Introduction to Isaiah - Understanding what repentance does for you

**Experiencing the freedom of cooperating with God**

**Monday**

Read Isaiah 1:9, 1 Kings 19:18, Mark 2:13-17

God has chosen you! **Meditate** on your divine appointment.

**Tuesday**

Read Isaiah 1:10-15, 1 Samuel 16:7, Micah 6:8

God hates religiosity (pretending to be someone in order to hide a messed up life). **Journalize** what it means to be transparent with God.

**Wednesday**

Read Isaiah 1:16-17, Philippians 4:8-9

Before you can start doing the right things (and stop doing the wrong things), you have to learn to think right. **Monitor** your thoughts today.

**Thursday**

Read Isaiah 1:18, Mark 2:1-12

When you repent, God settles the matter of your sin. You are forgiven!

**Friday**

Read Isaiah 1:19-31, Isaiah 48

**Journalize** the outcomes of those who are willing and obedient to God versus those who resist and rebel against Him.

Introduction to Isaiah - Understanding what repentance does for you

Last week - Understanding what rebellion can do to you

Isaiah 1 New International Version (NIV)

**3**

The ox knows its master,

    the donkey its owner’s manger,

but Israel does not know,

    my people do not understand.”

This rebellion leads to not know (relationship) and not understand (not understanding God, His goodness, His purpose, who He is)…not know who God is (His character, his purpose)

and therefore leads to hopelessness and not experiencing His love or having the inner strength that comes from faith in God.

**4**

Woe to the sinful nation,

    a people whose guilt is great, (unatoned sin)

a brood of evildoers, (Jesus used this term when talking about the Pharisees)

    children given to corruption! (Distortion of truth)

They have forsaken the Lord;

    they have spurned the Holy One of Israel

    and turned their backs on him.

3 steps to rebellion:

3 verbs in Isaiah 1:4 -

forsaken (left, absent, departed),

spurned (web 1828 to kick, reject with disdain, treat with contempt, treat with contempt; to despise),

turned their back on Him (become a stranger as in part of a different family or household, divorced your husband to be a prostitute)

Turned their backs on the Holy One of Israel.

Holy One of Israel - Used 26 times Isaiah, used more than any other book in the Bible.

* As Holy He is set apart from Israel’s faults in character and nature
* Yet He is ‘of’ Israel; He still was associated and connected to Israel, He still loved Israel, He still was in covenant relationship with Israel, He still had a plan for Israel.
* The one who contended with Israel; God cared enough to fight for Israel and cared enough to confront Israel.

**5**

Why should you be beaten anymore?

    Why do you persist in rebellion?

Your whole head is injured,

    your whole heart afflicted.

**6**

From the sole of your foot to the top of your head

    there is no soundness—

only wounds and welts

    and open sores,

not cleansed or bandaged

    or soothed with olive oil.

**7**

Your country is desolate,

    your cities burned with fire;

your fields are being stripped by foreigners

    right before you,

    laid waste as when overthrown by strangers.

**8**

Daughter Zion is left

    like a shelter in a vineyard,

like a hut in a cucumber field,

    like a city under siege.

If you turn your back on the Lord, what can you expect to happen?

You walk away from God’s protection, you can expect bad things:

beaten, head injury, affliction of the heart

* You won't have the upper hand in your struggles
* mental illness
* distractions, self centeredness, harmful desires, love for this world and idolatry
  + wrong and detrimental desires

This week - Understanding what repentance can do for you

**9**

Unless the Lord Almighty

    had left us some survivors,

we would have become like Sodom,

    we would have been like Gomorrah.

**10**

Hear the word of the Lord,

    you rulers of Sodom;

listen to the instruction of our God,

    you people of Gomorrah!

Isaiah is really about the remnant of Israel, that part of Israel that was loyal to God.

This is the question for all of us: How loyal are you to God? What claims your allegiance?

Think about this: *There is only a remnant of your self that can go to heaven*. God’s life-long work in your life is for your old self to die (the greedy, mean, selfish self) and your new self given life by Jesus.

Galatians 2:20

**20***I have been crucified with Christ* and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

**11**

“The multitude of your sacrifices—

    what are they to me?” says the Lord.

