



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Acts 1 – 12 Sermon Series

Supports Session 7: Worthy

Sermon Title: “An Invitation During Hostile Times” (Isaiah 55:6-11)

### Connection to Session 7

Peter and John once again found themselves under scrutiny for proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. They were told to no longer proclaim this message. We, like Peter and John, may experience scrutiny for sharing the gospel in today’s culture. God gave Isaiah specific instructions that we can apply to our lives today that will help us be faithful to our calling no matter the criticism.

### Introduction/Opening

It is fun and exciting to receive an invitation. We know that it is typically to an event like a wedding or a special event. We also enjoy knowing that the host felt us worthy to receive the invitation. It would be good for us to look at today’s message as an invitation. God is the One who has sent out the invitation and it is to those who are seeking to live out and share His gospel message. Every invitation calls for an RSVP. Let’s pray that we agree to the invitation that is being sent to us today.

### Outline

- I. An invitation to seek the Lord (vv. 6-7).** What do we do when we misplace our keys? Even better, what do we do when we can’t find our phone and we know it is on silent? Most of us go all in at this point. We also enlist our loved ones to help us. The first step in our invitation is not to find keys or a phone. Instead, God is inviting us to seek Him. In doing so, He also tells us that He may be found. Jesus extended this invitation when He said, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Matt. 6:33).

As we see this invitation in the passage, we have several things to learn. First, the call is to actively strive to find God as opposed to passively sitting and waiting on Him. When the keys or phone are misplaced, we do not sit on the couch and wait for them to magically appear. No, we get up and actively seek them out. God is extending this same invitation to us.

Second, when we seek Him, we are invited to return to Him. Seeking after God changes us because we draw closer to Him. Seeking after and following God is about

going on a journey with Him that changes us from the inside out. It does not mean everything is going to go the way we want, but it does mean that we can know and experience Him throughout the journey.

**II. An invitation to know His ways (vv. 8-9).** When we were young, we did not understand the rules our parents had for us. We didn't want to go to bed so early or eat our vegetables. Now, however, we understand their wisdom and are grateful for their willingness to patiently coach us.

In a similar way, we do not understand God's thoughts or ways. We wish that everyone would be open to the good news of Jesus Christ, yet we know that this is not the case. We wish that sin was not in this world, yet we look around and see the impact that it is having. We may not understand why God is allowing this to happen, but we also understand that He sees and knows things that we cannot see or know.

When we were young and didn't like the rules, we still followed them. Now that we are older, we understand our parents' ways. As we reside in this sin-filled world, we find ourselves, once again, lacking understanding. Can we learn to trust there is One who knows and sees more than we can? Can we follow Him no matter the circumstances while trusting in His goodness?

**III. An invitation to trust His Word (vv. 10-11).** If we stop and consider it, we can be trusting. When we turn on an alarm at night, we trust that it will go off as intended. When we put the key into the ignition, we trust that the car will start. When we walked into church today, we trusted that the roof would not fall upon us.

According to God's Word, every time His Word goes forth, it has a purpose, and it does not return to Him empty. Just like every time it rains, the ground gets wet, every time His Word goes forth, it will not return to Him empty.

When we consider this truth in the context of a culture hostile to the gospel, we need to be encouraged in at least two ways. First, God's Word is powerful. We may not understand its impact, but we can rest assured that an impact will be had. Second, it is God's Word that is going to make a difference and not ours. Therefore, we as His witnesses need to be actively sharing God's Word and not our own. Our words will not have the lasting impact that God's Word does.

## **Conclusion**

We all wish that we did not live in a culture that can be hostile to God's plans. The reality, however, is that we do. Given this, we can be encouraged through God's word to Isaiah. He invites us to seek Him. Not only this, but He also wants us to understand His thoughts and ways are different from ours. Finally, as we journey with Him, we need to be faithful to share His Word while trusting our efforts are not in vain, even if it does not feel like we are making a difference. We need to trust His Words more than our feelings in the moment.

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