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The Servant's Message

Isaiah 53.1

Series: The Suffering Servant (Communion Series)

The Village Church

September 5, 2021

I. Introduction

- A. **1 Corinthians 11:26** (NASB95) — 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
1. Every time you attend the Lord's supper – you preach
 - a. That's right – you preach
 - b. You proclaim Christ
 2. You proclaim His death
 - a. Not just that He died
 - b. Its not the local evening news which routinely announce the death of notable citizens
 - c. Its not the obituary page of the newspaper
 - d. You're not proclaiming the fact of His death
 3. No – you're proclaiming the significance, the meaning, of the death of Christ
 - a. You are proclaiming that God incarnate
 - b. The Son of God
 - c. The 2nd person of the Trinity
 - d. Who was sent by the Father to redeem His people
 - e. Came to this planet
 - f. Lived a perfect life – a life of righteousness
 - g. A life that you and I could not live even for one day on our best day
 - h. And that the Son of God took upon Himself our sin
 - i. And died on the cross
 - j. Receiving in His person the just punishment, the wrath of God, for our sin
 4. “As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.”
- B. You preach it
1. But do you believe it?
 - a. That's not an insignificant question
 - b. Because all across the world, millions of people “eat this bread and drink this cup” every week
 - c. And yet don't believe it
 - d. Don't believe the significance of the death of Christ
 2. They go through religious motions
 - a. They believe that if they do x, y, or z

- b. That if they say the right prayers
 - c. That if they do the right religious works
 - d. That somehow it makes them all right with God
 - e. That having followed the liturgy, God is somehow now obligated to save them
 - 3. But if they don't believe, don't trust that Jesus died in their place
 - a. If they don't believe that Jesus died for them
 - b. If they don't believe that they deserve the wrath of God for their unbelief, for their sin
 - c. And that Jesus took the wrath of God that they deserved on Himself
 - d. So that they never would have to
 - 4. If they don't believe that, then they are still in their sins
 - a. There are many who take the Lord's Supper
 - b. And do many other religious works
 - c. And yet, don't believe
 - 5. **Matthew 7:21–23** (NASB95) —
 - a. 21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.
 - b. 22 “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ [could add, “and take the Lord's Supper]
 - c. 23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’
- C. That's what the Lord's Supper means
 - 1. Every time you take the Lord's Supper – you proclaim – you preach – the Lord's death
 - a. But not everybody who takes the Lord's Supper believes
 - 2. And it's not that I preach the Lord's death and you don't believe
 - a. You preach the Lord's death – you're the preacher
 - b. “As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death” – you're the preacher
 - 3. But do you believe your own preaching?
- D. Isaiah raises that question in the passage we have been exploring on communion Sundays recently
 - 1. **Isaiah 53**
 - a. Which as you are now aware actually begins in Isaiah 52
 - 2. Part of the Servant of the Lord hymns in Isaiah
 - a. The best known of the hymns
 - b. The one quoted more often in the NT than any other OT text
 - 3. The one that led the Ethiopian eunuch to faith in Christ
 - a. The one that most fully describes the person and work of Messiah Jesus

- E. **Series: The Suffering Servant**
 - 1. First message: **The Great Exchange (Isaiah 52.13-14)**
 - a. In which we saw that the Messiah was both greatly abased and humiliated
 - b. But was also lifted up and greatly exalted
 - c. His death led to His ascension and installation at the right hand of the Father
 - d. The Great Exchange
 - 2. Second message: **The Servant's Redemption (Isaiah 52.15)**
 - a. Where we learned that the death of Christ "sprinkled" many nations
 - b. His death provided the atoning sacrifice for the sins of people from every tongue, tribe and nation
- F. But then Isaiah is frustrated
 - 1. Because he knows that in spite of these glorious truths
 - a. Not everyone believes
- G. Text
 - 1. **Isaiah 53:1** (NASB95) — 1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
 - 2. The history of Israel was marked by prophet after prophet
 - a. Who came along and proclaimed the covenant
 - b. A covenant of grace
 - c. Wherein God provides for the redemption of His people
 - d. And calls His people to repentance
 - 3. And year after year after year
 - a. Prophet after prophet after prophet
 - b. They don't believe
 - 4. **Isaiah 53:1** (NASB95) — 1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

