

God Invites You

Text: Isaiah 45:18-25

Introduction:

- A. It is really special to receive a personal invitation to a dinner at someone's house. You feel valued as someone worthy of that invitation.
A few weeks ago Pastor Sandeep and Sonia invited us to their home for dinner. It was delicious. She must have worked on that meal all day long. We had a great time of fellowship. We felt valued by that invitation.
- B. In this passage of Scripture God issues a special invitation to us – an invitation to be His valued companions participating in His special work here on this earth, and then into an eternal relationship in a perfect place.
- C. I want to invite you to listen to a parable this morning. You remember that a parable is a story that illustrates a spiritual truth. It may or may not be historical. This one I wrote myself, so I know it is not a historical event.

There were three angels in heaven sent from God to administer His will in creation:

- A. The first was an angel of justice.
 - 1. Remember that God is a God of true justice. America is currently in the throes of a demand for justice: in correcting systemic prejudice, in unmerited brutality of some police officers, in equal rights for all, etc.
 - 2. God sent this angel to see that all that was wrong would be justified to righteousness.
 - 3. This angel looked upon the universe, and said, "There is something drastically wrong in this creation. God created it perfectly good, and said so Himself. But something has gone drastically wrong!"
 - 4. This angel did a thorough search, and found that the wrong came from somewhere in the Milky Way Galaxy, a galaxy of some 200 billion solar systems.
 - 5. He searched further, and found that there was a solar system within this galaxy where the trouble seemed to be coming from.
 - 6. Within that solar system were 8 planets orbiting that sun, and the problem came from the planet called Earth.
 - 7. The problem was sin and disobedience, targeted specifically at the God who created earth in the first place.
 - 8. Lucifer, the "Son of the Morning," the fallen arch-angel, had been cast onto the earth after his rebellion, and had successfully tempted the man & woman there to sin in direct disobedience to God. They had thus allied themselves with Satan, and against God.
 - 9. That sin had such a far-reaching effect as to damage the entire universe.
For the angel of justice, the only way to restore righteousness to the universe would be to destroy the earth in sacrifice. Oh, the solar system would have to re-stabilize to compensate for the loss of the gravitational balance, but that would be a small sacrifice in light of the pervasive damage that had already been done.
 - 10. Sin demanded the death penalty. God had warned Adam & Eve of those consequences. But they sinned anyway, thinking that the Serpent might have some valid logic in his thinking.

What? You don't think that a snake can have logical thought? Well, in retrospect, this serpent not only proposed rational thought, but he had an agenda, with the only goal in mind of destroying what was good in God's universe.

11. So the angel prepared to set in motion a plan to destroy the earth to rid the universe of that evil.

B. But the second angel, the Angel of Mercy, intervened.

1. God is also a God who balances mercy with justice. America would do well to sit up and take note.
2. This was a part of God's creation, the part which He loved very much, especially the people who lived there.
3. The angel said, "Let's see if there isn't a way to balance mercy with the demands of justice. Is there no way that God's beloved might be spared, even when they have rebelled? Let God's mercy balance His justice.
4. The angel of justice answered, "They have sinned, and sin is always balanced by death. They must die for their sin. Mercy will not erase the damage done by that sin."

C. The third angel, the Angel of Love, came with the mission of extending God's love to the inhabitants of the earth. Unbounded love: What a revolutionary concept! Just because God loves some doesn't mean that there isn't enough love to go around for everyone else.

1. This angel said, "Wait a minute, you two. There is a way through all of this. God is a God of endless possibilities, and those possibilities are the fruit of His boundless love. And He has a plan in mind, one that He set in motion even before Creation. Here's the plan:
 - a. God Himself will come to this planet in the form of a man. Oh, it won't be simple, and some aspects of his deity will have to be temporarily set aside. (Philippians 2)
 - b. He will come as the Son of God, to be Emmanuel, God With Us.
 - c. He will need to live as a man, be tempted just as would a man, suffer the infirmities of the body as a man, and then suffer the effects of sin in death as the substitute sacrifice for the sins of all people.
 - d. Yes, He will need to be rejected by the Father, because of the sin that He represents but didn't commit. It will be through His wounds that man can be healed from the tremendous blight that sin brings.
 - e. But - wait for it - He will utterly defeat all the wages of sin. He will rise from the dead, defeating even death itself, and then live on victoriously into eternity future.
2. That means that humans, the crown of God's creation, have a way to be restored back into a personal, loving relationship with our Creator. By excising that part of life that bears sin's wages God the Father can look upon each penitent worshipper through the work of the Son, and be declare us to be holy.
3. So Justice and Mercy, hop onto the balance scales that are in the form of Christ's Cross, and allow me, God's love, to hold you high in victory.

Thesis: The Creator God Invites You and Me into a Personal loving Relationship with Himself.

Isaiah extended God's invitation into that relationship.

I. The Basis of God's Call into a Relationship with Himself is our repentance. v. 22

"Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God,
and there is no other." NIV

A. God issues this call to all who will hear and respond to Him.

1. He is the creator of heaven and earth.
 - a. He simply spoke, and the power of His word brought about the very complex universe.
 - b. He designed it with purpose. And that purpose was fellowship with people in that creation.
2. But His design was damaged by rebellion.

Illustration:

Several years ago our family visited *Silver Dollar City* in Branson, Missouri.

