

## A. SERMON SLIDES

Slide 1:

The Problem and a Promise

Isaiah 59

Slide 2:

Isaiah 59:1-2 (ESV)

Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save,  
or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;  
but your iniquities have made a separation  
between you and your God,  
and your sins have hidden his face from you  
so that he does not hear.

Isaiah 59:9 (ESV)

Therefore justice is far from us,  
and righteousness does not overtake us;  
we hope for light, and behold, darkness,  
and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.

Slide 3:

Isaiah 59:12-13 (ESV)

For our transgressions are multiplied before you,  
and our sins testify against us;  
for our transgressions are with us,  
and we know our iniquities:  
transgressing, and denying the LORD,  
and turning back from following our God,  
speaking oppression and revolt,  
conceiving and uttering from the heart lying words.

Slide 4:

Isaiah 59:20-21 (ESV)

“And a Redeemer will come to Zion,  
to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,” declares the LORD.  
“And as for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the LORD: “My  
Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall  
not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or

out of the mouth of your children's offspring," says the LORD, "from this time forth and forevermore."

Slide 5:

It matters into which stories we immerse ourselves

Slide 6:

The Christmas Counterfeit Story

Slide 7:

The counterfeit story defines the problem as an earthbound problem, and tries to solve it with earthbound remedies.

Slide 8:

We are being shaped and disciplined by stories

Slide 9:

There is only one True Story

Slide 10:

The Problem

Slide 11:

Ephesians 2:1-3 (ESV)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Slide 12:

When we try to fix our eternal chasm with temporal remedies, instead of fixing the problem of Me, we end up feeding the monster of Me.

Slide 13:

The Promise

Genesis 3:15 (ESV)

I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and her offspring;

he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel.

Slide 14:

The Promise

Genesis 12:3 (ESV)

I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse,  
and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Slide 15:

The Promise

Genesis 49:8-10 (ESV)

“Judah, your brothers shall praise you...  
your father’s sons shall bow down before you.

The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,  
until tribute comes to him;  
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Slide 16:

The Promise

2 Samuel 7: David

Isaiah 7: God With Us, Poverty

Micah: Bethlehem

Isaiah 53: Sorrow, Rejection, Death

Isaiah 9: God Himself

Slide 17:

Over 400 Promises about a Rescuer in the Old Testament, and Jesus  
fulfills EVERY ONE.

Slide 18:

Move into the Christmas season, but do not purchase the narrative that  
comes with it.

## B. GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1) Read Isaiah 59 and reflect upon the hopelessness and hope provided in that chapter. What do you see?
- 2) What is the overarching narrative of a secular Christmas in your opinion? think about the underlying advertising. What is the need or lack that the media is trying to tap into, and what is their answer to that longing?
- 3) In what ways does "narrative" shape us? Think about "masks" or the Rittenhouse verdict, or vaccines, or BLM. Why is narrative so important in forming a people or a culture? How have you been formed by false narratives?
- 4) What does the Bible mention as The Problem with the human condition? Is it outside or inside of us? Is it circumstances or more deeply embedded? Is it something we can fix?
- 5) How does God address that Problem with a Promise? In what ways would you have missed the answer to the Problem (Jesus) if you had missed the Problem He was addressing? Why did most miss Him? Why did they miss all the fulfillments of the Promise?
- 6) What is the "job" of the church? Which narrative should we be communicating? Which problems, and which promises?
- 7) Prayer and praise