

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## ISAIAH 55-58

Isaiah 55 begins with an exclamation of sorts. If I wanted to get your attention, I'd shout, "Hey!" Or "Yo!"

Isaiah cries, "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters..." This is what Jesus cried out in John 7 on the last day of the Feast, when the priest drew water from the Pool of Siloam, walked it to the Temple - then poured it on the altar. Jesus drew everyone's attention to the living, spiritual water - the soul-satisfying water...

*"Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters..."*

Someone noted, **it was the day Jesus shouted!**

Remember Isaiah 42:2 said of the Messiah, "He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street." Jesus was not a loud-mouth.

He spoke deliberately, calmly - with certainty. He impressed with the truth He spoke, not His volume.

But this was an exception. In John 7:37 we're told, Jesus cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

One of the best Pepsi ads of all time is the delivery mix-up. Pepsi gets delivered to the Senior Citizens Home, while the rival brand ends up at the Frat house.

Suddenly, the seniors are energetic and dancing and partying - while the college kids play shuffleboard.

Well, substitute the living water of Jesus for Pepsi, and the pleasures of this world for the rival - and it teaches a truth. His joy revives and refreshes, while the stuff of this world drags down and ends up a bore.

And the living water is free! “And you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” What a deal!

The best drink on the market is absolutely free.

That’s because it’s been paid for by another. On the cross Jesus uttered “Tetelestai” or “It is finished.” It was an accounting term which meant “paid in full.”

The fulfillment Jesus offers can’t be bought - it can only be received. **You have to come...** All that it costs you is whatever you have to step over to come to Him.

“Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.” Here’s a great question! *“Why do you spend money... for what does not satisfy?”* In the end the “other brand” has a steep price, *but for what? Nothing eternal or ultimately fulfilling is gained...*

There's an Aesop's Fable where a wolf wanted to eat a dove, but the dove always kept its distance. Until one day the wolf found a supply of the dove's favorite worms to eat. Every day he offered the dove a worm for one of its feathers. It seemed like a good deal to the dove. He had plenty of feathers. But over time it proved fatal. The dove gave up so many of his feathers that he could no longer fly. The wolf ate the dove for lunch.

And this is what can happen to a believer. If we swap time with Jesus - spiritual joys - for worldly pleasures, eventually we lose the ability to fly. Our hearts become grounded in the world, and we are food for the enemy.

The Bible closes with this invitation. In Revelation 22:17, "Let him who thirsts come, and whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely." It's free!

Verse 3, “Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you - the sure mercies of David.”

One man holds the exclusive bottling rights to the living water! It's called “*The sure mercies of David.*”

And who of David's family prevailed to lay claim to all he was promised? The Messiah! This is why Jesus cried, “If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.”

Jesus is the only distributor of God's living water!

Isaiah continues to speak prophetically of Jesus in verse 4, “Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, a leader and commander for the people.” I love that - Jesus Christ is our “*leader and commander.*”

“Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, and nations who do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, and the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.” The

Gentiles, who were ignorant of God's promises to David, will come to follow Jesus.

God will glorify His Son in the eyes of all nations.

“Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” Today, God is available to us. He offers mercy - a full forgiveness.

But that won't always be true. There will come a time when God withdraws His offer. *Time is of the essence.*

Verse 8, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” This is such an important, strategic verse!

*Theology* is “the study of God.” And when we study God one of the first things we realize is that He is infinite - "all-everything", "all mighty", "all holy," etc.

And this creates an immediate difficulty for the theologian. *Theology* is *the finite* in pursuit of *the infinite*. And even though His Word, His revelation, is *infallible* - there is still much of God that eludes us.

This is why the smart theologian is quick to recognize his limitations. There is no way his little, pea-brain can discover all there is to know about an infinite God. If I get confused putting together a swing set, who am I to presume I have the ability to fully know God.

Once a child in Sunday School told his teacher he was drawing a picture of God. The teacher corrected him, “*No one knows what God looks like.*” The little boy answered proudly, “*They will when I get through.*”

And this is problem with many prideful theologians.

They've forgotten their limitations. *My ways are not His ways. His thoughts are higher than my thoughts.*

God has His own logic. He's on a different plane.

