

The Sovereign God Uses Means

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[0:00] Take your copy of God's Word again and turn to Isaiah chapter 6. Isaiah chapter 6. We'll be reading the whole chapter together.

! With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

And they were calling to one another, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty! The whole earth is full of His glory. At the sound of their voices, the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the temple was filled with smoke.

Woe is me! I cried. I am ruined, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips. And my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.

Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, See, this has touched your lips. Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.

[1:17] Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said, Here I am. Send me! He said, Go and tell this people, Be ever hearing, but never understanding.

Be ever seeing, but never perceiving. Make the heart of this people calloused. Make their ears dull, and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.

Then I said, For how long, O Lord? And he answered, Until the cities lie ruined, and without inhabitant. Until the houses are left deserted, and the fields ruined and ravaged.

Until the Lord has sent everyone far away, and the land is utterly forsaken. And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leaf stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.

Amen. What a privileged man I am this morning to stand before you with such glorious passage to open before you.

[2:32] And I want to begin by asking this question. When do we meet with God as his people? When we gather like this, isn't it?

So the Lord is in our midst. We've come to meet with him. He says that where two or three are gathered for the sake of his name, he is with them. So the Lord is with us.

And we need to live here with the same kind of commitment like this prophet said. That, Woe unto me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the king.

And yet, brethren, one thing that I witness in biblical churches in America is that people gather and very quickly want to go back home.

too quickly they want to return to their homes. And this then will be an indictment against anyone who is in a hurry to go because this someone is going to take three hours.

[3:47] No, I'm joking. But the chapter before us is a very powerful, the most powerful encounter with God, I would arguably say, in all of Scripture.

It's a passage that reveals the Lord God Almighty highly exalted in his holiness. This chapter also demonstrates that the sovereign God whom we proclaim uses means.

And that's what I also wish to draw to your attention, lest anyone label us as hyper-Calvinists. We believe that God is sovereign, but this sovereign God whom we believe also has appointed means by which he accomplishes his sovereign purposes.

So here we see God and we see the prophet commissioned. But I would like to go home with this understanding that this passage tells us that the sovereign God uses means.

The sovereign God uses means. So let us explore this chapter and five important headings.
[5:14] First of all, verse 1 to 4 reveals the visions of God's holiness. Verse 5 has the confession of sin. Verse 6 and 7 reveals the cleansing of sin.

Verse 8 to 10 the commission. And verses 11 to 13 the hope for God's people. And once we are done with this chapter, we should become small and see God as great.

Because this big sovereign king is infinite but we are finite. He is God.

We are the work of his hands. We are creatures. We are but created men but he is the creator. We are subjects subjects of this great king.

So this is a chapter to humble us and to bring our pride to nothing. It's also a chapter most importantly to exhort the glory of God and see our God in his infinity since he has graciously revealed himself to us truly by his word.

[6:35] He is our God. We are his people. Though he is so transcendent yet he is imminent. He is Emmanuel God with us.

So we rejoice that we can know him truly since he has revealed himself in his word yet not fully because all eternity will reveal that God cannot be exhausted.

First of all then verse one to four marvel at the visions of God's majesty and holiness. The prophet says that in the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up and the train of his robe filled the temple.

The earthly king died because he is mortal. King Uzziah died in around 740 BC. The truth is that a man may ascend to the highest position of a other man yet all men died.

Uzziah though a king died. The mortality of man and the immortality of God is immediately demonstrated in this vision.

[8:02] The earthly king died and the heavenly king is seen by mortal eyes. Interestingly Isaiah receives an oracle when King Uzziah died and also when King Ahaz died in chapter 14 verse 28.

The truth there is that it is the Lord who is sovereign not the king. It is God who is immortal not the king not any man.

And it is God who is eternal and we have come to meet with him. The word of God to the people brings life and hope and especially when God's people meet with him.

How did Isaiah see the infinite immortal spirit? spirit? Because children we ask who is God? God is spirit and he does not have a body like us.

