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Sermon Notes

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The Consummation of the Ages: Eternity of Joy in a Redeemed World

Isaiah 55:10-13

Incredible section of the Book of Isaiah

Isaiah 53: The greatest single chapter of predictive prophecy in the whole Bible

- Clearly predicts the sufferings of Jesus Christ as an atonement for sins
- Jesus is disfigured, marred beyond human likeness (52:14)
- In this way He sprinkles many nations with His atoning blood (52:15)
- The message about Christ will be proclaimed all around the world, and kings will hear about it (52:15)
- This message must be heard and believed, but unless God reveals it to you, you will never believe (53:1)
- Jesus grew up in a very plain way in very humble circumstances; there was nothing in His outward appearance to display who He really was (53:2)
- He was despised and rejected by His own people... as a nation, they didn't receive Him or believe in Him (53:3)
- His suffering was overwhelming, but it was all as our SUBSTITUTE

Isaiah 53:5-6 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

- This incredible message of a suffering servant, Jesus Christ, who died by piercing, was buried in a rich man's tomb, but who rose

again to delight in his descendants and to receive glory and honor... THIS IS THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

Isaiah 54 predicts how this gospel message would result in a massive expansion of God's people... the family of God would get MASSIVE, because the Gentiles would hear this message and believe... so Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, would have to get HUGE to take in all those who would be coming in:

Isaiah 54:2-3 "Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. ³ For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities.

So we come to Isaiah 55... for the third week

TWO WEEKS AGO: Verses 1-5 speak of an invitation to an amazing BANQUET... a FEAST... but the feast is portrayed in liquid terms:

Water... Milk... Wine

Water: a symbol of life; you are desperately thirsty, you drink and live forever

Milk: you need nourishment for your Christian life; you drink and receive all the nutrients you need to thrive

Wine: in the Bible, a symbol of joyful celebration... of singing, of victory and feasting and lavish wealth... you will be RICHLY JOYFUL in this feast, celebrating with immeasurable joy

Who is invited to this feast? Those who are thirsty, who have no money:

Isaiah 55:1-3 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. ³ Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live.

God is calling on sinners to stop trying to save themselves, to stop trying to spend all their efforts on things that will NEVER SATISFY!!

LAST WEEK: verses 6-9 calls on us to respond with URGENCY to this invitation; to respond with repentance and brokenness over our sins:

Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

The time is NOW! God is calling on sinners around the world to forsake their evil ways and wicked thoughts, and turn to Christ in repentance and faith

If we do this, He will RICHLY, FREELY, COMPLETELY PARDON US FOR ALL OUR SINS!!!

The very King we have spent years rebelling against is spreading a lavish feast of forgiveness, love, blessing, joy and happiness if we will just repent and turn from our wickedness

Why should we do that? Because of how different God is from us:

Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. ⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

How is He different?

1) In holiness... our thoughts and lives are naturally in the gutter in our sinfulness; God is high, holy, lofty, pure light

2) In mercy and forgiveness... God has promised to forgive in ways we can scarcely imagine... we are so stingy, so slow to forgive, so vengeful, and we can hardly imagine a King like this... like the Father of the prodigal son... his wicked son comes to his senses and comes home

Luke 15:20-24 "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

Isaiah 55 picks right up where we left off... this lofty God, who sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, whose thoughts are not our thoughts and whose ways are not our ways, who yearns to call us in from the cold of sin to a warm rich banquet is SENDING FORTH THE POWERFUL FORCE to bring about what He wants... He is sending forth His SOVEREIGN and EFFECTIVE WORD to bring about His sweet purposes

Isaiah 55:10-13 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."

I. God's Purpose for His Word: Be Effective as the Rain (vs. 10-11)

Isaiah 55:10-11 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.

