

MIDWEEK MOMENT 5/20/2026

Isaiah 53:3

“He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief...”

Isaiah 53 stands as one of the clearest and most profound prophecies of the atoning work of Christ in all of Scripture. Written centuries before the coming of Jesus, it unveils the heart of the gospel with striking clarity: a Servant who suffers, not for His own sin, but for the sins of others. From the outset, we are confronted with the tragedy of unbelief. Though the message is glorious, it is not naturally received. The Servant comes in humility—“no form or majesty that we should look at him” (v.2). He is not embraced by the world, but rejected by it.

Verse 3 tells us He is *“despised and rejected... a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”* He enters fully into the brokenness of a fallen world. He knows suffering intimately, not as a distant observer, but as one who bears it. Yet the heart of the passage lies in the act of substitution: *“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows... he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities”* (4–5). This is the doctrine known as penal substitutionary atonement in vivid form. The Servant suffers for us. The punishment we deserved falls upon Him, and the peace we could never earn is granted to us. And, *“like a lamb that is led to the slaughter”*, the Servant does not resist. He does not protest. He willingly submits to the will of God. This points forward unmistakably to the crucifixion, where Christ, though innocent, endures judgment in silence before His accusers.

And yet, this suffering is not defeat. Verse 10 declares it was *“the will of the Lord to crush him.”* Meaning, this was not a tragedy outside of God’s control; it was the very plan of redemption unfolding as covenanted between the Father and the Son from eternity past. Through His suffering, the Servant *“shall justify many”* (v.11). Isaiah 53 does not end in death, but in victory. The Servant *“shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days”* (v.10), indicating a clear sense of a coming resurrection. The One who dies for sinners lives again and secures a people for Himself. Through His work, many are counted righteous; not by their own merit, but by His righteousness imputed to them.

Isaiah 53, much like Mark 6:1-13, demands a response. You are not a neutral observer in this passage, as the prophet reveals that *“All we like sheep have gone astray”* (v. 6). This includes you, and it includes me. It constitutes every person to exist in this world, past, present, and future. Your sin is part of what necessitated the suffering of the Servant. To reject this message is to stand with those who *“esteemed him not.”* But to receive it by faith is to be counted among those whom He has justified. The only correct response that remains then is to **repent and believe**. Do not admire the Servant from a distance. Come to Him. Trust Him. Rest in Him.

Reflection:

1. What does Isaiah 53 reveal about the seriousness of sin?
2. How does this passage deepen your understanding of Christ’s suffering?
3. In what ways are you tempted to “esteem Him not” in daily life?
4. What does it mean, practically, to trust in Christ’s substitutionary work?
5. How should this truth shape your worship, obedience, and witness?

Prayer

Lord God, we confess that we have gone astray like sheep, each turning to our own way. Thank You for sending Your Servant, who bore our sins and took our place. Help us to see the weight of our sin and the greatness of Your mercy. Grant us true repentance and a living faith in Christ alone. Teach us to walk in obedience, with grateful hearts for all He has done. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Additional Reading

Psalm 22; John 1; Mark 15; Romans 5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22–25; Hebrews 9

Looking Ahead:

Next Week's Sermon: Reggie Goll - "Ambassadors of the King" (2 Corinthians 5:11-21)

Upcoming Events:

- FBC will be hosting a VBS organized by LifeWise July 16th-18th. If you are interested in volunteering to serve, don't hesitate to get in touch with the church offices.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Pastor Branden