

God's Thoughts Work

Why would anyone really want to be a Christian? What is so appealing about following God? The answer is found, surprisingly, in **Isaiah 55:6-13**. You may be surprised to find that God is actually offering a sales pitch in this passage. He is presenting why anyone would want to follow His way. Further, this is recorded in a section that prophesies the era of Christ's covenant.

In **Isaiah 55:7**, God said that the wicked needs to forsake his way. The unrighteous man needs to forsake his thoughts. This, of course, calls to mind many other passages in the Bible. **Psalm 1:1** claims the man who doesn't walk in the way of sinners is blessed. The psalm ends in **vss. 5-6** saying the wicked and sinners will not stand because God knows the way of the righteous. **Proverbs 14:12; 16:25** reminds us that the way that seems right to a man ends in death. **Jeremiah 10:23** says "the way of man is not in himself" (ESV).

What we learn is in the cosmic scheme of the things, the way we naturally want to go just isn't going to work. Further, the wicked are so not because they have followed such a bad way that is worse than so many others. The wicked are so because they have followed their own way, not God's.

Isaiah 55:7 explains that we should turn to the Lord in order to receive pardon and compassion. But then in **Isaiah 55:8-9**, God explains why that is such a good idea. Because His ways and thoughts are not ours. Ours are unrighteous and wicked. They lead to death. His, however, are not the same. His ways are not just kind of different; they are truly different. God's ways and thoughts are higher, read that as better or greater, than ours. The difference is not small. His ways are not higher than ours as the high road is higher than the low road. His ways and thoughts are higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. As **Psalm 1:6** explained, the way that God knows is the way of the righteous.

Isaiah 55:10-11 explains that God's thoughts and ways actually work. His word will not come back to Him void. Whatever He has said will actually accomplish what God wants it to accomplish. It will accomplish it in our lives if we let it sprout in our lives. It will accomplish it through us, if we surrender to it. Does our way do that? How many of our plans have been worked, worked hard, and then failed? God's never does. His plans, ways, thoughts, words always work. Why would we choose our own way over that?

Finally, Isaiah explains the profound benefit of learning to think like God thinks, walk God's way, surrender to God's word in **Isaiah 55:12-13**. When we think God's thoughts and walk God's ways, we will "go out in joy and be led forth in peace" (ESV). As **Galatians 5:22-23** says, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. When we walk God's way, we receive these gifts; we bear this fruit. Who would want anything else?

The choice is really easy. However, we have to realize there really is a choice. We can continue to think our thoughts and walk our ways. If we do, we'll be wicked, unrighteous, sinful, lost. Or we can learn to think God's thoughts and walk God's ways. As you make the choice, remember our best thinking got us into the sinful mess we have been facing. But God's thoughts actually work.

--Edwin L. Crozier