In fact, 1 Corinthians 1 tells us that God's wisdom is so opposite ours, that to us at times it even looks like foolishness. God designs His ways to humble us.

He refuses to let us fully figure Him out. **We have to be willing to trust Him where we can't trace Him.**

It's like the atheist who bumped into the pastor at a restaurant. He asked the pastor, *"I suppose you believe the Bible?"* He answered, *"Yes, the Bible is God's Word."* The atheist shot back, *"But aren't there things in the Bible you can't explain?"* The pastor said, *"Sure, there're plenty of things in the Bible too difficult for*



me to understand.” The atheist thought he had him trapped.  
*“Well, what do you do with the difficulties?”*

The pastor looked down at his plate, and poked his fish with a fork. He said, “I treat the Bible like I do this fish. The difficulties are the bones. When I come to one I set it to the side of my plate, and keep eating the delicious fish. I leave the bones for a fool to choke on.”

Mark Twain once said, “It’s not the parts of the Bible I don’t understand that bother me, it’s the parts I do understand.” *And obviously, didn’t obey.* I love the old saying, “What’s over my head is still under His feet.”

Verse 10, “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it

shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

God's Word is like the rain that waters the earth. It makes its plants grow and produce fruit. Nothing is as life-changing as God's Word spoken at a fitting time.

The Bible is like a caged lion. You don't need to defend it, as much as you need to let it out of its cage. It can defend itself. Turn it loose and watch it work!

“For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” Trees have no hands. They definitely don't clap. Isaiah is speaking poetically, figuratively.

Romans 8 teaches that today creation remains under the curse. It groans awaiting God's redemption. But when that day comes, creation will sing and praise.

“Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name. For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” This looks to the Kingdom Age when Jesus will reign. When man sinned the Earth was cursed with thorns and thistles.

In that day they’ll be replaced with beautiful trees.

Chapter 56, “Thus says the Lord: keep justice, and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come, and My righteousness to be revealed.” One day soon, righteousness will prevail. In the meantime do justly.

“Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

Do not let the son of the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, “The Lord has utterly separated me from His people”; nor let the eunuch say, “Here I am, a dry tree.” Don’t give

ear or pity a person who talks about all they've given up to serve the Lord.

“For thus says the Lord: “To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, even to them I will give in My house and within My walls a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.” God is no man's debtor. He more than compensates those who've served Him, and made sacrifices in His name.

Verse 6, “Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants - everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant - even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer.” Just because God chose Israel to receive His covenants, doesn't mean He doesn't have plans for the Gentiles.

Here He promises them inclusion. Those who love Him and serve Him will have a place in God's house.

“Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” The Jerusalem Temple was the center of Judaism, but God had always intended for it to be *“a house of prayer for all nations.”*

This is the verse Jesus quoted when He drove the moneychangers from the Temple. The Jewish Temple wasn't a flea market or bazaar - it was a place for holiness, and sacrifice, and communication with God.

And it was for *“all nations,”* not just the Jews.

On our first night in Jerusalem I always take our group to the Wailing Wall. It's the last standing portion of the first century

Temple. It's actually a retaining wall. Because of its proximity it's the holiest site in Judaism.

And it's especially beautiful at night.

My first time at the Wall I walked up to the ancient stones and stood next to two Orthodox Jews. And it was a strange feeling. I wasn't sure if I really belonged.

That's when the Holy Spirit brought this verse to mind. The Temple is for *“all nations”* - not just Israel. I had as much right to be there as the Jews beside me. God had brought this foreigner to His holy mountain.

Verse 8, *“The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, “Yet I will gather to him others besides those who are gathered to him.”* God's plan is not only to regather the Jews, but to gather Gentiles as well.

In John 10:16 Jesus said, *“Other sheep I have which are not of the fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and*

there will be one flock and one shepherd.” He was thinking of us - the Church!

Verse 9, “All you beasts of the field, come to devour, all you beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.”

Isaiah is speaking of the royal counselors - the king’s watchdogs - who’s job it is to warn the king of danger. They’re silent. *Are they blind, dumb, ignorant, asleep?*

“Yes, they are greedy dogs which never have enough. And they are shepherds who cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his own gain, from his own territory.” The reason for their silence isn’t stupidity, or ignorance, or lethargy...

