

Twelve Reasons to Come to Christ

Isaiah 55:1-13

Halifax: 6 February 2011

Introduction

It is very difficult to miss the main thrust of Isaiah 55...

- It is an earnest call to come and partake of God's salvation!
- Over and over the summons is given!
 - Come to the waters!
 - Come, buy and eat!
 - Listen carefully to Me and eat what is good
 - Let your soul delight itself in abundance
 - Incline your ear and come to Me.
 - Hear and your soul shall live!
 - Seek the LORD while He may be found!
 - Call upon Him while He is near!
 - Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts...

This is the great call of the gospel that broke forth after Jesus rose from the dead.

- He has made His soul and offering for sin and the good news was,
 - the Father had fully accepted His offering for His peoples sins—all the people that God had given to Him from all over the world.
 - He told His disciples to go into all the world and preach the good news!
 - To command the nations to repent and believe—to come to the waters of His salvation and drink.
 - That is the call that broke forth 2000 years ago and that has gone all the way around the world so that it has even come to us who are gathered here today!

And here in Isaiah 55, Isaiah the prophet proclaims this gospel as a prophet!

- In chapter 53, he proclaimed how Jesus would offer Himself for sinners and how His offering would be effectual to save them from their sins...
- And now in chapter 55, he calls all men everywhere to come and receive this great salvation.
 - The prophet is constrained by the love of Christ and by the tremendous blessing that His finished work brings to those who receive it.
 - And so like Paul who would come after the work of which Isaiah prophesied had been accomplished,
 - Isaiah cries out as one beside himself for men to come and drink of what Jesus has done!
 - He is constrained, as Paul, by the love of Christ and the need of that men have for Him.

- You see how he pleads in Isaiah 55!
 - He presents reason after reason to come and partake of God’s salvation.
 - Today, I have the privilege of presenting to you these reasons to come to Christ.
 - I might have organised this sermon in all sorts of ways, but I have arranged it around twelve reasons that Isaiah presents to us to come and partake.
 - It is not enough just to know about it—we must come and receive by faith.
- If you have already trusted in Christ, as many of you here have,
 - this sermon ought to be a great encouragement to you to continue in Him, receiving the blessings of His saving work...
 - and it ought to be a help to you in calling others to come and partake...
 - and it ought to make you very glad and very grateful to consider all the treasures you have in the gospel—like a rich man counting up his treasures.
 - And if you are here today and you have not come to Christ for God’s salvation, or if you are not sure that you have come,
 - I urge you to will listen carefully (just as it says in this passage) and come!
 - There is nothing better for you to do!
 - Here are twelve reasons you ought to come!

I. Reason number 1: Come to the waters because you thirst.

- A. That is how the passage opens—with a call to those who thirst to come to the waters!
1. It says,
 - Isa 55:1: Ho! [*hoi* in the original] Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters!”
 - *Hoi* is just to get your attention—
 - There is a tone of reproof here—
 - “Hey you there—you who are thirsty...”
 - “Why are you standing around when there are waters here for you to drink?”
 - “Come to the waters.”
 2. If you have ever been thirsty—I mean really thirsty—you know that there is nothing better than water!
 - Most of us don’t know what it is like to have true thirst.
 - Men have been known to go crazy for water in the desert!
 3. But Isaiah is calling out to thirsty people who have not seen the water!
 - It is right there next to them and they are thirsty but they are not drinking.
 - This is such a sad thing to see!
 - We have had people come to our church and I could see the thirst in them,

- And I preached Christ to them...
 - There was this ocean of water that could satisfy their thirst, but they would not drink...
 - And I kept saying to them...
 - Hoi—Hey you there—you who thirst—don't you see this water? Come and drink!
- But they were scared or blind or stubborn and they did not drink.
 - How sad their lives are!
 - And there are some in the church here today and I am not always sure if you are drinking of the water—

