The Story A PEOPLE IN NEED Isaiah 1 February 2, 2014

INTRODUCTION

- a. As we begin today I want to do so in a similar way to what Randy Frazee does on the small group video material.
 - b. Let me ask you a history question.
- 1. Did you know that George Washington was asked to be king of America during the Revolutionary War?
- a. George Washington both as a Christian and as a praying man rejected the offer. He believed that there was only one King, Jesus.
- b. A motto that was shouted often during the war was, "No king but King Jesus."
- c. Here is an actual quote from the Revolutionary War found on the Catholic Education website:

In 1774 a report to King George of England, the Governor of Boston noted: 'If you ask an American who is his master he will tell you he has none, nor any governor but Jesus Christ.' The prewar colonial committees of correspondence soon made this American motto: 'No king but King Jesus,' and this sentiment was carried over into 1783 peace treaty with Great Britain ending that war which begins in the name of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.

- c. A great deal has happened in our country since then. I am quite sure that would not be the battle cry today. Think of where we have come:
 - 1. Racial and economic discrimination are still a reality
 - 2. We have embraced a philosophy that sets humanity as the standard rather than God
- a. The result has been an abandoning of the Biblical morality for one that is selfish and self-centered
- b. The rise of "free love" that is now called "friends with benefits" and the rate of infidelity within marriages and the number of people living together without being married and the rise of the homosexual agenda and addiction to internet or other porn, and the number of babies being born to unwed mothers and those babies being killed in the womb on and on we could go but you see how far we have gone from a Biblical Morality
 - c. Add to that the exploitation of the poor and the homeless.
 - d. The worship of a plurality of gods is now seen as normal
 - e. The social injustice that is fostered in many of the laws being made by our

government

- 3. All this simply says we have drifted far away from God and are not the people he wants us to be. We are indeed in need of a Savior.
 - d. Do you remember what happened in the aftermath of 9-11?
- 1. There was a spiritual resurgence. People flocked to churches seeking the peace that only God can give.
 - 2. The attack caused people to ask, "What is God doing?"
 - 3. They in some way wanted to be right with God
- e. Today in the Story we come to a time when Isaiah is addressing a similar situation in the Southern Kingdom of Judah
- f. Last week in the Story the Northern Kingdom, Israel, was taken into captivity by the Assyrians.
 - g. Today we begin to look at the Southern Kingdom and we begin with Isaiah the prophet.

I. THE CONTEXT

a. **The Story today can be found in 2 Kings 15-20**. It begins with King Azariah or Uzziah in the Southern Kingdom and Jeroboam II in the Northern Kingdom.

- b. The Northern Kingdom is about to be taken into exile by the Assyrians and the Southern Kingdom is beginning the slide to a similar fate by the Babylonians
- c. There have not been any kings in the Northern Kingdom who did what was pleasing to the Lord and judgment is coming.
- d. Uzziah like his father and grandfather have been good kings in the Southern Kingdom. Trouble is that they did not remove the worship centers for the foreign gods.
 - e. This is when Isaiah enters the scene.
- 1. **Isaiah began his ministry in the year the King Uzziah die**d (739 BC) and it extended through Hezekiah's reign, which would make it at least 53 years.
- 2. It is thought that Isaiah was probably a cousin to King Uzziah, which would help explain why he was so familiar with the royal court in Jerusalem and had so much influence on the various kings.
- f. Isaiah 1 graphically describes the state of Judah that compelled God to speak through this prophet.
- 1. **The people were in rebellion against God** they have abandoned the Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 1:2-9)
- a. **Isaiah 1:4 (NIV)** Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.
 - 2. The people are practicing empty or worthless religion. (Isaiah 1:10-20)
- a. **Isaiah 1:13 (NIV)** Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations-- I cannot bear your evil assemblies.
 - 3. Social injustice was rampant. (Isaiah 1:21-31)
- a. **Isaiah 1:23 (NIV)** Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow's case does not come before them.
 - g. Notice the natural progression.
- 1. Rebellion against God will inevitably lead to empty worship. 2. One cannot fool God. It is an abomination to Him to worship with insincerity, to go through the motions when one's heart is filled with rebellion.
- 3. The social structure disintegrates into chaos. Self-centered people will oppress and mistreat others; only God-centered people will seek true justice.

II. ISAIAH'S MESSAGE

- a. Isaiah had one clear message: You need a Savior
- b. From the beginning God intended Israel to be a blessing to all nations (Genesis 12:1-3). They were to be His "servant" on earth, a people through whom He would work to bring all people back to Himself. But they never met His expectations
 - c. Isaiah recognizes that Judah is sick with sin and in desperate need of cleansing.
- d. As you read his prophesy, **Isaiah began to paint a picture of the Messiah or the "ideal servant" who would die on behalf of all others to pay for their sins.**
- e. Isaiah describes the coming messiah first in ways that fit the people's expectations a messiah who would come and reign as King
- 1. **Isaiah 7:14 (NIV)** Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.
- 2. **Isaiah 9:6 (NIV)** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 3. **Isaiah 42:1-4 (NIV)** "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. ² He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. ³ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not

snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; ⁴ he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope."

- f. But then Isaiah turns to a picture of the coming messiah that is quite different from what the people expected. The image is of a suffering servant.
 - 1. The scripture read earlier from Isaiah 53:1-6
 - a. Despised and rejected by men
 - b. A man of sorrows and suffering
 - c. Smitten and afflicted by God
 - 2. Let me finish that passage for you
- a. **Isaiah 53:7-12 (NIV)** He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.
- g. The coming messiah would come and die for the sins of mankind and by his death we might have forgiveness and eternal life.
 - h. Isaiah gives us God's Upper Story some 700 years before Jesus was born.
- i. Jesus fulfills all the prophesies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah. He alone fulfills God's requirements of a sacrifice that atones for our sins. He alone can pay the full price of our salvation.
- j. It is that sacrifice that Isaiah describes that we celebrate when we share the Lord's Supper together.

SHARE THE BREAD SHARE THE CUP

- k. Let me close with these two thoughts that come from God's Upper Story
- 1. The saving work of Messiah was God's plan all along to reconcile helpless, rebellious sinners to Him.
- 2. Because of the work of the Messiah, believers do not need to fear condemnation before God.

BOW WITH ME IN PRAYER 8:30 #338 "AT CALVARY" 11:00 "GRACE FLOWS DOWN"