

Text: Isaiah 40:1-14

Theme: A Forever Word

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Old Testament Lesson of Isaiah, chapter forty verses one through fourteen.

Intro:

Imagine, for a moment, that you have the power to speak a word. This word will never fade away. It will stand forever etched in stone, on paper, and electronically, for everyone to see across all of time and space. What would you say? Would you be more careful about how you use your words in everyday speech?

A Word of Comfort

Because of our sinful nature, we often use words incorrectly and wrongly. We curse and swear at the smallest of things, when the hammer hits us in the thumb, when something does not go our way, or our boss adds on even more work to be done on an already busy day, or when our computer crashes and we lose over a days' worth of work, what do we do? We curse the very moment of the day. Imagine if that is what is held up forever for all to see. Our imperfections, our sins. Well we know our sinful flesh; well we know what our sins deserve. We deserve present and everlasting punishment because of even one misspoken word, much less multiple. We mourn over our sins, just as the people of Israel mourned over their captivity in Babylon, given as correction for their sins. We see in our text for today, what exactly Yahweh, the Lord says to Isaiah to proclaim to his hearers, and to us today. God says not a word of cursing or swearing, not a word of pain or damnation over our sins, as we well deserve. "Instead of the blast of divine anger and frustration, and demand, we hear from YHWH a word of

comfort. It is a warm spring shower of cleansing hope, a sweet rain of present rich possibilities, a downy snow of delightful feasibility.” He proclaims to us a word of comfort. He doubly says “Comfort, Comfort My people.... Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.”

A Word of endurance

How sweet this word of comfort is to those who mourn and wail over their sins. That our God does not give us what we deserve but has mercy and grace upon us. He states that our iniquity is pardoned, not because we have suffered enough, nor worked hard enough, but purely because of His grace and mercy. This word of comfort is one that will never fade away. Our words, and our flesh, eventually do. We are as grass and the flowers of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, and so do we. We are here today and tomorrow, gone. Yet, the sure and certain comfort of our Lord does not fade away. It does not cease to be. It stands eternally, both now and forever, unto the very end of the age.

A Word of Power and Might

How can this be? Because it is the Lord’s Word. It is a word of power and might as He states in verse ten, “The Lord God comes with might, and His arm rules for Him.” We see the power of His word at creation. He speaks and it happens. He says let there be plants and animals and there are plants and animals. “Let us make man in our own image.” and man is formed from the dust. His word says what it does and does what it says.

Salvation found in Jesus Christ, Word made flesh for our salvation, grants us ultimate comfort.

The word of the Lord provides us with the best comfort we could ever ask for or desire. In order to save us, the Word of God, Jesus Christ, takes on our human flesh. God becomes man for us. Jesus lives the perfect life that we cannot live. Jesus never cursed or swore at the misfortunes of life, even when He is unjustly tried and condemned to die. He goes to the cross, bearing in His holy flesh, our sins and the punishment that we deserve. He dies, so that

we might never die. In His perfect living, Jesus destroys the power of sin, by His death, He destroys the power of the devil and rescues us from his evil plans. Jesus rises from the dead on the third day, destroying the power of death and the grave, to give to us life eternal with Him in the bliss of heaven.

Having been so comforted by our Lord, how do we respond? We turn in love toward our neighbor and show them the same comfort and mercy that we have been shown. When someone angers us. When someone is mean to us or hurts us, when they swear at us or cut us off on the highway, what do we do? We forgive them we show them the same love that we have been forgiven. We point them to the same love, mercy, and comfort that we have in Jesus Christ.

Dear Christian, what better comfort could we ask for or give than the comfort of the Word of God? A word of comfort found in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ which lasts forever and ever, until we as His people are with Him, with all the saints, around the throne of grace forever and ever.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.