

WEEK 8

ISAIAH

THE LORD SAVES

CHECK-IN

Before you dig into the passage

Ask your group to share how they have applied the teaching from last week. In what ways have you been aware of God's holiness? How have you been aware of your own sinfulness? How has the finished work of Jesus to take away your guilt and atone for your sin encouraged you and moved you to obedience?

READ

Isaiah 6:8-13

As the text is central to the discussion, read the week's text together. Consider using a few different translations.

OBSERVE

Make text-based observations (What?)

Guide your group to make observations from the text. Focus on elements like words, grammar, structure, tone, literary devices, genre, etc.

1. Recall observations from last week's text (Isaiah 6:1-8). What did Isaiah see? What did it reveal about God and himself? How did God respond to Isaiah?
2. Who is sending Isaiah (v. 8) and how does Isaiah respond?
3. What is Isaiah commissioned to do? What will be affected by Isaiah's message (v. 9) and his task (v. 10), and how? (*Note how this contrasts with how Isaiah saw and heard!*)
4. Read instances in the New Testament where Isaiah 6:9-10 are quoted (John 12:36-43, Mark 4, Matthew 13:13-17, Acts 28:23-26). What is the context of these passages?

5. How does Isaiah respond upon hearing the effects of his message? (*Discuss also what he does not say!*) What tone is conveyed through his response? (v. 11)
6. Who is responsible for the hardening of the people's hearts and subsequent consequences?
7. What will be the consequences of the hardening of God's people's hearts? What will remain at the end? (v. 11-13)
8. What imagery does Isaiah use to describe the coming punishment and judgement of his people? (*And the hope that remains!*)

INTERPRET

*What does the passage mean (**So what?**)?*

Based on the observations, what did the text mean to its original audience? What is God saying?

1. What is significant about God's call of Isaiah? (*Think about God, Isaiah, and who is present with God, "Yahweh of hosts" (v. 3).*)
2. What caused Isaiah to respond to his call from God like he did?
3. Why will Isaiah's message primarily have the effect of hardening people or confirming their heartened hearts? (*Refer back to Chapters 1-5. Note that it will not be because Isaiah will speak without clarity!*)
4. What do the quotations from this passage in the New Testament reveal about the response to Jesus and his message? (*See also Romans 1:18-32; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16*)
5. How do verses 11-13 reveal God's faithfulness to keep his promises?

APPLY

*What should we do and why (**Now what?**)?*

In light of the meaning of the text in its context, what principles apply to us today?

1. How does the removal of your guilt and atonement for your sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus qualify, motivate, and equip you to serve God (however he calls you to serve)?

2. In what ways is your response to God's call to serve him (especially to share the gospel) similar to Isaiah's? How is it different?
- a. Do you feel you need a sure outcome of success in order to agree to serve God?
 - b. Do you feel you need to add to your salvation to be qualified to serve him?
 - c. Do you feel that someone else would be better equipped or more qualified for the task?
 - d. Do you perhaps need a greater sense of urgency?
 - e. Do you feel like people (perhaps family, friends, or colleagues) are so hardened to the message of Jesus that "there is no use" in sharing it?
3. What do you feel you need to humbly submit to serve God however he desires you to serve? What can you do to grow in this way?
- a. Do you need to see God's holiness and glory with greater clarity?
 - b. Do you need to see your own sinfulness and the grace of God poured out towards you through Jesus with greater clarity?
 - c. Do you need a deeper understanding of God's sovereignty?
 - d. Do you need a deeper understanding of God's faithfulness to keep his promises?
4. Read Hebrews 3-4 (Especially verses 3:7, 15 & 4:7). Ray Ortlund comments that "Every time you hear the Word of God preached, you come away from that exposure to his truth either a little closer to God or a little further away from God, either more softened toward God or more hardened toward God. But you are never just the same." What tends to be your response to God's Word and why? What heart posture do you need to be softened toward God upon hearing or reading his Word?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 2:15-17. In what ways have you experienced the mixed response to the gospel the New Testament quotations of Isaiah 6 speak of? How does Isaiah 6 encourage you to remain faithful to proclaiming the gospel and serving God?

PRAYER

Lead your group in a prayer in response to Isaiah 6.