

DEVELOPING A LIFE OF PRAYER
EDGEMONT BIBLE CHURCH
2021-2022 (January 12,2022)
“MAKING BEING HEARD BY GOD REAL” Part 1
ISAIAH 1 & 58
SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Isa 58:1 "Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God.

3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?' "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers.

4 Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high.

5 Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the LORD? (NKJV)

From earlier in Isaiah:

Isa 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me;

3 The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider." (NKJV)

Isa 1:4 Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward.

5 Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints.

6 From the sole of the foot even to the head, There is no soundness in it, But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.

7 Your country is desolate, Your cities are burned with fire; Strangers devour your land in your presence; And it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

8 So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, As a hut in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city.

9 Unless the LORD of hosts Had left to us a very small remnant, We would have become like Sodom, We would have been made like Gomorrah. (NKJV)

Isa 1:10 Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the law of our God, You people of Gomorrah:
 11 "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats.
 12 "When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts?
 13 Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies-I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.
 14 Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them.
 15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.
 (NKJV)

MAKING IT UP AND EXPECTING HIM TO LIKE IT

A. You're fooling yourself! Man's fallen religious condition:

Confusing what pleases myself with what pleases God; entering illegally into the world of the spirit John 10:1

1. Self-righteousness - the original and very first one - Adam and Eve's attempt to cover themselves! Hiding from God by creating my own standards of what it means to cover my naked shame. I expect Him to approve. He doesn't!
2. Half-heartedness - the second oldest religious effort. This is Cain's offering that was not done by faith or using a sacrifice acceptable to God, but expecting Him to like it.
3. Totally ignoring God as if He is not relevant to what I want - Tower of Babel madness; Romans 1:20-23 foolishness
 - a. Sentimentality - finding my happy place; retelling the narrative for its emotional value; substituting an emotional rush for truth
 - b. Performing arts obsession – believing my dopamine rush from the arts equals spirituality; sustained and prolonged use can provide “spiritual” awareness from near hypnosis
 - c. Celebrity madness - idolizing those who have been recognized for some desirable trait and seeking to emulate them; agreement with their trait is equated with righteousness; imitation of their life

- d. Religious promoters - selling godness for a profit; you can be your own God; it is what the “universe” will help you with.
 - e. The use of mind-altering substances, legal or illegal, to attain an experience that may or not be conducted in the world of the spirits; may be found in the world of the imagination: the effect is the same as reality is distorted. Often seen as a spiritual experience.
4. Ritual and ceremony with no concern for the object; it's the ceremony or ritual being done precisely that makes it meritorious. “God likes precision and order so surely He will like what is being done sincerely and accurately!”
 5. Asceticism - making myself pay to earn God's merits; impressing God with my willing pain and suffering; punishing the flesh for its opposition to the Spirit; Some think of it a “mortifying” the flesh

B. Why does that smell like figs?