

Guest Preacher - Rev. Roddy John Campbell

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Preacher: Rev. RJ Campbell

[0 : 00] Seeking the Lord's blessing and help, let us turn back to the portion of scripture that we read together, the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 53.

That we find in the prophecy of Isaiah.

And we have already looked at the introduction to this fourth servant song in the previous chapter in the morning. And among the things that we noted was the astonishment of the people who looked upon his sufferings.

So many were astonished at you. His appearance was so marred beyond human semblance and is far beyond that of the children of mankind.

But also the astonishment regarding what was to be achieved through his sufferings. So shall he sprinkle many nations and even more amazingly, the mouths of kings were literally hang open when they see him in all his majesty and glory.

[1 : 22] But the prophet now comes to be more personal and speaks of his own personal astonishment. Who has believed what he has heard from us?

And to whom has the Adam of the Lord been revealed? The plural here, our, it refers to Isaiah and the schools of the prophets.

Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the Adam of the Lord been revealed? There are two New Testament references to this verse.

The first one is in John's gospel. In his gospel, John quotes the first verse of Isaiah 53 and says that it was fulfilled in the rejection of Jesus by those who heard him.

But though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him. So that the words spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled.

[2 : 30] Lord, who has believed what he heard from us? And to whom has the Adam of the Lord been revealed? Then Paul quotes the same passage when he considered why he and others at that time had little gospel success among the Jews.

He says, But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, The Lord who has believed what he has heard from us.

And there are those who maintain that if they had lived during the time that Jesus was on earth, and had seen the miracles that he performed, that it would have been easier for them to believe in him.

But this song and verse 1 say otherwise. For this is a prophecy, a word of prophecy about people who rejected Jesus during his time in the world, but they are words that are also relevant to me and to you tonight.

Isaiah, like the other prophets, was commissioned to bring the Lord's word to his people.

[4 : 00] His ministry was not an easy ministry. His message to the people was unpopular. Not many listened. Although he continued to preach to the people to repent of their sins and to turn to God, the people did not take him seriously.

Isaiah was called by God at a time when he was about to bring judgment on his people because of their sins. He was commissioned by God to stress to the people the message of divine judgment because of their sins.

But he was also told that the people would reject his message. Go and say to this people, Keep on hearing, but do not understand.

Keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull and their ears heavy. And blind their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.

It was not going to be an easy ministry. But what we are confronted with here is the human and the divine side of preaching.

[5 : 39] The human side. Who has believed what we, or who, as it is in the AV, who has believed our report? Who has believed our message?

Who has believed what he has heard? from us? From us. And the divine side. And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Now, Isaiah was not stoic. He would have been affected by the rejection of his message. He would have felt it in his heart.

And he would have felt the disappointment, as he longed for his listeners to receive God's mercy, to turn away from their sin, and to embrace God's mercy.

Nevertheless, despite all that, Isaiah remained faithful. And this was not only true of Isaiah. For instance, Jeremiah tells us in chapter 9 how he was affected when the people rejected his message.

[6 : 50] Oh, that my head were water, and my eyes are found in of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.

Even more wonderful is the fact that Jesus would also experience this strange spiritual dilemma. As he wept over Jerusalem, as Luke records for us, that Jesus beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, Weren't you that even you had known on this day the things that make for peace?

But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children with you.

And they will not leave one stone upon another in you because you did not know the time of your visitation.

On another occasion, we know how Jesus cried out to the city of Jerusalem, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered you.

[8 : 07] And what was the problem? The problem was, Ye would not. Ye would not. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Jesus would have been comforted in that they knew that they were obeying the will of God.

That although Isaiah and other prophets were to proclaim God's judgments on the people because of their sin and because of their rebellious hearts, they were also commissioned to proclaim a great message about the coming Messiah and all the benefits that he would bring.

Isaiah was aware, along with other prophets, that he was in fact serving a future generation of believers who'd appreciate his message. In 1 Peter chapter 1, we read, concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be, he searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what portion or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you and the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things unto which angels long to look.

