

as we open God's word let's pray and ask him to open our hearts Heavenly Father we bow our heads and as we open our Bibles we ask you by the power of your spirit to open our hearts we offer ourselves to you in prayer we can do no more and we dare do no less for you are our God our savior Jesus Christ Our Only Lord amen amen our text today is Isaiah 55 our title is the invitation Isaiah 55. Isaiah 55 and Isaiah 54 are a celebration of the results of Isaiah 53. Isaiah 53 is the headwaters The Fountainhead Isaiah 53 is the gusher and Isaiah 54 and 55 flow from it because Isaiah 53 is the most brilliant explanation in the Old Testament of the Cross work of Jesus Christ what Jesus accomplished the good thing that Jesus accomplished on the cross and Isaiah 54 and 55 are the results of that pure and simple what Isaiah 54 says is the result of Jesus work on the cross is that everybody here can sing as loud as they can in celebration of what someone else has done for them and what Isaiah 55 says is that everybody here can enjoy without limit the Feast of the best wine and the best food that someone else has paid for and laid out for them Isaiah 53 is the victory Isaiah 54 and 55 are the Victory Parade Isaiah 53 is The Liberation from sin and death in Isaiah 54 and 55 are the celebration of that liberation last week we saw in Isaiah 54 the picture of a barren woman who couldn't have children and now she has so many kids that she's got to get a bigger house and we saw the picture of a sad and lonely wife who was temporarily deserted but who is now reunited with her husband in a bond of Love That Will Last Forever and we saw a city that could have been besieged by a storm but instead was made strong and even beautified with Sapphires and gems in its foundations here in Isaiah 55 we see this picture of an invitation to a banquet where those without money can buy everything that they need Isaiah 55 begins with an individual who is thirsty and hungry and Isaiah 55 ends in verses 12 and 13. with the whole world being renewed Isaiah 55 12 and 13 ends with the thorn and the curse being removed from the entire universe Isaiah 55 1 begins with an individual person's hunger and thirst being removed and satisfied Isaiah 55 the first word is the word of invitation come everyone who thirsts come to the waters and he who has no money come on and buy and eat come buy wine and milk without money and without price why do you Church whenever God asks why it's worth listening God Knows Why he asks you why because you got to figure out why verse 2. why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your labor for that which does not satisfy listen diligently to me and eat what is good and delight yourself in rich food remember what Satan said God doesn't want you to have the good food from that tree see what God says listen to me and take everything verse three incline your ear and come to me hear that your soul may live and I will make with you an Everlasting Covenant my steadfast sure love for David behold I made him a witness to the people as a leader and a commander for the peoples behold you shall call a nation that you do not know and a nation that did not know you shall run to you because of the Lord your God and of the Holy One of Israel for he has glorified you the Holy One of Israel places his glory inside of his people so that the world can see the kind of God we have because of who we are verse 6 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 that he may have compassion on him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon for my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways declares 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 for as the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the Earth making it bring forth and Sprout giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater so shall my word be that goes out

from my mouth it shall not return to me empty but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it for you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace the mountains and the hills before you shall Break Forth into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands instead of the thorn shall come up the Cyprus and instead of the Briar shall come up the Myrtle and it shall make a name for the Lord an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off this chapter is pure celebration and invitation we can summarize it and kind of six words the first word is invitation we see that in verses one and two invitation come and buy without money Church invitation is a common theme in the Bible and so if you are a Christian if you're a person whose heart is in tune with the Bible then invitation should be a common theme in your life you should be a warm and welcoming and inviting person invitation is a theme of The Bible and that makes us happy because invitation is a happy theme this is the kind of text that we should enjoy and this is the kind of text that should make us enjoyable people to be around Jesus that great fount of all love and grace and beauty invited us to come to him and know him and so we invite others the same way God loves to say hey there is room in my family for you there is a place at my table for you so I'm just saying people who are Godly love to say there's room in our household for you there's room at our table for you it's as simple as this question when's the last time that you were talking to somebody who was lonely or needy and you simply said to them you know there's room in my life for another friend I'll be your friend when's the last time that you were talking to somebody who doesn't have a church and doesn't clearly Believe As a Christian and you simply said to them you know there's room at my church for you I'll drive you we'll go out to lunch afterwards come with me this is the simplest easiest thing to do and it's one thing that when we do it we are being like our savior God invites everybody all the time you read the New Testament and you find me someone who is more welcoming and inviting than Jesus you will not find that personage the theme of invitation is a common theme in Scripture one of my favorite Old Testament books not surprisingly is Isaiah but a second one of my favorite Old Testament books is the Book of Proverbs listen to this theme of invitation in the Book of Proverbs Proverbs chapter 8 does not wisdom call does not understanding raise her voice on The Heights beside the way at the crossroads the busiest intersection she takes her stand beside the gates in the front of the town at the entrance of the portals she cries aloud To You O men I call and My Cry is to the children of men oh simple ones learn Prudence oh fools turn in here and learn sense herefore I will speak Noble things and from my lips will come what is right wisdom invites everyone to know Noble and true and good things in the next chapter Proverbs 9 wisdom has built her house she has hewn Her Seven Pillars she has slaughtered her beasts she has mixed her wine she has set her table she has sent out her young women to call from the highest places of the Town hey whoever is simple let him turn in here to him who lacks sense she says come and eat of my bread and drink of the wine that I have mixed and leave your simple ways and live the Bible is an invitation to leave your destructive ways and live that's what it is aiah 55 is one of the most beautiful invitations in all of the Bible and I said that carefully the only reason that I say Isaiah 55 is one of the most beautiful invitations in the Bible is because at least to my reading the invitation that Rivals Isaiah 55 is another invitation in Isaiah turn back to Isaiah 26 I just want you to see this again because we preached through it but I think Jimmy Carter was president when we preached in Isaiah 26 I can't remember exactly when that was it was a little bit ago it was a minute Isaiah 25 verses 6 through 8 Isaiah 25 verses 6 through 8. this is this to me this just wrestles with Isaiah 55 as the most beautiful text in

