

## Lesson 6

### Isaiah 55:1-13

Looking back is not always a tonic! A Sunday School class years ago, with not much evidence of results; a Bible class or club for youngsters, with memories of difficulties but not much to show for all that effort. Maybe door to door visitation: what a hard and stoney furrow! Did anyone listen? Was anyone won for Christ? Of course that is never the whole story, but some days it seems so — and when those days come, where are we to turn? Turn to Isaiah 55:11. Let it be never so true that we tried to share the Word of God and saw nothing for it, and our opportunity is now long since gone and irrecoverable: the Word we shared is not ours but his; our chance is gone, but not his. No one loves the Word of God more than the God whose Word it is, and he, the eternal, almighty, impeccably faithful Lord, has pledged that his Word will never be fruitless, never come back empty handed. When we speak of God's Word as a 'living Word', this is the reality of which we speak. First, it comes from his mouth: like the let there be light' of Genesis 1:3 — 'and there was light!' His Word is full of his creative power to achieve what the Word expresses. Secondly, God's Word is his personal messenger. It goes where he 'sends' it and achieves what he commands it. Thirdly, it cannot but hit its target, do its work. So then, those children, young people and door-openers of long ago, those passers-by at the open air meeting, that 'chance' fellow in the next seat in the bus who accepted a tract, that seemingly cold, unresponsive congregation in hall or church — did they hear the Word of God? From his mouth, through us, was the great messenger sent? Have no fear: as with Jeremiah (1a2), so with us, the Lord 'is ever wide awake, watching over my word to perform it'. All will be well, indeed, more than well.

1 Last week we studied the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. What connection do you see between Isaiah 53 and the invitation given in 55:1-2? Why is this a wonderful description of gospel grace?

2. Isaiah 55:3-5 is written in the context of the Davidic covenant. How does this help you understand verses 4-5? What did God promise? How was it fulfilled in the servant's work and the results that flow from it?

3. In Isaiah 55:6-7 what are the elements of an authentic response to the grace revealed in the servant's sacrifice? What do these verses tell us about the way our lives should be if we genuinely respond to the grace given through Jesus Christ?

4. What are the great promises regarding evangelism and the sharing of the gospel given in verses 8-11? Why do we need verse 8? What are the confidences and encouragements contained in verses 10-11 and how do these verses encourage us to persevere in proclaiming the gospel?

5. Read Isaiah 56:1-8. How does verse 1 combine the two great themes of the prophecy so far? What promises are given here to foreigners and eunuchs who were excluded from Israel's worship and what conditions must be fulfilled?