B. You do thirst, don't you?

1. You realise that we have been cut off from our Creator by our sin, don't you?
 - His wrath is clearly seen every day in the suffering and death that we see in this world...in storms, in sickness, in pain, in sorrows...
 - You yearn to be free of it, don't you?
2. And surely you yearn to have communion with your Creator, don't you?
 - I know that you know you have a Creator who is eternal and all powerful.
 - You know that, no matter how much you may try to avoid it and suppress it.
 - Isn't the very reason you try to deny Him because you know that He is displeased with us and you just don't want to think about it?
 - You see His wrath displayed and it frightens you and it makes you hate Him...
 - Yet, you also have this yearning to know Him—this thirst—this emptiness...
 - That's the way it is for sinners with a holy God...
 - You want to avoid Him, and yet you want to come near to see Him and to learn of Him.
 - But wouldn't it be super if you could really know Him and if you could somehow win His love and have communion with Him?
 - Don't you thirst for that, even if you have pushed Him so far away that you can hardly even think of Him?
 - Well there is a fountain and His name is Jesus...
 - And He will give you living water if you will come to Him and you will never thirst again!
 - “Hoi! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters!”

TRANS> That's the first reason to come, because you thirst.

- Always a good reason to drink, don't you think?

II. Reason number 2: Come to the waters because the water is free.

A. Perhaps you did not realise that.

1. There are a lot of people who don't realise that the water of salvation is free.
 - And it's no wonder that they don't...
 - We know that we are responsible for our sin against God.
 - We know that the wrath and curse that He put on us is truly just.
 - We know that it is our burden to bear...
 - If you get a fine for speeding, you don't expect someone to pay it, do you?
 - Children, if you do wrong you don't expect your brother to take you spanking, do you?
 - We all know that we have done wrong to God and we know that we owe Him for it—there is a terrible price to pay...
 - so we don't want to come to Him!
 - He will demand us to pay our penalty according to His justice and we don't want to face that!
 - Of course you don't!
 - The Bible says that it is a terrifying thing to come before Him with your sins!
 - It is unbearable in fact!
 - And it is true too—
 - If you do come before Him, you will have to pay.
2. And this, understandably keeps a lot of people away from Him.
 - And some will try different things to make up for it...
 - You know about Martin Luther—He spent years trying to be the best monk he could—beating himself up and trying to make up for his wrongs.
 - But he never could get it right...
 - He did penance and confession and washings and fasting and all sorts of things, but he knew it was not enough.
 - I talk to people today—maybe they go to church, or maybe they have some other religion—
 - and some of them are actually trying to pretend that maybe they have done all that they should...
 - But I know that they must be terribly uneasy about it,
 - because we are dealing with God that created us!
 - And we can't possibly make right all the wrongs that we have done.

- We don't like to face it, but that is why there is an eternal Hell.
- It's not just for Hitler and a few others like that...
- It is what we all deserve.

B. But Isaiah tells us that the water he is talking about is completely free!

1. Look at what it says in verse 1...

- Isa 55:1: And you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
- But how can we?
 - How can we **buy** something if we don't pay for it?
 - You can **buy** it because someone else paid for it!

2. And that is exactly what Isaiah is talking about!

- He told us all about the Servant of God who comes and bears the transgressions of His people in Isaiah 53.
 - He said that by His stripes we are healed.
 - He said that all we like sheep have gone astray, but that the Lord has laid on Him (or hammered down violently upon Him) the iniquity of His all.
 - Isaiah looks at Him and He says, "for the transgressions of my people was He stricken!"
- Jesus has paid the full penalty of our sin on the cross!
 - Full payment has been made by Him so that we can have the waters of salvation—absolutely free!
 - In fact, it is an insult to Him if you try to pay for them...
 - What could you possibly contribute to what He has done?
 - And its not just water—its wine and milk too—
 - Jesus has purchased all this for His people!
 - And if you will come without money, He will take care of your debt—all of it!
 - "you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

TRANS> So that's the second reason to come—because it's free!

- We often go places we might not have gone when we hear that it's free.

III. Reason number 3: Come to the waters because nothing else can satisfy you.

A. Isaiah speaks about this in verse 2.

- Isa 55:2: 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.

