

Isaiah: A Prophet for Our Time  
Hope in a Time of Lament  
Isaiah 56:1 – 57:2

There is a short sentence in Lamentations 1:11 where the prophet says, “All her people sigh.” There have been times throughout history where the people of God, whether the congregation of Israel or the church of Jesus Christ have had to deal with the effects of sin, either our own or by others, in our world. When I consider all that has taken place in our nation or all that has been revealed in our denomination, I echo Jeremiah’s sentiment.

1. We obey Christ in anticipation of His return.
  
2. We love those who have been marginalized.
  
3. We hope in the resurrection that is to come.

News cycles come and go. What is heavy on the hearts of the people of our nation will soon be forgotten by everyone except those directly involved and impacted. May that not be said of those who are Christ followers. We look forward to a kingdom where these sorrows and the resulting tears will forever be removed. Our job is to proclaim the gospel that affords all who will trust in Christ entrance to that kingdom.

Reflection

Take a moment to read 1 John 3:1-3 and consider how those verses challenge us in the way we should think and live in this world. Compare those verses with Isaiah 56:1-2. What is your knee-jerk reaction to news cycle events? Do you think first and foremost about the political implications of the event or does your heart immediately sympathize with those who have been victimized? Do you get angry at God for allowing these things to happen or do you get angry at the sin that permeates our world and causes death among the innocent? How does Isaiah 56:3-5 give a foretaste of the new covenant in Christ? Read Ephesians 2:11-22 and consider how the old-covenant barriers have been completely removed. How could the knowledge that righteous people die to be spared from further evil, to enter into peace in death, give a special comfort to those who grieve over loved ones who have died in the Lord, especially those who have died young?