

New Year's Day 2017

Hezekiah's Story

Isaiah 36-37

Background

- Father was Ahaz – a bad king
- Hezekiah was nothing like his father (though that wasn't his goal)
 - 2 Kings 18.6 – he held fast to the Lord
 - His personal integrity had a national impact
- He came under attack by Sennacherib
 - Every person trying to do the right thing will neither escape hardships nor escape them unscathed
 - You are swimming upstream against a decaying world
 - You are fighting a spiritual enemy who hates the light
 - You are invited (at times) to show how precious a treasure Jesus really is
 - The value of an object is measured by the level of sacrifice for it

Attacks sound like...

- Who do you trust? (36.4-10)
 - When this kind of attack comes, listen for right things said about you / your situation but wrong things said about God
 - Be certain that a lie said about God is NOT from God
- Don't you want peace? (36.13-20)
 - When this kind of attack comes, it often comes with an attempt to build consensus around you leaving you feeling very lonely or very wrong
 - When this attack comes, it will promise peace at the cost of freedom instead of peace as a benefit of freedom
- Where is your God? (37.10-13)
 - Most frontal attack – for those who are struggling most in their faith

His first and best response was prayer (37.14-20)

- "I am at a loss" – spreading the letter before God (v.14-15)
- "This is about You" (v.17)
 - I may benefit but don't pretend I'm the most important part of the equation (living is CHRIST)
 - Prayer has a way of dethroning us and empowering us
 - In prayer, God finds those who are willing to do what no one else will
- "See. Hear. Act." (v.17-20)
 - He had a specific way he wanted God to act
 - He was motivated by fear of God and fear

- He surrendered to God (represented by spreading out letter)
 - Greatest unanswered prayer was Gethsemane

Bottom line: God moves when we pray (37.21)

Questions for Discussion

1. Reread 2 Kings 18.6 about Hezekiah. Even though his father Ahaz was a terrible and immoral king, Hezekiah was different. What do you think led him to make a generational change? How have you seen that in your own family? What impact has it made?
2. Even though Hezekiah was a good king, he still came under attack. The sermon notes listed three reasons why this could happen. Do you identify with any particular one? Which is easiest to deal with? Which is most difficult?
3. When Hezekiah spread the letter from Sennacherib before the Lord, what all did that action represent? How can you apply those lessons to your prayer life and / or current situation?
4. Reread Hezekiah's prayer in Isaiah 37.14-20. What do you notice about how he addresses God? In the sermon, Trent said that Hezekiah also kept the perspective that the situation was really about God. Where do you see that? How can that change you, your perspective, or the content of what you're praying for right now?
5. God, through Isaiah, was perfectly clear in 37.21 – He was moving *because* Hezekiah prayed. How have you seen God move lately because you have prayed (or others have prayed for you)?