They’re “*greedy dogs.*” All they care about is their own profit - not the Lord, not the king, not the nation...

“Come,” one says, “I will bring wine, and we will fill ourselves with intoxicating drink; tomorrow will be as today, and much more abundant.” The nation Judah had disobeyed God, and was under divine judgment.

But the king and his counselors had interpreted the bad times as a cyclical downturn. Their solution was to get drunk today, and things will be better tomorrow.

And this sums up today’s America!

We’ve banned Christianity from our schools and public institutions. We’ve murdered 55 million unborn babies, and we’re about to legalize the perversion of marriage. *Is it possible our economic woes aren’t just cyclical, but are the beginnings of God’s judgment?*

Revelation 13 foresees a global economy in the last days. For that to occur the US economy has to fail.



Tough financial times in the future may not be just business as usual. Let's not sober up *and it be too late*.

Chapter 57 begins with an interesting, provocative verse, “The righteous perishes, and no man takes it to heart; merciful men are taken away, while no one considers that the righteous is taken away from evil.”

Notice, *the righteous, the merciful*, are taken out and spared God's judgment. It sounds a lot like the rapture!

We may have to endure tougher times, but before the toughest arrive - the *Great Tribulation* - the righteous will be taken away and will avoid the evil.

Verse 2, “He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

“But come here, you sons of the sorceress, you offspring of the adulterer and the harlot! Whom do you ridicule? Against whom do

you make a wide mouth and stick out the tongue?” Even in ancient times a person who stuck out their tongue was guilty of defiance.

Here, Isaiah is speaking of spiritual adulterers and harlots - people who've forsaken the true God for idols.

“Are you not children of transgression, offspring of falsehood, inflaming yourselves with gods under every green tree...” The idols were worshipped on the pagan high places, under the groves of green trees.

He describes their activities, “Slaying the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks?” This refers to the child sacrifices offered to the false god, Molech.

What was practiced in the valleys outside the walls of Jerusalem - particularly the western valley of Hinnom - was an abomination in the eyes of God.

Children were burned alive in the molten arms of Molech. The hollow-out statue was stoked with fire.

And don't think *"how could these people allow such atrocities?"* When we've legalized abortion mills all over our land. You could say, *"under every green tree."*

*"Among the smooth stones of the stream is your portion; they, they, are your lot!"* The pagans of old, like New Agers today assign supernatural powers to gems and crystals and smooth stones. The Hebrews offered them the sacrifices that God commanded for Himself.

*"Even to them you have poured a drink offering, you have offered a grain offering. Should I receive comfort in these? "On a lofty and high mountain you have set your bed; even there you went up to offer sacrifice.*

*Also behind the doors and their posts you have set up your remembrance; for you have uncovered yourself to those other*

than Me, and have gone up to them; you have enlarged your bed and made a covenant with them; you have loved their bed, where you saw their nudity.” Throughout Scripture *sexual immorality* and *spiritual idolatry* go together. Ancient idolaters worshipped fertility gods with lewd practices.

Israel had gone to bed with idols. God’s people had been intimate - both spiritually and sexually - with other lovers. They proved unfaithful to the One true God.

Often when I officiate a wedding I turn to the bride and say, “No one expects you to be perfect, but we all expect you to be faithful.” I make the same statement to the groom. And it’s true. We all can make mistakes and take our spouse for granted, but we *can* be loyal.

The same is true in our relationship with God! Give Him your whole heart, and don’t share it with another.

Verse 9, “You went to the king with ointment, and increased your perfumes; you sent your messengers far off, and even descended to Sheol.” *Even to hell!*

You are wearied in the length of your way; yet you did not say, ‘There is no hope.’ Their evil ways became burdensome. As time rolled on sin wearied them. Yet they didn’t repent. They held out hope for better days.

“You have found the life of your hand; therefore you were not grieved. “And of whom have you been afraid, or feared, that you have lied and not remembered Me, nor taken it to your heart?” They obviously, feared and revered other gods, and not the God of Israel.