the book 25 6 on this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for All Peoples a feast of rich food a feast of well-aged wine of rich food full of marrow of aged wine well refined and he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast Over All Peoples the veil that is spread over all nations he will swallow up death forever and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and the reproach of his people will take away from all the Earth for the Lord has spoken oh Church it doesn't just say that there will be no more tears says that there will be no more tears because the Lord himself will wipe them all away Alec matier says in his fine commentary on Isaiah these verses prove that in Christ Ultimate Reality is a banquet with no expense spared and every provision made and with nothing tomorrow our enjoyment of it for every grief and death and tear has been dried up this invitation in Isaiah 55 is so important if I could speak this way this invitation in Isaiah 55 seems so near to God's very heartbeat that the last uh two and a half inches of the Bible the end of the end of the last chapter of revelation 22 is a quotation from Isaiah 55. the spirit and the bride say come and let the one who is thirsty come and let the one who desires come and take of the Water of Life without price he's quoting from Isaiah 55 1. in revelation 22 and verse 17. you see the invitation everyone everyone God offers everyone a place at the table everyone May Come and there is only one table everyone must come to Jesus therefore the invitation of the Gospel is as inclusive as all of humanity and the invitation of the Gospel is as exclusive as Jesus Christ and Christ Alone what's the qualification to come verse 1. come everyone who thirsts the qualification is that you have to be thirsty oh and there's also another qualification you have to have no money right come to the waters and he who has no money come by and eat the thing that makes this invitation I don't know it seems like the thing that makes this invitation the most Godlike is it's utter one-way generosity there's no kickback there's no cost there's no requirement all you need to be is thirsty and all you have to have is nothing so we say that when it comes to the gospel all you need is need all you need is the spirit's Awakening that what you have spent money on is worthless and what you have tried to stuff you your soul with to satisfy you will never satisfy the Lord's offer here in Isaiah is to buy what is free I think it's beautiful that that's repeated twice the end of verse 1 coming by he he who has no money come by says in verse one and then he says again in verse 1 come by without money and then he says in verse 2 why are you spending your money on that which doesn't satisfy us repeat it three times so the point is being made emphatically how do you buy something without money one way to buy something without any money of your own is to use someone else's money to purchase it the points being made emphatically that this is something that is worth more money than you could ever have and yet you can have it how is it that you can have something without money you can have something without your own money if the purchase price was paid by another and the purchase price was paid by another Isaiah 53 Verses 4 through 6. surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows we esteemed him stricken Smitten by God and Afflicted he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds we are healed that's how you purchase without money it's because the suffering servant purchased it with his blood This is gospel Grace there's an amazing appeal even in verse two When God says why are you spending your money on that which is not bread why are you laboring for what doesn't satisfy and then God says listen diligently to me and you can eat what is good so there are at least two arguments there in verse two the first argument is if you refuse this invitation you are doing an incalculable wrong to yourself because you're wasting your life and