- What's that stuff you are eating?
 - That's not even bread!
1. I think about the Rolling Stones song here...
 - "I can't get no, satisfaction."
 - That is so sad but so true!
 - Often the people who know that the best—that they can't get no satisfaction—are the ones who have made it the farthest in this world...
 - They are rich, they are popular, they have a lot of leisure, they are successful...
 - It is all the worse for them than it is for the people who are still dreaming that they could be happy if only they had all those things...
 - They have it and there is no more dreaming to do...
 - All they have are drugs and the occult and transcendental mediation and whatever ways they can find to try to escape.
 2. Isaiah is putting his finger right on the problem...
 - The problem is that you have been eating at the wrong table!
 - You have been eating and drinking a lot, but you are still thirsty and the thirst just isn't going away.
 - Only the water that Jesus gives you can satisfy!
 - I know that you can try to make the best of things...
 - You can bear up and put on a smile and go on enjoying what you have.
 - You can even make a virtue of your cheerfulness...
 - But come on—if you don't have Christ, you know that there are really no grounds for cheerfulness!
 - You have sinned against your Maker and you are not reconciled to Him.
 - It is only a matter of time until you are cut off in judgement forever.
 - Don't play games about this.
 - Don't dink around trying to fill your life with whatever you are trying to fill it with...
 - your achievements, your wealth, your relationships—whatever it is...
 - And don't go on just trying to run away and avoid it all—
 - with your drugs, your religion, whatever it is.
 - You are spending your money for what is not bread.

B. There is only one place where true satisfaction can be found and that is in Jesus.

1. The Bible says,

- Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
- Come on now,
 - You don't think God the Father would sit there and leave His Son to suffer the curse for sin if there was *another way* of salvation, do you?
 - And you don't think He would have put Him through all that if it was a way that would not bring about the salvation of sinners, do you?

2. If you have not come to Christ, you are still in your sins,

- And there will be no true satisfaction for you until you come and fill your soul with the waters of salvation that Jesus gives!
- Then, and only then, will you be made right with your Maker!

TRANS> So there you have reason number 3—come to the waters because nothing else can satisfy your need.

IV. Reason number 4: Come to the Lord because He will make a sure and everlasting covenant with you.

A. Isaiah presents to us what the LORD says about this in verse 3 & 4.

- Isa 55:3-4: 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. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people.

1. You will notice that instead of saying "Come to the waters," this time,

- It is the LORD speaking and He says "Come to Me."
 - We already had assumed that the call to come to the waters was a call to come to the LORD Himself who gives us the water of salvation,
 - but now that is expressly stated—we come to the LORD Himself for salvation.

2. And notice as well that He tells you what you have to do when you come—

- Instead of telling you to eat and drink, He says,
 - "Hear and your soul shall live."
 - That is what you must do when you come to Christ.
 - You come hearing the good news that Jesus made His soul an offering for sin and that the Father accepted it and made Him Lord and Christ.
 - The Bible says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God...
 - "Hear [with faith of course] and your soul shall live!"

B. The LORD goes on to say that He will make a covenant with you if you come to Him by faith.

1. A covenant is a firm promise that He will not retract.
 - God makes covenants with us to make His salvation sure—grounded upon His promise as the God who cannot lie.
 - He does this because it is so hard for us to believe that He would actually accept us and pardon us!

2. You see that He calls the covenant He will make with us “the sure mercies of David.”
 - When David was king, God made a covenant with him in which He promised to give him a Son who would establish His kingdom of righteousness forever.
 - He told David that this Son would reign forever... death would not overtake Him...
 - And that meant that His kingdom would be accepted by God.
 - It also meant that all of His subjects would have eternal life.

 - We know all of this in part because God promised it to David,
 - but even better because when Jesus came He told us that this was the nature of His kingdom...that it was a kingdom of righteousness and eternal life.
 - Isaiah calls Jesus a witness to this covenant because He declares it to us.
 - He told us after He crucified that He was going to sit at God’s right and until all His enemies were made His footstool.
 - In this way, He is given to us a leader and a commander.

