

7/9/11

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 55:10-13

(Isaiah instructs in the power of God's Word.)

10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, **11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.**

12 You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. 13 Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed."

THE GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

(Jesus' parable instructs about the Power of God's Word.)

1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop-- a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 He who has ears, let him hear." . . .

18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. 22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. 23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Lots of empty promises
takes out stains - - - still there

INTRO - Have you ever been disappointed by a product that made a promise, but when you used the product you did not get the promised result? I wear nice shirts to work. But, I also use pens, and at times my pens have leaked in my pocket. I remember using a stain remover you put on the stain, and putting a stain remover in the wash and soaking the shirt. I used two product that PROMISED they would get out the stain. The stain was still there, a little less. I got rid of the shirt.

I. Have you ever been disappointed that something you thought would bring you desired results, failed in those promises?

A. We have all been disappointed.

1. Whether the pain reliever did not work after surgery, or the insurance did not cover all the loss on a car. We have all been disappointed.
2. It is almost like we expect to be disappointed.

B. So, when we hear a promise, especially big promises, we often look at them with skepticism. We wonder, "Can this president really do what he promises?" "Can this diet really work for me?"

II. God knows our disappointments, so he makes a promise and triply emphasizes it.

A. Listen to Isaiah 55

1. In verse 11 we are told about what God's Word will NOT do. **It will not return to me empty,** God's word is not full of empty promises like everything else.
2. Then we are told twice What God's will DOES.
 - A. But, it **will ACCOMPLISH what I desire**
 - B. And, it will **ACHIEVE the purpose for which I sent it.**
3. God's Word does NOT disappoint. It DOES do what God intends.

B. So, you might want to take out your Bible and look at what some of those Promises of God are concerning His Word.

1. There are many verses we could look at, but I want you to look with me in two places, but 3 times.
2. First, please turn with me to **2 Timothy 3:14-15** **14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**
 - a. God promises to make us wise for salvation through faith.
 - b. God's word can grow faith that leads to eternal life in heaven.
3. Now, let's continue there with verses 16-17, **16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**
 - a. Here God promises to show us how to live.
 - b. His word corrects, trains, equips.
4. Finally, will you look with me at **1 Peter 1:23** **For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the**

living and enduring word of God.

- a. God's Word gives new life. This means faith and it means everlasting life.
- b. But, this also means we have a new start. This is not just once, but every day, we are born again, as God's Word works faith, and through faith forgiveness, and through forgiveness salvation.
- C. Please remember God's promise for today. **11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will NOT return to me empty, but WILL ACCOMPLISH what I desire and ACHIEVE the purpose for which I sent it.**

III. I don't know about you, when I find something that works, I use it. When I have a head ache the best medicine I have found is Advil. So, if I feel a headache coming on I use the medicine. Last week I had a headache and chills, and took some Advil and was feeling better in about 30 minutes to an hour. See, when something does what it promises I use it.

So, if God's Word creates and strengthens faith, leads us by faith to heaven for Jesus' sake, gives us direction for life, and gives us a new start daily, shouldn't we use God's Word?

A. If you think the answer is yes, then pat yourselves on the back. Tonight in worship you are listening to, considering, and learning the Word of God. You are allowing God to work faith and forgiveness and eternal life, and a new life in this world for you.

B. But, worship happens once a week, there are times that we need to strengthen our faith, times that we need forgiveness, times that we need direction in addition to Sundays or Wednesdays. A regular pattern of reading the Word of God is healthy and helpful.

C. There are those about who we are concerned, and with whom we may want to share God's love in Jesus. You don't want to be preachy. But, to have some verses memorized that are important to you is a wise thing for sharing.

CONCLUSION - Friday night I'm performing a wedding for 2 folks who used to belong here as children and are now members of Lamb of God. I asked what I always ask, "Do you have any special Bible verses?" Most people really don't. But the young many said, "Romans 5:8." Do you know what that says? **"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."**

The sacrificial love of God for sinners is a great strength for love, and gives direction for loving others. Do you see how valuable God's Word is. Since it works, please, please, PLAN to use it.