It is not that the prophet so much saw the form of God because you notice that there are various features in this vision that reveal that though it was a vision it was a fairly blurry vision.

[9:28] It wasn't so much that he saw God but that he experienced God. He saw the majesty the glory of the revelation of God not so much the form of God.

God is not described rather the circumstances the environment around him is described.

We're told that the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim the burning ones and all these things including the smoke shows that it wasn't so much that he saw God but that he saw the majesty the glory of God the splendor of God.

And the first thing then that we see of God is his sovereignty his majesty. The Bible says here that he is sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.

The throne is the evidence of both majesty and sovereignty. He is enthroned. I saw the Lord sitting upon the throne. God's sovereignty is demonstrated in his vision very clearly by the fact that the Lord is sitting on a throne.

[11:07] He is not disturbed by the death of King Uzziah or anything happening on the earth because he is sovereign. nothing is happening that he doesn't know or that he has not ordained.

The throne of God is in heaven but the earth is his footstool. But a day is coming when the Lord God will dwell with his people forever when he will be upon the new heavens and the new earth with his people.

The Lord reigns over all the kings of the earth over all dominions rulers and authority. He is the king of kings and the lord of lords.

And this is what King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon saw and he saved when he was abased. He lifted up his eyes to heaven and the Bible says his reason returned to him and he blessed the most high.

He acknowledged that this is the most high. And then he said and you can see how he praised him in Daniel chapter 4 verse 34 to 35. He praised and honoured him who lives forever and ever with

these words.

[12 : 24] He said his dominion is an everlasting dominion. And his kingdom endures from generation to generation.

All the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing. And he does according to his will among the hosts of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. And none can stay his hand.

This is the sovereign God. Therefore God is sovereign. And he is sovereign not just in his majesty but also he is sovereign over the angels.

Even the burning ones, the seraphs. God created angels on the sixth day. And so they are under his rule.

And of the angels he says he makes his angels wings and his ministers a flame of fire. That's how the writer of Hebrews describes them in Hebrews 1.7.

[13 : 30] And so then I urge you that you should not fear angels even though you do not see them, they are there. Don't dismiss them as if they do not exist because the Bible says that they do exist.

Because they are they not ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation. That's what they are in Hebrews 1.14.

They are there for you, for your sake, to be your ministers, to serve you. And various angels like Gabriel, Michael, are known by their names.

Then there are the cherubim, like those who had flaming sword to keep Adam from Eden after the fall. The seraphim are the angelic beings as well.

They stand before God. In this verse, the Lord is sitting but they are studying. Angels are heavenly messengers and as they cover their faces and they cover their feet, they don't cover their ears because they are sent by God to minister to his people.

[14 : 45] And they have the pair with which they fly to go and attend to God's people and accomplish God's purposes. They stand before him. In a particular category of them here with human like bodies.

Each one having six wings. But the fact that they cover their faces and feet shows that they were not able to bear the sight of God.

They could not look upon the holiness and majesty of God. Yet, they also did not cover their mouths holiness. Because they exist to serve, also to praise God.

And so in holiness we see here God's sovereignty in that they call to one another holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

Did they sing? It simply says that they called to one another and said, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

[15 : 57] The Lord of hosts shows that he is in charge of all the armies, all the heavenly beings and the earthly beings. He is the Lord of them.

But the interesting word here is the repeated word, holy, holy, holy. What does it mean that God is holy? it means, first of all, and I would even say first and foremost, that he is transcendent.

He is completely different from everyone else. And he is totally separated from his creation. And this speaks of the otherness of God.

But it also speaks secondly, of the purity, of the the righteousness of God. God is morally pure.

This ethical purity of God shows that God is most pure, righteous, and true. And angels sing of this glorious attribute and character of God, and they simply say, holy is the Lord.

[17 : 19] In Revelation chapter 4 verse 8, we read of how the four living creatures with six wings and are full of eyes all around never cease to sing day and night. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come.

