

Our Duty to Give God No Rest

Isaiah 62:1-9

By [Dr. Frank M. Barker, Jr](#)

August 31, 2014 – Morning Sermon

Isaiah 62:1–9 says

[1] For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. [2] The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. [3] You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. [4] You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. [5] For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. [6] On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest, [7] and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. [8] The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: "I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink your wine for which you have labored; [9] but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary."

In Isaiah 60 we find the future exaltation of Zion predicted. Isaiah 60:1 says [1] Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

That is quoted in the New Testament as being fulfilled in the first coming of Christ. The Light shone there in a new way. Matthew 4:16a says [16] the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light... When the Bible talks about Zion it is close to Israel.

Jerusalem was built on the Mountain of Zion and it pictured God's true church. We sing of this in the hymn *O Zion, Haste* which says;

*O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling,
to tell to all the world that God is light,
that he who made all nations is not willing
one soul should perish, lost in shades of night.*

Refrain:

*Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace;
tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.*

Now that was from Isaiah 60 that spoke of that coming Light and in Isaiah 61 it identifies the Person who will be that Light. Isaiah 61:1–2 says

[1] The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; [2] to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.

Jesus read that passage in Isaiah 61 in the synagogue and then said “Today you have seen this fulfilled in your sight.” He would be that anointing One who would come and be the Messiah for us.

Now in Isaiah 62 we see that God promises not to rest until the exaltation of Jerusalem, until the true church takes place in a sense. Notice what He would not do in Isaiah 62:1 which says [1] For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, (what He would do) until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. He would cause this brightness to go forth, this righteousness to go forth.

What is the righteousness? Romans 3:10 says [10] *as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one.”* Righteousness is the perfect obedience which the Law of God requires where who shall offend in even one part of the Law is guilty of all but we read about Christ dying for our sins. II Corinthians 5:21 says [21] *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* Christ took our guilt upon Himself and His perfect righteousness, His perfect record, is credited to us legally where we stand before God not guilty when we put our faith in Christ and when we surrender our will to Christ. That's the Gospel. That's the Good News.

Christ was God the Son who became Man who lived a sinless life, then went to the cross to die for our sin, like someone would pay your fine in court. Then He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven. One day He'll come back but when we surrender our will to Him where I'm purposing to obey Him – I won't always obey – but I'm truly repentant and I put my trust in Him as the hymn, *Upon a Life I Did Not Live* says;

Upon a Life I have not lived,
Upon a Death I did not die,
Another's Life; Another's Death,
I stake my whole eternity.

I put my trust in Him as my approach to God. It's not enough just to believe all that was true but I have to put my trust in Him. When I do that I get His perfect record credited to me.

I remember when I used to teach the Youth's Communicants class here at Briarwood. I would say to them "If you stood outside the gates of heaven and if you could have anybody's record of whoever lived, whose would you want to have?" One youth said "I want George Washington's record." I said "He cut down the cherry tree." The youth said "Oh I don't want George's." Then another said "Mr. Barker could I have yours?" I said "Son, you do not want my record." Another said "Could I have Jesus' record?" I said "I have Good News for you, you can have Jesus' record as you approach God." That is the Good News. That's a gift. It's the Gospel for by grace through faith it's not of works.

Not only do we get legal clearance there of His righteousness but we also receive the Holy Spirit. He has come to live within us and He does a heart operation. He says I'll take the stony heart out and I'll write My law on your heart. I'll put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, judgments and do them. He doesn't totally remove our sinful nature but He breaks the back of it and gives us a new nature and puts His Holy Spirit in us. There will be the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, faithfulness, self-control – qualities that aren't natural to us but begin to be characterized by our life. There is that growing trend of obedience. So our righteousness is both legally and morally as we begin to live differently and make an impact.

Isaiah 62:1 says [1] For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. He says until it really lights up the world and makes an impact here for God won't rest until He brings that about. He shows us the impact of that in the next verse. Isaiah 62:2–5 says

[2] The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. [3] You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. [4] You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. [5] For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

What a change and a growing impact how God has promised not to rest until His true church, Jerusalem, or Zion here. Then we see God's provision of watchmen for the walls of Jerusalem. Isaiah 62:6a says [6a] On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. Who were these watchmen? They were prophets and ministers. Isaiah was a prophet in 700 B.C. when he is predicting all this. These watchmen He would appoint were ministers to His church and church leaders.

Who else is involved? He goes on to say in Isaiah 62:6b, [6b] You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest. It is you that remind the Lord and that's every true believer that fall into that category. Matthew Henry says "it includes the entire people of God for that's their character and their responsibility to remind the Lord." That applies to every Christian.

What were they to do? Isaiah 62:6–7 says [6] On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest, [7] and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. Don't give God any rest. Keep reminding Him of what He promised to do here. You remind the Lord of something He seems to have forgotten here. How do you remind the Lord? You plead with Him and you pray earnestly. You call out and wrestle with Him in prayer, in a sense.