There were numerous booths demonstrating American culture of a century ago. Artisans in those booths used only the tools available at that time to produce those crafts. There was a bakery, a blacksmith shop, a woodworking shop, a candy shop, and numerous others. But the one that intrigued me was the glass blower. He would heat the glass globules to a melting point, and then stick a stylus into that glob of molten glass. He would lift it and then skillfully blow air into the center as he rotated it. He would frequently reheat it as he filled it, tapping it here & there, turning it to make the desired shape. When he acquired the shape that he wanted he allowed the glass to cool, and then delicately tapped the neck at just the right place to separate it from the stylus. He would then fire the neck into a smooth finish.

As I watched something happened to one of his creations. When he tapped the neck it broke off unevenly. He placed that vessel back into the fire, and started over with a new creation.

- God's design for His creation was damaged beyond the point of natural healing. It took a special work of God to redeem it.
3. Now God's design included the remedy for sin damage. He planned the process of restoration and healing even before He began the Creation process.
 4. He created the earth to be inhabited. v. 18
 - a. His creation had purpose as well as a design.
 - b. It was designed specifically to support human life.
 - c. People were designed to have a personal relationship with God.
 5. He is the only One who can issue this invitation. "I am the Lord, and there is no other!"

B. God issued this invitation openly. v. 19

1. There is no secret about this invitation.
 - a. It was an open invitation, not something mystical or magical.
 - b. It was a real invitation, and one to be taken seriously.
2. We may seek that invitation with purpose - "... seek ye (not) in vain."
(expecting complete success when we respond)
3. He declared righteousness to be the basis of this relationship.

C. He intends this fellowship to be laid upon a solid foundation.

1. The solid foundation of the home church or assembly.
 - a. It is a praying church - open intercession
 - b. It is a giving church – We share the gifts God gives us with those in need of them.
 - c. It is an evangelistic church - concerned for the souls of the people it encounters.
 - d. It has well-disciplined people. They know what God wants, and

comply.

2. But we have allowed an erosion of that solid foundation
 - a. We relegate prayer to something we say to God, without even listening for His response.
 - b. We give to others out of our own surplus, not in relation to their need or our available resources.
 - c. Our concern for souls reflects our own need to grow numerically, not necessarily motivated by God's heart to redeem the lost.
 - d. We have allowed biblical teachings to fall into compromise, or we ignore them altogether. It has become more important for us to fulfill our own agenda than it is to find God's will through Bible study and meditation.
- So we allow an erosion of God's intended foundation, deteriorating His House.
- D. Therefore, to enter into this special relationship we repent – turn away from the rebellion, or sin in our lives, and seek His forgiveness and redemption.

II. God Invites us into a Personal Relationship with Himself. v. 20, 21

- A. The Creator God issues an invitation to cultivate a personal relationship with Himself. It's a personal invitation with your name written on it.
 1. We are invited to gather together, no matter what form that may take.
 - a. It's called a solemn assembly. We are to come before the Lord in reverence & awe. We have allotted Sundays as a time of worship and rest. That does not necessarily mean a church building, though that greatly enhances our ability to worship. We worship "in spirit and in truth," as Christ told the Samaritan woman.
 - The Israelites had at least 12 occasions for "Solemn Assembly" or feasts in a year's time.
 - b. It's an invitation to come in a regular assembly to cultivate that relationship with our Creator God.
 - c. But we find many other things more important than the "solemn assembly." These may be the "idols of wood" that Isaiah talks about. We "pray" to gods that cannot save!! All of those things that we find more important than worshipping God are our idols.
 2. God invites us to come unto Him. This is a continual drawing near to God, moment by moment.
 3. We are to draw near – Assemble.
 - a. Assemble with God in prayer
 - b. Assemble with God in worship
 - c. Assemble God in our personal walk.
 - This is the invitation the He extends to us.
- B. The Creator God issues an invitation to the entire creation – not just the church. (v. 21) "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together..."
KJV
 1. Declare what is to be. Present God's message to all who will hear it.
 - a. Share the Gospel of the Messiah, the message of Christ.
 - b. Teach and make disciples of all people.
 2. Draw our world near to the Lord - convince, lead, be the Salt, & light to the world.
 3. Let them take counsel together

- a. Lead others to thought – provoking concepts about God.
- b. Lead others into a habit of study. Those who earnestly and honestly seek truth will find truth in the Creator God, no matter how faulty their thinking currently may be.

III. There are Benefits of a Personal Relationship with God

v. 22 - 25

- A. First, we benefit from salvation resolution of sin in our lives.
 - 1. “Turn to Me, and be saved” – This is the God’s Plan of Salvation.
 - 2. There is only one real God, and He is concerned with our welfare. He is the One who desires fellowship with His creation.
- B. Secondly, there is a continual and eternal fellowship with God for those who respond to His invitation.
 - 1. Every knee shall bow, every tongue swear that Jesus is Lord, the only One with the real right of leadership and direction in our lives.
 - 2. Every believer will acknowledge that in Him, and Him alone, in real righteousness and strength.
 - 3. But all who reject His Lordship will be put to shame, along with Lucifer, their leader.

Conclusion: A Prayer ...

If I can do some good today,
If I can smooth the rugged way,
If I can something helpful say,
 Lord, show me how.

If I can right a human wrong,
If I can help to make one strong,
If I can cheer with a smile or song,
 Lord, show me how.

If I can do a kindly deed,
If I can help someone in need,
If I can sow a fruitful seed,
 Lord, show me how.

If I can feed a hungry heart,
If I can give a better start,
If I can fill a nobler part,
 Lord, show me how.

-Grenville Kleiser