

[As I was preparing this sermon, I was also writing the Multiply teaching primer for the DG's...its amazing for me that God, in His sovereignty, aligned these two with a similar message to be back to back]

Introduction

- I. We are all waiting for something, its almost ingrained in us to look forward or try and look forward earnestly waiting for something
 - A. As Kids:
 1. We waited/wait to get tall enough to ride the big rides
 2. To get to HS, graduate HS
 3. Turn 18, get license buy a car
 4. Turn 21 (or turn "21")
 - a) after 21, I jokingly waited for 25 so I could rent a car, that was the last age landmark, after that we eventually stop waiting for birthdays
 - B. As Adults:
 1. We wait for the right job, promotion
 2. A spouse (I struggled with waiting for this after my divorce, I wanted God to give me a new spouse on my time, not His)
 3. Some sign for something or anything; waiting for things to get better; waiting for things to get bad
 4. If you're an Eagles fan a Super Bowl
 - C. With Technology:
 1. We wait for the newest movie, game, phone--there are already websites and blogs about the iphone 7! The iphone 6 just came out in September, we haven't even had ample time to enjoy this new phone and we are already waiting for the next!
 - a) We see...Not only is the human heart an idol factory (maybe mention sermon series), but with our seemingly instinctive desire to wait, we jump on board to wait for more. In simple terms, our sinful nature, that the scriptures say we are all born with, is even distorting our waiting
 - D. So, we can all agree that we are constantly waiting for things, the question is why do we wait? We wait because:
 1. We have to. The fact you are waiting implies you have to. You can't have an iphone 7 because it isn't out yet; you cannot magically jump to a different age, you have to let time do its thing (you may be thinking duh, very insightful)
 2. (But the 2nd point is the one to meditate on) We wait for what we desire. Makes sense. What we truly want or what we believe we need, we'll wait for. You're not going to wait for something you don't want or need. If you don't want an iPhone 7 then technically you're not waiting for it.

- a) We don't wait for concert tickets, black friday deals, or at the DMV for our health, but because we want or need x or y
- E. Going through today's passage, divinely placed in between two very messianic (**explain messianic**) passages, we are going to discuss this idea of waiting and what we are to do while we are waiting.
- F. We're going to be in Isaiah 8
 - 1. Chronologically we are getting near the end of the OT, Isaiah ministered as a prophet from the 8th century BC into the 7th century (maybe mention trick to quickly determine what century); the intertestamental period, the fancy pants term for the time between the Old and New Testament was roughly 400 years. So, make Christ's birth your point of reference, come back about 400 years, Malachi and the OT are being completed. Isaiah then is just around 300 years earlier.
 - a) Why am I giving a timeline? This is significant because mankind in general, the Israelites particularly, have been waiting since the Fall of mankind (just give rough estimate avoiding all the debate of time of creation) in the garden of Eden for the promised Redeemer [Gen 3:15]
 - b) OT history is pushing forward (pointing forward) to the coming Messiah
 - c) We are stepping into this period of history where the Israelites have been waiting a long time and the "wheels" have been coming off (the kingdom of Israel) for some time

II. Read Isaiah 8:1-8 [Quickly recap last week explaining how chapters 7 & 8 are connected]

- A. Review the historical context that Syria and Israel (Ephraim), the northern kingdom, have joined forces to fight against Assyria and are threatening the southern kingdom, Judah, to join with them. Ahaz, the King of Judah, was not **firm in his faith** (last week's sermon) and sent tribute to Assyria to ally with them against Syria and Ephraim.
 - 1. We see the northern kingdom has gotten "tired of waiting" and has long abandoned following God as they allied with a Pagan nation against the southern kingdom. What we can take from the "lack of patience" to wait for the Redeemer is the pervasiveness of sin from the Fall
 - a) While in the waiting room for the promised Redeemer of Genesis 3, throughout their history, despite all God had done for them, Israel consistently would fall away from God
 - (1) Currently in review 28 OT plan going through Judges...
 - (2) We read OT and look at the nation of Israel and, I'll be honest because of my sin nature, I judge and condemn them, "they had all these great signs etc" and still were disobedient. But I am just as disobedient, Deut 6:6

- b) The Scriptures teach that we don't have the ability or desire to "wait" for God in our own strength.
 - (1) That by grace, through faith, in Christ [Promised Messiah] we are saved
 - (2) That the Holy Spirit regenerating our hearts, applying salvation to our lives, and sanctifying us makes salvation ALL of God
 - (a) That in our weakness His power is shown; that we receive Christ's blessings despite all we've done.
 - (b) That is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, whom the world was waiting for

III. Read Isaiah 8:9-10

- A. In the historical context this is a promise to Judah, that God will not allow the joint forces of Syria and Ephraim to conquer them, that God is with them [Immanuel]
- B. But this also foreshadows THE Immanuel, Jesus Christ, that all who rise against His Kingdom will not stand
 - 1. The OT points forward to the coming Messiah and the Israelites were waiting for "the king like David" who would reestablish the glory and power of the Kingdom.
 - 2. But when Christ came, the Jews were looking for a political Savior to free them from Roman oppression.
 - a) But Christ's first coming, He came as a spiritual Savior, to die as our substitute, to pay the penalty for our sin.
 - b) He rose and ascended to God the Father in heaven, with all power and authority, leaving His church with the mission of proclaiming and inviting all into the Kingdom of God
 - 3. As Israel waited for the Promised Messiah, we, as the church, are waiting for the return of the King
 - a) Out of response to the gospel, we devote ourselves to the King of kings and His [gospel] mission and earnestly wait for His return.
- C. C.S. Lewis - *"Aim at heaven and you'll get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you'll get neither."*
 - 1. "Aiming at heaven" is having a kingdom-focused life, earnestly desiring the return of the King!
 - 2. Turn your eyes upon Jesus...not to belittle the struggles of today
- D. So, while we wait...

