5/3/26

Sunday 1st Message

Listen Diligently to Me

Is 55:1-7

Because of original sin, every human being is bound by three fundamental problems. Behind them, Satan is still present, and the answer to overcoming Satan is Christ; His death and the blood of the covenant that he shed are the only way. This is called the covenant, and apart from it, there is no other way to escape Satan's snare. Along with this fundamental covenant, God also gives us the word to apply concretely to our daily lives, to receive his answers, and to conquer our circumstances. While there are many ways to receive this word, God primarily grants it to each of us through the main worship. This word that has come to me is the answer to the problems I was facing at the time, and because it is destined to be fulfilled, it brings victory and conquest. Therefore, we must not simply come to worship; we must come with questions about the problems we face and with prayers seeking the word that will provide the answers. We receive the word from the pulpit, grasp it as a covenant given for our current circumstances, pray and wait, and when the answer comes, we follow it.

In 1 Samuel 7, we see that the Ark of the Covenant, which had been captured by the Philistines, was returned and placed in the house of Abinadab in Kiriath-jearim, where it remained for twenty years. Twenty years later, Samuel gathered the people at Mizpah and led a movement for the restoration of the covenant and repentance. Seeing this, I wondered, "What on earth did Samuel do for those twenty years?" I wondered if Samuel, whose every word did not fall to the ground, had simply been idle for those twenty years.

However, when we look at 1 Samuel 7:2, we see that over the course of twenty years, all the tribes of Israel came to long for the Lord. Consequently, they held the Mizpah gathering, offered a suckling lamb as a burnt offering, restored the covenant, and the entire people repented, turning away from idols. God then sent a thunderous storm to destroy the invading Philistines and restored the land of Israel that had been lost. Seeing this, I came to respect Samuel even more. He was not the one who did nothing, but a man of God who waited for God's timing - a man of prayer, a man who held fast to the covenant, and a God-centered man. If we have received a word from God, we too will have the strength to wait and align with that time schedule.

1. **Listen Diligently to Me**
    1) As we see in the first verse, it tells us that no money is needed and that God does not charge a price. It is a message of grace that says, "Come, everyone who thirsts, buy and eat without money and without price."
    2) The second verse asks, "Why do you spend your money for the idols and serve Satan for a deception that cannot satisfy you?" He says, "Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food."
    3) The third verse states not to just hear and move on, but to incline your ear, and come to me; hear. It says that then your soul will live and I will make with you an everlasting covenant.
    4) As we listen intently to his word, God will continually renew the eternal covenant of Christ within us. He will establish a covenant for my entire life, enabling me to conquer my entire life through that one covenantal word, save everyone sent to me from the curse, and raise up disciples who can do the very same.
    5) The word of the covenant will be my lifelong bartizan, and the prayers I offer while holding fast to the word will serve as my lifelong means of communication with God - my antenna. Such people will become the seventy disciples who establish the disciples sent to them, pray together for their regions, and open the doors of the gospel in those areas. This is God's

desire; He has already prepared everything necessary for this and has even provided examples to illustrate it - the Book of Acts being the prime example of this.

6) So, in verse 5, it records what will happen through the covenant made with those who listen intently and receive it. Through the eternal covenant made with David, through the covenant given to me for all my life, and through the covenant of the word I am receiving right now regarding the issue of the week… It says that through us, who are receiving the word, world evangelization will take place, bringing back nations that we do not even know.
7) Verse 6 says, "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near" - this is a call to prayer. Praying to seek and call upon God in our daily lives is of the utmost importance. It is the most fundamental duty of a believer, alongside the covenant. Set aside time to seek God, and call upon him and seek him at all times, all day long… If our hearts are like this, we will be clothed in the full armor of God.
8) As we journey toward this state of complete prayer, our prayers to seek and call upon God in light of today's message should be rooted in holding fast to his word as the covenant. When the word takes root in our hearts, prayer naturally follows. And because the Lord fulfills his promises through our prayers, it is of the utmost importance to pray to God with a heart that holds fast to the covenant.
9) I pray that we may all experience the blessing of receiving God's word today, holding fast to his covenant, praying, waiting, and following his answer when it comes. If we continue reading today's passage, we find these words in verse 10.
10) This is something we must never forget for the rest of our lives. Just as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, so too are the words of the Lord. "They will never return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."
11) A while back, there was a message titled "A Word that Shall Not Return". Isaiah 45:23: "By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'" This passage, too, expresses even more forcefully that the word of God never returns.
12) The rain that fell down never returned to heaven. Nor did it simply flow away into the sea. It always watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout. He says the same is true of his words. He says that his words will accomplish that which he purposes, and shall succeed in the thing for which he sent it.
13) Since it must be something God has sent and something that pleases him, we must wait and seek guidance from the word even after we have received it. If we hold onto the word we have received and pray, we will be guided. However, prayer comes later, and waiting comes later as well. First and foremost, we must receive the word.
14) For those who may have simply come to worship today, I hope that when you return home, you will pray earnestly, listen to the word again, and receive it. If it doesn't happen the first time, keep trying until it does. Since it is God's promise, nothing is impossible. He has promised to answer our prayers. I pray that this will be a week filled with the greatest blessings. May receiving the word become your nature.