What are we to ask for? Isaiah 62:7 says [7] and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. We are to ask that He blesses His church and causes us to have great impact in the culture, in the nation, in the world. That is what you are asking and pleading Him to do in individual's lives and in people around you. Calvin says "this means to remind the Lord to make His church glorious." We pray "Thy Kingdom come..." Lord, we want it to come in power more and more in and through our lives and in the world around us.

Notice the basis of our request in the next verses. Isaiah 62:8–9 says [8] The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: "I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink your wine for which you have labored; [9] but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary." Your nation won't have others who are conquering it and really your church here instead of being conquered will do the conquering. It will be making an impact in the culture around you here.

We are to remind the Lord. Give Him no rest until He does this. That's a crucial part of seeing it happen, our intercession. I think about Jesus' parable about the friend at midnight in Luke 11. This chapter starts out with the Lord's Prayer but

then He goes on to give the parable about the friend at midnight. Luke 11:5–9 says

[5] And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, [6] for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; [7] and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? [8] I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. [9] And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Ask in that way and persevere. In other words, the man knocking on the door says “Look, I’m not leaving and I’m going to keep knocking until you get up.” That’s the kind of praying we need to do. We have to be persistent and persevere and Jesus said to ask in that way and it shall be given to you. Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened. So we need to ask God to bless His church and use it to impact the culture around us. Suppose you get to heaven and you say “Lord, my next door neighbor is not here and he died over a year ago.” The Lord replies, “You didn’t remind me to save him.” Perhaps you get to heaven and your son is not there and you say “Lord, my son is not here” and He says “You didn’t remind Me.”

When I was a teenage boy my dad reminded God to save me. I would come home drunk and I would go upstairs to my bedroom but the steps to my bedroom went right by my dad’s bedroom. I would look in his room and he would be on his knees at his bed and I knew who he was praying for. He was praying for his wayward son. He reminded God to save his son and that’s a big factor in my being saved. We have to remind the Lord. We have to pray for God to work in our families, in our cultures, in our communities and through our church and through His church throughout the world.

I have an interesting story of a conversion. This is from George Truett who was a famous preacher in Dallas, Texas about a hundred years ago at the First Baptist Church of Dallas. He tells in his book, *We Would See Jesus*, about what he calls the greatest conversion he ever saw. (An excerpt from Truett’s book follows.)

The occasion was several years ago, in a great outdoor Texas meeting. Conditions religiously were dreadfully hard and bad where such meeting was held. I think I never knew them worse. Men with white locks about their ears were lost, and even their grandchildren followed in forbidden and ruinous paths, and the few people of God in the community were down and beaten and defeated, it seemed. One of the causes for such conditions was that a group of men had had a series of little, pesky,

religious debates, and the result was that conditions were hard and harsh and bad on every side.

I shall never forget the repeated story of the people there concerning one of their citizens, a man known for a radius of hundreds of miles. They told me much about this same Big Jim. They said, "He will come to the meeting once this year, then he will curse you and the meeting out, and curse the churches, and then he will wait another year to come again. That is his style. You need not waste any preaching on him." They described him so that I could not mistake him — he was the largest man in all that section. One night I stood up to preach, and in came Big Jim. I shall never forget the emotions that then possessed me. Here was the chief of sinners, so the people said; what could be done for him?

That night I preached, and God's Spirit moved upon the audience mightily, and men with their white locks and stooped shoulders were, like little children, that night turned to the Savior. Yonder sat Big Jim like a granite shaft. And when that service was concluded, a little group of people stayed behind and talked with one another about the hour just past, as men are wont to talk over such an occasion. Every now and again they would refer to Big Jim. They said, "He was here tonight, but he won't be back." Another said, "I believe he will return, I never saw him look as he looked tonight. Another said, "No" another said, "Yes."

Presently after I had left the tabernacle to find the cottage where I slept, as I went along through the quiet woods, I heard someone talking in the darkness of the night. I did not mean to be an eavesdropper. There were two of them talking, oh, so earnestly. They were talking to God. This is what they were saying, "Mighty God, the people are saying that Big Jim is too much for Thee. Oh, break to pieces our unbelief, and let all this country know that God is Master of the situation, that He can save even the chief sinner here!" They said, "Master, we plead Thy promise to Thy disciples about two who may agree, and if agreeing concerning anything they should ask, Thou wilt hear. We agree that we want Big Jim saved for the glory of God, and to stop the mouths of gainsayers once and forever in all this section. "

I quietly went my way, leaving them thus on their knees. They did not know that I had heard them, nor do I know who they were. The next day came and wore to evening, and again I stood up to preach, and in came Big Jim again. Yonder he sat at the rear of the tabernacle and then I said, "Father, give me the word of life for this brother man." I told the story of the prodigal son, that restless, wayward lad, who went away from home against the protest of love and wisdom's voice, and who went from bad to worse, and down and down, until yonder he is in the swine fields eating of the husks wherewith he fed the swine. One day the prodigal became

home sick and soul-sick and he said, "I have missed it all, my whole life's course is a grim sarcasm. I have missed it all. I can do better than this as a servant in my father's house and worst of all, worst of all, I have sinned against my best friend, I have sinned against my father who loved me, and I have sinned against my father's God. I will go back and I will tell him all."