The whole earth is full of his glory. Alec Muthier makes a powerful comment on this statement about God's holiness, existence, and his glory on earth, which is so helpful here.

He says, this transcendent holiness is the mode of God's immanence, for the whole earth is full of his glory.

That which fills the whole earth is his glory. That is, it is not only the one thing that is capable of filling everything, but the thing which actually does so.

Holiness is God's hidden glory. Glory is God's all present holiness. Holiness is God's hidden glory, and glory is God's all present holiness.

[18 : 34] You notice that the angels do not have a language. peculiar to heaven. I don't know whether this is something that you've heard, but one of the arguments presented for the tongue

speaking today is that the reason why we do not understand what they are saying is because they are speaking heavenly language, the language of angels.

angels. Well, this verse refutes that very strongly. The angels spoke a language that Isaiah, the prophet, on earth understood.

Well, they say, but that's because he had divine revelation. That's why he was able to understand what these angels were saying. Well, throughout the Bible, the angels spoke, and they never ever spoke the languages of heaven to man.

They always spoke the language of man, whether to Abraham or to Manoah on earth or to Joseph or Mary.

They've always spoken the languages of man. And in heaven we see they speak the languages of man to God. After all, they are ministering spirits to man.

[20:00] So how can they speak a language that would never be understood by man? So clearly, the proponents of gibberish speaking, because it is not language speaking, have no passage to cling to here.

The truth is that what they speak is unfamiliar to divine revelation. And please, children, you will most likely go to colleges and you will encounter a peculiar group of people calling themselves charismatics and they speak gibberish, a language that they don't know and no one knows, and they claim that it's from God.

No, it is not from God. It is the Tower of Babel being recreated. and the Pentecost was about returning or destroying, demolishing the Tower of Babel.

So what I'm saying here is that the language of heaven is the language of man because that is where we are looking forward to. And that's where we will be with God in his presence where righteousness dwells.

God is sovereign even over the languages of man. And he is also sovereign over all the foundations.

[21:27] The Bible says here, and the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called. The foundations, the door posts, the thresholds shakes in such a way that Isaiah could not dare to enter this presence or come closer.

And this may be an effect of the angelic singing or shouting, but it's particularly attributed to the voice of him who called.

Not the seraphs, but the Lord God Almighty. God is sovereign, over all the foundations that we build, over the foundations of his temple.

God is sovereign over everything, over the house, because we are told that the house was filled with smoke. And this smoke prevented Isaiah from seeing much.

The smoke possibly from the altar, referenced in verse 6, from where the seraphim picked the burning coals. Was this a vision of the heavenly sanctuary from where the earthly was pertinent?

[22:53] What is clear is that the divine nature is such that it excludes all the creatures from seeing the glory and the splendor of God.

The king of kings is not visible people with naked eyes. And yet he accommodates our eyes to take instruction from him.

You look at Psalm 18, verse 6 to 7, for a similar experience where we read in verse 8, that the smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth, glowing coals flamed forth from him.

The sovereign God dwells in an approachable light, and he is described as a consuming fire by the owner of Hebrews. This is our God. Behold our God.

And we must come before him then in worship, with reverence and all, for he is a consuming fire.

And when we meet with him, dear friends, we must not be in a hurry to go anywhere else, because this is the best place to be in, in the presence of God.

[24:08] King Uzziah died in 740 BC, leaving Judah in uncertainty. But the prophet's vision reminds us that when the earthly thrones are empty, the heavenly throne is well occupied to strengthen our faith.

When we feel like our failures and sins overwhelm the sovereign God, we must look to the sovereign God, the Savior, because by his Son, he has revealed himself to us.

For in the beginning, Jesus Christ, the Word, came, dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son, full of grace and truth.

We have seen him, and we see him every time we see a new conversion. We know that Christ is still at work in the means of his people. And we see him every time he gathers people like this. Because why else would you leave your beautiful homes to be here? Is it not to meet with God? And when we meet with him, we behold his majesty as we sing to him, as we offer our prayers to him, as we gather in fellowship, we see him.