 - His kingdom is the one that will never ever be judged again...
 - because He has already borne all of the judgement on the cross!
 - That is how He established this kingdom—by the cross.
 - Now that He has been exalted, having finished His work of suffering, His kingdom will never fail...
 - This is the sure mercies of David!
 - A Son to reign on your throne forever!

 - God makes this covenant with us when we come to Jesus!
 - It’s not on the basis of what we have done...
 - It is on the basis of what Jesus had done.
 - That is what makes it so sure and so certain!
 - That is what makes it eternal!
 - That is why John could say:

- John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
- God has promised this to us in His covenant.

TRANS> So the fourth reason to come is because God makes a sure covenant with you when you do, grounded not in you, but in Jesus our king.

- All the promises of God are yea and amen in Him. This water will not fail you.

V. Reason number 5: Come to the waters because that covenant is so grand that the nations are drawn to it.

A. Verse 5 tells us how the nations will be drawn to Christ when He is glorified.

- It seems that now the Father has turned to speak to His Son, and He says:
 - Isa 55:5: 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 work of Christ was so great, and the Father was so pleased with Him, that He gives Him the nations as His inheritance.
 - He already knew Israel, but now nations that He did not know (did not know as His own people) will come to Him.
- Remember what the Father said to Him in Isaiah 49:6?
 - Isa 49:6 Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’”
- This magnetism to Christ is that which was described all the way back in Isaiah 2 when the nations would say:
 - Isa 2:3: Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

B. But how is *this* (that the nations are coming to Him) a reason to come to Him?

1. Because you see them coming and delighting in something that you have missed!
 - You know how it is if everyone has something and they are all talking about it and eager about it and you don’t have it...
 - It makes you realise that you are missing something good...
 - People are drinking and they are being satisfied, but you are thirsty!
 - I know this was one of the main things that drew me to Christ—I saw believers who seemed to truly know God—and I wanted what they had.

2. What a shame it would be for you to miss out when the waters are so near, so free, so available for you!
 - Here they are, running to Him, going through hardships to obtain his blessing, coming from far away...
 - And all the while you had the gospel so near and you were too blind and pigheaded to see it.
 - You covenant children, you have the privilege of growing up with it all around you...
 - What a terrible thing for you to be thirsty when others would long to drink if only they had access to the fountain.
 - The Samaritans begged Jesus to stay, calling Him the Saviour of the world—but the people in Jesus’ hometown drove Him away.
 - Oh that you would even be jealous when you see people making great sacrifices to find Him.

TRANS> That is the fifth reason to come—you see how richly He is blessing others.

- The next reason is closely related to this...

VI. Reason number 6: Come to the waters because you will not always have the opportunity to come.

A. You may not always have His salvation so near to you as it now...

1. If you refuse Him for too long, He may turn you over to a heart that is so hard that you don’t want to come.
 - That is what happened to most of Israel when Jesus came...
 - They were blinded so that they could not see the glory that was in Christ.
 - Paul tells us that God had sent blindness to them as a judgement.
 - That why they couldn’t recognise their own Saviour when He came.

2. Isaiah advises you in verse 6 to stop delaying:

- Isa 55:6: Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.
- The time will come when it will be too late for you to come to Him.
 - I heard of a man whose son was a pastor, and his son went to be with his father when he was dying...
 - The old man was miserable—he had resisted the gospel his whole life—
 - and he died like Esau, unable to find a place of repentance.

B. Salvation is not something to mess around with

1. It is a terrible thing to think of dying without Christ.
 - He bore the curse for His people, but if you will not come to Him, you will have to bear the curse yourself!
 - All because He called and you refused!

2. Here is what the voice of wisdom says to those who refuse the call of wisdom:
 - Proverbs 2:24-33: Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, Because you disdained all my counsel, And would have none of my rebuke, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, When your terror comes like a storm, And your destruction comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD, They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with their own fancies. For the turning away of the simple will slay them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them; But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, And will be secure, without fear of evil."

TRANS> Come while you still can! While the way is still open!