“Is it not because I have held My peace from of old that you do not fear Me? I will declare your righteousness and your works, for they will not profit you.” Because of God’s patience they took Him

for granted. Because He'd been silent, and didn't judge them, they figured He couldn't - a tragic miscalculation.

Instead of repenting and turning to God, they pointed to their own good works. They were self-righteous.

It reminds me of an old saying, "Good works will keep you out of jail, but they won't keep you out of hell." In the end, Israel's good works did neither.

Verse 13, "When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you. But the wind will carry them all away, a breath will take them." A strong wind would blow away their idols. "But he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land, and shall inherit My holy mountain."

And one shall say, "Heap it up! Heap it up! Prepare the way, take the stumbling block out of the way of My people." "*Heap it up*" means to elevate a road. Build a highway where God's people can return to His Temple.

“For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” God is *the highest!* No one is higher. *But with whom does He dwell? The lowest.* He fellowships with the humble and repentant.

He fellowships with *the contrite* - not the proud folks who insist *they're always right*. James 4:6 reads, “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

Verse 16, “For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry; for the spirit would fail before Me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, and he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.” God is speaking of the people of Israel!

“I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will also lead him, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners.” God was angry with

Israel, but He hasn't forsaken him. He'll bring healing, and lead them again.

“I create the fruit of the lips: peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near,” says the Lord, “and I will heal him.” This sounds like Ephesians 2 - that in Christ both Jews and Gentiles have been made one.

“But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. “There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.”

Isaiah 58, “Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” **The good news always begins with the bad news.** Salvation is possible only after we've come to grips with, and repented of our sin.

Thus, God says, *“Tell My people their transgression.”*



Be honest. Don't sugar-coat it. Folks need to know. How can we *repent* if we're not willing to *admit*?

But most people are not willing to admit their sin, or even recognize their sin. Thus, they need to be told.

I've heard pastors say, "People today know they've missed the mark. We don't need to talk about their sin."

Well, God through Isaiah says the opposite. People don't like to admit their sins - *they justify it, or rename it, or water it down, or sweep it under the carpet* - that's why they need to be told and confronted with their sin.

One author writes, "People are no longer sinful, they are only immature or underprivileged or frightened or, more particularly, sick." *Or so they liked to believe.*

Realize, a sickness is not *my* fault... It's something I catch, I'm the innocent victim rather than a guilty party.

Today, it seems that everything is a sickness.

There are now 140 different self-help groups in the US. These groups claim 45 million members. There's "Sex Addicts Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Spenders Anonymous, Debtors Anonymous, Workaholics Anonymous, Shoplifters Anonymous." There's even "Messies Anonymous."

At a *Messies Meeting* sloppiness isn't dealt with as a character flaw, it's a disease. This separates a *person* from the *problem*. It removes personal responsibility. It seems to be a cop out to call laziness a sickness.

Even with alcoholism or drug addiction, *that involves a legitimate chemical dependency*, a person still bears a responsibility for his or her actions. The illness is the uncontrollable drinking *that follows the first drink*. But the sin is *the first drink*. Alcohol is a sickness **and** a sin.

Verse 2, “Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching God.” Like the Pharisees of Jesus’ day the Jews were going through the motions.

They appeared to be seeking God. ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?’ “In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exploit all your laborers.” The Jews wondered why their fasting wasn’t seen. Why they weren’t rewarded and praised.

“Indeed you fast for strife and debate, and to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, to make your voice heard on high.” But their fasting was a farce. They were hypocrites. They fasted to win arguments and to boast in their religious zeal.

Sincere fasting is to restrain from a daily activity to pursue a spiritual goal. “To do without food to fatten the soul.” The time I spend preparing and eating a meal is invested in prayer or deepening my walk with the Lord.

Fasting forces me to tune out the world, and subdue my flesh, and acknowledge my weaknesses. Charles Swindoll defines it, “Fasting gives time to let the silt of our lives drop to the bottom.” It settles the soul. It quiets and prepares our hearts for God to speak.

Jesus said of the Pharisees, “They disfigured their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting.”