[25 : 40] Because we see his mighty salvation in the lives of men, and we know that God is at work today, as he was at work in the days of these prophets.

And then secondly, when we meet with him, what are we to do? We see that there has to be the confession of sin, verse 5. how should we respond to the truth of God's sovereignty and holiness described here?

We must be humbled. We must see our sinfulness and repent. All human beings are sinful. When we admit that all human beings are sinful, that's not an excuse.

It is a reality that the prophet here himself confesses. Here is the prophet's reaction to the presence of God. Woe is to me, for I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Woe is me. The prophet pronounced a woe on himself and confessed his sinful state. His state was not compatible with God's infinite holiness, and he thus admits it, and he confesses that he is not worthy of the vision of God that he had seen.

[27 : 11] Because when we fully comprehend who God is, we shall be appalled by our pathetic, sinful state, and our plight before God will draw us to repentance, to confession of sin.

So, brethren, if you estimate yourself highly, it is possible that you are yet to fully comprehend who God is. I am a man, he says.

Of course he is a man. Why does he need to say that? He is acknowledging his mortality, his finiteness, but also his unworthiness as he confesses here.

It is a statement of humility. And you know that God dwells with those of a humble heart and a contrite spirit, those he will not despise, and he lives with them.

So, when you admit your unworthiness before God, it is so that you may decrease as Christ increases.

[28 : 31] I am a man of unclean lives, he says. These words is an admission of all sins of the mouth, the sin of blasphemy, the sin of slander, the sin of cursing, and anything else that is the opposite of praising God and blessing man.

He does not hide his sins. He admits without blaming anyone the sin of his mouth, and he confesses without explanations, without excuses, without passing the blame to anyone else like Adam, he simply blamed himself for his sins.

I am a man of unclean lips. I am a man who has sinned. He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and renounces them will obtain mercy.

To prosper is to obtain mercy. When we sing of the streams of mercy that are unceasing, which call for the loudest praise, it means that we are praising the Lord for spiritual prosperity that he has given us in his son.

But not only is the prophet sinful, but he also dwells amongst the people of unclean lips. A people of unclean lips are a people who have sinned against the Lord in word and thought and deed.

[30 : 12] In a man, all men are polluted by sin and we live with people who have been polluted by sin.

None is righteous, no, not one. All have sinned together have become worthless. No one does good, no, not one.

And the prophet has already described the sins of his people in chapter one. And he called them to come and reason together with God. If God was to mark our iniquities, we could not stand.

But he is a God merciful and gracious. His mercy knows no bounds. His grace is rich and sufficient. So perhaps you came to church today for the first time.

you've been coming, but you're not a believer. It has to begin with you being convicted of your sin, of your lies, of your cursing, of all those sins that you have committed with your lips.

[31 : 35] And you know that that admission of the sin of the lips is also the admission of the sin of the heart. Because from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

And the Lord said that the problem is not really with the mouth, but with the heart. It is from the heart that springs all evil.

Blasphemy and lust and adultery and all that. It's from the heart. But come to the Lord Jesus Christ, confessing your sins to Christ, pleading for forgiveness of your sins, and the Lord will save you. The Lord will forgive you. The Lord will deliver you from your sins. Come every soul by sin oppressed, there is mercy in the Lord. And then he says, I have seen the king, the Lord of hosts. This is the true king. This is the Yahweh, Sabaoth. He is sovereign as one who is in full charge of all his hosts, his armies.

[32 : 49] The prophetized have seen the king. And this is the most important thing that has happened to him. So I ask you, have you seen the king yet? You gather here with us to see the Lord and to worship him?

You sing with us. You bow your head with us who believe in him. But then have you seen the king? Have you confessed your sins to him? And those of us who are believers, we have seen the king. He is our king. We are in his kingdom. His kingdom that cannot be shaken. We have seen the sovereignty of God and the sinfulness of man and now we see the cleansing.

The seraphim, one of the seraphs became the agent of cleansing. And this is to tell us how the angels ministered to us sometimes without even us seeing like it happens.

