

The Effectual Love of God

Isaiah 62:1-12

Human Stories

Beginning

Often we see a hint of where the trouble will be (warning)

Middle

The crisis: well-deserved trouble

End

The crisis is resolved

The Story of the People of Israel

Beginning

God called the people of Israel to be His people

Warning: "If you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you... You will plant a vineyard, but you will not even begin to enjoy its fruit... A people that you do not know will eat what your land and labor produce." *Deuteronomy 28:15, 30, 33*

Middle

They disobeyed

God called Assyria and Babylon to conquer Israel and take them into exile and consume their harvests

End

?

The Story of God's People in Jesus

Beginning

The call: "Follow me!"

The warning: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." *Luke 9:23*

"And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." *Luke 14:27*

Middle

You, and I, and we all fail to follow

even for those with the Spirit of God living within us!!

The crisis

End

?

Isaiah 62:1-12

1-5: Desolation will be replaced by the delight of God

"I will not keep silent": perhaps Jesus' ministry of intercession for His people

We are invited into that ministry

Vindication/righteousness: status and character

Both from God, and both really become ours

A new name=a pledge by God to make it true

The "effectual voice" of God: what He declares becomes true by Him saying it

"My delight is in You" and "Married"

Symbol of blessed life: head, heart, hands

6-9: God and people worked toward His promised blessing

Watchmen: prophets, or angels, or God's people

Persevering prayer

"give him no rest": crying out for God's ongoing work

Persevering proclamation

"give yourselves no rest": join in God's ongoing work
God vows to bring blessing to His people
God's people pursue what God has vowed to bring
God's blessings lead to praise
Knowing that the blessings we enjoy come from God's love doubles the enJOYment

10-12: All people are called to become God's delight

Emphatic call to enter God's blessing
For God's people
For the peoples of all nations to join God's people
The names for "the people" and "the peoples"
Holy People
"A kingdom of priests and a holy nation" Exodus 19:6
Redeemed / rescued
Sought after (like the Good Shepherd and lost lamb)
No longer deserted (delight)
A people loved by God's transforming love

The Big Idea

God's love rescues, transforms, and delights in the people who are His in Christ

God's love makes the objects of His love worthy of His love

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

Application

Know that God delights in each person in Christ

We were Deserted and Desolate
We were judged and worthy of judgment
We have a Savior: Jesus Christ
This is a gift of God, received by faith in God the giver
The gift must be received

Our new names:

Redeemed & Sought After
"My delight is in you!"
Like a bridegroom delights in his bride
A shocking description of God's feelings about broken people!

Rejoice in such great love!

Sometimes we resist this love because "I don't deserve it"

Of course we don't deserve it!
That's what makes His love so glorious!
Resisting His love is responding in self-centeredness

"My beloved is mine and I am his" *Song of Solomon* 2:16

God says: "My delight is in you"
Our reply: "And my delight is in you"
When we delight in this love of God, it brings joy together with God!

Joyfully and passionately live into God's promised transformation

We pray and work because our prayer and our work are guaranteed to be fruitful
"Give yourselves no rest" and "Give Him no rest" until it is complete
The effectual love of God calls us into the joyful journey of sharing His glory → being like Him

In the Church as well

The Church, and our church, is not worthy of God's love

So we bring harm rather than good to the world
Yet He delights in the bride of Christ (the Church)

Because of the love of Christ

“Give yourselves no rest” and “Give Him no rest” until it is complete

Joyfully and passionately, we desire to live into God’s promised transformation

By the power of the Spirit and the love of God

God’s love makes the objects of His love worthy of His love

That we would be a blessing, not a curse, to all peoples!

Reflection Questions

1. How do you typically respond to the crisis that comes when we fail to be good like God? Common responses are: to shame ourselves, or to tell ourselves we’re doing okay and just to hand in there, or to give up in despair, or some other response?
2. What is your reaction to the idea that God gives His people the new name: “My delight is in her”? What might prevent us from rejoicing in this delight?
3. What does it look like “to give God no rest” until His promised transformation of us and the Church is complete?
4. What does it look like “to give ourselves no rest” until His promised transformation of us and the Church is complete?