A. God Rolls Out the Power... the Force... by Which this Feast Will Occur

1. The attendees to the feast are presently locked up in Satan's dark kingdom, held in chains of wickedness

a. Vs. 7 makes this plain

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

b. Satan held prisoners in check and they had to be rescued, delivered from the wickedness of their hearts

Colossians 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves

Colossians 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

2. How do such people get delivered, rescued from their own wicked ways and evil thoughts? BY GOD'S SOVEREIGN WORD!!!

a. Vs. 11 "...so is MY WORD THAT GOES OUT FROM MY MOUTH..."

b. God focuses on His Word...the same power by which He created the universe!

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

Genesis 1:3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

B. God Likens His Word to Rain and Snow:

vs. 10... "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven... so is my word that goes forth from my mouth..."

1. The heavenly origin of the word of God... it all starts in His mind, and goes forth from His mouth... FROM HEAVEN DOWN TO EARTH
2. If God doesn't initiate salvation, not one of us will be saved... it all starts with God
3. All life depends on rain for its continued existence... God gives the rain that sustains both plant and animal life
4. Rain is an amazing gift of God!!!

Job 5:8-10 But as for me, I would seek God, And I would place my cause before God; Who does great and unsearchable things, wonders without number. He gives rain on the earth, and sends water on the fields.

John Piper:

Is rain a great and unsearchable wonder wrought by God? Picture yourself as a farmer in the Near East, far from any lake or stream. A few wells keep the family and animals supplied with water. But if the crops are to grow and the family is to be fed from month to month, water has to come on the fields from another source. From where?

Well, the sky. The sky? Water will come out of the clear blue sky? Well, not exactly. Water will have to be carried in the sky from the Mediterranean Sea, over several hundred miles and then be poured out from the sky onto the fields. Carried? How much does it weigh? Well, if one inch of rain falls on one square mile of farmland during the night, that would be 27,878,400 cubic feet of water, which is 206,300,160 gallons, which is 1,650,501,280 pounds of water.

That's heavy. So how does it get up in the sky and stay up there if it's so heavy? Well, it gets up there by evaporation. Really? That's a nice word. What's it mean? It means that the water sort of stops being water for a while so it can go up and not down. I see. Then how does it get down? Well, condensation happens. What's that? The water starts becoming water again by gathering around little dust particles between .00001 and .0001 centimeters wide. That's small.

What about the salt? Salt? Yes, the Mediterranean Sea is salt water. That would kill the crops. What about the salt? Well, the salt has to be taken out. Oh. So the sky picks up a billion pounds of water from the sea and takes out the salt and then carries it for three hundred miles and then dumps it on the farm?

Well it doesn't dump it. If it dumped a billion pounds of water on the farm, the wheat would be crushed. So the sky dribbles the billion pounds water down in little drops. And they have to be big enough to fall for one mile or so without evaporating, and small enough to keep from crushing the wheat stalks.

How do all these microscopic specks of water that weigh a billion pounds get heavy enough to fall (if that's the way to ask the question)? Well, it's called coalescence. What's that? It means the specks of water start bumping into each other and join up and get bigger. And when they are big enough, they fall. Just like that? Well, not exactly, because they would just bounce off each other instead of joining up, if there were no electric field present. What? Never mind. Take my word for it.

I think, instead, I will just take Job's word for it. I still don't see why drops ever get to the ground, because if they start falling as soon as they are heavier than air, they would be too small not to evaporate on the way down, but if they wait to come down, what holds them up till they are big enough not to evaporate? Yes, I am sure there is a name for that too. But I am satisfied now that, by any name, this is a great and unsearchable thing that God has done.

