



Sunday, December 8, 2019

Pastor Ashok Andrews

Intro to Isaiah 8:19-9:7

One of the beautiful things about the Christmas story is that God does new things. There was a newness to the very first Christmas. The world had long lay in sin and error pining, but when Jesus appeared, everything changed. The One who had been prophesied about over and over again had arrived and a new age had dawned. Now, the world could behold the glory of God in a way that it never could before. No longer was there the darkness and gloom of Mount Sinai or the glory cloud in the Temple that couldn't be approached. Now, God had come to His people and was making a way for them to draw near to Him.

In the same way, Christmas reminds us of the new birth that Jesus gives us through His Holy Spirit. Our lives were pitiful, destitute, without God and without hope in the world. But when the light of the glory of Christ shone in our hearts, we came to know and love Him. We have been made new ourselves—no longer serving the passions of our former lives—but our bodies are now devoted to the Lord, for Him to use for His own good purposes. Truly that is something to celebrate!

Context

Isaiah has been considered the “fifth gospel” throughout church history, and for good reason. Isaiah prophesied a few generations before the people were taken into exile, but God had already revealed to him the path that the people were on. Their sins had led them astray to live in a pitiful condition. but they couldn't see it yet. Isaiah was sent to tell them that God was not pleased with them and that they needed to repent in order to be saved, but, significantly, their obstinance was part of God's plan, as He says in 6:9, “Keep on hearing, but do not understand, keep on seeing but do not perceive.” Praise God that He has given us ears to hear and eyes to see and respond appropriately to the gospel!

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Isaiah 8:19-9:7

“Christmas Presence: The Greatest Story Ever Told”

Pitiful

Purposeful

Powerful

(8:19-22)

(9:1-7)

(9:6-7)

Disobedient

Favor

Grace

Defiled

Fruitfulness

Glory

Distressed

Fulfillment

Greatness

Destitute

Freedom

Defeated

Fellowship

Dejected

Fullness

Darkness

Forever

Takeaways

- 1) Beauty out of brokenness
- 2) Hope that leads to holiness
- 3) Testimonies in the face of trials

Discuss

- 1) Would you consider your life apart from Christ “pitiful”?
What was pitiful about it?

- 2) How have you seen God’s power at work in you to draw you to Himself and grow you in Christ-likeness?

- 3) Is your life is characterized by dying to self? How do you know?

- 4) How does the hope of the gospel motivate us to live holy lives here and now?

- 5) What opportunities do you have this Christmas season to share the good news about Jesus? How do you plan to take advantage of those?