II. "Who has believed our message?"

- A. **The Message**
 - 1. **The Person**
 - a. The message is Jesus – the person of Jesus
 - b. Who is Jesus?
 - c. He is the eternally begotten Son of God
 - d. Who was sent by the Father
 - e. Born of a virgin
 - f. Lived a life well into adulthood
 - g. A life without sin; perfect obedience to the Law of God
 - h. He is the God-man
 - i. He is God – divine
 - j. He does things that no mere mortal could do
 - k. Signs (Gospel of John)
 - l. He knows things that no mere mortal could know

- m. He is also human; He, the Son of God, took upon Himself our humanity
- n. So that in His perfection, and in His humanity, and in His divinity
- o. He is the only Being in the universe who qualified to save sinful humanity
- p. We sinful human beings can't save ourselves
- q. We are sinners; we deserve eternal punishment for we have transgressed the Law of the eternal God
- r. Only the sinless eternally begotten Son of God could save sinners
- s. **Acts 4:12** (NASB95) — 12 “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

2. **His Work**

- a. His labor – it's Labor Day tomorrow
- b. But we observe labor day every Sunday
- c. Because we celebrate the labor, the work of Jesus
- d. Part of His work is His life
- e. He lived a perfectly righteous life
- f. Without His works of righteousness, there is no gospel; no redemption; no salvation
- g. And then there is His suffering and death – that part of His work which we proclaim, we preach, when we take the Lord's Supper
- h. His substitutionary sacrifice – His death in our place
- i. His propitiation – His wrath-removing sacrifice
- j. **Romans 3:23–26** (NASB95) — 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- k. Jesus – His work of righteousness; His work of propitiation, of sacrifice
- l. That's the message we proclaim as often as we eat this break and drink this cup

3. **Its Value**

- a. And consider its value – the value of the message
- b. There is no message of greater value!
- c. It is the message of eternal life
- d. Life in the glorious presence of our Lord Jesus Christ
- e. **Luke 2:10–11** (NASB95) — 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which

will be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

- f. Luke 2:13–14 (NASB95) — 13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”
- g. James Durham: ... the discovery of Christ Jesus, and the making him known, is the greatest news, the gladdest tidings, and the most excellent report, that ever came or can come to a people. There is no such thing can be told them, no such tidings can they hear; this is the report that the prophet speaks of by way of eminency, a report above, and beyond all other reports; these are news worthy to be carried by angels.
- h. There is no greater message, no greater news, than Jesus
- i. His person and His work

B. **Belief**

1. **Its Necessity**

- a. But what if it's not believed?
- b. What if we do not trust this Jesus, this Messiah?
- c. For faith, belief, is necessary for salvation
- d. **John 3:16** (NASB95) — 16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”
- e. **John 3:36** (NASB95) — 36 “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
- f. **Romans 1:16** (NASB95) — 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- g. **Romans 3:21–22** (NASB95) — 21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe...

2. **Its Character**

- a. But what is faith?
- b. There are all kinds of faith
- c. Even the devils believe and they tremble
- d. So faith is more than just intellectual assent to the right facts about Jesus
- e. The Devil is orthodox in his understanding of Jesus
- f. **Faith is coming to Christ**
- g. **Matthew 11:28** (NASB95) — 28 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”
- h. Coming to Christ assumes that by nature you are separated from Him

- i. But you turn from your sin and come to Jesus
 - j. **Faith is receiving Christ**
 - k. **John 1:12** (NASB95) — 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name...
 - l. Receiving implies a welcoming, a delight in the One welcomed, a joyous encounter with the Savior
 - m. **Faith is** apprehending Christ, **taking hold of Christ**
 - n. **Philippians 3:12** (NASB95) — 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
 - o. **Faith is casting yourself on His mercy**
 - p. **Psalm 55:22** (NASB95) — 22 Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.
 - q. Allow Him to carry you – for you cannot carry yourself
 - r. **Faith is submission to Christ**
 - s. **John 3:36** (NASB95) — 36 “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
 - t. In a word, saving faith is trusting in Christ
3. **Its Duty**
- a. And it is the duty of everyone to believe in Jesus
 - b. **Acts 17:30–31** (NASB95) — 30 “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”
 - c. It is the duty, the obligation, of all human beings to repent and believe in Jesus Christ
 - d. What about those who have never heard of Jesus?
 - e. **Romans 1:20–21** (NASB95) — 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
 - f. We must proclaim Christ to all because all will be held accountable for their unbelief, for their rejection of display of the nature and character of God in nature
 - g. And once Christ is proclaimed – all have the duty to believe!
- C. **Unbelief**
- 1. **Its Kinds**