You know the rest. You know how the father, whose heart ached forever with an aching that would not stop because the boy was gone, looked one day and saw him coming, and while he was yet a great way off, that father ran to meet him and to fold that thing of rags and shame to his heart, while the boy wept and said, "Father, I did not come back to ask to be your boy, but to tell you that I have sinned against you and heaven, and that I am not worthy to be called your son, but ask only to have a servant's place." And the father said, "Kill the fatted calf for the boy returned, bring him the best robe, put on his finger the ring — emblem of love that never dies." That was what I preached. And then I said, "I bring you a Gospel to which I have anchored my very soul, I am willing to die by it, and I am trying to live by it, I am going to meet God with it when I stand before Him in the judgment. I came one day and surrendered to that Savior whom God the Father sent. Is there a man here who will surrender to Him now?" Big Jim started towards the preacher, and in a moment half a thousand men were seeing him and all these rose to their feet. Were they dreaming! Was it too good to be true? They were on their feet, looking, listening, sobbing. Down that long aisle came Big Jim, and when he reached me he caught my hand and said, "I put you on your sacred honor will Jesus Christ save me if I give up to Him?" I said, "On my sacred honor, I answer that He will." And then he looked at me again while the men, who stood all about us now, were begging him to yield to Christ. He spoke again, "But you must remember that I am the worst man out of hell." I answered back, "My Savior died for the worst man out of hell, and He is able to save him now." Once more he looked at me and said, "When would He save me if I were to surrender myself to Him right now?" I said, "On the authority of Jesus Christ, on which I have rested my soul for time and eternity, I declare that He will save you right now, and you yourself may be the judge, if you will fully surrender to Him now."

Then he turned that great, bronzed face, pitiful in its anguish, up towards the heavens, and gasped this prayer, "Lord Jesus, the worst man in the world gives up to you right now!" I cannot tell you all the rest. I don't know that the angels could tell it all. But God unloosed his tongue, and Big Jim witnessed for Jesus then and there as I never heard Him witnessed for Him before nor since. Old grizzled men came and kissed Big Jim and old women came and kissed him and little children kissed him, for the chief of sinners was saved, then the word went to and fro as fast as the winds could carry it that God was in the midst of the people forgiving sin.

Boy you get a feeling here of God moving in His church and people praying, reminding Him, pleading with Him and gave Him no rest. He saved Big Jim and look at the impact of that on the whole culture around them. That's what we need God to do over and over again. We need to pray.

How do you pray? Pray persistently, believingly, specifically and earnestly. The Bible says whatever you ask, believe and whatever you believe ask believing that you'll receive it and you shall receive it. So pray believingly. George Mueller was a great man of prayer who established an orphanage in England by prayer years ago said, "It's not enough to begin to pray but to pray right or is it enough to continue in prayer for a time but we must pray patiently, besiegingly and continuing in prayer, believingly until we receive an answer." Amen! Charles Spurgeon, a great pastor, said "A prayerless member of a church is a hindrance. He is like a rotting limb in a body. For my own self (he says personally) I say that no man can do a truer kindness than to pray for me." Amen!

Think of our nation. It is getting darker and darker. The church is supposed to be salt and light. How can we be what we're supposed to be here? The church is not doing well nation-wide in a sense but if we'll earnestly start praying right where we are, no telling what God will do and that's the solution for there is no other solution. God has to move and He has to move in the grass roots up from there as we pray and are salt and light. Here is the heart of it right here – to lay hold and ask God to fulfill His promise to glorify Zion and make it an impact in the world here. I need to give Him no rest as He tells us in this passage in Isaiah. Instruct your personal time to do this and your family time and your time with others gathering together to unite our hearts in prayer.

I think of those two men who prayed for Big Jim. Look at the impact of that in that whole culture around them. We have prayer groups here at the church. Join one of those prayer groups. We can form other prayer groups. We have all types of different ones. Read the biographies of great men and women of prayer, like George Mueller, Hudson Taylor, James O. Fraser, Helen Roseveare, Amy Carmichael etc. Reading these biographies will really help you know how to pray believingly. Let's resolve to be salt and light.

Maybe you're reading this and you're a 'big Jim.' You have never really surrendered your will to Christ. That is the starting place. Put your trust in Him alone. Start there. For all who know Christ, we want to be doing exactly what we're told to do here and give Him no rest. Remind the Lord. Is there someone you need to remind Him of especially? If you have never committed your life to Christ that is the starting place so surrender right now. Let's pray.

Prayer:

As our hearts are bowed, what is your prayer practice? How about reminding the Lord of different people? What about the joy of praying with others in prayer?

What do we need to do there? If you have never surrendered your will do it right now. If you have never put your trust in Him do it right now. He will save you right now if you'll do that. Pray in your heart, "Lord Jesus, I surrender to You and I put my trust in You alone as my Savior. Come and make any changes you want in Jesus' Name, Amen."

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