Isaiah's astonishment is not confined to himself. We can honestly say that the echo of his cry is heard down through the avenues of time even to the present moment and shall be heard to the end, a cry uttered by every preacher of the gospel who has believed what he has heard from us.

[10 : 03] These sentiments are not confined to Isaiah or Jeremiah but is true of every preacher of the gospel just as they felt in their hearts the disappointment of few converts and as the gospel was preached and they longed for their listeners to receive God's mercy but regretted how little they saw of repentance and that is true down to the present moment.

Christian parents who have brought their children to value the truth of God yet who may be disappointed to see little fruit for their labours. Nevertheless, like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Jesus our greatest comfort is that we know that we are obeying the will of God.

So we continue to bring the message to a people. There are words in Ecclesiastes that always give me comfort and encouragement and these are the words as you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.

In the morning sow your seed and at evening withhold not your hand for you do not know which will prosper this or that or whether both alike will be good.

And so we continue to preach the gospel of the good news of Jesus Christ. In this verse 1 we have the human and divine side of preaching.

[11 : 51] Who has believed what he has heard from us or as we noted the King James Version who hath believed our report? Well what report is Isaiah speaking about?

The report he is speaking about is God's purpose for the salvation of sinners through the suffering, death and resurrection and exaltation of the servant of whom he is speaking here in this song. God's only beloved son. Whenever God's word is proclaimed or read or given to us by whatever means it is God communicating to us this message.

God communicating to us this report. He has made his purposes of salvation known to us. Paul writing to the Ephesians says God has in him that is in Jesus Christ in him that we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him things in heaven and things on earth.

And this is the place where Christianity begins where our Christianity begins its beginning is not with this or that experience but it begins by accepting the truthfulness of God's message the truthfulness of this report by accepting the truthfulness of the report it draws us to the gospel to know more and more.

[13 : 57] This is the place where so many people struggle to accept the truthfulness of this report the truthfulness of the message that is brought to us.

in Luke 16 for example we have Abraham's answer to the request of the rich man in hell.

The rich man did not want his brothers to have to experience the pain that he had to endure so he makes a plea but he was shown that his plea was unnecessary for he was told they have Moses and the prophets let them hear them and the rich man said no father Abraham but if someone goes to them from the dead they will repent and he said to him if they do not hear Moses and the prophets neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.

In other words the rich man's brothers already had the means of salvation. They had in their possession everything they needed to be saved to know salvation to get to heaven.

They had Moses and the prophets that is they had the very word of God. We do not realize realize the preciousness of having the word of God.

[15 : 33] It is the most prized possession that we can ever have. It is the greatest treasure that we can ever have and that is to have the word of God.

And here as we said regarding the rich man in Luke 16 it says that they had Moses and the prophets the very word of God all that was necessary for them to embrace the salvation of God. If only they had believed what the Bible said if only they had accepted the truthfulness of the report it would be enough to save them.

They would know the promises of God about the coming of salvation. They would know that they needed blood to atone for the sin. They would know that Jesus was the Messiah.

That Jesus was the Christ. It was all there in the scriptures. All they needed to do was to believe it.

[16 : 44] And we have everything that is necessary proclaimed to us through the preaching of the word of God. all that is needed is that you would believe it.

That you would believe that you are a sinner. That you are a sinner bound to a lost eternity. But that God in his infinite mercy and his love and his compassion has made a way possible for you to escape what your sins deserved in the suffering servant in his own son whom he sent into this world to be the substitute that is to bear in his own body what your sins deserved so that you can have salvation that you can be saved from your sin.

All that is in the word of God and what is needed is for me and you to believe it. who has believed what he has heard from us.

Paul writes to the church at Corinth and he says for the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing but to us who are saved it is the power of God.

Well what is your own response to the preaching of the word of God? Have you come to see and accept the truthfulness of this message?

[18 : 19] The truthfulness of the word of God? However although acceptance of the truth is the first essential requirement there is more required than merely to accept the truthfulness of the report.

The second is obedience. Obedience to the report. Obedience to the truthfulness of the word of God.

