

The Missionary Nature of God

Isaiah 55: 4



“Indeed I have given
him as a witness to the
people,
A leader and
commander for the
people.”
Isaiah 55: 4



I. Introduction

One of the greatest tasks we have is to proclaim the good news of salvation to those who are without hope. The meaningful life cannot be reached if the eternal realities have no central, ultimate importance.



First praying, then sharing
“We best defend the Lord's glory
by speaking first TO Him about
unbelieving men rather than
speaking first ABOUT Him to
unbelieving men.”
Sinclair B. Ferguson



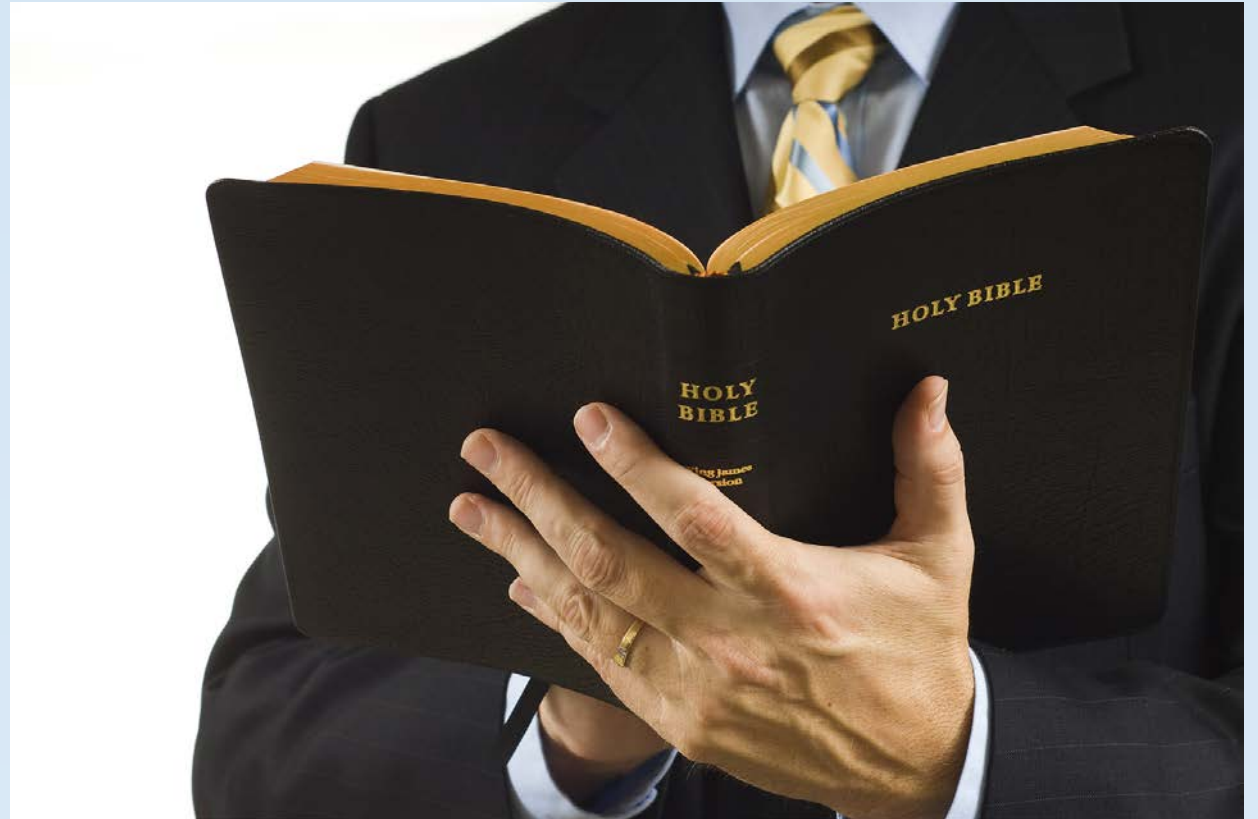
Love is the true inspiration

“Don’t wait for a feeling or love in order to share Christ with a stranger. You already love your heavenly Father, and you know that this stranger is created by Him, but separated from Him, so take those first steps in evangelism because you love God. It is not primarily out of compassion for humanity that we share our faith or pray for the lost; it is first of all, love for God.”
John Piper



