

Original Message: Sunday, May 19th, 2024

[As it is in Heaven- Make Room](#)

Discuss:

- **Isaiah 61:1-3:** How does Isaiah describe the anointing of the Spirit in this passage? What specific tasks is the anointed one sent to accomplish?
 - Cross-reference: Luke 4:18-19. How does Jesus use this passage in the New Testament, and what does it signify about His mission?
- **Acts 1:8:** What does it mean to receive power from the Holy Spirit? How is this power connected to being witnesses for Christ?
 - Cross-reference: Acts 2:1-4. How did the early believers experience this power at Pentecost, and what was the result?
- **1 Kings 19:** How does God's interaction with Elijah illustrate His concern for us as individuals?
 - Cross-reference: Matthew 11:28-30. How does Jesus' invitation to come to Him for rest relate to God's care for Elijah?
- **Joel 2:28:** What is the significance of the prophecy that God's Spirit will be poured out on all people? How does this differ from the Old Testament understanding of the Spirit's work?
 - Cross-reference: Acts 2:16-21. How does Peter interpret Joel's prophecy in the context of the events at Pentecost?
- **Ephesians 5:15-18:** What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?
 - Cross-reference: Galatians 5:22-23. What are the fruits of the Spirit, and how do they manifest in the life of a believer?

Series Review:

- **Justice:** In what ways can we act justly and pursue blessing for all people in our daily lives? How can we be like gardeners influencing the culture around us?
 - Reflect on Micah 6:8. What does the Lord require of us in terms of justice, kindness, and humility?
- **Healing:** How can we be agents of God's healing in the lives of those around us? What practical steps can we take to comfort the brokenhearted?
 - Reflect on James 5:16. How does confessing our sins to one another and praying for each other lead to healing?
- **Freedom:** What areas of your life do you need to experience the freedom God offers? How can living fully into your freedom help others find theirs?
 - Reflect on Galatians 5:1. How does standing firm in the freedom Christ has given us impact our daily choices and actions?
- **Peace:** How can we cultivate peace in our lives amidst the troubles of the world? What does it look like to trust and surrender to Jesus in practical terms?
 - Reflect on Philippians 4:6-7. How does prayer and thanksgiving lead to the peace of God guarding our hearts and minds?
- **Joy:** How can we exchange our spirit of heaviness for a garment of praise? What daily practices can help us remain clothed in the joy of the Holy Spirit?
 - Reflect on Nehemiah 8:10. How does the joy of the Lord provide strength, and how can we tap into this joy regularly?
- **Influence:** How can what happens in us influence what happens around us? In what ways can we intentionally cultivate a culture that reflects heaven in our daily environments?
 - Reflect on Matthew 5:14-16. How does being the light of the world and the salt of the earth relate to influencing our surroundings for God's glory?
- **Faith-Filled Imagination:** How can we expand our imagination to believe that God will continually fill us with His Spirit? What practical steps can we take to slow down and listen for God's direction in our lives?
 - Reflect on Proverbs 3:5-6. How does trusting in the Lord with all our heart and not leaning on our own understanding help us to see and follow God's guidance?

Original Message: Sunday, May 12th, 2020

[As it Is in Heaven- Influence](#)

Discuss:

- Isaiah 61:3, take a closer look at the symbolism of great oaks planted by the LORD. How does this imagery convey the transformative power of righteousness in our lives?
- Matthew 5:6, Jesus speaks of those who hunger and thirst for righteousness being filled. How does this concept of longing for righteousness relate to the promise of fulfillment in Christ?
- Galatians 5:16-26 contrasts the desires of the sinful nature with the fruit of the Spirit. How does this passage change the way we think about the internal struggle between righteousness and unrighteousness?
- Galatians 5:19-21, how do these behaviors align with the desires of the sinful nature? How do they contrast with the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23?
- How does Galatians 5:24-26 emphasize the importance of crucifying our sinful desires and living by the Spirit's leading? How does this relate to the theme of influence and its impact on our internal climate?

Stretch:

- Reflecting on the internal struggle between the desires of the sinful nature and the fruit of the Spirit, how can we actively nurture the fruit of the Spirit in our lives?
- Galatians 5:26 warns against becoming conceited, provoking one another, or being jealous. How can we guard against these negative attitudes and behaviors in our relationships with others?
- How does our pursuit of righteousness and alignment with the Spirit's leading influence our external climate, including our interactions with others and our impact on the world around us? What tangible examples can you share from your own experiences?
- Reflecting on the concept that "what happens in us influences what happens around us," how does this truth shape our understanding of our influence as Christians in the world? How can we leverage our influence to bring about positive change and spread the message of God's love through righteousness?