To be obedient to the word of God. To be obedient to the truth of God. To be obedient to the message that is brought before you this night. And this is sometimes where people have a problem. They believe the truthfulness of the report. They believe the truthfulness of the Bible. They believe that Jesus was the Son of God. I am sure that nobody here this evening denies that Jesus was not the Son of God. That he died. [19 : 25] I'm sure nobody here denies the fact that Jesus died and that he was buried and that he rose again and that he is going to return.

But sadly at that point people stop. They stop at that point. They go no further. They will tell you yes I believe that Jesus was the Son of God. I do not deny that. That he died and was buried. That he rose again and that he is going to return. And there they stop. All that is true but it's not for you. All that is true but there is enough time for you to give all that serious consideration. Now is not a convenient time.

[20 : 31] And you believe that and you accept that and you go on in life. Who has believed what he has heard from us?

Sometimes even our own reasoning can get in the way. We have a lesson to learn from Peter's response recorded for us in Luke chapter 5 where we read that after Jesus had stopped speaking or preaching that he said to Simon Peter put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. Let us for a moment consider Peter's reaction to this command and consider your own response to the gospel. Peter was a professional fisherman.

That was his living. So Peter replied to Jesus and he said Master we toiled all night and took nothing. Peter's way of reasoning and wisdom and wisdom was surfacing here. It was getting in the way of the command that Jesus had given him. Nevertheless he did what Jesus told him to do because he said nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

[21 : 52] And this is the important thing even if Peter was a bit reluctant and even if his own reasoning was getting in the way Peter still obeyed.

Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And you know that they caught a great raft of fish. Obedience to the word of God for me and you become a matter of life and death. who has believed what he has heard from us.

The message contained in the Bible set before you this evening presented in the preaching of the gospel is a wonderful story about the glorious servant of Jehovah who through his self humiliation and suffering on behalf of his people even unto death has accomplished for his people so great a salvation.

And he is now exalted to such a great height of glory. But even though the message of the servant's significance and work has been so eagerly presented to you over many years still so many do not respond in obedience.

[23 : 17] You believe the truthfulness of the word and you stay there. you do not respond to it in obedience. In the gospel of John chapter 12 to which we have already referred to where John quotes Isaiah 53 verse 1 the writer continues with another quotation from Isaiah to which we have already referred out.

Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said he has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts let's see. With their eyes and understand with their heart and turn and I would heal them.

Now without going into too much detail what we have here is the hardening effect of unbelief. That is what is brought before us here in the words of the prophet.

the hardening effect of unbelief. People think that they can wait to commit themselves to Jesus. They think that at the time of their choosing, they can become Christians. What they fail to realize is the hardening effect of unbelief on their hearts so that it will be increasingly more difficult for them to believe and to commit themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[24 : 51] If you continue to go in unbelief, God can give you over to a judicial hardening of the heart to which John says, therefore, they could not believe.

Why could they not believe? Because of the hardness of their heart. This confronts us with a very sober reality that when God presents us with the gospel and we accept the truthfulness of the message, that we should obey that message, entrusting faith.

Who has believed what he has heard from us? A continual contempt, scorn and rejection to be obedient to the gospel truth, which invites us to commit ourselves to Christ.

God can do as he did with the Jews of Isaiah's day. He can give you over to judicial blindness and to the hardening of your own heart.

The hardening of the heart is just God giving you over to what your heart desire. Who has believed what he has heard from us?

[26 : 08] We read here back in Exodus that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh. And what just that means is just that God gave him over to what his heart's desires were.

God giving you over to your own heart's desire. Then Isaiah uses an interesting image when he describes the divine side of the act of preaching as the revelation of the Adam of the Lord.

The Adam of the Lord is an Old Testament statement that speaks of the power of God. In Exodus chapter 15, we have the following words recorded for us in the song that they sang after crossing the Red Sea.

Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed. Trembling ceases the leaders of Moab. All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them because of the greatness of your Adam.

