

Chew on This

How can you help others experience the grace and peace found in God?

In Scripture, Jesus models how we can graciously and lovingly interact with those who do not know Christ. Remember that Jesus reflected the heart of the Father, and similarly, we reflect the love and grace of Christ here on earth. We are His representatives and ambassadors, and as our words and actions reflect more of Him, people around us will see and experience His grace and peace through us. We can share the Gospel with them directly and indirectly through what we say and do, and we can pray that they will seek to know Him more by reading the Word and joining a community of believers.

Isaiah 62:1--9

The Delight of the Groom

God is committed to His people and delights in them just as a bridegroom delights in his bride.

GROUP
DEVOTION

02

Are You Hungry?

What future event or milestone do you look forward to most?

There are many things to be excited about in the future. You might look forward to getting into college, getting married, or having kids. These milestones are usually joyful events because they signify new stages of life, and they are exciting because they mark the end of something old and the beginning of something new. They are an indication that we are growing and maturing. In this chapter, we see the prophet Isaiah talk about a future event that is exciting and new. This event will mark a defining moment in the relationship between God and His people.

Taste and See

What new name do God's people receive? Why do they receive this name? (v. 4)

They will be called Hephzibah because the LORD delights in them.

Because God's people strayed far from Him, they were once called Deserted, and their land was called Desolate. But they will not keep this identity forever, as nations and kings will one day see their vindication and salvation. God's redeemed people will no longer appear to be abandoned by God. Instead, they will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow upon them. They will be called Hephzibah, which means "my delight is in her," because the LORD delights in the renewed and redeemed covenant relationship He has with His people.

How does our identity change when we receive Christ into our lives?

Before knowing Christ, we are dead in our sins and do not realize that there is more to life than fulfilling our own fleshly desires. When we receive Christ as our Lord and Savior, however, we are born again into God's family and receive a new identity as children of God. We become a new creation and receive the Holy Spirit within us. We also a spiritual inheritance and enter into eternal life with Him! Regardless of our ethnic background or social class, we are able to enter into the kingdom of God and have a new life in Christ!

What analogy does Isaiah give to describe the relationship between God and His people (v. 5)?

He uses the analogy of a bridegroom and his bride.

The covenant relationship between God and His people will be like the committed relationship between a bridegroom and his bride. He will rejoice and delight in His people just as a young man delights in his bride on his wedding day. God will no longer discipline His people and give them over to their enemies because of their sins. He will no longer punish them and let other nations reap the benefits of the work that His people have done. In His mercy and grace, God is committed to restoring His relationship with His people, and they will praise Him and enjoy the fruit of their labor.

How committed are you in your relationship with God?

Imagine a perfect married couple that selflessly and sacrificially loves one another without an inkling of jealousy or pride. That is the kind of relationship God desires to have with us. He is completely committed and utterly devoted to us, but we are often distracted or half-hearted in our relationship with Him. Like healthy married couples who spend time together and grow in their love for one another, we need to be committed to spending time with God and growing in our love for Him so that we might pursue Him just as He pursues us.

Chew on This

How can you be intentional about growing in your relationship with the Lord?

Here are some ways that you can strengthen your commitment and love for God:

1. Set aside an extra hour each week to delight in God. For example, you could read the Word, enjoy His creation outdoors, or sing along to worship songs.
2. Remember reasons why you are thankful for Him, and write them down or pray thanksgiving prayers to Him.
3. Share about why you love God with as many people as possible. People who are in love can't stop talking about the person they love.