

Sunday October 11, 2026
The Singing Servant Series
Isaiah 55:1-13
@ FGBC

Good Food and Drink...and It's Free!

- Wouldn't life be great if you could get by without needing money for everything?
 - o You could just do whatever you wanted (within reason and presumably within God's plan) without having to consider the cost or the budget or the amount of debt that said expenditure would put you into.
 - You need a house, you simply move into a house...there would still need to be some sort of procedure otherwise I am sure fights would start pretty easily over "This is my house"... "No this is my house."
 - You want to enroll yourself or your kids in an extra curricular activity, so you go through the enrollment and there is no fee at the end of the enrollment.
 - And if you need equipment for said activity, you just go to the store, get what you need, and walk out...and it isn't even considered stealing.
 - o In 2019 in Skid Row, LA, which is one of the largest stable homeless communities in the US, maybe even the world, which takes up approximately 50 city blocks, a 21 year old kid named Jaden Smith, maybe best known as the son of Will Smith, opened up a food truck and made everything free.
 - The menu wasn't just cheap burgers but was plant-based, vegan bowls and meals.
 - Jaden's vision behind this was that everyone should be able to eat, even if they had no money.
 - o Someone with money could buy a meal...they weren't going to not accept money, but paying wasn't a requirement.
 - When you have Hollywood money, maybe doing something like this is a little bit more practical, but this is a story that shows what free looks like, and free doesn't happen often in our world.
- As we continue looking at Isaiah today, we are working through Isaiah 55 and come face to face with God's grace, which is completely free, and not something that you can buy at the store, or with money.
 - o It is simply God offering abundant life to people.

READ ISAIAH 55:1-13

- Out of this passage, there are three questions that I have found myself pondering...

- **1) Who is God?**
 - We first see that God is the giver of grace and mercy and life.
 - The passage opens with God offering wine or milk at no cost.
 - Throughout scripture, wine is a very common drink.
 - It is used in worship, as an offering poured out at the altar.
 - It is a drink used in celebration...Jesus turned water into wine.
 - There is also the warning with wine that it can be intoxicating and must be used very carefully.
 - Milk as well shows up throughout scripture as a common part of life.
 - Going back to biblical history, someone took a look at cows and goats and decided, "Let's try milking that."
 - Milk is representative of food and sustenance.
 - In Isaiah 55 wine and milk is not just representative of common food and drink, but is representative of God's gift to humanity of hope and of life.
 - God offers abundant life today...life living in the abundance and blessing of all that God offers today...and abundant life into eternity.
 - And it costs you \$0 because God's gift of life cannot be bought and it cannot be earned.
 - Every single one of you can afford God's gift of life because it is God's gift to you and it is free.
 - God offers us life knowing that we, humans, are nothing like God, yet made in the image of God.
 - To the Israelites (and to us), Isaiah writes,
 - "My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord.
"And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine."
⁹For just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so my ways are higher than your ways
and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."

- There is immeasurable difference between God and us...God is God and we are humans and not God.
 - God is telling us that he sees and knows things that are far beyond our capacity, ability, to know.
 - God knows things that if we knew them, it might really break us.
 - I don't think any of us want to know the extent of what God knows.
- "God's ways and thoughts are different from human's. God's range of vision is universal and includes all people. God's understanding of the human heart is deeper than human understanding. God's government and sovereignty are different from human ways." (Interpreter's Bible: 5, 649)
- God is at work in our lives, our neighborhoods, our city, our country, and our world in ways beyond what we can see or imagine.
- The life that God offers to anyone who is thirsty or needs a drink is the finest food...the finest drink that we can ever imagine, and it is given to us by the one who knows the numbers of the hairs on our heads...the one who rejoices when we rejoice and hurts when we hurt...the one who knows the future.
 - The life that God offers is immensely more valuable than the \$25,000 ice cream called "Frrozen Haute Chocolate" which contains 28 rare and exotic cocoas along with edible gold.
 - The life that God offers is immensely more valuable than the \$44 million price tag on a bottle of D'Amalfi Limoncello Supreme.
- Who is God?
 - God is the giver of life and hope in the midst of chaos...and there is chaos all around us.

- **2) How do we respond?**

- The initial response is simply a response of acceptance.
 - There is no cost, so take your choice of the finest food that is abundant life today because Jesus, the suffering servant, paid the penalty of sin.
 - We can second guess and doubt that free gift all we want or we can say, "Yes please."

- Isaiah then goes a little further, saying, “Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near.” (55:6a, NLT)... “Listen and you will find life.” (55:3a, NLT)
 - These are the action steps for the Israelites and for us as well.
 - Seek the Lord.
 - Call out to the Lord.
 - Listen.
 - **SEEK**
 - If you have ever done a scavenger hunt, you know that you will never find anything if you don’t look for it.
 - God isn’t a God who hides in a corner in order to not be found.
 - It’s almost like God is in that really bad hiding spot...the kid hiding behind a curtain with their feet sticking out very obviously...but God isn’t imposing himself on people, saying, “Hey, I am right here...you need to come to me now.”
 - That is why we are called to seek the Lord.
 - God is present but he invites us to seek out his love and joy and justice and forgiveness that he offers.
 - God invites us to know him and we can only know him when we spend time with him.
 - **CALL**
 - That is where we are invited to call out to the Lord.
 - God is inviting each of us...each of you...into something...into pursuing God and God’s purposes for your life.
 - You may know what that looks like or you may still be trying to figure it out.
 - Prayer is conversation and intimacy with God that leads to the fulfillment of God’s purposes.