They are still as a stone till your people, O Lord, pass by. However, within our context, it is the manifestation of this power of God in and through the servant that he speaks about.

[27 : 35] How the power of God is seen in and through the servant. Here comes the paradox. The power of the servant has not been revealed in an overwhelming display of strength.

But in the work of the servant, as we see and described for this morning in our introduction to this song, and we reflected upon that in the morning.

The power of the servant in his humiliation, in his suffering and death. Paul could write, For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who have been saved, it is the power of God.

He says, But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews, and folly to Gentiles. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than man. Who has believed what he has heard from us?

[28 : 43] Whose eyes have been opened to behold in this despised and humiliated servant the very embodiment of the power and of the wisdom of God?

Paul writes, For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. You see, our faith, our trusting, our commitment to Christ does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The gospel truth concerning the servant is the power of God into salvation to all those who believe, to all those who will commit themselves to Jesus Christ.

That is why Paul is not ashamed of the gospel. We read, Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the Adam of the Lord been revealed?

Two very important and relevant questions for me and you tonight. Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the Adam of the Lord been revealed?

[30 : 00] The servant brought before us here as the Adam of the Lord, the power of the Lord.

And to whom is this revelation given? Amen. Well, a weak person is incredibly grateful when a strong person stretches out his hand to help and to share his strength with him.

This is how the Spirit of the Lord deals with us as sinners. When the Spirit of God is dealing with us, he reveals to us our weakness which is due to our sinfulness.

and we need a strong Adam to help us. In the book of Romans and chapter 5, Paul gives us four descriptive labels of what is true of us as the recipients of God's love and grace.

And one of those labels is that God loved us while we were still weak. That is, while we were still powerless and helpless to rescue ourselves when we were weak in matters of our salvation.

[31 : 13] It means to use a theological term, our total inability, entirely empty of any spiritual strength, unable to understand spiritual truth because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness into him, neither can he know them.

We are totally unable to please and obey God. We are totally unable of saving ourselves or delivering ourselves from the just and righteous wrath of God.

Yet it is for such that God sent and delivered his son to die on the cross. The point is that God can deliver people who are sinners, unable to free themselves from their difficulties, may be oppressed by their circumstances.

But God can give you, rescue you, and can give you deliverance, security, and confidence because the servant is the arm of the Lord, the power and wisdom of God.

And tonight, even if your difficulties are a result of foolish choices that you have made, or your spiritual life is mired in sin and its consequences, the arm of the Lord stands ready to rescue you.

[32 : 38] All those who wait patiently upon the Lord, and that means an act of faith. What a message, and what a report.

It is a proclamation to us of what God has done about us and our salvation. No human being could have done what he did for us.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

We have already noted this morning who is the servant that is brought before us in the song, his only son, who was a unique son, as the only begotten of the father, the one of whom he said, this is my beloved son.

The one given over to be sacrificed is the father's only and beloved son. Paul says, he who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all.

[33 : 52] It was not a man only that the father was sparing on the cross of Golgotha. It was not even one of his adopted sons, but it was his own son, the one of whom the writer to the Hebrew records has been the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person.

Think for a moment what is revealed to us when he spared not his own son, as Jesus brings before us, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son.

God giving the son, delivering you up and not sparing him. His love is immensely astonishing, is it not, at this point? Because at this point, he puts the world before his son.

He puts sinners like me and you before his son. For God so loved the world that he gave. Who did he give? His only son.

God that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Who has believed what he has heard from us?

[35 : 06] And to whom has the Adam of the Lord been revealed? We have already referred to Paul's words in Romans chapter 10, but they have not all obeyed the gospel.

For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us? A reminder to us, as we have already noted, that all hearing of this message does not lead to faith.

You can hear the message, you can hear the gospel, accept the truthfulness, and still have no faith. It is offered to all, it is preached to all, but all do not believe.

All do not obey the gospel. And the great question is, how do you hear this gospel? God's word never leaves anyone the way the word found them.