It was all an outward show. But here we learn from Isaiah it wasn't anything new. The Pharisees were following in the footsteps of earlier hypocrites.

Verse 5, “Is it a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?” Again, it was not the outward performance that God desired, or the body posture that came with it - *the bowed head - dressing in sackcloth and ashes...*

In the OT God only required one fast. On Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement, the nation was to fast. Other than that one occasion fasting was voluntary activity.

**Fasting fattens the soul.** It was always a means to an ends - never an end in itself. God doesn't care about sacrifice for sacrifice sake, or outward rites and rituals.

His priority is the attitude of our hearts. It's been said, “**He who fasts, but does no other good, saves his bread, but loses his soul.**” Fasting was never to be a substitute for truly and sincerely following God.

God says in verse 6, “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?” To really please God it takes more than ritualistic service. He gets excited about liberation. Freeing people from what enslaves them.

Christianity is not about confinement and restriction, it’s about freedom from sin and what holds us down.

God wants us to be all that we can truly be.

Verse 7, “Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?”

What thrills the heart of God are acts of charity that actually change the plight of people in need. Feeding and clothing and sheltering the poor excites the Lord.

And Christianity sweetens the pot. Jesus added an extra incentive. Remember what He said in Matthew 25:40, “Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” When we help the poor and needy it’s as if we’re caring for Christ Himself.

1 John 3:16 tells us, “By this we know love, because He (Jesus) laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” This is what Isaiah is trying to communicate to the Jews of his day.

“Then your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here

I am.’ “If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness...”

The healing and help from God they’d hoped to gain from fasting, they can obtain by obeying God and showing mercy to others. His *“glory... shall be your rear guard”* - what an interesting idea that stirs up.

Verse 10, “If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.”

Look at all God promises if we reach out to the hungry and afflicted - *guidance, fulfillment, strength, refreshment, fruitfulness* - what more do we want?



“Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.”

“*Breach*” means “gap.” “*Street*” means “path.”

Sin has caused a breach between man and God - as well as man and his fellow man. The path to God has been lost. Today, the road is overgrown and unmarked.

But here Isaiah refers to God, and more specifically Messiah, Jesus, as “*the Repairer of the Breach*” and “*the Restorer of Streets.*” Jesus cuts a path. He is THE PATH - the only way to God. He’s the bridge-builder. Jesus connects man with God, and man with man.

Of course, these names are not just indicative of Jesus’ spiritual mission. In the Kingdom Age our Lord Jesus will literally don a

hardhat. He'll rebuild "*the old waste places*" and "*raise up the foundations.*"

He'll give the holy city of Jerusalem a facelift.

"If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the Lord..."

Throughout tonight's study, again and again God has mentioned the people's respect for the Sabbath Day.

Obviously, we are no longer under the Sabbath laws.

For a Christian everyday is a holy day to be use to glorify God. In a sense there's nothing more special about *Saturday* than there is *Monday or Tuesday*.

But having said that, there is a principle behind the law that does apply to us. The Law of Moses was given for our learning. And we're foolish to ignore something that was so important to God for thousands of years.

There's a rhythm to our lives. We cycle between work, and family, and leisure. These are inescapable components. We move through life in a patterned way.

And God wants to interject worship into that rhythm.

He wants there to be one designated day among the six other days of work devoted to rest and worship.

We ignore this to our own peril. We live such stressed-out lives because we disregard the rhythms of Sabbath. Our work suffers. Our family suffers. We let work override our time and leave nothing for worship.

In Mark 2:27 Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The Sabbath is not a straightjacket to

restrict us, it's a lifejacket that will keep us afloat in a stormy sea if we buckle it on.

Verse 14, *And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.*"

Carve into your life a Sabbath respect. Make worship regular and weekly, and be committed to it - and you'll benefit. God will cause you *"to ride on the high hills."*

You'll enjoy your life. You can breathe deeply, and take in the beautiful vistas. You can endure life in the valley, knowing you'll be enriched on the high hills.

But ignore the Sabbath - seek only your pleasure and profit - and you'll enjoy neither. Your life will get gobbled up by this world... Work and worship need to be balanced. And God gave us the Sabbath to do just that. Never forget, *God is what makes life worth living.*