The Task of the Church Today

During the days of the kings in Israel (the northern kingdom) and Judah (the southern kingdom), God raised up prophets to denounce sin, to warn of judgment, and to provide hope for the future. Though the Old Testament prophets are sometimes difficult for modern readers, their message is as relevant today as it was in the centuries 800-400 B. C. Isaiah (700 B. C.) was the greatest of the writing prophets, and he is frequently quoted in the New Testament. Our moment in history is by no means unique, and our task is much the same as the task God gave Isaiah.

**1. We Denounce a *Degenerate Culture***

That is marked by –

A. *Complete corruption* (1:4-6)

B. *Worthless worship* (1:11-15)

C. *Lousy leaders* (3:4, 13-15; 10:1-3)

D. *Sexual saturation* (3:16-17; 1:10)

E. *Killing their kids* (57:3-5)

F. *Countries in chaos* (chps. 13-24)

**2. We Proclaim a *Desirable Christ***

He is the true answer for our culture’s ills.

A. His personal *attractiveness* (33:17)

B. His miraculous *birth* (7:14; 9:6-7)

C. His death & *resurrection* (52:13-52:12)

D. His world-wide *mission* (49:5-7)

E. His righteous *kingdom* (11:1-10)

**Conclusion:** A call not to *moaning* but to *ministry*

**For additional study or family discussion**

1. What did the Lord say to you today through His word? Did you learn some new truth about God or yourself? Did the Lord challenge you, convict you, or encourage you?

2. In the first century A. D., the gospel penetrated a culture that was violent and corrupt. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

-- What was the core of the Apostle Paul’s message?

-- What kinds of tactics did he avoid in his preaching, and why did he not use them? See also 2 Corinthians 4:1-2. What kinds of deceptive, manipulative practices do Christian ministries sometimes use today?

-- Why didn’t he mount a social campaign to change the culture?

3. Read Paul’s farewell to the elders of the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:17-35). What did he teach during the ~3 years he was at Ephesus (vv. 20-21, 27-28)?

4. Nevertheless, we have a responsibility to do good whenever we have the opportunity (Luke 10:30-37; Galatians 6:9-10; James 1:27).

-- How can people in public office do good for their town, state, or nation?

-- How can individual Christians do good in their neighborhoods or professions?

-- How can Christians work in the political arena for justice and compassion without falling prey to the false notion that political action will make America a “Christian nation” again? (This is both possible and important.)