- That is the sixth reason to come—
 - But do not suppose that it is too late for you when it is not too late.
 - Do not suppose that you cannot come because your sin is too great—
 - which brings us the seventh reason:

VII. Reason number 7: Come to the waters because the Lord will totally pardon you if you come.

A. See the encouraging words of verse 7!

- Isa 55:7: 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.
1. Do you see your sin?
 - Do you see that your way is wicked and that even your very thoughts are unrighteous?
 - The words are clear!
 - Turn to the LORD and you will find mercy!
 - Turn to Him and He will not just pardon you—
 - He will **abundantly** pardon you!
 2. It glorifies Him to pardon the greatest of sinners who turn to Him.
 - It shows the power of the blood of Jesus to take away sin...
 - It shows how precious His sacrifice was to the Father.
 - Where sin abounded, grace far more abounds!
 - Your sin is not an excuse to *keep* you from coming to this Saviour, it is the *reason* to come to Him.

B. So let there be no hesitation and no doubts about Christ if you come to Him...

1. He assures you that if you come to Him, He will not cast you out.

- There is great joy in heaven over one sinner that repents!
 - This is the whole reason that Jesus came and did His work—to save sinners!
2. Some of you are hindered in your walk with God because you are unsure of His forgiveness.
- How can you be unsure?
 - Jesus was crucified!
 - What greater thing could be done?
 - If you have come to Him, Psalm 103:11-12 applies to you...
 - Psalm 103:11-12: For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
 - There is no place for a guilty conscience when you come to a crucified Saviour!
 - There is mercy and there is abundant pardon in Him.
 - That is the seventh reason to come.
 - Come boldly with full assurance of faith.

VIII. Reason number 8: Come to the waters because the Lord's ways and His thoughts are so vastly superior to your ways and your thoughts.

- A. In verse 7, the you were just told to forsake your way and your thoughts and you would be pardoned,
- but in verse 8-9 you are shown how inferior your way and your thoughts are to God's way and God's thoughts.
 - Look at what it says—verses 8-9:
 - Isa 55:8-9: 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.
 - Often this verse is quoted out of context to point out that God's thoughts are greater than ours in that He understands things far better than we do...
 - that we are not capable of understanding all that He does...
 - Of course that is true, but that is not really the point of this verse.
 - The point here is not just that our ways and thoughts are intellectually inferior, but that they are morally inferior—
 - that they are wicked and sinful while His are righteous and holy!
 - You can't repent of intellectual inferiority,
 - but you are called to repent of these morally inferior thoughts.
- B. In other words, you need to come to the LORD out of disgust about your sinful life and your sinful thoughts—

1. They are not holy like God's!
 - You are full of envy and selfishness and greed and bitterness...
 - You are focused on yourself and not on the Lord.
 - Here is your Saviour who poured out His soul as an offering for those who yet hated Him and were deep in their sins...
 - Here is the love of God and the grace of God that goes to such lengths for the unworthy.
 - And you don't even love your own wife or your own children the way you should!
 - Not even with a love that comes close to His.

2. Surely you are tired of what you are!
 - Surely the thought that you might have the mind of Christ is sweet to you!
 - Surely the thought that it might be that you could live as Jesus lived, having the same obedience, the beauty that is found in Him, is appealing to you.
 - And this is what the Saviour offers to all those who come to Him...
 - The same power that raised Him from the dead will work in you to transform you and to renew you after the image of Him that created you!
 - He gives His Spirit to all who ask Him, and the Holy Spirit becomes like a river of life welling up from within...
 - to cleanse you, to sanctify you, to renew you!
 - So turn from those old ways and those old thoughts of yours and come to Him...
 - He will teach you His ways and He will transform your mind that you might do the will of God.

TRANS> And that brings us to reason number 9...

IX. Reason number 9: Come to the waters because the Lord's word is sure to do its work in you.

- A. It is hard to believe that Christ really will change you if you come to Him, but He will.
 - His Word will work powerfully in your life to totally make you over.
 - This is what you are told in Ephesians 5:25-27 where it says of Christ that He:
 - Eph 5:25-27: loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
 - He uses His word together with His Spirit to bring about this glorious renewal in us.
 - It does not happen all at once, but it is a work that He begins and continues our whole life long...