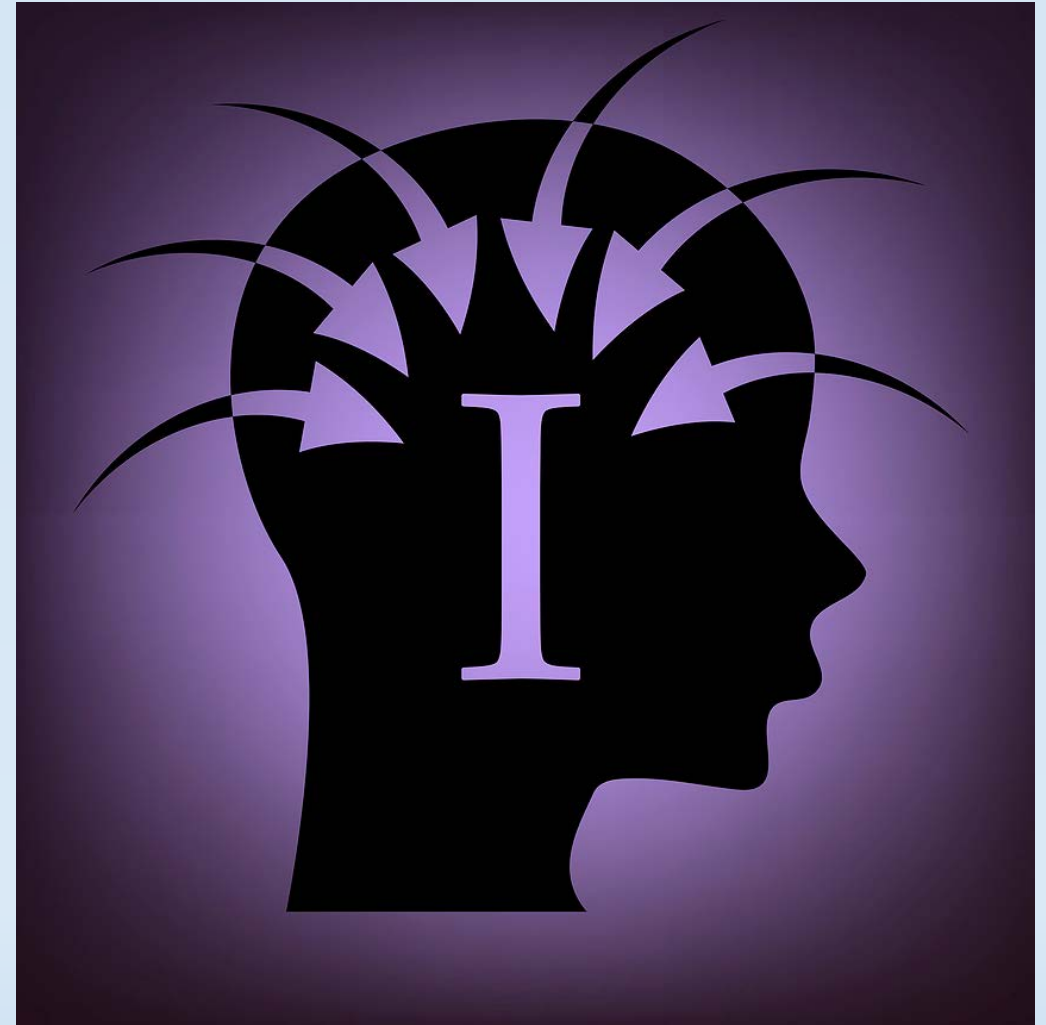
"The more faithful preachers are to the Word of God in their preaching, the more liable they are to the charge of hypocrisy. Why? Because the more faithful people are to the Word of God the higher the message is that they will preach. The higher the message, the further they will be from obeying themselves."

R.C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God*



"Introverted seekers need introverted evangelists. It's not that extroverts can't communicate the gospel, either verbally or nonverbally, in ways that introverts find appealing, it's that introverted seekers need to know and see that it's possible to lead the Christian life as themselves. It's imperative for them to understand that becoming a Christian is not tantamount with becoming an extrovert."