But you see, this was a divine initiative. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongues from the altar.

[34 : 05] The prophet did not request for this. This is God's grace that brings salvation to all men. Teaching us to say no to ungodliness and to renounce worldly passions.

The true and permanent cleansing of our sins can only come from Christ. For we read in 1 John 1 7 and 9, the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now a burning coal, why a burning coal?

Though there is no sacrifice in view here, the seraphim flew to the prophet with a coal taken with tongues from the altar. The altar was the meeting point of atonement, propitiation, expiation, satisfaction, and forgiveness.

Because the animal had been killed, the blood had been drawn and burnt at the altar, and satisfaction of God secured, and forgiveness procured for the sinner.

[35 : 31] He used them to touch his mouth for cleansing and that's reconciliation. And he touched his mouth. The touching of the unclean lips that he had confessed to have shows that when sin is confessed, the Lord provides the means to deal with that sin immediately.

And in this case, the prophets lives were cleansed permanently because the Lord is able to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And the guilt is taken away as it was declared.

To reassure him that the Lord had not only heard his prayer of repentance and of confession, but he had also acted accordingly to deal with the problem. And he was told and assured, your sin has been atoned for.

The guilt has been taken away. And this is not arbitrary. The basis of God's mercy is the atonement of Christ. And this is exactly what the seraphim told the prophet because having confessed his sin, he brought full forgiveness.

God does not leave us in despair. Though our sins are many, but his mercy is more. Our guilt is removed, our sins are forgiven because Jesus paid it all on the cross of Calvary.

[36 : 58] The cross of Christ is where judgment and mercy meet and keys to this guilty world of sin with God's grace. So again, I ask you, do you rejoice in this salvation wrought by Christ, having been washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Do you see that your sins have been atoned for, your guilt has been taken away, and with Paul we can say, therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8, 1, there is therefore no condemnation. Why? God. Because we are in Christ Jesus our Lord. And so we are persuaded that neither life nor death, neither the angels nor the demons, neither things present nor things to come, nor anything else, is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And that forms the foundation of the commission. Because then in verse 8 through 10, the pattern of Isaiah's commission is very similar to that of Jeremiah.

And the point here is that the Lord cannot commission those that he has not saved. His cleansing, his forgiveness precedes and is the foundation upon which the great commission is given.

[38:42] because the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth and the Lord said unto me, to Jeremiah, behold, I have put my words in your mouth. And in speaking about commission by the Lord, we all need to see ourselves as having been commissioned by the Lord because he has saved us.

everyone who has been redeemed by Christ has been given the marching orders.

Go and make disciples of all nations. Beginning with your own Jerusalem, going into Judea and into Samaria and to the ends of the world.

Yes, you may not be ever able to go to Le Kuchula in Radile, but you pray for those who labor for the Lord there.

And if you're able, you give. And the point is that we are all partners in the gospel because we've been equally commissioned.

[39:57] listened. Listen to the voice of God. The Lord has called us all to his service. The Lord has spoken many times as to the means of the building of his kingdom.

And his word is the primary means that he uses in building his kingdom. So here we see the voice of God. I heard the voice of the Lord. Whom shall I send?

And this is where many Christians would respond like this. Lord, here I am.

Send him. Not send me. Send him. It's very easy to do that, isn't it? And here is the Lord's invitation to you today.

Whom shall I send? This is not a desperate God seeking to recruit anyone. He recruits those whom he has equipped with the salvation of his son.

[41:10] He is extending his invitation to you and others to be the means to accomplish his sovereign purposes. Because the Lord is in the business of sending those whom he has saved at the cost of his son to bring many others into his kingdom.

If others go, then we should support them. We should be holding the rope. If other believers did not come to you with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, would you be a believer today?

Someone shared the gospel with you, maybe your mom and dad. It could be that they didn't really necessarily share the gospel, but they dragged you to church and you heard the gospel.

