

Family Worship Guide: Instructions for the Remnant

Key Scripture Text

"For the Lord spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying: 'Do not say, "A conspiracy," concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow; let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.'" (Isaiah 8:11–14, NKJV)

Old Testament Connection Summary

Isaiah lived and ministered in a very difficult time in Israel's history. The nation of Judah had turned from the Lord, retaining an empty outward form of worship while pursuing self-indulgence and political alliances rather than faith in God's law. In the midst of this apostasy, God spoke directly to His prophet, giving instructions for how the faithful remnant must live. The Lord told Isaiah that He would be a sanctuary—a place of absolute safety and refuge—to those who fear Him. But to those who reject Him, God would become a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. The New Testament writers, including Peter and Paul, take this exact imagery and apply it directly to Jesus Christ. He is the chief cornerstone. To those who repent and believe, Christ is a precious sanctuary. But to those who stumble at the word and refuse to bow to the cross, the gospel of Jesus Christ becomes a rock of offense that will ultimately crush their pride.

Devotional Teaching and Application

In God's order, in God's way, the call to separate from the sinful practices of the world confronts the believer in every age. But it is acutely felt in a crumbling culture and a spiritually lukewarm church. Isaiah was feeling the tremendous pressure to conform to the apostate culture around him. The Lord laid His mighty hand upon His prophet and warned him: do not walk in the way of this people. What do we mean by this? We mean that none of us likes to be different. Our flesh is attracted to the customs of the world, and our biblical lifestyle makes the unbelieving world uncomfortable. But God's call is a positive obedience to His will. This is not a self-styled withdrawal or total isolation, but a distinctive, obedient lifestyle lived out within the community of faith, the local church, where we can encourage and hold one another accountable.

The second instruction God gives the remnant is just as vital: do not fear what the people fear. The people of Judah were shaking like trees in the wind because of the political and military threats of their day. They accused Isaiah of treason because he told them to trust God instead of making unholy alliances. But God tells His people, "Neither fear ye their

fear, nor be afraid." We are not to get caught up in the popular waves of panic that sweep through our society. If you fear men, you will keep the commandments of men. You will adopt their standards and conform to their culture. But if you fear God, you will keep the commandments of God.

We must sanctify the Lord of hosts in our hearts. This means we must consider and meditate upon the absolute holiness and transcendence of God. Our lives and our eternal destinies are entirely in His hands. All that men can do is kill the body, but God is the one who can cast both body and soul into hell. When we fear God alone, we discover a glorious truth: He becomes our sanctuary. He becomes our fortress against the judgment to come. We do not need to fear the ridicule, the rejection, or the persecution of men, because we are hidden safely in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions for Children

Please discuss these questions with your children:

1. Why did God command Isaiah not to walk in the ways of the people around him?
2. Who is the only One we are commanded to fear, and what happens when we fear Him instead of being afraid of men?

Parent and Adult Reflection Questions

Take a moment to reflect on these questions together:

1. In what specific areas of our family life are we feeling the greatest pressure to conform to the unbiblical standards of our culture?
2. Are our reactions to current events, political crises, and cultural shifts driven by the fear of men or by a reverent fear of God?
3. How can we better engage with our local church community so that we are supporting one another in this call to live a separated, holy life?

Practical Applications for Obedience

Identify one area this week where your family has compromised or conformed to the world simply to avoid standing out or being different. Repent of this conformity and establish a clear biblical standard in its place. Additionally, monitor your conversations about the news, politics, and culture this week. Refuse to participate in the panic and fear of the world; instead, intentionally speak of God's sovereign control and His holy judgment over the nations.

Family Prayer

Lord, we ask that Your word to Isaiah and the remnant would be a contemporary word to us in the day in which we live. Forgive us for the times we have conformed to the world because we did not want to be different, or because we feared the rejection of men. Strengthen our resolve to walk in obedience to Your truth. Give us a profound vision of Your holiness, that we might sanctify You in our hearts and fear You alone. Thank You, Father, that for those who believe, Jesus Christ is our sanctuary and our perfect refuge from the judgment to come. We pray this in His holy name, Amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

"The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread."
(Isaiah 8:13, NKJV)

Instructions