

Read Isaiah 63:15-Isaiah 64:12

Trust. It is something essential for each of us here this morning. It is necessary for our everyday life. Whether with a parent, a husband, a wife, a child, a friend, a leader...we all need to be able to trust someone.

Have you ever had an experience where you trusted someone and later found out you shouldn't have?

- 📖 Perhaps it was a parent who didn't follow through on a promise and let you down.
- 📖 Perhaps it was a husband or a wife who made promises on your wedding day that were bitterly betrayed years later.
- 📖 Perhaps you are a parent who had high hopes for your child, only to see that child make some bad choices and turn away from the teaching you had given him or her when under your care.
- 📖 Perhaps you told a friend something you wanted to keep between you and her, only to find out later that half the town now knew that information.
- 📖 Perhaps it was a politician you were convinced would bring about change, only to discover that instead of bringing change, he had betrayed not only the trust of his wife and family, but that of his constituency, as well.

Because our Creator made us to be relational people, trust is a key element of our daily lives. The foundation of trust is a promise. In each of the examples I previously cited, promises were made....and promises were broken. Sadly, in our human existence, because of the corruption sin has brought about in our lives, this will occur more often than we would like to admit.

A biblical example of misplaced trust is found in the first few pages of the Bible...instead of trusting the One who had created them and provided for their every need, Adam and Eve chose to believe the deception of the God's enemy in the form of the crafty snake and be led astray. The turmoil their misplaced trust created has wreaked havoc on the human race and the world ever since.

A similar problem confronted the people of Israel in Isaiah's day.

In the opening chapter of Isaiah, in verse 21 we read:

"See how the faithful city has become a harlot! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her -- but now murderers!"

In chapter 5, verse 7 we read concerning God's vineyard:

"And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress."

The Lord says to His people in chapter 48, verse 8: ***"Well do I know how treacherous you are; you were called a rebel from birth."***

Isaiah tells the people in chapter 59, verse 2: ***"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."***

Later in the chapter he writes:

***Their feet rush into sin;
they are swift to shed innocent blood.
their thoughts are evil thoughts;
ruin and destruction mark their ways.
The way of peace they do not know;
there is no justice in their paths.***

*They have turned them into crooked roads;
no one who walks in them will know peace.* (Is. 59:7-8)

Do these descriptions of God's people sound like people you would trust?! Like people you would like to do business with? Since we possess the same characteristics as the people of Israel, I am pleased to announce to you on the authority of the risen Lord Jesus Christ that God is able to save and is fully trustworthy to do so!

As we look at a segment of Isaiah's prayer this morning, let's keep in mind several things:

1. God is a promise-making and promise keeping God. He is ALWAYS faithful and worthy of the trust of His people.
2. For those of us who are numbered among God's people this morning, we have repeatedly have demonstrated by our decisions that our hearts are prone to wander...wander far away from the One who created us and has patiently pursued us;
3. In His amazing grace and mercy, God has developed a plan whereby His justice is completely satisfied and the sins of His people are completely paid for through the life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of His One and Only Servant/Messiah! Praise God!
4. The central figure of the book of Isaiah is the One and Only God who accomplishes the salvation of His people for His own glory;

Let us grow in grace and in our understanding of the One we have come to worship this morning as we spend a few moments with our passage for today!

1. **A Right Request, 64:1-2** -- In response to 63:19 - Israel cries out: "God come down from heaven"- "We beg you, God, to show yourself once again!"

- a. Exodus 15:11 (page 69) –
- b. Exodus 19:16-20 (page 73)
- c. Exodus 34:10 (page 88)
- d. Deut. 10:17-21 (page 182)
- e. 2 Samuel 7:22-24 (page 302)
- f. Psalm 66:3-5 (page 570)
- g. Psalm 106:20-22 (page 522)

(back to Is. 64:2):

- As when fire sets twigs ablaze - engulfing/consuming nature of fire
 - As fire causes water to boil - energy producing effect of fire on another element
- a. That the mountains would tremble
 - b. Make your name known to your enemies
 - c. Cause the nations to quake before you.

2. **A Right Review, 64:3-5** – **What is true about God?**

It has been a long time since:

- a. anyone has heard
- b. anyone has seen....any God besides you.

A quick survey of the latter chapters of Isaiah reveals how important this concept is to the writer who penned these words under the guidance of God's Spirit...which should serve as instruction to us, God's people...and to anyone else who hears this message, for that matter!

1. Isaiah 43:11
2. Isaiah 44:6
3. Isaiah 45:5-6
4. Isaiah 45:18
5. Isaiah 45:20-22
6. Isaiah 46:9

What is true about God?