- a. And yet, so many don't believe
 - b. "Who has believed our message?"
 - c. They **suppress the truth** about God even though the evidence for God is plain for all to see
 - d. They **do not honor God** as God
 - e. They **do not give God thanks** for all His good benefits to them – none of which they deserve; they are all gifts
 - f. They **speculate about things they know nothing about**; conjure up false philosophical systems which all end in meaninglessness
 - g. They **substitute** all manner of **idols in the place of God**; not the least is the self
 - h. By nature we are all self-made men who worship our creator!
 - i. They even substitute religious idols in the place of Jesus; pretending religious works substitute for genuine faith in Jesus
 - j. There are all manner of ways people persist in unbelief
2. **Its Consequences**
- a. And its consequences are lethal – eternally lethal
 - b. **1 John 5:10–12** (NASB95) — 10 The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. 11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
 - c. **John 3:36** (NASB95) — 36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."
 - d. Do you really want to subject yourself to those consequences?
- D. The message of Isaiah is the message we preach week in and week out
- 1. Message of Jesus Christ
 - a. His life
 - b. His death
 - c. His resurrection
 - 2. Have you believed the message?
 - a. The message you preach every time you take the Lord's Supper?

III. **"And to whom as the arm of the LORD been revealed?"**

A. **The Arm of the LORD**

1. **Its Identity**

- a. Arm of the Lord is a euphemism for the power of God
- b. In order for us to believe, the power of God must be engaged
- c. In the case of the gospel, the power of God, the arm of the Lord, is the Holy Spirit at work
- d. **The Holy Spirit in convicting us of sin**

- e. **John 16:8–11** (NASB95) — 8 “And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
- f. **The Holy Spirit in regenerating us**, making us born again
- g. Unless one is born of the Spirit we cannot see or enter the kingdom of God (**John 3.3,5**)

2. **Its Necessity**

- a. **Ephesians 2:1** (NASB95) — 1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins...
- b. **Ephesians 2:4–5** (NASB95) — 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...
- c. The arm of the Lord, the power of God, is necessary because we are spiritually dead
- d. And the dead have no power; no ability to do anything
- e. That’s why Isaiah puts faith and power together
- f. “Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”
- g. They are two sides of the same coin
- h. Do you believe? Genuinely believe?
- i. Then the arm of the Lord, the power of God has been at work in you!

B. **The Revealing**

1. **Its Greatness**

- a. And when the power of God has been at work, Isaiah speaks of it as a revealing
- b. “To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”
- c. When you are born again, the lights of come on in your darkened mind
- d. The glory of Jesus, formerly hid from our eyes by our sin, now shines in our darkened hearts
- e. And what a great revelation that is!
- f. It is a glorious revelation!

2. **Its Grace**

- a. And not only that, it is a gracious revelation
- b. **Ephesians 2:4–9** (NASB95) — 4 But God, being rich in **mercy**, because of His great **love** with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by **grace** you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His

grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by **grace** you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

3. **Its Humbling**
 - a. That's why this revealing is humbling
 - b. "So that no one may boast"
 - c. **Romans 3:20** (NASB95) — 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight...
 - d. **1 Corinthians 1:28–29** (NASB95) — 28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no man may boast before God.
 - e. **Philippians 3:7–9** (NASB95) — 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith...
 - f. "And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"
 - g. Only to those who are truly humbled in the gospel

IV. Conclusion

- A. **1 Corinthians 11:26** (NASB95) —
 1. 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
- B. Is this what you preach?
 1. Is this your message?
 2. Isaiah doesn't say it is his message
 3. "Who has believed our message?"
 4. It is our message
 - a. All of us who take the Lord's Supper
 - b. We proclaim the death of Christ
 - c. We preach the message
- C. But who has believed our message?
 1. And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?