Adam S. McHugh, *Introverts in the Church: Finding Our Place in an Extroverted Culture*



Watch for Opportunities

"We are nearing the close of this earth's history; soon we shall stand before the great white throne. Soon your time for work will be forever past. Watch for opportunities to speak a word in season to those with whom you come in contact. Do not wait to become acquainted before you offer them the priceless treasures of truth. Go to work, and ways will open before you."

Ellen G. White, 7T p. 15.



“Every Christian is either
a missionary or
an imposter.”
Charles Spurgeon



"I can tell you that there is no greater joy than leading someone to faith in Jesus Christ. Even if they reject your message, it still feels great to obey Christ. Yet regardless of how we feel, we need to remember this is what He has commanded."
D. James Kennedy



II. Context



The structure of Isaiah chapter 55 is typical for a poetic text. Two parts of the chapter underline the same reality: the importance of returning to the Lord and the witnessing.



The structure of Isaiah 55: 1 - 13

A	1	COME TO THE WATERS (Buy without money)
B	2	YOUR WAGES (Spending things for insignificant results)
C	3	YOUR EAR (Listening to God's word produces life)
D	3a - 5	EVERLASTING COVENANT (Witnessing)
A'	6 - 7	COME TO THE LORD
B'	8 - 9	MY WAYS
C'	10 - 11	MY MOUTH (The word of God doesn't return without results)
D'	12 - 13	EVERLASTING SIGN (Witnessing)

The witnessing to the nations is expressed through a very important word: EVERLASTING. Before presenting David as a leader and a commander for the people, God is assuring His loyalty to him and to his people. The same idea is found at the end of the Gospel of Matthew (Great Commission). Jesus is sending His disciples (go, therefore...). At the same time He is reconfirming His support: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age."



III. God is providing
leaders in order for
His church to stay
focused on its
mission



1. God gives us as witnesses

“Indeed I have given
him as a witness to the
people”

