



THE THREAD

weaving Sunday's message through the week

Date: December 6, 2020

Passage: Isaiah 9:3-5

Theme: Justice & Mercy Series

Main Idea: The depth of Christian joy is experienced by taking hold of God's promise to, one day, thoroughly and definitively end every form of injustice and oppression caused by sin and to bring everyone who believes on Christ into his eternal joy.

1. The Light brings thriving (v. 3)
 - a. Where there has been barrenness, there will be fruitfulness (v. 3)
 - b. Where there has been sorrow, there will be joy (v. 3)
 - c. Where there has been lack, there will be abundance (v. 3)
2. The Light brings rest (v. 4)
 - a. The yoke of oppression will be irreparably shattered (v. 4a)
 - b. God will conquer the foes of his people by his own power and give them rest (v. 4b)
3. The Light brings victory (v. 5)
 - a. Every tool used to do violence and harm against God's people will be burned
 - b. The most intimidating threats (past, present, and future) will be utterly devastation
 - c. God's judgment against all that opposes his glory will be swift and final

Application: God's unflinching promises have been spoken into actual darkness (suffering, pain, persecution, oppression, uncertainty, etc.). His people experience his joy by taking hold of those promises in the midst of this real darkness, confident that he will fulfill his promises and show his goodness to them at some point in the future.

Discussion Questions:

1. Think about the imagery of flinching mentioned in the sermon. Where are you prone to flinch regarding God's promises? What would it look like to have "unflinching joy"?
2. Consider the promise that Jesus (the Light) will bring thriving in verse 3.
 - Are there any areas in your life that feel barren (dry, fruitless, withered, etc.)?
 - Where are you experiencing sorrow, either personally or communally (in family, community, nation)?
 - Are you experiencing lack, or perceived lack, in an area of your life?
 - How does God's promise to multiply, cause joy, and satisfy abundantly encourage you to hope and rejoice?
3. Consider the promise that Jesus brings rest in verse 4.
 - Where are you restless? What is the cause of your restlessness?
 - Do you feel a heavy burden in some area?
 - Where are you looking, or going, to experience rest? Trust God to be gracious and sufficient and take your restlessness and your burdens ("cares" of 1 Peter 5:7) to him by praying about these things. Consider inviting another person to pray for you.
 - If you are prone to look to your own power to carry every burden, how does the promise of verse 4 (that God will shatter every yoke) encourage you to entrust these things to God's power, care, and control?
4. Consider the promise that Jesus brings victory in verse 5.
 - What "tools" or "weapons" are being used in your life to disrupt your hope, joy, and peace in Christ?
 - Are you facing any intimidating threat? Have you shared this with someone you trust so they can help you stand firm against it? How does God's promise to devastate every threat against him and his people bring courage and rest to your heart and mind as you wait on him?
 - Are you failing (or perhaps even refusing) to trust God's word in one of the areas that came to mind above? Confess these things and rest in God's life, his peace, and his ultimate victory, even if you must wait in the darkness for a little while longer.

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