

Title: THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH, ISAIAH 50:4-9.
(Chatham, NJ; 03/28/10, AM) [D – Exegesis]

Theme: Jesus became the author of our salvation by his obedience, suffering, and perseverance.

Purpose: To exalt Jesus because of these things and to demonstrate that they were consistent with the exhortation in the Book of Hebrews given to the church.

Introduction:

1. We focus on Jesus who has given us the model for our faith, Heb. 12:1-2.
2. He is described by Isaiah.
3. Consider what we learn of him in Isaiah.

I. He Obeyed, Isaiah 50:4-5.

- A. Isaiah demonstrates the obedience of Christ (the servant).
 1. He listened with open ears.
 2. He was not going to be rebellious.
 3. He would not turn back.
 4. The words of comfort for the weary were the result of his willingness first to be taught; he had to submit before he could lead.
 5. He was obedient to his Father's voice.
- B. Jesus' Obedience.
 1. His father was pleased with him, Mt. 17:5.
 2. Jesus does what his father does, John 5:19.
 3. "Not my will but yours" in the Garden, Mt. 26:42, is also reflected in Phil. 2:8, "...he became obedient to the point of death."
 4. He learned obedience, Heb. 5:8, just as we learn it: through suffering.
 5. All of this was so that he could sustain the weary, Is. 50:4.
 6. Hebrews 4:15 reveals that his perfect obedience and compassion made the perfect combination for intercession and redemption.

II. He Suffered for Our Sins, Isaiah 50:6.

- A. Isaiah's language here is a precursor to chapter 53.
 1. His back
 2. His cheeks
 3. His face
 4. All of these become objects of scorn and punishment.
 5. Yet Jesus despised the shame of the punishment, Hebrews 12:2.
- B. His suffering is the great mystery of redemption.
 1. It was the one thing that the disciples resisted and misunderstood most, but it was written in Scripture, Luke 24:46.
 2. No doubt Isaiah 50 was one passage he alluded to.
 3. 1 Peter 2:24 quotes Isaiah 53 to demonstrate that Christ suffered for us.
 4. For me the mystery is why it had to happen through suffering.
 5. Why this substitutionary atonement? How is God's justice served by shedding blood?
 6. God satisfied his justice by paying the price of redemption.

7. A more compelling question might be, "Why did he do it for me?"
8. He suffered for our sins and took the punishment we deserved.

III. He Stood Up to the Enemy, Isaiah 50:7-9.

A. Language of perseverance and certainty.

1. God helps; my face is like flint (the same image is used of Ezekiel).
2. He stands toe to toe with his enemies.
3. No disgrace and no shame
4. A series of rhetorical questions follows.
5. Who will contend?
6. Who is my adversary? (Implied that he will lose.)
7. Who will declare me guilty?
8. He is almost mocking his adversaries, like a cocky athlete.
9. They will wear out like a garment eaten by moths.
10. Perseverance is his characteristic because victory is certain.

B. All this demands perseverance.

1. Paul maintains an attitude of assurance and victory in Romans 8:31-39.
2. Although the Christian life has many adversaries, we have the confidence in God that unflinching perseverance must characterize our Christian walk.
ILLUS: Story of navy SEAL (see next page.)
3. I can hardly think of a better way to demonstrate the conviction and perseverance demonstrated in Isaiah than in that note on that Navy SEAL's hospital door.
4. Hebrews says, "You have need of endurance," and "...lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees."
5. Turning back is not an option.

Conclusion:

1. What Isaiah describes is found in the life of Christ.
2. He obeyed; he suffered; he didn't back down; and he overcame.
3. Those who deny the existence of God, or who mock the Christian way of life, or who put Jesus in the same category with all other religions are wrong. We needn't fear them, and we most certainly must not give in to them or to any enemies of Christ for a second.
4. God strengthens us and guides us. Let us keep our eyes fixed on the Jesus who obeyed, suffered, and overcame.

Story of Wounded Navy Seal
(From a speech by Karl Rove on 3/23/2010, Naples, FL)
See Heritage.org.

Recently I heard a speech by Karl Rove, Senior White House Advisor and Deputy Chief of Staff under George Bush. In that speech he described the experience he had recently had when he spoke to an audience of Navy Seals not long ago. His host for the event wanted him to meet one of the seals but warned him that he might be hard to look at. He was.

This lieutenant had been shot eight times and had undergone 22 operations. He lost part of his cheekbone and nose where a bullet had caught him. Karl Rove expected a broken soul, a dispirited individual, but he was everything but that. Though he still needed 2 more procedures, he was excited about the possibility of “getting back in the game.” It didn’t take long for the speaker to realize this was an extraordinary man.

After the evening was over and Mr. Rove went home, his host sent him two pictures. One was of this lieutenant when he was first in a Baghdad hospital bed. You couldn’t recognize the human being under all the bandages. The second picture depicted the sign that the young SEAL had put on his hospital door. It read,

Attention to all who enter here: if you are coming into this room to feel sorry for me for the wounds I received, go elsewhere. The wounds I received in a job I love with men I love protecting the liberties of a country that I deeply love. I will have a full and complete recovery. What is complete? It is the absolute utmost my body can do and then I will push myself 20% further through sheer mental tenacity. The room you are about to enter is a room of joy, optimism, and intense rapid re-growth. If you’re not prepared for that, go elsewhere. – The management.