you're wasting your money on that which will not satisfy that's the first argument if you refuse this invitation you're doing something incalculably wrong and violent and wasteful to yourself but the second argument is uh listen diligent to me and eat what is good delight yourself in rich food the second argument is if you take this invitation you're doing something incalculably wonderful for yourself you're getting what's great satisfying in all abundance so the first word that summarizes this is invitation and we spent the bulk of our time on that word the rest will go quicker the second word is promise that God will satisfy every need and he says that his steadfast satisfaction is tied verse 3 to the Everlasting Covenant that he made with David we can't take the time to go back there but if you want to mark it down mark down that going backwards Isaiah is quoting from Psalm 89 going backwards Isaiah is quoting from Psalm 89 and we also don't have time to go there but if you want to look at it mark down that going forwards is acts 13. going forwards is acts 13 because when Paul is preaching in Antioch in Acts 13 he defines the work of Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Everlasting Covenant that he made to David and Paul in Acts 13 quotes Isaiah 55 and Psalm 89 that It All Leads to Jesus God has always promised to satisfy every need and the one who satisfies the needs is Jesus third an important word is the word command the command to seek to call to forsake and to return read verses 6 and 7 again see 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 that he may have compassion on him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon what does he mean when he says seek the Lord well to seek the Lord doesn't mean to go out and find something that got lost to seek the Lord means that you are putting in the work to find what is there to find what is there and God is he who is there he was there before you he'll be there after you he's always there to seek the Lord is to be intentional about your relationship with God to seek the Lord is to be intentional about your relationship with God we tend to take our most important relationships for granted our parents or spouse we tend to take those most intimate relationships for granted but perhaps those are the relationships that we should be seeking and investing in the most well same with our relationship with the Lord be intentional about your relationship with the Lord cultivate intimacy within make his kingdom the one you think about and what you organize your day around and make your decisions around so if we ended and we were just talking with each other and I asked you this question it sounds like a church question but it's actually a very straightforward question are you seeking the Lord if you said yes could I ask you another question proof it how would I see that how would I know that if you don't know how to answer that question you find someone here who's a little bit closer to God than you and ask them what do you do to seek the Lord that Mutual edification can help you seek him notice verse six seek the Lord and then it's qualified while he may be found what does that mean what does that mean what does that mean this is a place in Bible teaching where I'm able to tell you what you think that means that's what it means when he says seek the Lord while he may be found it means what you think that it means it means you don't know how long you have but you should know this you have less time than you think you do that's what it means no one is uninvited and the invitation lasts forever for No One no one is uninvited but the invitation will not last forever everyone is welcome and the door is wide open and there is no admission fee you don't have to have a ticket you don't have to have money all you have to have is need that's how wide open the door is and a day is coming Revelation says that the day is coming when the gate will be shut and outside of Heaven will be all those who by their their unrepentant refusal to

seek the savior they'll be in hell we Proclaim Jesus and we support the work of missions so that more and more followers of Christ will be made and we do that today because today is the only day that we can do it it's a Time coming when we won't do that anymore so you have this command to seek the Lord and you have it qualified only while he may be found and then doesn't verse 7 describe repentance and not only does verse 7 describe repentance but I'm telling you verse 7 describes repentance in a way that you should get yourself familiar with and maybe even memorize let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts let him return to the Lord when we seek the Lord remember I said a second ago if I asked you are you seeking the Lord and you said told me yes I'd be like well how do you prove it well this is how you prove it when you seek the Lord you repent of sin if you are not repenting of sin you are not seeking the Lord that's exactly what this says don't make it more complicated than that and don't don't don't spin yourself out of the self-examination that this requires this describes repentance when we seek the Lord we willingly let go of sin when we are protecting and refusing to repent of sin we are going the opposite way of seeking the Lord we're actually avoiding him God calls us to seek him a parent of a teenager hollers into the teenager's room because the door's shut are you working on your homework teenager says oh yeah yeah and on the other side of the door said Teenager it's like 75 minutes deep into a Fifa tournament on Playstation just getting what they want out of their team when you say yeah I'm working on it yeah I'm seeking the Lord well are you or not ice what he says let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts the very Hebrew parallelism here Wicked and unrighteous way and thoughts um rescues us from a surface level behaviorism or moralism because not only do you have to forsake the way and the actions have to have your intentions and thoughts reality changed this is genuine repentance of course you stop the activity but you stop the the heart idolatry and the pride and the avarice of attitude that motivated the activity in the first place so yeah the the the teenager would would put down the PlayStation because he or she would actually begin to think I don't want the consequences of not doing my homework and I do want the consequences of a relationship with my parents where I'm not lying to them and they begin to think differently about themselves and their relationships and their motivations the mind the heart the desires the goals it's all Encompass in Repentance and don't sleep on the end of verse 7 let him return to the Lord that he may have compassion on him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon you have a you have a calling and a job it's to repent of your sin but God if I could put it this way respectfully God has a calling and a job and it is to forgive you for every single one of your sins and bury them in the deepest ocean that's what he does that's the kind of God that he is and church we should Revel in that we should Revel in that the people in this community who are the quickest to apologize and the quickest to reconcile with each other must be Christian people for we're the ones who are able to admit that we've sinned and we believe in a God who forgives us of our sin any time we front and we refuse to reconcile we're like well I'll apologize a little bit when they apologize 82 times we're running away from the gospel the grace of Jesus Christ the grace of God in forgiving us makes us people who lavishly forgive so easy to live with people like that so hard to live with people who have hardened themselves to God's grace it is so easy to live with people who are melted every day in the presence of the fire of God's grace and fourth we see that God's thoughts and ways are high above ours and fifth we see that God's powerful word is always working just one comment about verses eight and nine you know my thoughts your thoughts put it in context put it in context what

