

Good News for a Troubled World > Isaiah 7:1-8:10

7:1-9 Syria and Israel have joined forces against Judah because the nation of Judah won't join their defense treaty against the Assyrians. Though Judah defends themselves initially, there is no way they can continue to hold out. Isaiah is commanded by the Lord to go to King Ahaz to encourage him with the truth that God is offering to defend Judah.

7:10-25 Sadly, Ahaz has decided that he would rather have help from the Assyrians than from God (**2 Kings 16:7**), so he gives a very pious – but ultimately unfaithful – response to God's generous offer to give a sign. The Lord, however, will give a sign anyways – not of rescue for Ahaz, but a sign of future hope for God's people: Immanuel. In this way, the prophecy of Christ is both a judgment and a long-term hope.

8:1-10 The bad news fulfilled: though Syria and Israel will be defeated by the Assyrians, Judah will be caught up as well and be left in such a devastated state that their "rescuers" will be as bad as what Judah had feared in the first place.

Context: Isaiah has been given a mission by God to declare His judgment upon His unfaithful people – a judgment that is necessary, but also ultimately hopeful.

Aim: To see that hope is found only by turning to the Lord.

Gospel: The arrival (and life, death, and resurrection) of Christ is a wonderful thing for those who trust Him – yet it will also bring judgment upon those who don't.

Applications: The presence of Christ changes everything – has He changed you? Where do you turn for hope that lasts?

Here is how I will apply these truths: _____

Announcements

Remember that we'll – Lord-willing – be resuming Sunday school at 9am next week. We'll be doing our best to social distance and do recommend masks, just like for the worship service. There are two things to make note of with regard to Sunday school: **first**, if you don't yet feel comfortable joining us for that, then it's no problem. While we won't be mailing or posting the lessons to the church website, we do have workbooks available which will keep you following along with the main themes each week. Similarly, if you are a parent who won't yet be rejoining us, we would be happy to supply you with a teacher's guide to help you disciple your children. If either of these cases fits you, then let the office know and we'll be happy to mail the materials out to you. **Second**: if you are a parent of children or teens who will be attending Sunday school, you will need to register them first. You can find forms on the information table out in the hallway – make sure you fill one out before leaving today.

My second announcement has to do with time: as I've mentioned before, some of you are busy these days – perhaps even busier than before Coronavirus hit. Others of you aren't and you are just about bored to tears. Let me give a word of encouragement to each group. If you are extremely busy and maybe even a bit relieved that the church doesn't have so many programs that you feel obligated to attend right now, then don't feel guilty about that. Our point is to make disciples, not just to be really busy every night of the week. Faithfulness does not mean being here every time the door is open, but instead looking to Christ and trusting Him each day.

For those of you in the second group, I offer both a caution and an opportunity. The caution is this: be careful that you don't think busy-ness is the same as faithfulness. That attitude will slowly corrode your faith and make it all about what you can do and how you can be busy. That said, I suspect for many of you that you are simply looking for how to serve others with the extra time you have these days. If that's you, then two opportunities are to help out with our weekly DQ mailings or to sign up for a rotation on our weekly ushering teams. Both are necessary, both will help you to serve others, both will help you to love Jesus. You can find out more information by contacting the office.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we approach you this morning as a people who need your grace. We've come to worship, but we are also distracted. We've come to learn from your Word, but are also thinking about what we'll be doing later today. Our lives are so often mixed like this and only you can make us pure. So we pray: work through us by your Spirit. Give us focus. Keep our minds – and our hearts – undistracted. Your Word is a feast for us – would you enable us to enjoy it and be nourished by it this morning? And then Lord, don't let us grow spiritually fat and lazy, being fed ourselves but not looking for how others can enjoy the same feast. Instead, help us to use this sustenance you provide to go and serve Christ. Give us a heart to spend our time and money and efforts for others rather than just for ourselves. We want Jesus to be honored amongst us; so use this morning, this service, our fellowship, towards that goal. In Christ's name, amen.