Like me, I had no desire to go to church, but a friend said, if you find any job, find me at church on Sunday, and you will find me at the bulletin board at the end of the service, and then you can tell me about the job.

That's the means the Lord used to draw me to church. Got a job for my friend, went to church to look for him, but as the Lord would have it in his sovereignty, he sent rain, and the rain could not allow me to stay outside.

[42:40] I didn't want to get wet. And so I went in and I heard the gospel that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the worst, and God had mercy upon me, and he saved me.

Here I am, save me. That's the mentality of the disciples of Christ. Here I am, Lord, save me, not send someone else, save me.

When we pray your kingdom come, we mean that we are willing to be the means by which his kingdom comes. And then the Lord said, go and say, the gospel commission is primarily a call to speak.

But it may sometimes involve going. You have to be willing to leave your comforts, and particularly your emotional comfort.

For whatever reason, sharing the gospel is very hard. As I was coming this way, the Lord gave me a chance to talk with the lady. And it was a very, very pleasant experience once we got down to it.

[44:02] But before I could gather and master my strength and my courage to speak with her, it took quite some effort and some prayers too. people. But brethren, we have six days to labor for ourselves.

But also those six days we are to meet with people, people that we know, people that we work with, people that we live with. And these people know us.

They are fairly secure with us. They are not second-guessing us. they know us well. And so when we tell them that we have good news for them, and that Jesus Christ saved me, and he can save you too, if you believe in him, that's not very difficult.

It's like when you go to that beautiful, wonderful restaurant that you like, and you enjoy the meals there, and you don't struggle telling a stranger, oh yeah, I've been to that restaurant, it's very, very good, they have very good food.

It's not so hard telling them about that restaurant, is it? Then why would it be hard to tell them about Jesus Christ who saved you from death and from hell, and who gave you a new name, and who gave you a new home, and who is willing to save whoever else, and freely, by his grace?

[45:31] Why would that be so hard? we make it harder than it is, isn't it? Why do we fear telling people about Jesus Christ, and especially when we consider the hope that the gospel delivers?

We have seen four things so far, the sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of man, the cleansing of sin, and finally the commission, and finally we see the hope for God's people.

First of all, the hope is tied to that opening statement of intercession of how long, O Lord? That is the perfect question.

How long, Lord, is his way of interceding for the people to whom he would be preaching? He was pleading that the Lord would not abandon his people, because he was told, go and say to them, keep on hearing, but do not understand, keep on seeing, but do not perceive, make the heart of these people dull.

This doesn't look like the message of the gospel, does it? The message of doom and destruction. Make the heart of these people dull, and their ears heavy, and light their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.

[47:00] Praise God, this is not the message that we've been given. Because then the prophet says, how long, oh Lord? And the Lord responded with that good news word, until.

So that dull heart, those heavy ears, those blind eyes, is up to a point.

It wasn't going to be forever. That's what that word until means, is that there is a point where the Lord will help them to see, help them to hear, help them to understand, help them to perceive, and receive the gospel.

So even though you've been ministering to a people with dull hearts, and blind eyes, yet, that is not permanent.

Do not assume that they are permanently blind, and permanently dull, and that they would never ever see.

[48:19] Yours is to share the gospel, and leave the rest of the Lord, who is sovereign. Intercede for them. How long, oh Lord? Will you be angry with them forever?

The psalmist asks in Psalm 79 verse 5, How long, oh Lord? Will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire? Again, in Psalm 8 verse 4, Oh Lord, God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

It is a plea for God not to remain in his anger, and not to punish his own people in wrath, but to remember mercy. And so in Revelation chapter 6 verse 10, the Bible says, they cried out with a loud voice, Oh sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?

The ministry of prayer and intercession is one that any of us can do. You might say, well, I don't have the courage to face them with the gospel.

Well, if you will not face them, face God with prayer and pray for those who have that courage. We should pray that the message of the gospel will get to the right years of the elect and bring them to salvation.

