

**Comfort for Our Crisis:
We Find Comfort in What God is Doing
Isaiah 41**

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Text Introduction: With the exception of a few Sundays here and there for special emphases, we are going to be in the book of Isaiah from now until the end of the year. We are considering this book from the general theme of “Crisis,” because it is a prophetic message from a time of crisis in Isaiah’s day, focused on the nation of Israel and more precisely, Judah. To this point, we have examined the *Confrontation that Comes from Crisis*. That’s the tough part. But, that is only part of the story. We also see the comfort from God in the midst of the crisis.

Isaiah was the messenger of God during a part of ancient Israel’s history that is filled with crisis. Isaiah would prophesy the coming judgment of God on Israel (really Judah). But, as is so common in God’s Word, this message of God’s judgment was always tempered with the message of God’s grace.

Last week, we learned that we can be comforted by “Who God is.” Today, I want you to see that we can be comforted by “What God is doing.”

Text: Do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be afraid, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you; I will help you;
I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Introduction: Before this present series, I hadn’t preached as much as I probably should have from the book of Isaiah, but I have preached often from Isaiah 41:10. I turn to Isaiah 41:10 often. I find much comfort in this one verse.

God gave Isaiah a word of certain truth that would carry him through the uncertain days. I pray that it is a verse that will guide us in any uncertain days that we might encounter. In this one verse of Scripture, we see 2 statements of “Do not fear,” 2 statements of “I am,” and 3 statements of “I will.” From this sequence we understand something of what God is doing even in the midst of crisis.

In this one verse we discover the “**Promises of the Activity of God in the Middle of the Crisis.**”

- God promises to be with you.

Our perspective ought to change when we begin to acknowledge God’s presence in our lives. Isaiah 6 can serve as an example. Isaiah came to the Temple with fear, but he left with faith. What made the difference? The difference was the acknowledgement of God’s presence.

God’s promise of His presence has always been God’s way of helping us deal with our fear. When Moses questioned what he should say and do in going before Pharaoh, God simply said, “I will be with you.” When the disciples were afraid, Jesus promised His spirit would remain with them.

I can't think of anything better than the promise that God is with us. (And remember what we said about God last week—compassion, consummate plan of God in Christ, continuing reign of God, care, incomparability of God—He is with us!)

We might find ourselves lonely, but we will never find ourselves alone.

- God promises to bless you.

The promise is “I am your God.” This is His blessing. God blesses His people. Notice how personal this is. He is not just God, He is our God.

- God promises to build you up.

He strengthens us. What we want is for the crisis to go away. What God wants is to strengthen us for the crisis.

- God promises to benefit you.

He helps us. Sometimes the most glorious words are “Let me help you with that.”

Some years ago, I was out in my front yard putting together a basketball goal. To say I was struggling is an understatement. My neighbor came to help me. In seemingly no time at all, the goal was put together.

God says, “I will help you.”

- God promises to brace you.

It is good to know that God upholds us. This speaks to His preserving us.

These last three statements are in what is referred to as the perfect tense, but the Hebrew grammar experts say that this tense is used in what they call the “prophetic perfect.” They used this tense to emphasize that what is being talked about is so certain it is spoken about as though it already happened thus the translation, “I will.”

Someone put it this way: He is with you, beside you, within you, around you, and beneath you. Promises of God! We must in the midst of crisis, stand on these promises of God.

Some of you know the hymn, “Standing on the Promises of God.”

The second verse says:

Standing on the promises that cannot fail
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail
By the Living Word of God I shall prevail
Standing on the promises of God

All of this is believed by faith and has a purpose.

Consider verse 20.
so that all may see and know,
consider and understand,
that the hand of the LORD has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

Now, notice what is not promised. He never promised to take the crisis away.

We must have Faith that God is at work even when we do not see Him at work.

So What?

Don't Fear! That is repeated.

Praise Him. Look at 42:10

Sing a new song to the LORD;
sing his praise from the ends of the earth,
you who go down to the sea with all that fills it,
you coasts and islands with your inhabitants.

Worry less, worship more!

As I have often said, "It is hard to worry and worship at the same time.