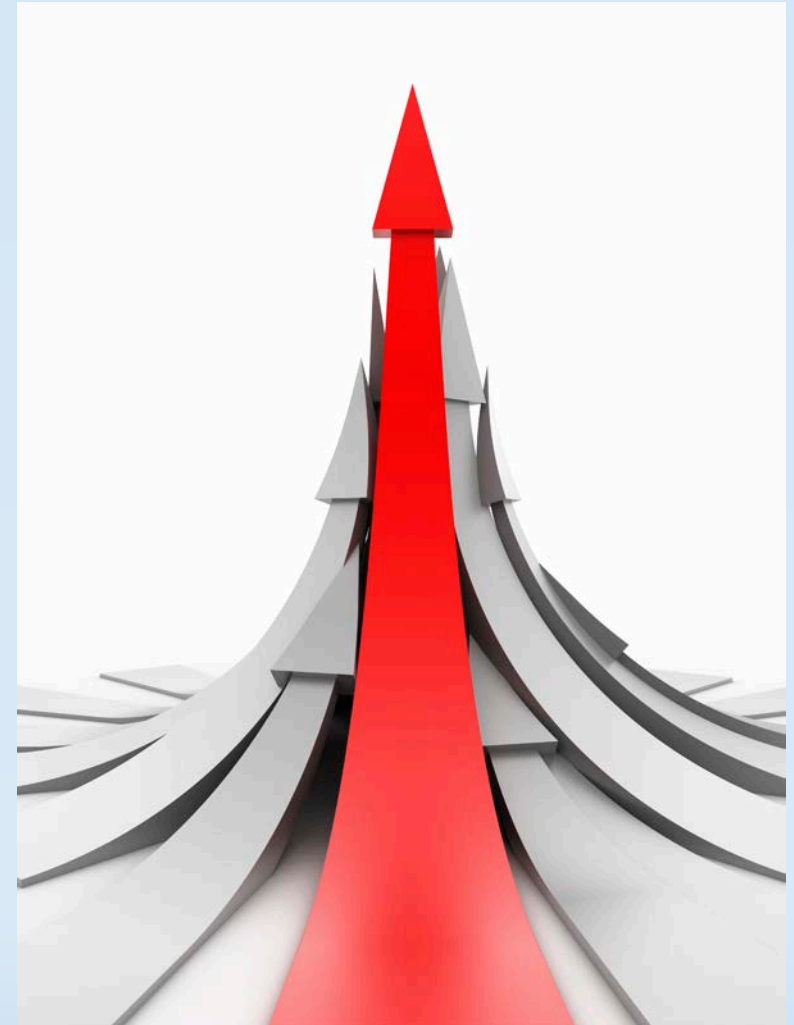


“Witness, one who stood forth to bear solemn testimony in regard to God to his law, and claims, and plans; and one who, therefore, was designated to be the instructor, guide, and teacher of people.”
Albert Barnes,
(1798 – 1870)



“How kind and gracious of God to appoint leaders for people to serve for their betterment, under-shepherds who will lead and guide them both in example and proclamation. Yet how difficult when leaders fail to lead in love and people fail to follow. Doubtless we all have plenty of examples of each. Consider how by God's grace you can walk in a manner worthy of the gospel.”

Nik Lingle



“Among the followers of Jesus, therefore, leadership is not a synonym for lordship. Our calling is to be servants, not bosses, slaves, not masters. True, a certain authority attaches to all leaders, and leadership would be impossible without it... Yet the emphasis of Jesus was not on the authority of a ruler-leader, but on the humility of a servant-leader.”
John R. W. Stoot



“Leaders are the gift of God to His people. God says, “I have given him as a witness...”

When God organizes His church, He provides the right leadership. There is no church without the leadership according to God’s heart.”

(DS)



2. God's witness is a leader and not a tail
"A leader and commander for the people."



“The head, and not the tail, an Oriental form of expression, indicating the great dignity and acknowledged excellence.”
Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Bible Commentary.



"You are not only saved by grace, sanctified by grace but there is also a grace that helps you to serve. Kingdom service is the provoker of your next level, it is the sustainer and the preserver of your next level... God's grace will save you, sanctifies you, empower you for service and also sustain you. Being a Christian does not mean that you will not encounter some challenges, you wont check out as a result of the challenges, wont lose your testimony: His grace is sufficient for you."

Festus Adeyeye



“Christ leads his people out of their own ways into his ways; and he leads them in a right way to the city of their habitation, to heaven at last; and he leads them on gradually and gently, as they are able to bear. He is a “commander” in a military way, a wise, powerful, valiant, and courageous one, and always victorious; and in a political sense, as a King commands his subjects, whose commands are to be obeyed; and indeed they are written on the hearts of his people; they are not grievous, though they cannot be performed in their own strength; nor is it designed that life and salvation should be obtained by the observance of them, but are done to testify subjection to Christ, and gratitude to him. The Targum is, “behold, I have appointed him a Prince to the people, a King, and a ruler over all kingdoms.”

John Gill, 1697 – 1771.

V. Conclusion



“Those who today teach unpopular truths need not be discouraged if at times they meet with no more favorable reception, even from those who claim to be Christians, than did Paul and his fellow workers from the people among whom they labored. The messengers of the cross must arm themselves with watchfulness and prayer, and move forward with faith and courage, working always in the name of Jesus. They must exalt Christ as man’s mediator in the heavenly sanctuary, the One in whom all the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation centered, and through whose atoning sacrifice the transgressors of God’s law may find peace and pardon.” Ellen G. White, *Acts of Apostles*, p. 230.

"The precious grace of humility is sadly wanting in the ministry and the church. Men who preach the truth think too highly of their own abilities. True humility will lead a man to exalt Christ and the truth, and to realize his utter dependence upon the God of truth. It is painful to learn lessons of humility, yet nothing is more beneficial in the end. The pain attendant upon learning lessons of humility is in consequence of our being elated by a false estimate of ourselves, so that we are unable to see our great need. Vanity and pride fill the hearts of men. God's grace alone can work a reformation.

It is your work ... to humble yourself and not wait for God to humble you. God's hand at times bears heavily upon men to humble them and bring them into a proper position before Him; but how much better it is to keep the heart daily humbled before God. We can abase ourselves, or we can build ourselves up in pride and wait till God abases us..."

Ellen G. White, Lift Him Up, p. 282.

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