

expression of his character and nature and are thus of the highest value to him. Since he is transcendent, he cannot be manipulated by sympathetic magic. He can only be identified with through the means of personal relationship he makes available to us. Since he is the one Creator and is utterly consistent, the world has a purpose and a goal. That in turn means it is possible to determine what is effective in reaching that goal and what is not effective. This also means that it is possible to keep track of progress toward that goal. There is thus an absolute ethic that is rooted in the very nature of things, which, when followed, brings blessing to the human race and which, when denied, brings disaster.

This is where Isaiah is coming from. And it is the same place that Jesus Christ was coming from when he said to Nicodemus, "I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man" (John 3:12-13). Jesus was claiming to have direct access to the truth. More than that, he was claiming to be the means of that truth's being revealed to the world. This is where the passion of an Isaiah and a Jesus come from: the conviction that the truth about nature and life has been revealed to us and that we can then speak with assurance about the right ways to live and the wrong ways. That is what is at issue in a passage like this.

(Zondervan, 2003).

News:

Nick Self needs surgery on his foot. There are some problems with the logistics of getting that surgery.

Sandy Cavazos: bone scan: There is probably some news on her condition that was not available at bulletin press time.

October 25 is the Fall get-together at the Cunninghams. Around 6 P.M. until they're tired of us.

The Eloy Church of Christ is having their First Annual Men's Leadership Day on November 9, 2013. Bro. Freddie Anderson, Minister at the West Main Church of Christ in Madisonville, Texas will be conducting the workshop on Church leadership and various other topics beneficial for leaders in God's kingdom. Contact info: eloy.churchofchrist@yahoo.com. 520-466-9593.

Prayer List:

Healing: *Jerry Robinson's mother Norma. Mike and Sandy Cavazos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

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Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

6 October 2013

Topics

A.M. Bible Class: Spiritual Gifts

A.M. Lesson: Are You Maturing as a Christian?

Hebrews 5:11-6:12

P.M. Lesson: Thus Says Yahweh to His Messiah Cyrus

Isaiah 44:28-45:13?

Wednesday: Did God Appoint Baasha to Do Evil and then Punish Him For Doing It?

1 Kings 16:7

Notes

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Ben Atchley: 428-2246

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

Why Did Jesus Ask the Disciples to Pray?

Luke 22:40

Quest Study Bible

In the loneliness that comes while awaiting death, Jesus longed for the presence of friends who would pray with him. In addition, the disciples needed to pray for their own benefit, considering their predicted denial, cowardice and abandonment of Jesus. Their boasts of allegiance (Mark 14:31) appear pathetic in light of their behavior as the night wore on. Their failure to pray would make them an easy mark when assaulted by fear and temptation. (Zondervan, 2003).

Fill 'Er Up

Isaiah 44:17-20

Revolve Devotional Bible for Teen Girls

When was the last time you were tempted to bow down and worship a block of wood? Good answer. Okay, when was the last time you binged on ice cream or went shopping when you were depressed? Ever tried to cover up a restless or lonely feeling by looking up a guy or calling friends? Uh-oh...

When the Bible talks about worshipping idols, some people think it's only talking about weird little statues. Our idols may look a little different than in Bible times, but they're still around. *Anything* (or anyone) that you turn to for meaning, security, comfort, or satisfaction before God is an idol. Getting a high or an instant fix from those things is idol worship, and God says it's just as dumb as bowing down to a block of wood (or a cud-chewing cow, for that matter).

Ask yourself, "What habits or objects are stealing my affections away from God? What do I turn to when I want to make myself feel better?" Attention from guys, food, spending money, friends, looking good, fun, alcohol, drugs, exercise, TV, Internet, school, and sports are some things you might try to fill up holes. Many of those aren't even bad things, but they can be misused.

When you feel a hole opening up in your life, God is the only one who can fill it. He wants to make you satisfied in him alone and to give you an undivided heart toward him (Jeremiah 32:38-39).

(Thomas Nelson, 2010).

Access to Truth

Isaiah 44:6-22

John Oswalt. NIV Application Commentary

The forcefulness of the language used here and elsewhere in Isaiah in reference to idol worship strikes our modern ears harshly. This is because we have come to the place where harsh language is tolerated only when it is directed against intolerance. In the modern West, intolerance and politically incorrect speech are the only sins left. And intolerance is defined in the widest terms possible: believing that someone else is wrong. We have lost all confidence that anything is true in the realm of ultimate meaning. What you believe is just as likely to be true as what I believe; therefore, how dare either of us criticize the other? I may adhere to any strange creed I wish as long as I do not insist you should believe it.

What has happened is this: For the first fifteen hundred years of Christendom the church maintained the authority to determine what was right and wrong. Then for the next three hundred years the Bible was the authority. Then the Enlightenment replaced the Bible with reason. Now we have lost faith in reason's ability to show us the truth. This means that each person now determines truth for himself or herself, but with one major caveat. Anything

that society determines demeans the absolute worth and freedom of any individual will be attacked with draconian energy.

So, to use modern parlance, where is Isaiah "coming from"? How can he speak so forcefully about someone else's cherished beliefs? He can do so because he believes that he has access to "the truth." That is the critical question. Does he have access to such truth, or is his "truth" of no more value than that of the Canaanites or the Babylonians? If the latter is true, then we must hang our heads for him and tell him to "pipe down." If, however, he does know the truth, then he must not keep silent. Should a person who knows that a highway bridge has collapsed a few miles ahead keep silent? That would be criminal neglect. Such a person has an obligation to warn everyone he can of the danger they are facing.

So the overriding issue in all of this is whether the "truth" about life, its meaning, and its purpose can be known. And if so, by what means is that knowing possible? If, however, life is without meaning, then that is the end of the discussion. "Right" and "wrong" are meaningless terms that should be expelled from our vocabulary. Yet the most avid secularist is not willing to give up such terms, especially when he or she feels "rights" have been violated. We do think some things are so, so the question is: How do we know them? The answer given everywhere today is: experience. Our experience, individual and collective, teaches us that certain things are so. However, beyond some broad generalities, everyone's experience is different. So it is impossible to say that there are particular principles that are true for everyone.

But before we go very far down that road, we should look at the five thousand years of human history that have preceded us. When unaided human experience has been made the means for discovering "truth," the results have been markedly similar around the world. The world is divine; all physical-psycho-social forces are gods; conflict is eternal; sexuality is the life force; sympathetic magic is the means of manipulating and identifying with the gods; all ethics are relative (though since no society can exist for long without certain ethical norms, the ethics a given society deems effective will have to be enforced with coercion); all time is cyclical; progress is an illusion; individuals are only of value as they are a part of the larger whole of humanity, but humanity itself is of no particular value. The history of the human race tells us that this is where the theory of knowledge the Western world now espouses will lead us. Is that really where we want to go?

The only viable alternative to that theory of knowledge is the one offered in the Bible. It is the principle of revelation. Truth is mediated to us from beyond ourselves. It is mediated by both language and action as God, who transcends us in every particular, intersects us in our own context.

This mode of knowledge has led to some startlingly different conclusions about reality. There is one transcendent Creator of the universe, who is a personal Spirit. He created the universe freely and joyously as an expression of his own creative love. Humans, and indeed, individual humans, are an