“I have more than enough of burnt offerings,

    of rams and the fat of fattened animals;

I have no pleasure

    in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

**12**

When you come to appear before me,

    who has asked this of you,

    this trampling of my courts?

**13**

Stop bringing meaningless offerings!

    Your incense is detestable to me.

New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—

    I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.

**14**

Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals

    I hate with all my being.

They have become a burden to me;

    I am weary of bearing them.

**15**

When you spread out your hands in prayer,

    I hide my eyes from you;

even when you offer many prayers,

    I am not listening.

Your hands are full of blood!

God hates religion! Every Christian struggles with religiosity.

What is religiosity?

Pretending to be someone in order to hide the out of control, inner mess of your life.

1 Samuel 16:7

**7**But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

What does God look for?

Micah 6:8

**8**

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

    And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

    and to walk humbly with your God.

Matters of the heart:

* act justly for God’s sake, not for your own credit
* Love mercy - giving people a break when they mess up
* Walk humbly with your God. Being transparent with God; inviting Him into your human experience

**16**

Wash and make yourselves clean.

    Take your evil deeds out of my sight;

 stop doing wrong.

**17**

Learn to do right;

seek justice.

    Defend the oppressed.

Take up the cause of the fatherless;

    plead the case of the widow.

Before you can do right, you have to learn to think right.

Philippians 4:8

**8**Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.**9**The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Learn, practice, don’t get down on yourself when you fail

What do you call it when you stop doing wrong and learn to do right? Repentance! Turning away from, and turning toward.

**18**

“Come now, let us settle the matter,”

    says the Lord.

“Though your sins are like scarlet,

    they shall be as white as snow;

though they are red as crimson,

    they shall be like wool.

When you repent, God comes in and says, “I am going to settle the matter of your sin. I have forgiven, you are clean, *you are now opposite of who you were before.*

*I am naturally a gambler and greedy, but God has settled the matter and has made me generous.*

*I am naturally an addictive person, but God has settled the matter and has set me free.*

*I am naturally lustful, but God has settled the matter and given me eyes only for my wife and made me enduringly faithful.*

*I am naturally ambitious, but God has settled the matter and made me a submissive servant of Christ.*

Hebrews 11:34

whose weakness was turned to strength

*If you want to know who you are destined to be through God’s grace, picture the opposite of all your natural tendencies!*

**19**

If you are willing and obedient,

    you will eat the good things of the land;

**20**

but if you resist and rebel,

    you will be devoured by the sword.”

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Willing and obedient vs resisting and rebeling

**21**

See how the faithful city

    has become a prostitute!

She once was full of justice;

    righteousness used to dwell in her—

    but now murderers!

**22**

Your silver has become dross,

    your choice wine is diluted with water.

**23**

Your rulers are rebels,

    partners with thieves;

they all love bribes

    and chase after gifts.

They do not defend the cause of the fatherless;

    the widow’s case does not come before them.

**24**

Therefore the Lord, the Lord Almighty,

    the Mighty One of Israel, declares:

“Ah! I will vent my wrath on my foes

    and avenge myself on my enemies.

**25**

I will turn my hand against you;

    I will thoroughly purge away your dross

    and remove all your impurities.

**26**

I will restore your leaders as in days of old,

    your rulers as at the beginning.

Afterward you will be called

    the City of Righteousness,

    the Faithful City.”

**27**

Zion will be delivered with justice,

    her penitent ones with righteousness.

**28**

But rebels and sinners will both be broken,

    and those who forsake the Lord will perish.

**29**

“You will be ashamed because of the sacred oaks

    in which you have delighted;

you will be disgraced because of the gardens

    that you have chosen.

**30**

You will be like an oak with fading leaves,

    like a garden without water.

**31**

The mighty man will become tinder

    and his work a spark;

both will burn together,

    with no one to quench the fire.”

Charles Swindoll - Insights Bible Application Guide

The difference between righteous people and sinful people is not the absence of sin but whom they trust for deliverance. The repentant live by faith in God; the arrogant live only for themselves. - the two thieves crucified with Jesus as an example.