- As you read scripture, call out to God in worship.
- As you work, call out to God about struggles you are facing.
- As you are resting at home, call out to God and tell God the joys of what you have experienced.
- As you are driving or with friends or at the store, call out to God with a simple prayer of thanksgiving... “God thank you for today.”
 - Often we view prayer as something that needs to be a planned part of our routines...we pray when we are doing devotions and we pray before meals...
 - The intention behind what Isaiah is asking of the Israelites is that they would call out often.
 - The root of this word in Hebrew has connotations of “accosting”
 - The person who just keeps calling out over and over and over, and God says, “Yes that is what I want from you.”
- **LISTEN**
- Isaiah writes, “Listen and you will find life.” (55:3)
 - We can only search and talk (aka call on God) so much before the noise drowns out our ability to hear.
 - The importance of listening to God in prayer...to being still and hearing the voice of God comes up so often through scripture.
 - If we don’t listen, the inverse of what Isaiah says is that we won’t find life.

- Listening to God and for God to lead us is of utmost importance as followers of Jesus.
 - “[This] invitation to seek and call and return [to God] has such force, for God is ‘permitting himself to be found’ and is drawing near.” (Interpreter’s Bible: 5, 649)
 - This invitation to call out to God is an invitation that is for those who know God and have made a commitment to follow Jesus just as much as it is an invitation to those who, as Isaiah says, are living in wickedness and needing to change their ways.
- **3) What happens as a result of this?**
- God is God and God is revealing himself to us and offering us a gift of life that is free.
 - God invites us to seek him, call out to him and to listen to him and for his voice.
 - Out of this, there are 3 things that happen, according to Isaiah 55:
 - A) God’s word produces fruit (55:11)
 - When scripture is read with a willingness to seek truth, God shapes people through that scripture.
 - I remember hearing the story of a guy that was a part of my church growing up...he didn’t have a strong faith background, but found himself working a camp job, and as a result of that, he found himself reading scripture a lot...there wasn’t a lot of other things to do where he was working.
 - He told of how he was being shaped by the Word...how God was forming fruit in his life as he read scripture diligently.
 - The Word is compared to rain.
 - Have you ever tried to stop the rain?
 - It’s impossible right?
 - The same is true with the Word of God.
 - You can’t stop it.

- You can't stop the physical Bible and you can't stop the word of God...truth...being shared with other people.
 - I have read numerous stories about how the word of God is being spread throughout places like North Korea.
 - In a similar way, in the Book of Acts chapter 5, there is a story told about the church...the word of God spreading and then it is cut off only to spring back again, and a Pharisee by the name of Gamaliel says, "[Just let it happen]. If it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even find yourselves fighting against God." (Acts 5:39, NLT)
- B) With abundant life comes joy and peace.
 - Isaiah describes people living in joy and peace, not because life is free of grief and challenges, but because God is at work renewing our world.
 - And then creation joins in in calling out to God...Isaiah 55:12: "The mountains and hills will burst into song and the trees of the field will clap their hands."
 - Echoes Psalm 148...let all creation sing praise to the Lord.
- C) Finally, we see death come to life.
 - In the story of creation, one of the consequences of the man and woman's disobedience is weeds and the need to toil to harvest the crops.
 - Now, Isaiah says that when God brings life, God brings life even in the weeds.
 - Cypress trees grow where thorns once grew.
 - Myrtles (flowering evergreen shrub) grow where nettles were plentiful.
 - This reminds us as well of a theme throughout Isaiah...the theme of a tender shoot that grows out of a stump...out of dry ground.

- That green shoot throughout Isaiah is a foreshadowing of Jesus...God who came to earth living an abundant life and inviting people into an abundant life out of the death and darkness that they found themselves in.
- God invites the thirsty to receive a life they cannot purchase.
 - We then respond to that life by listening to, seeking, and turning to God and calling on him.
 - God's word brings renewal that reaches beyond what we can see, breathing life and renewed life into our lives and our world.

PRAY

- Communion is not just a remembrance meal but a commitment to pursuing Jesus and a reminder of God's faithfulness to us in the midst of the good and the bad that we experience.
 - Communion is a meal that we take together as those who follow Jesus.
 - It is food that sustains us...it is Christ sustaining us.
 - And it should make us long for more of Christ.
 - You may have noticed this morning something slightly different...an aroma that hopefully caused you to hunger a little bit.
 - As we have been gathered together this morning, a loaf of bread has been baking...an aromatic reminder of Jesus' gift to you of that free gift of life.
 - We are going to take communion together using our little cups...if after church you want to come and tear off a piece of freshly baked bread, you are welcome to do that too.
 - Then we are going to sing together.
 - As we sing, there are going to be a few people at the front willing to pray for you or with you...this is an opportunity for you to call on the Lord in prayer so come to the front if you would like prayer.