

The Power and Challenge of God's Word

Isaiah 55:1-13

Pastor Guy Gray

Power

When God speaks, things happen: creation; impact; results; change; salvation. On page one of the Bible the message sounds out loud and clear: God speaks the universe into existence by the power of His Word (Genesis 1:3). The Word of God pulses with power because through it the heart, mind and purpose of God is set into motion in time and space. It moves the world. It determines reality. It calls things into existence out of nothing and then sustains what has been created. It is for all these reasons that the Word of God gives us hope, even in our darkest moments. To hear the Word of God is to hear the highest word. It is a Word of promise that supersedes all other ideas, experiences and perspectives.

This is why Isaiah 55 focuses on the power of God's Word. In Isaiah 55, God's people are experiencing hard times. That doesn't quite cover it. They are slammed with shame, defeat, captivity, failure and hopelessness. They have been working overtime trying to figure it all out by their own wisdom. But that isn't helping—so God directs them to the awesome power of His Word. This is what they needed most.

The power of God's Word is rooted in His infinite wisdom. His ways and His thoughts are infinitely above human ways and thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). When He speaks, He speaks from that boundless wisdom. The power of God's word is the expression of His sovereignty as almighty creator of all things. When He speaks, His Word is more than a suggestion or an idea; it is a decree of the sovereign, almighty God. Like water going forth and producing tangible fruit, so the Word of God creates (Isaiah 55:10-11). His Word is His own heart, mind and purpose, spoken forth and sent on a creative mission in this created world. Things happen!

Challenge

There is something required on our part. Isaiah 55 opens with an invitation and a challenge: "Come; listen; turn" (find these challenges and others in Isaiah 55:1-7). The power of God's Word becomes effectual in our lives when we receive it in faith (1 Thessalonians 2:13). This is fascinating because the Bible tells us that faith actually comes to us as we hear the Word of God (Romans 10:17). This shows us the incredible spiritual dynamic taking place every time we read or hear the Word of God. God's Spirit is at work. He is stirring up faith within our hearts. He is doing a creative work! But still, we must "say yes". We must open our hearts to this Word and this work of God's Spirit. When we do, something amazing happens—a work of God that goes beyond our own efforts, thinking or ability. This is the miracle power of the God's Word!

Jesus

In the New Testament we learn that Jesus is the incarnate Word of God (John 1:1; Hebrews 1:1-3). Jesus is the heart, mind and purpose of God, sent into our world in human form. All the power of Genesis 1 and all the promise of Isaiah 55—it's all wrapped up in the person of Jesus Christ. This is why the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16-17). The Gospel of Christ is the ultimate Word of God in this fallen world. It is ultimate power, but still there is this—the response of faith—the personal response—the opening of the human heart to the Word of God. "Come, listen, turn and live", this is the offer of God. It is real and it has your name on it. Don't wait. Seek the Lord today, while he may be found! There is a hope in Christ that is greater than your heart or mind can ever fathom—and all the joy that goes with it. Will you say yes to God's Word today?

Reflection This Week:

Read Isaiah 55:1-13 each day this week. Here are some questions to consider as you seek the Lord in His word.

How strong is your faith in God's word right now? What evidence is there in your life that the Word of God is molding and shaping you? What does it mean for you to say "yes" to the Lord this week, to respond in faith to the work of His Spirit in your life? What has the Lord been speaking to you through His word?

RW Happenings

Today!

Pick up August's copy of The Thread today!

Saturday August 16th •

Saturday Morning Prayer

RW Fellowship Hall • 8-9am

All are invited to take a more active role in the heart of our church through prayer. For more information contact Jeff Nopper @ 245.1841 or Ryan Lee @ 235.9388

Friday, August 15th •

New Moms Social

River West Community Center 6:30-9pm

Calling all new moms! Come and enjoy a casual evening meeting other moms, enjoy a few goodies and have fun socializing. For more information contact Amy Palmer @ 656.9789

Saturday, August 23rd •

Who's coming to BBQ 7-9pm

Sign up today for this opportunity to meet other folks from our River West community at your home or theirs... fill out the postcard and drop it into a fishbowl! For more information contact Kent Nielsen @ 639.7897

Saturday August 23rd •

River Day @ the Hamilton's

2-9pm

Student Ministries has another great River Day planned for Jr. High & High School Students. Medical release form required - pick up a flyer in the lobby or contact Pastor Josh at 699.2226 or josh@riverwest.org

FYI • • •

For more information on what's happening at River West Church, go to www.riverwest.org and click on the calendar link