

Isaiah 55:1-13

"The Invitation, The Exhortation, The Jubilation"

True contentment can only be found J.C. ...* I love the scene, it's Jn Ch 4. There He is, your Lord & mine. He's talking to a Samaritan woman who'd come out to a well to draw water. & He says to her, "Give Me a drink." (His disciples had gone into the city to buy food). She's all, "How is it that You being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" Because Jews typically didn't have any dealings w/Samaritans. (Ethnic, demographic tensions are nothing unique to our day). – But Jesus answered her & said, *"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."*¹

She's all, "Sir, You have nothing w/which to draw... & the well is deep. So uh... where do You plan on getting this "living water"? & Jesus answered her & said, *"Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."*² It was an invitation unto salvation, to believe on Him & be saved!

He was saying, "Listen, you can drink from the waters of the wells of this life. They don't satisfy!" People will try to drink from the wells of fame, of fortune, of partying, of sexual conquest, of power, of intellectualism & academia... But they don't satisfy, it's never enough. It's a temporary fix to a permanent problem. But when you receive the free gift offered to you by grace through faith in J.C. (You believe on the Lord J.C.). It becomes in you a *fountain of living water* springing up into everlasting life.

& The beauty of it is that the invitation goes out to everyone. There are none who are exempt. For God so loved *the world* He gave His only begotten Son, that *whoever* believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. * It's not a mechanical offer locked in the airtight compartment of God's election... it rests upon the free flowing will of each individual hearer. & In Ch 55 of the book of Isaiah, the hearer is urged... in fact, commanded to seek the Lord!

Vs 1-2

Ladies and Gentlemen: this is God's invitation to the world! To every tribe, every tongue & every nation! But we realize, we recognize that it's *limited* in its appeal. There are a couple of conditions/criteria that need to be met before this offer is attractive, appealing to you. – #1 You must be "thirsty". & #2 You must be broke.

¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 4:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 4:13-14). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Not physically (to perhaps state the obvious) but spiritually. This is that which Jesus was alluding to when He (on the last day, that great day of the feast) stood & cried out, **"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."**³

This isn't an invitation to those who feel that God would be lucky to have them, who find all that they think they need in the "wells" of this world. This is an offer to the desperate soul, the poor in spirit, the one thirsting for more than what this life has to offer & has nothing to offer God in return...

* Listen to me. Spiritual warfare is real. Satan & his cohorts do a fantastic job of convincing people of their worthlessness. & Predicated *upon* said worthlessness, they have nothing to offer God so they do themselves a favor by staying away from God altogether... Nothing could be further from the truth! #1 You are of more value to God than all the riches of the world! **What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, yet lose his own soul? Translation? 1 Soul has more intrinsic value than all the combined wealth of this world. #2 It's the one who realizes they've nothing to offer God to whom the offer of God goes out! You're just the type of person God is looking for! The Psalmist said it this way, "The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite (crushed) spirit."**⁴ It's not the well who are in need of a physician, but the sick! Jesus didn't come to call the righteous, but the sinner to repentance!

& So the call goes out, "Ho! *Everyone* who thirsts, come to the waters..." Family, I want you to see the love of God in this. That He would cry aloud, the Creator essentially begging His creation to come, drink deeply of the waters of life & be saved! **Charles Spurgeon said this, "Oh, the condescension of God! That he should, as it were, become a beggar to his own creature, and stoop from the magnificence of his glory to cry, 'Ho!' to foolish and ungrateful men!" – The offer goes out to everyone who thirsts... "come".** * You must be thirsty.

#2 You must be broke. That is recognize that you have no means, no manner, no method by which you can secure salvation & the good things of God on your own.

"You who have no money, come, buy & eat. Yes, come buy wine & milk w/out money & w/out price." Btw you might notice that "waters" is in the plural form. In the Hebrew that expresses a superlative degree. It's too wonderful to be expressed by the singular form.

³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [In 7:37-38]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ps 34:18]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It speaks to the quantity & the quality! *The cleansing waters of the word of God, water for your thirsty soul... But what I'm wanting to emphasize in this part/portion of our text is this, it's *all free!* Waters, wine, milk... It's not like there's an initial free entry & then if you're interested you can start making monthly installments. Salvation, sanctification, spiritual gifts, growth, maturity & spiritual development. You get it all for absolutely nothing! It's the gift of God's grace to you in Christ Jesus our Lord...