Original Message: Sunday, May 5th, 2024

[As it Is in Heaven- Clothed with Joy](#)

Discuss:

- Reflecting on Isaiah 61:3, How does the imagery of receiving a "crown of beauty instead of ashes" and being "clothed with joy" demonstrate God's transformative power in our lives?
- In Psalm 30:11, what does it mean for God to turn mourning into joyful dancing and clothe us with joy?
- Read Psalm 112. How does obedience contribute to cultivating a spirit of joy in our lives?
- Psalm 112:7 speaks of not fearing bad news. How does trust in God's sovereignty and providence enable believers to face difficult circumstances with confidence and joy?
- Reflect on the characteristics described in Psalm 112 (verses 4a, 4b, 7-9a). What role do generosity, compassion, and righteousness play in fostering joy in our lives?

Stretch:

- How can we actively seek God's transformative work in our lives, especially in areas where we may be experiencing mourning or despair?
- How can we cultivate a mindset of joyful praise even in seasons of difficulty or sorrow? What practical habits or disciplines can help us focus on the joy found in God's presence?
- How can we develop a deeper trust in God's provision and care, enabling us to face uncertain or challenging situations without fear? What steps can we take to strengthen our confidence in God's faithfulness?
- How can we maintain a perspective of hope and light amidst the inevitable troubles of life?
- In what ways can we invite the Holy Spirit to replace any spirit of despair with a spirit of praise in our lives?

Going Deeper:

Where else do we see the use of garments as an image or theme in scripture?

Genesis 3:21	Matthew 6:28-30	Romans 13:13
Exodus 28:2	Matthew 22:1-14	Galatians 3:27

How does this deepen or change the way we look at Isaiah 61?

Original Message: Sunday, April 28th, 2024

[As it Is in Heaven- Peace](#)

Discuss:

- Reflecting on Isaiah 61:2, what does the phrase "the time of the LORD's favor has come" signify, and how does it relate to the theme of peace?
- In Isaiah 11:1, the imagery of a shoot growing from the stump of David's family is presented. How does the image point to the arrival of peace?
- According to Isaiah 11:2-3, what attributes of the Messiah are described, and how do these attributes contribute to bringing about peace?
- How does Isaiah 11:4-5 depict the role of the Messiah in establishing justice and righteousness, and what implications does this have for understanding the nature of peace?
- Isaiah 11:6 paints a picture of harmony among traditionally opposing creatures. What does that tell us about peace? How does it reflect God's ultimate plan for His creation?
- What role do people who know the LORD play in bringing about the vision of peace described in Isaiah 11:9?

Stretch:

- Reflecting on John 16:33, how can we find peace in Christ despite facing troubles and challenges in the world? What practical steps can we take to experience this peace in our daily lives?
- Considering the sermon's definition of peace as the surrender of control, how can we cultivate a mindset of surrender and trust in God's sovereignty, especially during times of uncertainty or adversity?
- How can understanding peace as more than just the absence of conflict impact our interactions with those around us, particularly in the midst of disagreements or misunderstandings?
- Based on the sermon's distinction between what peace is and what it is not, how can we shift our perspectives and expectations to align more closely with God's definition of peace in our lives?

Go Deeper:

David is a man who understood surrender and resting in the peace of the Lord. Read Psalm 23. How does this add to your understanding of what peace can look like in the life of a believer?

Original Message: Sunday, April 21st, 2024

[*As it Is in Heaven- Freedom*](#)

Discuss:

- Reflecting on Ephesians 1:3,5&7, what does it mean to be "blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms" and to be adopted into God's family through Jesus Christ? How does this relate to the theme of freedom in Christ?
- The message emphasizes the importance of a change in identity for experiencing true freedom. How does Ephesians 4:21-27 illustrate this concept of putting off the old self and putting on the new self in Christ?
- According to 1 Peter 2:11, how does the concept of being "temporary residents and foreigners" influence our understanding of freedom in Christ? How does it challenge our attachment to worldly desires?
- How does the transformational power of the Holy Spirit, as described in Ezekiel 36:27 and Galatians 5:22-23, enable believers to live in freedom and righteousness? How does this align with the message this week?

Stretch:

- Reflecting on the message's illustration of pornography's impact on behavior and spiritual life, how can we guard ourselves against worldly desires that wage war against our souls? What practical steps can we take to confront sin that we often try to keep in the dark?
- The message emphasizes the importance of confession and truth-telling in experiencing freedom. How can we cultivate a culture of confession and accountability within our group? How can we overcome barriers to authentic confession?
- Considering the two steps outlined for choosing freedom—receiving a new identity and choosing new behaviors—how can we practically apply these steps in our daily lives? What specific areas of our lives do we need to surrender to Christ for transformation?
- How does the realization that we are either slaves to sin or surrendered to Christ influence our daily decisions and actions? What practical choices can we make to live fully into the freedom offered by Christ?
- In what area of your life have you moved from guilt ("I did...") to shame ("I am"). How can you practically surrender that shame to your new identity in Christ?

