

The Human Problem

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Isaiah 1.
- B. Isaiah was a far seeing prophet of God.
- C. The book is often called the Gospel according to Isaiah because of the picture of Christ and redemption in Isaiah 53.
- D. The theme of the prophesy is that God saves.
- E. The book has 66 chapters, having a division between 39 and 40 just as the Bible does.
- F. The time of Isaiah was a time of danger, threat and desolation because of the coming of Babylon.

II. The Jews were God's chosen people.

- A. This means they were a picture for the world.
- B. What happened to Israel happened as a type for us.

III. The problem of the book: man rebelled against God creating a sad picture.

- A. Man is blind to the goodness of God.
- B. Everything we do is by the mercy and opportunities of God.
- C. There is something wrong with humanity.
 - 1. He is not what he was made to be.
 - 2. The problem is self-centeredness.
 - 3. The result is that man is utterly estranged from God and from himself.
 - 4. When there is a persistent refusal to acknowledge God, defenses are taken down. This is what is happening to Judah.

IV. Judah's remedy is religious pretense.

- A. If one does not mean what one says, God finds it nauseating.
- B. God desires goodness and justice—ceasing from wrong and starting to do right. Indifference makes us accomplices.

V. We cannot change ourselves—we can only be changed through a work of God.

A This is the gospel.

B. Jesus shed his blood. God put our sins on Him in order that we might be changed.

C. The gospel offers true power to be changed and then to reach out to others.

Application questions:

1. How would you respond to someone who says that mankind is essentially good? Explain.

2. What forms does religious pretense often take in the church today?

3. What is the gospel and what in the first chapter of Isaiah points to it?
