

Isaiah 42:1-9

Servant of the LORD - Savior of the World

Pastor Guy Gray

The Servant of the LORD

Isaiah 42:1-9 brings us to the first of what are called “The Servant Songs” in the book of Isaiah (see also: Isaiah 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12). Here we are introduced to “The Servant of the Lord,” who will be used of God to bring salvation to the world. Only in the light of the New Testament do we learn the real identity of the “servant of the Lord”—Jesus Christ our savior.

Reading the servant songs is an amazing revelation of Jesus. Here we learn about the mission of Jesus; His sacrificial life and death; His style of ministry in our broken world; and most incredibly, we see a portrait of the love relationship between God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. This is why the servant songs are so powerful for our faith and practice as Christians. If you take the time to really reflect on these passages—meditating on them; pulling them into your heart; praying through them with gratitude and longing to know and experience Christ—your life will be touched in a powerful way. Remember, our goal is to see, know, love, and trust Jesus. Ultimately we want to become like Him and serve Him, joining Him in His mission to our broken world.

A Mission of Justice

“Justice” is a key word in this passage. It is repeated 3 times in 4 verses. Justice is the word that captures the essence of Jesus mission in our world. What does justice mean? Does it mean punishing the guilty? Does it mean making sure that all people are treated in a manner that is “fair.” Does it mean exposing and eliminating corruption? Well, yes. It means all that and more. In the Bible the word justice is a huge concept that means setting all things right. It means restoring lives and relationships to the state that God originally intended. Because we are living in a broken and sinful world that is filled with “injustice,” this implies that evil must be overcome and the guilty punished. This aspect of justice comes into focus with the Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross. There is another dimension to it as well. It also means restoration, reconciliation and healing. This is also the mission of Jesus Christ—a mission of true justice in a broken world. We learn about both dimensions of Jesus’ mission in the servant songs. We learn about God’s work to triumph over evil, sin and guilt through the sacrificial death of Christ (see Isaiah 53). We also learn about God’s work to restore, reconcile and heal lives and relationships. This too is the mission of Christ. If you are a follower of Christ, you have been called to join Him in this mission. It’s so wonderful that Jesus wants to touch our own lives with the gift of righteousness and restoration. He then sends us into the world to join Him in His mission to others.

The Root of All True Ministry

Pay close attention to the first verse of Isaiah 42. This verse is a description of a relationship. It is the relationship of God the Father and Jesus Christ, the servant of the Lord. As you read the verse you can sense an incredible bond of love. The Father speaks of His absolute delight in Jesus. This is the passage that is quoted at the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17). In fact, this is one of the ways we learn that the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 42 is actually the Son of God, Jesus Christ—this is so powerful. It shows us the root of all true ministry in our broken world. Before Jesus ever performed one miracle or ever taught one word of amazing truth—before He even got started in His world changing ministry—there was this expression of the absolute love of the father. This is the root of all true ministry. Real ministry flows out of a dynamic love relationship with God. It flows out of the committed love of God, received and embraced. Jesus lived in this love relationship every day of His life. This was the center. And so it must be for us if we want to see real world changing ministry flow out of our lives.

A Primer in How to Take Over the World

Verses 2-4 reveal the methods of Jesus. Jesus is on a mission of Justice to the world. That sounds intense, and it is! The methods of Jesus are unexpected. The ministry of Jesus is characterized by a “relentless gentle persistence.” He won’t cry out or shout. He won’t break a bruised reed or snuff out a smoldering wick. That’s gentleness. But neither will He falter or be discouraged until He brings forth justice in the earth. That’s persistence! So now we know the ways of Christ. Christ wants to take over the world (to bring justice). He is calling us to join Him in His mission. But if we want to join Him in His mission, we will need to adopt his methods as well as his goals. Relentless gentle persistence—that’s the way of Jesus! May the Lord fill us with the power of His Spirit, giving us the strength we need to change our world as we walk in the way of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This week: Read through Isaiah 42:1-9 every day. Spend time praying, listening, and journaling. Allow the Lord to move in your life.

Parent Prayer Group

Wednesday, July 9th 7-8pm

Come and join other parents of Jr. High & High School to pray for our students and the Student Ministries leaders. For more information contact Cynthia Weston @ 515-1464 or cwweston@juno.com

Friday, July 11th •

Jr. High School Kids Meeting

6pm @ the Community Center

If you are a Jr. High student (6th – 8th grade) you are invited to join us for a planning meeting! Last week your parents met, this week it’s your turn! The goal of this meeting is for you to plan activities just for Jr Highers! For more information, contact Pastor Josh at 699.2226 or josh@riverwest.org

July 14th-18th •

Vacation Bible School K-5th

Register now...it’s almost full! Forms are in the lobby & at the church office. For more information contact Lindsie at 699.2226 or lindsie@riverwest.org

Sunday July 13th

Night Out-River West Stories 7pm @ RW Church

Come out for an evening to listen to stories of faith, rescue & redemption as members of River West share their stories about the amazing ways God is working in their lives. As usual we will be serving something cool & delicious! Limited childcare available by RSVP only to Mary@riverwest.org or 699.2226

Saturday July 19th

Saturday Morning Prayer

RW Fellowship Hall • 8-9am

If you would like to take a more active role in the heart of our church through prayer, come join us during this amazing time of seeking and rejoicing in Gods plans for us as a church and community of believers. For more information contact Jeff Nopper @ 245.1841 or Ryan Lee @ 235.9388