This isn't something we're accustomed to. A true "no strings attached" offer. (I'm thinking of how marketing works in our culture so frequently today). So many apps or games online today have an initial free entry, & that's how they advertise to gain your interest. "Free! Enter in! Be a part of this fantastic experience!" & You're like, "Man, this really looks good! I think this might be a great time, a wonderful experience. Something I might really enjoy!" So you download it. Then you quickly realize that, yes, it was free to download & perhaps even gain the most basic nonessential elements of it. But if you really want to get the fullness of the experience, if you really want to grow & advance, there's a cost involved, a price tag. Everything involves money.

That's not the way God works. There are no hidden fees, no loopholes through which He will exploit you. All that He has for you... the best He can provide for you, abundantly, eternally free! How can this be? Because Someone else already paid for it all! We get to enjoy Ch 55 because Jesus paid the price in Ch 53...*

* "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, & your wages for what does not satisfy?" What a radically relevant question! We touched on this at the top of our time. We throw so much time, effort, energy & money at things that have zero ability to truly satisfy & are of no genuine sustenance. They don't sustain & they don't satisfy...

But we're always buying the lie, aren't we? "Man, if I just got that new ____ then I'd be satisfied!" Satisfaction is a brand-new vehicle! It's a better home! It's a new rifle or handgun. It's a new guitar or drum set. "Man, if I had that new boat... that's all it would take." "All I need is a trip to the salon, maybe some new shoes & a new outfit..." & It's not that any of those things are wrong in & of themselves. But so often we spend thinking they'll satisfy us... & they *may*, for a week, or a month, perhaps a year... Then we're right back to ground zero thinking we need something else... I suppose this is as good a place as any to quote the respected poet, & profound philosopher, Mick Jagger. ☺ He sums up the entire human experience (apart from J.C.) in a single sentence. "I can't get no satisfaction. 'Cause I try, & I try, & I try, & I try. I can't get no... Oh, no, no, no, hey, hey, hey... that's what I say!"

True joy, true contentment, true satisfaction can only be found in the Lord J.C. He can provide in a manner that goes deeper than the temporary things of this world. He satisfies the deeper thirst that abides in the human heart. That longs to be filled but always seems to fall just a little bit short w/the things of the world. *

God says... “Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.” God promises satisfaction for our soul, but there are 3 things contingent upon *us* if we’re to receive it.

#1. We must, “Listen carefully”. The satisfaction that God promises you will elude you if you will not listen (& don’t miss this) listen *carefully*. It takes time, effort and attention (discipline) to listen carefully to what God has to say in His word & quite frankly, (I’m just going to say it boldly) some aren’t willing to do it! They just won’t do it!

#2 We’ve got to (underline it) “Eat what is good.” This requires some discipline & discernment as well. You’ve got to determine what is good, & eat that, take that in! Most people will just sit down & eat whatever spiritual meal is set before them, you need to take care to make sure it’s *good* before you ingest it. Listen, weigh it in the balance of the word of God, then receive it & allow it to nurture your soul.

Finally, #3. We’ve got to “let our soul delight itself in abundance.” You can listen carefully, take in what’s good, but you still need to let your soul delight itself in abundance. You can sit down at a great spiritual meal, & because of your stubborn personality, your bad attitude, or simply because you don’t have a teachable spirit, you don’t allow your soul to delight itself in the abundance of the goodness of the Word of God... Look at Vs 3.

Vs 3-5

Before we get too far down the line here you might note the emphasis upon *hearing* (that is, truly paying attention) in Vs 2-3. We read, “Listen carefully”, “Incline your ear” & “hear”. * I don’t know if there’s a plainer way to put it. If you’re going to delight your soul in the good things of God... If you’re going to truly “feast” on His word, you’ve got to *intentionally, conscientiously* “incline” (the idea is stretch out or leaning in) your ear toward what God has to say!

It can be the difference between 2 people but sitting under the same teaching, one benefits tremendously & the other... doesn’t get *anything* really. One is “inclining” their ear, the other may be listening courteously, but they aren’t honestly *hearing* what’s being said... It kind of harkens back to the parable of the Sower (Mark Ch 4). The Sower did *his* thing, the seed did *its* thing. But the soil... the ground varied in its reception of the seed based upon its condition.

Do you remember what the soil represents? The human heart. What kind of soil is the seed of God's word finding in your heart? Now... I trust you can make the connection. Are you "leaning in", inclining your ear to the Word of God? Ensuring good soil in your heart, free of the debris of this world? – It all comes back to the hearer. *

"Hear, & your soul shall live..." Ok, you've got my attention! If I will hear, my soul will live. – What does the Bible say? **"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."**⁵ Life for your soul is found in the Word of God...

