

The Weary World Rejoices – Isaiah 40:1-5

*“We pursue being a disciple making family: surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and **saturated in His word.**”*

We see the prophet Isaiah bringing comfort to God’s people in this text. This comfort was future focused and would provide encouragement to a weary people returning from exile. Their rebellion which led to the Babylonian exile would be their judgment, but we see in Isaiah 40 that God is committed to His people. Let’s take a look at a couple of questions.

Discussion Questions* -- *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. We read in verse 1, “comfort, comfort my people, says your God.” This is intended to be an encouragement to a people that had sinned greatly against the Lord, with their idolatry, immorality, and insensitivity to the things of God. But they were still His people, and He loved them. He would discipline them but not forsake them. As they returned from exile to rebuild Jerusalem, we see the God of all comfort go before them. As believers we can find comfort for our lives today as well. What areas of your life do you need to hold to his comfort? We are more than conquerors in Christ. How do we find comfort today through our struggles?
2. There is a command to “speak tenderly” or to the heart that their “warfare” or severe trials may be ended. Who is someone that has spoken tenderly or spoken to your heart that brought you encouragement? Can you recall a time that the words of someone impacted you to carry on in a difficult time? How have you been able to “speak tenderly” to others?
3. Think about Isaiah and many of the other prophets. We see over and over the people would not listen nor heed the warnings of the prophets. The people would stiffen their necks and walk in rebellion. This passage was given to the people 150 years before they would ever need it. Can you relate to the ignoring of the prophets’ words? Have you ever found yourself feeling like you were wasting your breath with others? How can we find comfort in the sovereignty of God in this passage? Along with His attributes of grace and mercy.
4. We see in v.3 there is a voice that cries in the wilderness preparing the way of the Lord. In the coming of Christ, we see John the Baptist prepare the way. We are called to prepare the way for Christ in our hearts. As people would prepare the highways for kings and queens to travel along the road. Filling in the low spaces and cleaning the way we are called to do the same in our hearts. We should follow through with repentance of our sin that elevates our own glory or that ignores our rebellion against Christ. Repentance may be a kind of death, but it leads us to new life. How well do you see the areas of repentance needed in

your life? How do you typically allow your heart to be leveled by divine grace? Our pride and conceit of our own merit hinder us from the comfort in Christ. How have you found this to be true?

5. There is an exciting point that stands out in this text that the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. His glory is revealed to the prepared hearts and it is revealed without regard to nationality. There will come a time all will see His glory (Philippians 2:9-11). On that day we will experience together the greatest sight we have ever seen. Most who saw Jesus during His lifetime missed his glory. We can behold His glory today as we anticipate His coming glory through the Scripture. How can you focus on His glory this busy Christmas season? Who can you share this good news with this season?