God's gift of rain is a gift of life... clear display of His power and goodness:

Job 36:27-31 *"He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams; ²⁸ the clouds pour down their moisture and abundant showers fall on mankind. ²⁹ Who can understand how he spreads out the clouds, how he thunders from his pavilion? ³⁰ See how he scatters his lightning about him, bathing the depths of the sea. ³¹ This is the way he governs the nations and provides food in abundance.*

Matthew 5:45 *He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

Deuteronomy 28:12 *The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands.*

C. Rain's ROUND TRIP

1. The verse highlights the circularity... the round-trip of rain... it comes down in showers and goes back up in evaporation... a big circle
2. BUT before it goes back up, it accomplishes the reason why God sent it
3. So is God's word coming from His mouth
4. It goes out and then comes back having achieved the purpose

D. God's Good Purpose in Rain/Snow

Isaiah 55:10 *s 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,*

1. God sends the rain FOR A GOOD PURPOSE...
2. It enriches the earth... it waters the earth, making it bud and flourish
3. The plants of the field soak in the water, and produce buds...
4. The buds eventually become beautiful, fragrant flowers or succulent fruit
5. Within the fruit, you have SEEDS for the SOWER... this is a whole system of agriculture that God has already figured out
6. Everything is ready—the genetic code of the flowers and fruits and grains are ready, the root system in place... all that's needed is WATER... RAIN
7. Life depends on plants, and the plants depend on rain, and the rain comes when God sends it

E. The Analogy with His Word

Isaiah 55:11 *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.*

1. The word has a round trip too
2. It goes out from His mouth through the prophets, the apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers
3. It goes back in the end to God

Romans 11:36 *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.*

4. AND 100% of the time it accomplishes exactly what God sent it to do

5. It doesn't return to God EMPTY... the word of God does not come back and say, "Sorry, Lord, you sent me to do something, but I couldn't get the job done."
6. God's sovereign word trumps every card in the deck... it trumps all of man's will, man's power, man's purpose, man's plans

Isaiah 14:26-27 This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations. ²⁷ For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?

7. SO... this means we have to see more than one purpose in God's word... it saves some and hardens others

F. God's Delightful Purpose: Salvation for the Elect

1. Home base in this passage... elect sinners are convicted of their wicked ways and their evil thoughts
2. They hear of Christ crucified and see that He is the living water and they are so thirsty
3. They seek the Lord while He may be found; they call on Him while He is near
4. They repent, and find ABUNDANT FORGIVENESS for their sins

G. God's Mysterious Purpose: Hardening for the Reprobate

H. The Absolute Sovereignty of God is Central Here: Everything God Wills to Happen ABSOLUTELY DOES HAPPEN!!

1. 100% of the elect will repent and come to Christ

John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me

2. 100% of the non-elect will be hardened in their rebellion

Romans 9:18 Therefore God has mercy on whom he wills to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wills to harden.

This happens every time the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached... some hear, repent, and come to salvation through faith in Christ; others hear the exact same message and their hearts are hardened and they refuse to come

Paul knew this clearly:

2 Corinthians 2:15-16 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life.

I. God's Word Accomplishes Everything He Sends it to Do!!!

Isaiah 55:10-11 it will not return to me EMPTY... but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

II. God's Purpose for Us: Rescue, Joy, and Peace (vs. 12)

Isaiah 55:12-13 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 briers the myrtle will grow.

A. For the Believers, God's Purpose is Astonishingly Sweet

1. These words are the finish line of God's salvation purpose in the world
2. They speak of an incredibly beautiful final end for us

B. First: RESCUE... "You will GO OUT... you will BE LED FORTH..."

1. This is exodus language... just like when the Jews were enslaved in Egypt; they WENT OUT in joy and were LED FORTH in peace to the Promised Land
2. In a similar way, the exiles in Babylon would GO OUT from BABYLON and be LED FORTH back to their homeland
3. So we were enslaved to sin, imprisoned in Satan's dark dungeons of wickedness, sin and death
4. Christ our Savior came to deliver us, to lead us out from slavery to sin and death into a new life of freedom in God's Kingdom
5. So we GO OUT from Satan's kingdom and are LED FORTH into a holy life
6. Ultimately, we are going to GO OUT from the grave and be LED FORTH into the New Jerusalem!!

John 5:25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

John 6:40 my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

C. Second: JOY

1. The gospel of Jesus Christ will go forth from God's mouth and seek out enslaved sinners to set them free
2. When the Holy Spirit gives them faith and they repent and call on the name of the Lord, they believe and receive forgiveness of sins
3. As a result, we have JOY UNSPEAKABLE and full of glory
4. But our joy now is imperfect... someday, when we come out of our graves in our radiant resurrection bodies, we will be swimming in a sea of joy!!
5. We will celebrate forever!

