

NS LIFE GROUPS

Standalone Message

Isaiah 1:1-20

February 23, 2020

Main Idea: God hates sin and empty worship, but he loves to save sinners by his mercy and grace.

Study:

Read the referenced Scriptures as you go and use the following points and questions to discuss this week's sermon.

Three Truths from Isaiah 1:1-20:

1. Truth #1: God hates sin. (Read Isaiah 1:1-9)

- What word does God use in verse 2 to describe the essence of sin? (*rebellion*)
- Why does God hate sin? (*He is holy, which means he is completely pure from sin and set apart in a different category from us. Sin is rebellion against him, and it destroys us.*)
- Do you view all sin as serious rebellion against God?
- What are examples of sins that we are not necessarily quick to hate and that we are more acceptable of in our lives? (*Pride, gossip, materialism, selfishness, laziness, etc.*)

2. Truth #2: God hates empty worship. (Read Isaiah 1:10-15)

- Why does God reject his people's acts of piety, devotion, and worship? (*They are just going through the motions because their lives are full of sin and their hearts are far from God.*)
- How does this idea apply to us today? What does "empty worship" look like for us now?
- **Read Matthew 22:37-38.** According to Jesus in that passage, what is the key to worship, obedience, and religious activity that actually honors God? (*Love for God must be the motivator for us.*)

3. Truth #3: God loves to save sinners. (Read Isaiah 1:16-20)

- In verse 18, what does God say he will do with our sins?
- How do we receive this forgiveness and cleansing of our sins? (Faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.)

Application:

1. Take a moment to reflect on your life. Is there a certain sin or sins that you are tolerating and don't view as that big of a deal? Are there sins in your life you don't hate like God does? What step of obedience can you take with that sin to begin pursuing a holy life that honors God? (*People can share, but they might not want to publicly share here.*)
2. Is there a reason that your worship and religious activity have been "empty" before God? Why? What needs to change? (*Again, this might just be a reflection time rather than public sharing.*)
3. What is one step of obedience you need to take or one change in your thinking you need to make in response to our study today?

Close your group time with intentional prayer for each other and for our church. Pray that God would help us to view our sin, even "small sins" as serious rebellion against his Lordship in our lives. Pray that we would pursue God-honoring holiness in every way and that we would love him above all else out of gratefulness for what he has done for us on the cross.