IV. Isaiah 8:11-13

- A. Though at this time God has promised Judah would be spared, they ultimately continue walking in disobedience as a nation and eventually fall.
 - 1. The Lord then gives a warning to Isaiah and the remnant of faithful disciples to the Lord, "to not..."

- a) James 4:4 “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?”; In world not of the world
 - 2. As followers of Christ we are called not to walk in the ways of the world; we’ve been called out of darkness into light; (as a theology nerd, I have to drop a Latin term) we are called to live *Coram Deo*, which means “before God”...we are to not worry about what people or the world thinks about us, but living our lives faithfully to what God calls us to do
 - a) we are called to “fear the Lord”
 - B. The fear of the Lord may or may not be a topic that gets touched on often in today’s churches, but it is a theme throughout scripture:
 - 1. In *Proverbs* we see the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom
 - 2. Psalm 33:8 - “Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!”
 - 3. Peter says in his first epistle to “fear God”
 - 4. Even Christ Himself says in Matthew 10:28 “...do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”
 - C. The glory, majesty, and splendor of God is so infinite and transcendent it both comforts and terrifies us, builds us up and humbles us
 - 1. Though this may seem contradictory, we see shadows of this through our society
 - a) We have crazy people jumping out of airplanes for fun
 - b) We watch scary movies
 - c) Go on rollercoasters
 - d) Bungee jump; rock climb etc
 - 2. When we have a *godly fear* we are giving credence to God’s power over us and meditating on His glory with reverential awe
- V. So, what does a life of godly fear look like in action?
- A. I am going to flesh this out in 3 categories: mind, strength, and heart
 - 1. **Mind:** we fear God with our minds by having biblical reasons for our convictions.
 - a) This means the Bible shapes what we believe, it is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct
 - b) It also means we need to be teachable and allow the Scriptures to shape us [even if the HS uses another follower of Christ to show us the biblical evidence]
 - (1) You don’t become a Christian and immediately know everything about the Bible, but you are beginning a journey of learning (disciple) and being transformed by the truth you learn
 - c) It also means we take the biblical convictions of fellow believers seriously (I struggle with this, be honest, I can get arrogant and

quarrelsome. I thank God He has blessed me with a beautiful wife that, though she probably wouldn't admit it, is helping me grow in this area)

(1) [How controversial can I get?] People may present a different belief than ours and we sometimes either a) get defensive or b) write it off as stupid, when we should think about.

(a) Maybe they're right and I am wrong

(b) Ex. We recently celebrated a holiday a month and a half ago that is either the bane of a follower of Christ's existence, or doesn't even cross the mind of another as a problem

(i) My point is not to discuss that, but to point out we can show godly fear [and gospel unity] by being able to discuss these topics without fights, not by simply ignoring them or remaining ignorant

(ii) Won't touch Christmas don't wanna get stoned

2. **Strength:** we fear God with our strength by living a kingdom-focused life, proclaiming the gospel, serving the needy, obeying the "one another" commands in the Bible, and pursuing holiness

a) Our mission as the church is to pursue the advancement of the Kingdom of God through the power of the Gospel

b) Our desire should be to see lives transformed and our actions/deeds should be shaped by that desire

(1) If we are kingdom-focused, we will seek to sacrificially serve our community, give sacrificially, and love one another as we love ourselves

c) We need to actively pursue holiness:

John Owen[17th century Puritan Theologian]- "*Do you mortify? Do you make it your daily work? Be always at it whilst you live; cease not a day from this work; be killing sin or it will be killing you.*"

(1) Through the power of the HS working in us through the Bible and prayer

3. **Heart:** we fear God with our heart by fearing Him in Mind & Strength out of an overflow of the gospel

a) If we are not studying the Bible, inviting people into the Kingdom, and serving others out of a response to the grace, mercy, and love of God declared in the gospel message, then we are simply performing empty religion

B. God does not want your mind and strength without your heart, but if He has your heart He will also have your mind and strength.

1. I took these categories from the Shema from Deut and they are also quoted in the NT, that says you shall love the Lord your God with all mind, strength, heart

a) The point is to show that loving God and fearing God do not cancel each other out, but amplify one another

b) Chris Poblete says in "Two Fears":

What we believe informs how we live. If we really have our theology right, then the emotions that help undergird godly living will follow naturally. That is, if we truly understand godly fear, and if we truly understand the grace that is ours in the cross, we will naturally hate our sin, feel gratitude to God for His grace and mercy, and worship Him for His goodness and kindness.

VI. As a follower of Christ we need to "...fear God while waiting for our King"

VII. Read Isaiah 8:14-22

A. Outside of Christ there is only darkness

B. We don't do any favors trying to sugarcoat the gospel

1. The gospel offends because it proclaims we are fallen and sinful; that we are unable to do anything about it, and because it is to be proclaimed to all people, even ones we don't like.

2. But the gospel renews because it proclaims Christ is perfect and righteous; that He did everything we could not; and the free gift of grace is offered to undeserving sinners, even ourselves

3. The gospel is not some feel-good story, it is a matter of life and death

C. Next week we begin our Advent series "Let there Be Light"

1. There are many in our community waiting, lost, and hopeless

a) They are those in v 21-22 [read]

b) They need Jesus, they need the gospel

(1) Please invite people to come and hear the gospel message, and come yourself to see how Christ is the fulfillment of the OT