D. Third: PEACE

1. Having called on the name of the Lord, we received an abundant PARDON and MERCY for all our sins

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

2. This results in a perfect peace with God right now, by faith:

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

3. Better than that, though, we will GO OUT in joy and BE LED FORTH in peace into an NEW HEAVEN and NEW EARTH
4. Christ will defeat ALL OUR ENEMIES... they will die under His feet

1 Corinthians 15:24-26 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

5. And we will live in a New Jerusalem, where there will be NOTHING TO FEAR forever... perfect peace in this world

E. The New Jerusalem a Place of Perfect Peace, Free from Enemies

Revelation 21:25-27 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

III. God's Purpose for Creation: Triumphant Deliverance from the Curse (vs. 12-13)

Isaiah 55:12-13 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.

A. Salvation Goes Beyond Only What He Does with People

1. Certainly human salvation is the centerpiece of the redemptive work of Christ
2. By far the most significant part!
3. BUT God also extends His redemptive work to include creation itself

B. The Curse in Adam

1. When Adam sinned, God judged the earth as a result

Genesis 3:17-19 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

2. The "thorns and thistles" represent an aspect of this curse
 - a. It is the picture of frustration, of futility... of wrestling with the ground for a crop, only to have it come up weeds
 - b. The curse clearly includes any CROP FAILURE for whatever reason... locusts, early frost, hailstorms, drought, blights and mildew
 - c. But the agony goes far beyond thorns and thistles
 - i) All the convulsions of our planet are linked to it... "natural disasters"
 - ii) Earthquakes...
 - (i) December 26, 2004 Indian Ocean, resulting in a tsunami near Indonesia, killing almost 300,000
 - (ii) October 8, 2005, Kashmir, Pakistan... killing 100,000

- (iii) May 12, 2008 Sichuan, China... killing over 75,000
- (iv) January 12, 2010 in Haiti... killing as many as 300,000
- iii) Hurricanes... tidal waves, tsunamis, mud slides, cyclones, tornados... wreaking death and destruction year after year
- iv) All ecological disasters as well... pollution, deforestation, erosion, anything that causes ugliness and futility on planet earth
- v) All of it symbolized by those THORNS that God cursed Adam with

3. Therefore, when in Christ the curse is removed, the results extend to NATURE

C. Christ's Death Symbolically Linked to this Curse

Matthew 27:28-29 [The Roman soldiers] stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.

The weaving of a crown of thorns by the Roman soldiers was done to humiliate him and increase his agony; but in actuality, they were acting under mysterious divine providence to display how Christ had become a curse for us, to deliver us from the curse of God on earth. The thorns were smashed into his face and scalp, causing his blood to flow. The shedding of the blood of Jesus was the redemption God had planned for our cursed world with its cursed nature

D. Creation Waiting for Human Salvation

Romans 8:19-23 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Powerful LINK between human race and our groaning creation...

The creation is in bondage to decay, waiting to be liberated

The liberation will coincide with our resurrection

E. The New Earth that is Coming Described

1. This passage describes beautiful in symbolic language the coming beauty in nature

Isaiah 55:12-13 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 briers the myrtle will grow.

2. The terrain itself—the mountains and hills—will BURST INTO SONGS before us as we go out with joy
3. We will be delighted to leave behind all the sin and death and suffering and oppression by wicked people... but we will not be glad to leave behind all the natural beauty of this world
 - a. Acadia National Park... with its awesome ocean vistas and rocky shoreline
 - b. The Grand Canyon, with its amazing purples and reds and oranges and browns and blues... and its soaring eagles and windy thermals
 - c. Yosemite National Park... with its awesome Half-Dome
 - d. The Redwoods... the breath-taking Sequoias, hundreds of feet tall
 - e. The Alps... the Eiger north face, the Matterhorn
 - f. The rolling grasslands of western China
 - g. SO MUCH NATURAL BEAUTY
4. The beauty of nature is personified here... celebrating in worship that AT LAST THE CHILDREN OF GOD have come into their glory, their resurrection bodies
5. So the trees of the field will CLAP THEIR HANDS and the mountains will erupt in songs of praise... no more groaning!!

