

Tanya Howze – Lesson 10

Isaiah 56:1-8 (Salvation for Others)

What is one new thing you learned or idea to which you were exposed?

It was a revelation to me that these first few verses are referring to a call to salvation. The Lord begins by telling them to maintain justice and to do what is right. He then goes on to say that if you obey Him and hold fast to his covenant then he has things that he has promised for those that obey Him. The primary message is a call to those who accept the Lord's invitation to live a righteous life, keep the covenant, and maintain a repentance to continue to receive the mercy of the Lord. That which we do, according to His word, will be the transformation that God has promised.

In the readings, it surprised me that there were several upheavals within the church before the early Christians could accept the truth that Isaiah was teaching (Oswalt, 609). It was Peter's vision from heaven that convinced Isaiah that it was even appropriate to share the gospel with non-Jews (Acts 10:9-16). Even still when conflicts arose in association with the Gentiles, Paul had to confront Peter publicly to keep him from reverting to the old ways.

I am impressed by the scenario that the text gave about two young men who come to worship who are out of place. Their clothes, their hair, and the tattoos on their arm clearly show that they are not of that culture. An usher comes to them and tells them that they are not welcome there and they don't belong. God can then say the same thing to us that he said to the Israelites "Don't you dare exclude them from my house. They love me more than you do, as you could tell from their lives if you took the time to look." (Oswalt, 609)

As Christians, I feel that we need to show grace and compassion to those who come into the house of Lord. We never know what situation arose for them to enter as they did but we fail to remember that it's not about the appearance but it's about the heart. It tells us in 2 Chronicles. 30:9, "For the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate, and will not turn his face from you if you return to him."