did the end of verse 7 say God will abundantly pardon and then he says for my thoughts are higher than your thoughts and my ways are higher than your ways I think in context Isaiah 55 verses 8 and 9. is a reaction to the instinctive human recoil that refuses to believe in God's grace we're like bad people get spanked evil people go to hell Works earning Works earning and we just don't get it and so after God says I'll forgive you he says I know that's hard for you to believe and that's because the way that I operate is so high above your simple little works-based human minutia and myopia perhaps the Fulfillment of verse 8 in its zenith that is the way above all other ways that God's ways are higher than our ways is in fact Isaiah 53. that in order to redeem us he would crush his own son how how different than human expectation could anything be than that in God's powerful word is always working again in context in the context of Isaiah 55 verses 10 and 11 about the power of God's word is the power of the word of the Gospel this is this is the chapter where he began with if you don't have money you can buy it and this is the chapter where he says God's word accomplishes God's work the word of the Gospel saves people it is the word of the Gospel it is the word of the Lord that accomplishes his work it's not human means and human strength and then it ends with perhaps the biggest blessing of all in saying in verses 12 and 13 that the reality of Salvation will renew the world he says you'll go out in joy you'll be led forth in peace the mountains and the hills before you will break forth in singing that was even referred to I think in our call to Worship in Psalm 96 today all the trees of the forest will clap their hands and then he and then in verse 13 if you're a sensitive Bible reader who's been through the story you know that he's talking about the curse the Thorns that infest the ground will be no more this will be an everlasting sign the near fulfillment in Isaiah is that verses 12 and 13 describe in Poetic language the return from the Babylonian captivity but verses 12 and 13 in the final fulfillment of Isaiah I would propose describe in actual literal language what will happen in the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ every Covenant has a sign the Covenant with Noah the rainbow the Covenant with Abraham the circumcision you see verse 13 this will be an everlasting sign that will not be cut off what he's talking about there is the reversal of the curse and the renewal of the new heavens and the new Earth there is no more Everlasting there is no more universal sign than that the new heavens and the new Earth so what stands out to me with that last verse is the sheer uh reality of the Gospel or if I could put it this way the sheer objectivity of the Gospel or the sheer inevitability of the Gospel or to speak very personally the the sheer fact that the gospel will do what it will do to the universe no matter what you do no matter how you feel no matter how you respond that's what he's getting at here the entire Cosmos will be redone by God because that is the inevitable result of what the suffering servant did on that cross and this is outside of you and I just if I could do one thing for you I just wish that the next time you have a bad day or the next time you have a bad year or the next time you feel like you're actually Justified insane I have had a bad life I wish I could get you to remember Isaiah 55 12 and 13. because no matter how you feel and no matter how the shattering classes put you down and no matter how it seems that everybody else gets everything and you don't get anything God will accomplish his work in this universe and if you are in Jesus you will never ever be left out of that good work that God is doing it includes the whole world and it includes you this is the invitation this gospel is so great this invitation is so persuasive I go back to verse two when God asks why Church why are you spending your money on other things and why are you spending your labor on other things the best news in the world it deserves our highest celebration and it deserves our wholehearted

invitation to everyone everywhere let's pray Lord God what a what a great chapter what a what a wonderful invitation that you've given to us what a God you are that you would speak to us in such a way when we have merited your rejection and your refusal what kind of God are you that you would just roll out Isaiah 55 to us and invite us to have everything and the cost being paid by your son Our Savior the Lord Jesus what can we do but respond with Wonder Love and praise what can we do but respond with Thanksgiving what can we do but renew our commitment that that asking you to fill the sales of Our Lives that we might go to the places you would have us to go and speak to the people you would have us to speak to of this wonderful word of invitation we rejoice in how you've saved us and we Delight in this invitation to the banquet to take it to everyone everywhere for Jesus sake amen