**Mind Blowing! - Isa. 55:8 “My thoughts are not your thoughts…”**

It’s hard for most of us to understand that we do not think like God thinks. To say it another way, “***We don’t understand how God does not think like we think****.*” **The fact of the matter is God’s is always on the correct side of any issue and his mind thinks on an exponentially higher plane than we could imagine.**

**Since our thoughts make sense to us we** have a hard time seeing how others (let alone God) could think differently about things than we do. **We’ve all thought when disagreeing with someone: “*How can they not see that?!!***

·        **Case in point:** Moral issues like abortion, same sex marriage and the vastly different ways people think about any number of political topics. **And amusingly enough neither side can really understand how the other side can’t see the light and embrace what is “right**.”

**The same is true of God. God’s thoughts and ways are often beyond us.**

**The passage in Isaiah 55 is a testimony to how a sinful people, a corrupt nation, willing to repent has nothing to fear about God extending his mercy regardless the depths of their sin and unfaithfulness.  *And the key verse is about God’s mercy that does the unthinkable.***

·        *Isa 55:8-9 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says 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.*

**God is not generalizing about his omniscience or sovereignty in this text. It’s about His mercy. Even when Israel could not and we cannot conceive of God’s willingness to extend his mercy to others or ourselves; that “blow our mind.”**

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**God is saying, I know it’s hard to believe and comprehend that I would extend my mercy when you don’t deserve it. But since when is understanding how and precisely when you are forgiven a condition of your being forgiven? We may not understand how God works when it comes to mercy and its good news that we are not required to, in order to receive the unthinkable benefit from it. “My thoughts are not your thoughts.”**

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**We have no idea the extent, scope, and timing of God’s mercy, and the unlimited capacity I of the great “I Am.” (Moses)**

**Normal people, especially the wicked audience of this chapter, would not pardon as God does, would not forgive as God does, would not have mercy as God does. But God does not think how people think.**

**Fast forward about 700 years - The early Jewish Christians were opposed to Gentiles being welcome into God’s kingdom. This blows Peter’s mind so God takes extreme measures in Acts 10 (:13-15) to show Peter God accepts the gentiles, the unclean aliens, saying “*Peter, don’t you ever call unclean what I have made clean. And just so you don’t forget I decide who decides who is in and who the saved are you will now eat this feast of unclean beasts, snakes and birds.”***

**In the mind of those who could not and did not think about mercy the way God did such inclusion went beyond where their doctrine and understanding would allow. How could God include non-Israelites into his kingdom? How could we not be the only ones God favors? They, as we sometimes do, disapprove of God being merciful “to those terrible sinners” forgetting we are terrible sinners too.**

     ·        **This is what Paul means when he tells the Roman church “W*hat then shall we say, is God unjust? Not at all. For he says to Moses ‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.’”* – Romans 9:14-15**

**Our mercy tends to be cautious and limited, help with a tight fist. God’s mercy is liberal and generous. The truth is we don’t know what God is up to. He operates on a plane “higher than the heavens.” *Therefore, our best posture is one of humility and our best message to our culture is not the pretense of a perfect church but the mercy of a gracious God.***

***Two final thoughts:***

**1.**        **God is “rich in mercy.”**

**Ephesians 2:4 – But because of his great love for us, God who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our sins…”**

**Did you know the only trait God is called “rich” in is *mercy*. “Mercy” defines him and flows from him like a fountain to richly bless all who would repent. This gift is limitless because *mercy* is who God is and not just what he does.**

**Famous movie line “The 6th Sense:”** Traumatized little boy whispers to his therapist ***“I see dead people. Walking around like regular people. They only see what they want to see. They don’t know they are dead.”***

**God’s mercy comes to us when we needed it most, when we didn’t even know “we were dead in our sins.”**

·         D. Ortlund: Ultimately, ***“Christ was sent not to mend wounded people or wake sleepy people or inspire bored people or spur on lazy people or educate ignorant people, but to raise dead people.”***

**And Paul says that happens because God is rich in mercy!**

**2.**     **The child of God has nothing to fear on Judgement day.**

**Never completely rid of sin in our life how could we not be afraid to face God?**

**God’s answer to his children: When it comes to mercy, I am rich. When it comes to compassion, I am limitless.  On that final day when you see me face to face trust I have provided what you need most. Don’t fret, *for I don’t think like you think. I am God. My thoughts and ways are beyond you.* Because of my Son Jesus, mercy flows like a fountain.  “I have saved you not because of righteous things you did but because of mercy.” (Titus 3:5). My judgement is merciful.**

**1 Peter 1:3  -“Praise be to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”**

**Prayer: 4th Century Egyptian monk, Macarius, was asked by a young man: “Sir, how should I pray?” The old man replied, “There is no need for long discourses. It is enough to stretch out your hand to the Father and say:**

**“Lord, as you will and as you know, have mercy.”**