They walk. And they not faint. You have been there. You have experienced that. Where you have gone.

You come in. Under the word. And the word. Has changed you. It has brought vitality. And light. And life. And energy.

[28 : 48] Into your being. And this is. This is part of the. This is part of the beauty. Of God's word. This is where he is nourishing us. And strengthening us. For the journey. That is ahead of us.

And again. We need this word. To feed upon this word. As we fight temptation. And as we fight. All the lusts. Within our own heart. And within our own flesh. And we have to use the word.

The Bible tells us. That we need the sword. Of the spirit. The word of God. Remember how it says. That we are to. To put on the whole armor. Of God. That you may be able.

To withstand. The wiles of the devil. And let me tell you. You and I. Have not one hope. Against the devil. Unless we have on that armor. And we are equipped.

With that sword. He is far. Too strong. For you. And for me. And the biggest mistake. We can make. Is thinking we can beat him. In our own strength. He loves.

[29 : 48] Satan loves. When he sees us. Saying. Oh. I won't give in. Yes we will. Unless we are armed. And unless we have the word. And it is with the word. That we repel him.

Remember how Jesus. Every time. It is written. When Jesus was tempted. It is written. It is written. It is written. And the end. Satan. Went. And he will go from you too.

But we need the word. We can't do it without. We also need his word. In order to serve. A right. You know. Some people say. I have heard people.

Who are very very busy. And very active. In the church. Which is great. But sometimes. They will say. You know. I am too busy. I am too busy. I am too busy. Really. To read. And to spend time.

I have just got so much to do. For the Lord. They have got it wrong way around. The most effective. Work that you can do. Is when you are soaked in the word. When you come from the presence of the Lord.

[30 : 45] What made Elijah. Such an incredible servant of the Lord. We find him. That he came. We would read. That he came. From the presence of the Lord.

That he stood in the presence of the Lord. That is how he was so mightily used. And so we need. We need the word. In order that we will serve right. We need the word.

In order that we will praise God. A right. You know. Some people think that. You just. To praise God. You just sing. And make as big a noise. As you can.

And that the louder. The louder the noise. The volume. The more we are praising. Well. We were talking recently. Isn't it. In Psalm 65. That silence. That praise can be silent.

But in order to praise God right. We need the word. We base our praise of God. Upon what we understand of him. In his word. He shows us through his word.

[31 : 43] Who he is. And it is as we drink the sin. Then we are able to praise him. In a right way. And so this word of his.

Is at the very heart. Of our fellowship. And that is why the Lord. Is saying to us. Listen diligently to me. That is really. Listen carefully. And eat what is good.

And delight yourself. In rich. That is taste and see. That God is good. That is it. There is nothing greater. Nothing more important for us.

But to taste and to see. That God is good. Let us pray. Oh Lord. We give thanks for. Offer this word. And.

We can be so familiar with it. And let it. And let it. Allow it to pass us by. Lord. May this word of yours. Go down deep. Into our hearts. May it transform our lives.

[32 : 41] We pray. Oh Lord. Be merciful and gracious to us. Fill us with yourself. And do us good. Take us all to our home safely. We pray. Part us with your blessing.

Forgiving is our sin. In Jesus name. Amen. We'll conclude singing. In these words. From Psalm 34.

Psalm 34. Psalm 34.

verses 13- Of Blashev Aspen. Give sure.

Give sure.

[34 : 45] Give sure.

Give sure.

Give sure. Give sure.

Give sure. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.