

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Restoration Despite
Rebellion

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

Isaiah 1:1-31

Theme: The Lord will not tolerate impurity forever, but judgement is never his final act.

Introduction: "Happily ever after" may work for fairy tales; but it seems disconnected from real life in this age. For Christians though, we know both the eternal happiness that awaits us and the sufferings of this life. This is especially true when we consider God's judgements on the unrighteous in this age. In them, we find his perspective on evil even as we realize that he never ends his work with only judgment. He will save his people.

We can discover God's gracious attitude toward his people under 3 points:

1. Rebellion is insanity (1-9)

In these verses we find that God's people have fallen so far away from him that they don't even recognize their rebellion. The Lord is appalled by their foolishness and insolence. He's calling them to repent.

We must recognize that sin is rebellion and we must not be shocked by its consequences. Rebellion always leads to desolation.

2. Piety can be corrupt (10-20)

God likens rebellious Israel to Sodom and Gomorrah. Even their religious deeds and rituals were fruit of rebellion and not genuine faith.

The problem is that they were trying to manipulate God. They were, in essence, trying to lord over God and to make him do what they wanted.

God was not opposed to the rituals, as he had given them to Israel. He was opposed to the hypocrisy and pride that would seek to use those rituals to manipulate him, rather than as an occasion for humility and faith.

3. Restoration is inevitable (21-31)

True faith in the Lord results in following him, an obedience that is born of faith. Israel was not demonstrating that obedience. By their wickedness and injustice they were showing their broader rebellion against him.

Though our nation is not like Israel in relation to God, the church must likewise be a place where justice reigns in our impartiality and love for one another.

We can and should also be encouraged that our God is a Savior, a Redeemer, who works to save his people even in spite of his judgment of sin.

Questions:

1. Do you seek to manipulate God?
2. How is the Lord holding out to you the mercy that you need, if not that you want?
3. How does God's faithfulness and patience encourage you? Does it move you to faith and repentance?