[49:39] Evangelism without prayer is nothing for it depends on the arm of flesh. And therefore, Charles Haddon Spurgeon had his boiler room where there were so many people interceding as he preached.

So we must be willing to go, but we also must be willing to pray. And again, this is the answer. Until cities lie with houses without people and the land is desolate and waste and the Lord removes people far away.

God's response is basically that this rejection of the message of good news and judgment on these people will run its course. And that's true of all of us, isn't it?

We rejected the gospel, rejecting the gospel, rejecting the gospel. But then at some point, we heard the gospel and the Lord opened up our ears.

Perhaps because someone was praying for us and eventually we believed by the grace of God. But still there is the threat.

[50:47] Devastation comes after rebellion because sins have consequences. When we act in a manner that does not glorify God, we should expect him to show his wrath.

And so if you're there and you remain obstinate in your sin, in your rebellion, know this, that God also issues threats, true threats, and he will punish everyone who disdains his word and his son and does not believe in him.

So do not remain in rebellion. Do not harden your heart in rebellion. And then there is the promise. Because God's remnants shall be spared, God preserves a remnant saved by grace.

No matter how dark the times may be, God's purposes will prevail. And there is the ultimate promise, the holy seed, referring to Christ, the true remnant, who brings salvation to God's elect. The holy seed is its thumb. Brethren, this journey of faith is very similar to every believer. We encounter God's holiness, by his mercy we recognize our sins, and his spirit helps us to confess and to renounce them, then the Lord gives us grace.

[52:20] And when you respond in obedience, a Christian soldier is born. Yes, you may be wounded, but you are also healed and supported to get back to the battle of faith with a renewed courage.

But we have to be willing to go where the Lord has commissioned. And I know that I'm preaching to the choir here. But if we are indeed under his lordship, this is something that we need to be reminded of all the time.

The reason why we go is because we are under the lordship of Christ and we are subject of this great king. Because the Lord is our master, then we obey his instructions, specifically and especially.

But no one can obey on your behalf. You have to obey personally. And if there is any unwillingness in your heart to serve the lord with all he has given you, then you need to confess that rebellion today.

You've been commissioned and the only response the lord expects from you is here I am lord, said we.

[53:44] We should be ever singing, take my life and let it be all consecrated lord to thee. We should present our members to god as those who have been brought from death to life and our members to god as instruments for righteousness.

us. Our commitment must still be, here I am, said me.

Here I am, said me. Because we have met with the infinitely holy god. Our eyes have seen the king, the lord of hosts.

Let us pray. yes lord, we do rejoice.

Thank you for revealing yourself to us, for blessing us with your holy presence, for granting us life in your son, for giving us revelations of who you are and who we are.

[55:00] and we praise your name because we belong to you, on the account of your son. And because we belong to you, then, lord, we are willing to be used of you for your glory.

Oh, we pray that you may take away any rebellious thought in us, but that we will get to a point where we totally surrender to be used of you and to be guided by you and to be strengthened to serve you in all that we think, in all that we say, in all that we do.

Yet, lord, we also know that there are those who are in our midst who are yet to know you. They are yet to know your saving grace. Oh, lord, our savior, as you saved us, so are you able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to you by faith.

So save our children. Save them in their young age and spare them from the wickedness and the pollution of the world. Save them early in their lives.

And yet there are those also older here who are yet to know your salvation. Dear lord, have mercy upon them and draw them to Christ and save them, dear lord, by your grace.

[56:32] Thank you for this church that is so gospel minded, mission minded. They have served you.

They have seen you. They have heard your voice. They have been willing not only to commit themselves but also their resources to be used of you for the expansion of your kingdom as it is witnessed in Isilu and as they sent their pastor to teach at the Trinity Pastors College and as they are involved in many other missionary efforts we rejoice with them and are glad that we are in gospel partnership together.

So we pray, dear lord, that you may strengthen them, provide for them, continue to bless them, and use them to gather more of your elect here in Indiana, draw them to this church, oh lord, and be glorified in their midst.

And this we pray for the glory of your name. Amen.