"I will make an everlasting covenant w/you – the sure mercies of David." If you & I will just hear the word of God (& embedded w/in that statement is the understanding of responding appropriately to what we hear) God will make an everlasting covenant w/us.

The sure mercies of David... Now, there's a significant number of things we could talk about regarding the "sure mercies of David", I'll try to keep it short & sweet.

God promised that His mercy would *never* depart from David. In fact, He promised that his house & his kingdom would be established *forever*. & Of course, that will be fulfilled through J.C. who will rule & reign forever being both the Root & the Offspring of David. Jesus came through David's lineage. & Paul quoted this Vs in Acts 13:34, saying that Jesus makes this everlasting covenant possible through the resurrection.

& God is saying that if you will *come* to Him, *listen & hearken* unto Him, He will make w/you a covenant (in Christ) that is just as sure, just as eternal as is the one He made w/David. Now... if you know anything about David, you know he had a trying/troubled life to say the least. Yes, he was the king. Yes, he was a man after God's own heart (meaning he sought desperately the heart of God, he wanted to know Him, to be well pleasing *to* Him).

But he was also a man who committed adultery, who committed murder, who had incest, rape & insurrection erupt in his own house... His reign was marked by civil war... yet God never gave up on him, but was merciful to him. David was a man w/a tender heart, quick to repent when confronted w/his sin.

& God holds him up here (Vs 4) as a prototype for a great leader. What's the take home? I've heard it something like this, "The best of men are at best men..." Meaning. Even the best & most effective of God's leaders often fall radically short, & don't get the luxury of an easy life.

& We can pick on his failures & faults, he had many (as do we all). But he also had a relationship w/God. He was a witness to the people & a leader (notice) *for* the people.

⁵ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ro 10:17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Not “of” the people, but “for” the people. He had a shepherd’s heart & genuinely desired God’s best for the people.

Many of our nation’s leaders are leaders *of* the people. But they’re not leaders *for* the people. Many do what they do *for themselves!* That wasn’t the way David led. His heart was *after God & for the people.*

As for Vs 5. * Here’s my question to you. What kind of work is God doing in your life? God is saying here that nations will flock to Israel because of His work of restoration in their lives. They’ll (throughout the millennial kingdom) be an attractive witness for J.C. The question for you (me) to consider would be, are people attracted to Jesus through God’s work in your life? Do people see you as someone they’d like to emulate? If your life is no different than anyone else’s (in the world) why would they be drawn *to* you or want to be *like* you? The application would be, give God His way in your life.*

Vs 6-7

I trust you sense the urgency in this exhortation. & Btw, the verbs “seek” & “call” are in the imperative mood. Meaning, they’re not suggestions, they’re commands! * Carefully, intentionally, enquire whole-heartedly after the Lord (notice) “while He may be found”. – What’s the implication? You don’t have forever to do this... There’s a window of opportunity! You hear me say it occasionally. The most successful lie of the enemy of your soul seems (to me) to be not that there’s no God, or no devil, or no heaven or no hell. But that there’s no *hurry*...

Yet nowhere in scripture is there the sense in which we can just take our time as it pertains to turning from our sin & to the Lord! Quite the opposite is true! Hebrews Ch 3, “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”⁶ & Again, “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts...”⁷ We’re never guaranteed a moment beyond the one we’re in! & So to echo the words of Paul the apostle, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”⁸

“Call upon Him” (cry out to Him) “while He is near”! The window of opportunity won’t always be there. The dispensation of grace will come to an end. God will judge the world in righteousness. Be wise, call upon Him while you still can!*

⁶ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Heb 3:12-13). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Heb 3:15). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (2 Co 6:2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

* “Let the wicked forsake his way, the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him *return* to the Lord...” This is a picture of *repentance*. Turning from *our* way, returning to God’s way. It’s impossible to walk *God’s* way until we turn from & forsake (abandon) *our* way... The restoration & reconciliation of God works through *repentance*.

& Just so we’re clear, this is included in what it means to “seek the Lord”. Seeking the Lord looks like forsaking our sins & returning to the Lord! & It’s a continual, ongoing effort. We don’t arrive in this life. As we grow in Christ, we’re not going to become sinless, but we should sin less & less.

