

desire that our lives should be in conformity with His standard of holiness and should thus form a sounding board for our words. The Christian life alone is not a witness to the Lord; words of testimony are necessary, but the words are empty sounds if they are not backed up by a life that is constantly growing more and more into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The latter part of verse 1 shows that this command to God's people to maintain holy living is not based upon human effort and human struggling but upon the presence of God's salvation and of His righteousness. It is not that we can by ourselves attain to a standard of righteousness, but that we should put on His righteousness, which is revealed through the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verse 2 God declares that He will give great blessing to those who are truly born again and lay hold on God's free grace. Christ said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (John 15:10). God wants us to observe those holy ordinances which He has established and to keep our hands from doing evil. These verses are where they belong, not at the beginning of the offer of salvation, which is not dependent upon the performance of works of righteousness, but at the end of the promise, as an indication of the kind of life the redeemed man should live.

Isaiah 56:3 to 8 properly forms a third main section of this portion dealing with the results of the work of the righteous Servant as described in Isaiah 53. It might be helpful to give a summary of the passage from Isaiah 55:1 to 56:2:

- 1-3a God's Invitation in General Terms
- 3b-5 The Covenant of David
- 6-7 God's Invitation to Receive Pardon
- 8-9 God's Thoughts Different from Man's Thoughts
- 10-11 God's Word not to Return to Him Void
- 12-13 The Results of God's Mercy
- 1-2 God's Grace Results in Good Works

Isaiah 56:3-8

This short section which stresses the universality of the work of the suffering Servant would bring comfort to believers