- His Word does not fail to accomplish its purpose in you!
 - Does it seem impossible that such change can be done in you?
- B. Isaiah gives us a very helpful illustration about the power of God’s Word for our encouragement!
1. Look at verse 10-11:
 - Isa 55:10-11: "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.
 2. Isn’t that marvellous?
 - There is a drought. The ground is thirsty—but then the farmer looks out and he sees that the rain has come!
 - What does he think when he sees the rain poured out on his crops.
 - Does he say, “I hope it will do something—
 - My crops have been so dry—I hope this rain will help them”?
 - No, of course not!
 - When he sees the rain, he *knows* that it will water his crops.
 - The problem was that there was no rain, not that the rain was falling, but failing to water his fields!
 - Isaiah is saying that God’s Word is just as sure to accomplish its purpose as the rain is to water the fields and make them grow!
 - The word does not fail to do the work that God has designed it to do!
 - It is even more certain that it will do its work than that the rain will do its work in the fields!
 - My brothers and sisters, if you will humble yourself and come to God’s word and receive it with eagerness,
 - it will bear fruit in you—it cannot fail to bear fruit!
 - Jesus said,
 - John 15:4 (&7) “He who abides in Me [and in my word] bears much fruit”
 - God does not send out His word to have it fail to come back to Him the way a defeated army comes back...
 - “It shall not return to Me void,” He says, “But it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.
 - What a great encouragement!
 - Bring your thirsty soul to the water of the Word and you will not be disappointed.

TRANS> That is reason number 9. Come to Him because His Word *will* be powerful in you!

X. Reason number 10: Come to the waters because you will have great joy when you leave your old ways behind.

A. Some people are hesitant to come to Christ because they think of all the things they will have to leave behind.

1. But I tell you that if you will truly come to Him, you will have no regrets!
 - You will be repaid a thousand times over!
 - Verse 12 says, “You shall go out with joy!”
 - You will leave the old ways and the old thoughts behind you with no regrets because of the new ways and the new thoughts that you are coming to embrace!
 - And most of all because you come to the God of glory who will never disappoint those who come to Him!
2. Your joy will be so great that the mountains and hills will be compelled to break forth into singing before you—
 - And the trees will clap their hands for joy!

B. But understand that this is not the joy that comes from having no problems.

- Not at all!
1. It is the joy that you have because you realise what you have in Christ by faith.
 - Joy in the New Testament is almost always described in the context of suffering and trials!
 - For example, in 1 Peter 1, Peter speaks about the incorruptible inheritance we have in Christ,
 - and how we are kept for it by the power of God and then he says:
 - 1 Peter 1:6-9: In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.
 - The joy comes from the inheritance you are receiving, not because there are not problems.
 2. I remember counseling a woman who was a new believer...

- And the thrill of the newness of her relationship with Christ was starting to wear off.
 - And she confessed to me that she was missing some of her old ways.
- But after a little investigation,
 - It became clear that the reason she was pining away for the old ways was because she was not fully pursuing the new ways of Christ!
 - She was not seeking Him and earnestly following Him and hungering for His word and the new life that He gives.
 - She was not serving others—her prayers were all about her problems and her sorrows.
 - No wonder she was miserable!
 - She had left the old ways and she was not walking in the new ways—so she had *nothing*!
 - She repented and her joy in the Lord was restored.
- Don't be like Israel when she grumbled in the wilderness and looked back at Egypt with longing...
 - or like Lot's wife who looked back at Sodom and was turned into a pillar of salt.
 - Leave the old ways behind...
 - Come to the Lord, Seek the Lord, and you will have great joy.
 - You will if you come to Him.
 - That is the tenth reason to come.
 - The eleventh is closely related...