& Don’t miss the details. It’s true that wickedness is demonstrated outwardly (our ways) which we need to forsake. But it’s *rooted inwardly* (our thoughts). Often, the battle ground for a righteous walk w/the Lord is found in the mind, our thoughts... It’s why Paul the apostle wrote of bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ... That we’re not to be *conformed* to this world, but *transformed* by the renewing of our *minds*...

So, realize that what we do outwardly is important. But even *more* important is what’s happening in our hearts/minds inwardly. Man looks to the outward appearance, but God searches the heart.

& The one who repents, who *returns*, (be it 1 time or 1,000 times) will find *mercy & forgiveness*. God says, “I will pardon” (notice) “abundantly” that is, “continually”, “increasingly”, “exceedingly” ... This is so contrary to what the enemy whispers in your ear. “You’ve blown it too bad! Too many times! There’s no way God could forgive you or *would* forgive you if He could! You’re a hypocrite & need to just quit, give up, walk away!” But the word of God says, “Repent, return, mercy & forgiveness, restoration, reconciliation awaits you.” In the NT vernacular we read it like this, “*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*”^{9*}

Vs 8-9

In other words, the way of mercy & grace & forgiveness isn’t the way of man. It’s the way of God. You hurt me, you violate me, you take advantage of me, it doesn’t occur to me to look for a way by which I could forgive you & reconcile you back to me. I want to cast you out, write you off, hold on to my grudge & make you pay... that’s not God’s way. God doesn’t think like we think (& we should thank Him for that)!

⁹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). [1 Jn 1:9]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

& God doesn't act like we act. His ways aren't our ways. & * This can get us into a lot of trouble. When we think God thinks like we think, or He should act the way we'd act.

But He's not like us. There's a great divide in the way we think & the ways we'd choose. Immeasurable in fact. You see, we use the measurements of feet/miles (kilometers) when it comes to the earth. *When it comes to the heavens we measure in lightyears. A light year is the distance light travels in the course of a year at the speed of 186,000 miles per second (which is 5.88 trillion miles). Now, the milky way galaxy (which is your corner of the neighborhood) is about 100,000 lightyears across. (Hop on a ray of light, travel 5.88 trillion miles a year & in 100,000 yrs you'd reach the other side). That's just the milky way. There are 100's of billions of galaxies. The observable universe is suspected to be 94 billion lightyears across... If you could ride a ray of light at over 5.8 trillion miles a year, you could fly (w/out stopping) across the known universe in a meager 94 billion yrs.*

God says, "You want to know how much higher My thoughts & My ways are above yours... this will give you an idea. If your ability to think/act are on one side, & Mine are on the other, 94 billion light years separate our capacity & ability." *Or to understand that another way. He's on a different level of which you & I will never attain. This is why the arrogance is unsettling when someone presumes to command God to do anything. Better to say, "God this is my heart, the way I see it, my understanding of it. But Your understanding & insight are infinitely beyond mine. So, this is my desire, nevertheless not my will, but Your will be done."* *

Vs 10-11

* This is one reason (of several) that we're all about the Word of God here. Rain & snow descend from heaven, water the earth & accomplish their purpose before returning (making the earth bring forth & bud). God's word is like that. It rains down from heaven, it's full of life & power & it never fails w/regard to its intended purpose. It will always bring forth its fruit.

Listen, God doesn't speak just to hear His proverbial head rattle. There's a purpose He's set to accomplish. This is why it's not open to, "You think this, I think that... who's to say? That's your interpretation..." & all that. God has a specific purpose in giving out His word. Many applications (yes). 1 Interpretation... & It doesn't barely get the job done, it prospers, it thrives in the purpose God has for it. Be it salvation, sanctification, exhortation... You might write it down, read it later, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 * **Close**

Vs 12-13

The *invitation*, the *exhortation* (we could've added the *revelation*) & the *jubilation*. When God's people turn to Him, *listen* to Him & His word does it's *work* in them... joy, peace, praise & fruitfulness are always the result. Barrenness is removed, fruitfulness remains.

Prayer Points:

God may our hearts eagerly receive Your Word today. Having listened carefully, leaned in intentionally, Your word is good. May it find its way deep into the soil of our hearts. Our soul delights itself in life giving abundance of Your word.

If you're here & you've not surrendered *to* the Lord. Or you've drifted off course & away *from* the Lord. Repent & return today. I can tell you w/all the authority of the Word of God, He will *abundantly* pardon & you will find mercy, forgiveness & grace (new life) at the cross of J.C. Come to the waters & be satisfied.