6. The peace and joy will extend to the animal world as well:

Isaiah 11:6-9 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

- F. The Millennium? A Thousand Years is NOT ENOUGH!

1. Some people claim this is the Millennium... the thousand year reign of Christ on earth
2. BUT the verse itself implies that a thousand years of such joy and harmony and beauty is NOT ENOUGH

Isaiah 55:13 This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed.

THAT IS NOT 1000 years!!! It is forever!!

IV. God's Purpose for Himself: Everlasting Glory (vs. 13)

Isaiah 55:13 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.

A. God Intends this Work of Redemption to LAST FOREVER

1. This is his MEMORIAL...
2. Conquering Emperors build memorials to themselves wherever they go
3. This is often a display of their own arrogance...

Genesis 11:4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves

1 Samuel 15:12 Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor

2 Samuel 18:18 During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King's Valley as a monument to himself

Alexander the Great founded city after city as he conquered the Ancient Near East; as many as 70 cities, but certainly at least 20... and many of these he named Alexandria... after himself

B. God Intended to Make a Name for Himself as Well

1. Verse 13 clearly teaches this...

"This will be for the Lord's renown" or literally "This will make a name for the Lord and be an everlasting sign which will not be cut off"

2. What is the "THIS" or "IT"?? It is the work of redemption celebrated throughout this chapter! Sinful, rebellious, starving, thirsty beggars find salvation from the free grace of God in Christ, through repentance and faith

being forgiven and redeemed... led out of sin and death into eternal joy and peace... the redemption of PLANET EARTH... a NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH

3. This is for the PRAISE OF HIS GLORY... to make a name for Himself that will last forever

C. The New Heavens and New Earth will Shine With His Glory

Revelation 21:1-4 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Revelation 21:22-23 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

D. His Glory and Our Joy are ONE!!

1. See how the two great forces in the universe come together as one
2. God is determined to be glorified as God in His universe
3. We are determined to be happy, to be joyful
4. All these come together in the New Heavens and New Earth

V. Applications

A. This is the Final Sermon in Isaiah (for a while)

B. Hear the Sweet Invitation of the Chapter One More Time!!

Isaiah 55:1-2 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

COME TO CHRIST NOW!!!

C. A Sense of Urgency to Repent and Believe

Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

D. Christians Living an Ongoing Life of Repentance and Faith

1. We are no longer wicked or evil... we have been redeemed
2. But we sometimes dally with wicked ways and evil thoughts
3. There is an urgency to us all to repent continually of these things WHILE THERE IS TIME! God is pressing us to be holy as he is holy

E. Understand the Sovereign Power of God's Word

1. Everything God sends it to do, it most certainly will accomplish
2. Stand in awe... even TREMBLE at the power of God's Word
3. Stand under its transforming power every day

F. Letting the HOPE of this Chapter Fill you with Present Joy

1. Go over the amazing words of this chapter and drink in where we're going!!
2. Be filled day after day with bible-based hope
3. Live such openly hope-filled lives that non-Christians want to ask you to give a reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15)

G. Minister Hope to Each Other

1. So many are suffering from the curse of disease and pain and death
2. Let's remind each other continually of where we're going, and how someday all the curse will be gone
3. Let's visit the sick and the dying and minister this hope to them
4. Let's find people who are drooping in life and minister this hope to them

H. Evangelism and Mission: A different way to understand "going out with joy..."

Isaiah 55:11-12 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.

Evangelism and missions... let's GO OUT into the world with joy and be LED FORTH with peace into the mission field... let's be confident that God's word will not return to Him empty!!