It will either soften the heart, or it will harden the heart. The word of God always has an effect upon us. When Jesus gave the parable of the sower, he said, who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

[36 : 21] Well, how do you hear? How do we hear? What effect has the word of God upon me, God upon me, and upon you? Paul speaks of the hearing of faith, which leads us to conclude that there must be two kinds of hearing.

There is the ordinary hearing, and there is the hearing of faith. Many Christians here tonight will understand what I mean.

There came a day in their experience and they heard the gospel differently. They may have been under the gospel for many years, but on a certain occasion, they heard the gospel differently.

Maybe they thought that a great change had come upon the preacher suddenly began to be more interesting. they began to be captivated by the gospel. But what was happening is that by the work of the Holy Spirit, their hearing had changed.

We are dependent upon the Spirit of God. Because we cannot convert anyone, but the Spirit can convert.

[37 : 42] That is why every time we proclaim the word of God, we are dependent upon the Spirit to take that word and to apply it to the hearts of our people in order to bring conviction in their hearts of their need of a Savior.

And whatever I say to you tonight will mean nothing unless the Spirit takes it and applies it to your heart and convicts you that you do need a Savior, Savior, and that Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners.

We need the work of the Holy Spirit. Yes, many have come and they have experienced and they say, well, I heard the gospel differently.

It became more interesting. I began to be captivated by the gospel. What was happening is the work of the Holy Spirit. Their hearing had changed. The message was the same, but the hearing had changed from what had been an ordinary hearing of the message to be a hearing of faith through the Holy Spirit.

You know, you may be familiar with the words of the Bible, and you may have been listening to sermons for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years or more, but that does not tell us anything.

[39 : 18] You may be satisfied with the mere sound of the gospel, but it is the hearing of faith that saves. It is committing yourself to the Saviour, to the Servant, to the Son of God that is brought before us in the gospel that saves.

Has your hearing led you to faith? Has your hearing led you to obedience? Remember that there is a hearing that does not. And what is your own spiritual responsiveness then this evening to the word of God?

Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom, through the work of the Holy Spirit, has the Adam of the Lord been revealed?

Two important questions, two important questions that is relevant not only in the days of Isaiah, but is relevant for us tonight and shall be to the end of the age.

What are you doing with the greatest treasure that you will ever be in possession of? And that is the word of God.

[40 : 47] The word of God that can lead us to salvation, to embrace Jesus Christ, as he freely offers himself to us for our salvation.

May the Lord bless our thoughts on his word. Let us pray. Eternal and ever blessed Lord, our heavenly Father, we give thee thanks this evening for thine own word.

We give thee thanks that we are able to gather together and to reflect upon thy word. But we pray that that word may become a living word in our experience and be applied to our hearts by thy Holy Spirit so that it may be embedded in our hearts and bring forth evidence in our lives that will lead us to embrace and trust and lean upon the one who is revealed to us in the word as the servant of Jehovah, as the servant, as the saviour of sinners.

All we pray, O Lord, that thou would make thy word to be a living word to each and every one of us.

We pray, Lord, that thou would watch over us in coming days and forgive us for all our sins.

In Jesus' name, Amen. We shall now conclude by singing to the Lord's praise from Sing Psalms, Psalm 147.

[42 : 22] Psalm 147 in Sing Psalms. And we shall sing from verse 18.

Sing Psalms 147 at verse 18. But when he sends his mighty word and makes the warm wind blow, the frozen waters start to melt and once again to flow.

To Jacob, God declares his word and makes his doctrines known. His ordinance he reveals to Israel alone. He has not dealt in such a way with any other race.

To us alone he shows his laws. O praise the Lord of grace. And we pray that the Lord through his word would indeed melt hardened hearts at all times.

We shall sing these verses to the Lord's praise from Sing Psalms 147 at verse 18. But when he sends his mighty word and makes the warm winds blow.

[43 : 38] But when he sends his mighty word and makes the warm wind blow, the frozen water start to melt, and once again to flow, to Jacob's God declared his word, sharp God held his heart the way

With any other ways To us alone he chose his heart O grace, the Lord of grace The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ And the love of God the Father And the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit Be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.

Amen.