

**I. Empty Rituals - Is. 1:10-15**

1. The word of the Lord (**verse 10**)
  - A. He comes with the authority of the Lord
  - B. The same God who spoke in the days of Moses
2. Instruction
  - A. Torah or law - he is describing God's law
  - B. Hear implies obedience
- Rea C. The word "hear" also allows for disobedience... because just because you hear does not mean you obey
3. Sodom and Gomorrah
  - A. Compared to these pagan cities
- Rea B. From the outset he is telling them that they are behaving like these wicked cities
4. "Sacrifices" - multitude (**verse 11**)
  - A. Continued to bring their "offerings"  
Rea -everyone knows that as long as you come to church and give your money you can act any way you please - ???
  - B. Sacrifices:  
-for guilt  
-for thanksgiving  
Rea -to begin an event, or project
  - C. What are they to me?  
Rea -by bringing their offerings, they think they can buy God - pay Him off
  - D. I have more than enough burnt offerings
5. Who required this? (**Verse 12**)
  - A. God himself required this - see Leviticus
  - B. Their motives were in question
  - C. Going through the motions was not enough
- Rea D. Compare a husband who buys his wife an anniversary gift, yet is not faithful
- E. By asking "who required this?" God is reminding them that this is not the "system" they are dealing with - like, remember who asked this of you and treat Me with a little respect
6. Their "trampling" of His courts was meaningless (**verse 13**)
  - A. Coming to His courts (even) was not an empty affair to God
  - B. Note the word "meaningless"
  - C. With pagan gods, relating to them was like a vending machine... bring your offerings and you receive His blessing
- Rea D. We often think like this... we expect His blessings - after all haven't we been faithful to "bring our offerings?"
- Rea -meditate on your "expectations" of God
7. Specific things that they were doing - "New Moon feasts" and "appointed festivals" (**verse 14**)
  - A. I hate will all my being  
Rea -does God hate? - must be something awfully big

B. A “burden” to me

C. “Sabbaths” are mentioned

-the Sabbath is so designed to make us trust Him

-background text is Ex. 16:22-30

-they are keeping the Sabbath but not really trusting Him

Rea D. Even in the Old Testament He wanted more than ritual - He wanted relationship

8. Spread out your hands (**verse 15**)

-when they want something from God

-I hide my eyes from you

Rea -there is a novel idea - that when we pray God will not listen - could this be the reason that our prayers are unanswered?

Rea -hand raising without your heart being in it

9. Full of blood - they were not innocent toward one another

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. What is “Sunday” to you?

-what is the correct way to keep “Sunday?”

2. Compare 1 Timothy 2:8 - pray “lifting up holy hands”

3. Discuss how what we do with our neighbor affects our relationship with God,... and more specifically our prayer life with God

4. “Leave your gift at the altar” - then come and worship Me

5. One evangelist stated that in many sermons we don’t know what we’re being asked to do,... that is not the case here

## II. True Followers - Isaiah 1:16-17

1. Wash and become clean (**verse 16**)

-wash, clean, take and stop

2. Remove evil deeds

Rea -mmm, repent before you approach God??

3. **Verse 17** has positive commands

Rea -as to what that change would look like

-learn, seek, defend, take up the cause, plead

A. Learn to do right

B. Seek justice

C. Defend the oppressed

D. Take up the cause of the orphan

E. Plead the case of the widow

Rea 4. Is this social justice?

-how is the same or different from Black Lives Matter? - if you dare

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. “Learn” - we have to learn to do right, doing wrong comes natural

2. All these are the vulnerable, defenseless

3. Does anyone look after the widow? Or the orphan?

4. Do you think it true that God has a special place in His heart for the oppressed?

## III. Repentance Required - Isaiah 1:18-20

1. “Settle” - set things right (**verse 18**)

- a chance to repent
- Rea -in the past some preachers made us feel like scum with no opportunity to repent
- 2. He presents a positive outcome - moving them beyond their sins, to what God actually wanted
- Rea -note that “sins” is the problem - not the sacrificial system itself
- 3. Animal sacrifices had to be accompanied by a heart to repent
  - God will make them “white” as wool
- 4. A promise of blessing (**verse 19**)
  - covenant blessing will happen (Dt. 30:15-20)
- 5. Resist and rebel (**verse 20**)
  - the consequence will be “sword”
  - I see an opportunity to repent before the judgment of God falls - just like in the days of Noah, they had opportunity
  - just like in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah they had opportunity to repent
  - just like today... you have opportunity to repent
- 6. By the “mouth of the Lord”
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
  1. Billy Graham always gave an opportunity to repent
    - the word “repent” has all but disappeared from sermons today
  2. Worship is not divorced (in God’s eye) from “real life” - you cannot just leave that at the door
  3. Isaiah (speaking for God) says you have two choices:
    - A. Repent of sins - receive blessing
    - B. Resist and rebel (verse 20) - and be devoured by the sword
 \*\*A clear cut choice - so their free will is evident here
  4. We ought not get our feelings hurt if people reject the gospel message - they are not rejecting us, they are rejecting the “word of the Lord”
  5. The altar call has disappeared as well - two very positive things about the altar call is that it...
    - A. Confronts all with their misdeeds - confrontation is out of style at church
    - B. Gives people a chance (by free will) to lay down the burden of their sin/ guilt

Blake Hearson - SS Lesson for September 6, 2020