Go Deeper:

Identity in something addressed often in scripture. Check out these very real examples of God changing the identity of His children.

- Abram to Abraham: In Genesis 17, Abram's name is changed to Abraham by God, signifying a significant shift in his identity and purpose. With this change, Abraham becomes the father of many nations, as promised by God.
- Jacob to Israel: In Genesis 32:22-32, Jacob wrestles with God and receives a new name, Israel, which means "he struggles with God." This renaming marks a transformation in Jacob's identity and character, signifying his new role as the father of the Israelite nation.

Original Message: Sunday, April 14th, 2024

[*As it Is In Heaven- Binding Up the Brokenhearted*](#)

Get the Conversation started:

- Think of a time when you experienced a small act of kindness or justice, either receiving it or giving it to someone else. How did that experience make you feel, and how do you think it reflects God's heart for justice and mercy?

Discuss:

- Reflecting on Isaiah 59:1-2, how do these verses illustrate the connection between sin and distance from God? How does that impact our understanding of repentance and reconciliation with God?
- Isaiah 60:1-3 speaks of Jerusalem's radiance and the nations being drawn to its light. How does this imagery relate to the concept of God's glory shining upon His people? How does this message foreshadow the coming of Jesus?
- The repetition of Isaiah 61:1 emphasizes the anointing to bring good news to the poor. How does this align with Jesus' mission as described in the New Testament, particularly in Luke 4:18-19 where he quotes this verse?
- Micah 6:8 outlines what God requires of His people: to do what is right, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him. How do these principles manifest in our daily lives, and how do they align with the message of justice and righteousness presented in the other passages?

Stretch:

- In Isaiah 1:17, the call to "learn to do good" and "seek justice" resonates strongly. How can we actively pursue justice in your day to day life?
- Leviticus 19:15 warns against distorting justice by showing favoritism to either the poor or the rich. How can we ensure fairness and impartiality in our dealings with others, within the church and as a society?
- Reflecting on Amos 5:24, which depicts justice rolling on like a river, what steps can we take to ensure righteousness flows continuously in our communities?
- Considering the overarching theme of justice and righteousness in these passages, how can we embody these principles as individuals and as a community of believers? What tangible steps can we take to live out God's call for justice and mercy in our spheres of influence?

Going Deeper:

Read James 1. Discuss the practical expression of faith that James describes and how that relates to justice and righteousness as we looked at it in scripture this week.

Get the Conversation Started:

- When have you experienced a time when you felt the Lord extend His comfort in your time of despair?

Discuss:

- When Elijah asks God to take his life, how does God respond? What does this reveal about God's character and His approach to comforting and restoring His servants in moments of despair?
- Reflecting on 1 Kings 19:5-8, how does God provide for Elijah's physical needs in the wilderness? How does this relate to other instances in Scripture where God sustains His people during times of trial or testing?
- The appearance of an angel providing food and water to Elijah echoes similar instances in the Bible, such as the angelic provision to Hagar in Genesis 16:7-14. What parallels can we draw between these encounters and their significance for God's care for His servants?
- Considering the encounter between Elijah and God on Mount Horeb (Sinai), how does God reveal Himself to Elijah? How does this encounter compare to other divine encounters in Scripture, such as Moses' encounter with God on the same mountain (Exodus 3:1-6) or the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-13)?

Stretch:

- How can we recognize and address signs of burnout in our own lives and in those around us? How does God's care for Elijah provide a model for seeking restoration and renewal?
- How can we cultivate a posture of listening to God's voice in our daily lives? What practices or habits can help us attune our hearts to His whispers?
- Reflecting on God's provision for Elijah's physical needs, how does this challenge our understanding of God's care for us in practical, tangible ways? How can we trust God to meet our needs, even in the midst of difficult circumstances?
- In Luke 9:28-36, Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, speaking with Him about His death & resurrection. How does Elijah's inclusion in the pivotal event change the way we think about God's power to redeem and restore?
- Elijah's story ultimately points to God's faithfulness and His ability to work through imperfect and weary servants. How does Elijah's journey of despair and restoration encourage us to persevere in our own faith journeys, trusting in God's sustaining grace and provision?

Original Message: Sunday, April 7th 2024

[As It Is In Heaven- Justice](#)

Justice is the way of God in pursuit of blessing all people.