

GOD'S WORD SHALL NOT RETURN VOID

TEXT: ISAIAH 55:8-13

Introduction:

1. We were in Isaiah 55 last Sunday evening but we stayed in the first half of the chapter, giving special attention to verses 6 and 7.
2. Tonight I would like to focus on the latter half of the chapter, giving special attention to verse 11 – “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”
3. What a wonderful promise! We can be certain that God’s Word shall not return void (empty).
4. I would like to preach tonight about the power of God’s Word. A word is the expression of thought. We express ourselves with words.
5. Our Lord Jesus Christ is referred to in the Bible as “the Word” (John 1:1; Rev. 19:13). Hebrews 1:1, 2 says, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”
6. Before turning back to Isaiah 55, let me stress that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Furthermore, thank God we have a reliable, trustworthy English translation of God’s Word – the authorized King James Bible.
7. There are many Bible critics out there, but we can be confident that we have the inspired, inerrant Word of God. Watch out for preachers who say the Bible “contains the Word of God.”
8. No – the Bible *is* the Word of God.
9. Watch out for people who say the Bible is reliable when it is dealing with religious themes, but it is not trustworthy or accurate when it is dealing with matters of science or history.
10. John Wesley (1703-1791) wrote: “Nay, if there be any mistakes in the Bible there may well be a thousand. If there is one falsehood in that Book it did not come from the God of truth” (*Journal*, cited by Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*).

I. GOD’S WORD SHALL NOT RETURN VOID

II. GOD’S WORD SHALL ACCOMPLISH THAT WHICH GOD PLEASES

III. GOD’S WORD SHALL PROSPER

I. GOD’S WORD SHALL NOT RETURN VOID (55:11).

1. All of God’s actions are purposeful. God is a God of order. Contrary to what the evolutionists teach, the creation and development of this universe are not accidental.

2. God has a wonderful and perfect plan and it is a blessing to know that you and I are part of that plan. God's purposes will be carried out. God's plans will all be fulfilled.
3. This great plan includes the restoration of Israel, the second coming of Christ, and all of the other amazing prophecies taught in the Bible.
4. Let me make a practical application: when we give out the Word of God, we can be confident it "shall not return void (empty)."
5. Pass out Gospel tracts, and pray as you do. God's Word shall not return void.
6. Just as the rain and snow are never wasted, but they accomplish God's purposes, so God's Word never fails.
7. Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."
8. Using the figure of the water cycle – "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven..." (55:10) – the LORD illustrates this important principle that His word shall not return void.
9. God's Word will surely get the job done. The Word of God is alive – just like a seed. In explaining the parable of the sower, Jesus said, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11).
10. To an unsaved man or a carnal Christian, the words in the Bible may appear lifeless and powerless. There is a little bag of seeds in my "mud room." They appear lifeless and powerless too. But when they are planted, we see they are indeed alive.
11. We see growth. And when the Word of God is read and taught and preached, we see life and growth too.
12. First Peter 1:23 says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
13. In John 6:63, our Lord said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."
14. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword..."

II. GOD'S WORD SHALL ACCOMPLISH THAT WHICH GOD PLEASES

1. Just as God has absolute control over the rain and snow, and how they water the earth "and maketh it bring forth and bud," God has absolute control over how His word touches the hearts of men.
2. "Just as what comes from the soil of the earth is produced by the rain and the snow, so with the soil of the human heart and the Word of God" (WE Vine, *Isaiah*).

3. Just as God sends the rain down from heaven, He has sent us His Word from heaven. Four hundred and thirty times, we read the words, “Thus saith the Lord.”
4. There are hundreds of other times where the Bible simply says, “saith the Lord” (no “thus”). For example, Genesis 22:16 says, “By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD...”

III. GOD’S WORD SHALL PROSPER (55:11).

1. It is reported that DL Moody wrote on the flyleaf of his son’s Bible, “This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book.”
2. Think of the importance of God’s Word. The Bible is the best selling book of all time. (*Pilgrim’s Progress*, a Biblical allegory by John Bunyan is second.)
3. Like Bunyan and Shakespeare and Dickens and Milton and all the great writers, Sir Walter Scott’s books are loaded with references to Scripture. These men wrote in the days when people were familiar with Scripture.
4. Sir Walter Scott’s son-in-law told the story of when Sir Walter Scott was on his death-bed, and he asked his good friend John Lockhart to read him something from the Book. Lockhart asked, “What book?” Scott replied: “Why do you ask? There is but one book, the Bible.”
5. One Shakespeare scholar wrote, “No writer has assimilated the thoughts and reproduced the words of Holy Scripture more copiously than Shakespeare...he is saturated with the Bible story.”
6. Voltaire, the French infidel (died in 1778), boasted that within 100 years Christianity would be extinct. However, in 1878 his house was being used by the Geneva Bible Society to print Bibles.
7. Our Lord said in Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
8. George Washington Carver was a great botanist who knew the Word of God. He testified before the United States Senate Agricultural Committee that he got his great knowledge of peanuts from the Bible. Asked what the Bible said about peanuts, he replied, “The Bible does not teach anything regarding the peanut. But it told me about God, and God told me about the peanut.”

CONCLUSION:

THE BIBLE contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you

It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.

CHRIST is its grand subject, our good the design and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents. (author unknown)

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