- ❖ There is NO God apart from the LORD;
 - ❖ He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth;
 - ❖ He commands all people everywhere to worship Him, and Him alone according to His standards!
 - ❖ He commands all people everywhere to turn to Him alone for the salvation He alone is able to provide through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- a. He acts on behalf of those who wait for him, **v. 5**;
- 📖 Heb. 9:27-28 (p. 1190):
 - 📖 Is. 40:30-31 (p. 715)

What does it mean to wait for the LORD?

ESV Study Bible - "Savoring Gods promise by faith"

- b. He is angry with His people who continue to violate God's commands, **v. 5**;
- c. He has hidden His face from His people and made us waste away because of our sins, **v. 7**;

4. A Right Realization, 64:6-7 – What is true about mankind?

- a. All of us has become like one who is unclean

Like dogs; swine; lepers (outcasts from society)

- b. All our righteous acts are like filthy rags;

This doesn't say we don't do good things...we are capable of doing good things...in the eyes of our fellow man.

What this DOES say is that **ALL** our righteous acts before God are being compared to filthy rags! (Yes, your *good* actions... helping little old ladies across the street, mowing our neighbors lawn, shoveling our neighbor's sidewalk when it snows; *religious*...being in church every time the doors are open in the hopes the Lord will be impressed, or reading your Bible to prove you, in fact, are a Christian, or praying more because you sinned a lot yesterday...your moral behavior amounts to filthy rags in God's sight and will **NOT** save you!).

If God's voice of law does not de-center us, throw us off balance, and judge our best efforts as having fallen short of God's glory, we will never flee to Christ as our Mediator greater than Moses. Instead, we will come up with our own representations of God--the golden calves of our own forms of worship--gentle suggestions for life, and helpful advice that lulls us into thinking at last we have a friendly God who does not provoke the cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" (Luke 18:13)

There is no balance here between law and gospel. The law tells us what we must do; the gospel tells us what God has done for us.

- c. We all shrivel up like a leaf...lifeless/shriveled up/dead;
- d. Our sins sweep us away like a leaf;
- e. No one calls on your name, v. 7;
- f. No one strives to lay hold of you, v. 7

6. **A Right Result, 64:8-12** – Plead for God's mercy

- a. Recognition of our rightful place before the LORD, v. 8
 - 1. We are clay
 - 2. God is the potter
- b. Right Plea
 - 1. Do not be angry beyond measure, v. 9;
 - 2. Do not remember our sins forever, v. 9;
 - 3. We are your people, v. 9;
 - 4. Your sacred cities have become a desert, v. 10;
 - 5. your holy and glorious temple has been burned...all we treasured lies in ruins, v. 10; (Isaiah's prophetic word actually takes place in 586 B.C.)
 - 6. Will you hold yourself back? Will you keep silent and punish us beyond measure?

Points to Ponder and Practice this week:

- 1. To you who already trust in Jesus –
 - a. Continue to trust Jesus
 - b. Grow in your understanding of Jesus so you will trust Him more
 - c. Wait on the Lord...that is, meditate on God's promises by faith and rejoice in the Gospel of grace.
- 2. To you who have not yet trusted in Jesus, God's One and Only solution to the sin problem that separates you from your Creator, the One before whom you will appear one day, HEAR AND OBEY GOD'S WORD:
...Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood, who pray to gods that cannot save....Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me. "Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.
 - a. God commands you to recognize Him as the One and Only true God;
 - b. God commands you to recognize Him as the righteous God and a Savior;
 - c. God commands you to turn **from your sin** which separates you from God;
 - d. God commands you to turn **to Him** for salvation from your sin;

Study Questions:

- 1. Are you a trusting person? Why or why not? In what ways are you guilty of trusting yourself?
- 2. How would the LORD have you deal with your self-trusting ways? Where do you find your answer in Scripture?
- 3. What is your reaction to the biblical truth of the sin nature which corrupts you?

4. How do you deal with your reaction to the biblical truth of the sin nature which corrupts you?
5. What biblical truth from Isaiah 64 was new or refreshing for you?
6. As a result of the reflection on Isaiah 64, what are some of the things for which you are praising God?
7. Lamentations 3:22-23 speaks about the compassions (mercies) of God being new every morning. What are some of the mercies of God you are praising Him for today?
8. As you reflect on the mercies of God in your own life, how are they fueling your passion/desire to make His name known in the context in which you live and work?
9. How are you actively combating your natural tendency toward resting in your own righteousness?
10. What rough edges of your life is the Potter currently working? How are you responding to His work?