XI. Reason number 11: Come to the waters because you will obtain true peace from Him if you come.

A. Isaiah has told us before that there is no peace for the wicked.

1. This is one of the things that makes us thirsty that I spoke about before.
 - We are under the wrath and curse of God because of our sins.
 - There is no peace for the wicked—
 - Peace is *shalom*, which speaks of total prosperity and happiness.
2. But you see that Isaiah not only says that we will go out with joy in verse 12,
 - but also that we will be lead out with *peace*!
 - And then in verse 13 he speaks of the curse being reversed...
 - He says:
 - Isa 55:13: Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;

- When man sinned in the garden, it was the very opposite...
 - The thorn came up in place of the cypress tree and the brier came up in stead of the myrtle tree.
 - We exchanged peace for a curse because of our sin.

- B. The reversal comes when you turn from your wicked ways and your sinful thoughts and come to Christ...
 - You enter His kingdom righteousness which is also a kingdom of peace.
 - He is the one, as we have seen, who purchased our peace by His sacrifice for our sins.
 - Isaiah 53:5 says, “The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.”
 - He arose from the grave with righteousness and established us in His eternal kingdom of righteousness...
 - And when that kingdom fully comes, the curse will be completely reversed so that even the creation itself will be delivered.
 - Just at the creation was cursed for our sake, so it will be blessed for Christ’s sake...
 - Paul speaks about this in Romans 8 where he tells us that
 - Romans 8:21: the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.
 - The full blessing is described in Revelation 22
 - Rev 22:1-5: And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.
 - If you turn from your wickedness to Christ, this is what you inherit!
 - You enter into His peace immediately, even though you must still suffer in this world, because you know where you are headed...
 - You know that your inheritance will peace—the fullness of God’s blessing.

TRANS> Come to the waters and you will obtain this peace...

- That is the eleventh reason to come.
 - And last of all...

XII. Reason number 12: Come to the waters because it will bring glory to God forever

A. In verse 13, Isaiah goes on to say that the reversal of the curse

- “shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

1. This is probably a reference to a monument such as kings erect to preserve their name and their memory.

- They build tombs and they have their inscriptions and things so that their greatness can be remembered...

- They have cited that they build and name after themselves.

- However, it is often the case that another king comes along and tears down the monument or that the king is just forgotten over the years and the name of the city is changed

2. But God’s monument is the creation of a new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells!

- The New Jerusalem!

- This is a monument that cannot be forgotten and that will never be destroyed.

- It brings great glory to God’s name forever!

- Here is the work of the gracious God who sent His Son to establish this glorious kingdom of righteousness where there is no death!

B. This should be a great encouragement for you to come to the waters of salvation!

1. Who would not want to have king who is so glorious as this king!

- A king who lives forever!

- A king who blesses His people forever with abundant life and salvation!

- A king whose reputation will be extolled and will never fall into question.

2. Who would not want to contribute further to the glorification of so great a king!

- When you see that which is excellent, you want to praise it!

- You want to tell your friends of a great movie or a great book or of a place of great beauty!

- If someone has been so very kind to you, you want to tell others what He has done, you want them to see.

- And when you see the glory of God revealed in Christ in the gospel, you want people to see His glory and join you in praising Him!

- And when you learn that it will glorify Him for you to come and drink of His salvation—it gives you all the more reason to come.

- When you drink, you become a trophy of His grace and a part of the great kingdom that He has established.

- *You* have the privilege of bringing glory to His name.

Conclusion

- Is any body thirsty?
 - Does any body want this kingdom?
 - Surely you do!
 - Surely you thirst for it...
 - And did I tell you it is free—Jesus has purchased it for you!
 - It alone can satisfy you, whatever else you are pursuing will fail you.
 - It is firmly established by God’s covenant with Christ the king,
 - He is so glorious that the nations are flowing to Him for salvation.
 - Don’t miss the opportunity to come to Him while you can.
 - He will totally pardon you of all your sin...
 - You can replace your wretched ways and your wicked thoughts with His righteous ways and beautiful thoughts.
 - His word is as sure to accomplish its purpose as the rain is to water the ground.
 - You will be filled with joy if you leave the old ways.
 - Peace will be yours such that the very curse will be reversed
 - And your God will be honoured and glorified in your salvation.
- You have plenty of reasons to come to Him.
 - See then, that you have.