

Introduction:

1. One of the great prophetic chapters of the Old Testament is Isaiah 11. In this chapter you will find:
 - a. A prophecy of one called the “Branch” (v. 1). This is a favorite term of the prophets as they speak of our Savior, Jesus. Jesus grew out of the stem of Jesse (the father of King David).
 - b. The next four verses describe Jesus, His character and His actions (v. 2-5). His life and ministry are marked by wisdom, truth and righteousness.
 - c. Verses 6-9 speak of the effect of the Savior coming into the world. It is a picture of those who once were enemies now being at peace with one another (v. 6-9). Those in the kingdom of Jesus Christ learn to live at peace with one another and do not harm one another.
2. It is verse 9 that contains a key phrase that we want to be the focus of our study: “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord...” In this text, God expresses His ideal. He wants His word to permeate every place on the earth and fill the heart of every man!

The Lesson:**I. Two lessons to be learned from Isaiah 11:9.**

- A. God wants to change the hearts of men.
 1. “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain.” In the book of Isaiah, “mountain” is used to refer to the Lord’s house. This figure of speech is used to emphasize the high and exalted position that God gives to His people—the church. See Isaiah 2:2-4.
 2. Isaiah shows that the Messiah’s kingdom—the church—is one of peace. While it may have enemies without, those within the kingdom live at peace and do not harm one another, Isaiah 11:9.
 3. The savage spirit which consumes the hearts of so many men is tamed by the Messiah’s message. There is an ignorance of God in our world today, just as there was in the time of Isaiah. That ignorance leads to depraved conduct on the part of men. The remedy is the knowledge of God. God’s word planted in the hearts of men can produce a wonderful and complete change. A man’s conduct and disposition can be radically altered because his mind has been filled with the knowledge of God.
 4. God wants to change the hearts of men! To accomplish that...
- B. God wants His word to fill the earth.
 1. “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.” There is only one way that happens. God has to have a people in the earth who will carry His word to the local community and beyond, even to the uttermost parts of the earth.
 2. We are the people of God. We are on a mission from God. A few weeks ago we saw the rapid growth of the gospel in Jerusalem. What we did not note at that time was that the gospel did not stay in Jerusalem. How could it, when God wanted it to fill the earth?
 3. The first century Christians in Jerusalem were forced (by persecution) to flee their beloved city, Acts 8:1. This was an attempt by the enemies to stop the gospel right where it started. How did that work out? See Acts 8:4. The very thing that the devil used to try to stop the gospel caused the knowledge of the Lord to fill the earth.
 4. But the mission continues. Jerusalem was 2,000 years ago. The mission is now ours. What can we do to make sure the mission continues? God wants more people involved in the mission—more teachers, more preachers, more people doing evangelism. We cannot speak for others, but we can speak for ourselves. We intend to do more in God’s kingdom. But “more” always raises some questions—questions about growth and how we deal with the challenge of being a growing congregation...

II. Planning for the future (from Curtis Carr).

- A. A brief history of our congregation from the time we were on Lucas Drive.
- B. Many congregations today have problems; some have a declining membership.
- C. Our problems are good! We are growing and need more parking space and seating space.
- D. What are we going to do about the growing problems we face? Here are three options:
 1. Do nothing. This option is unacceptable.
 2. Build a new, larger building. This is not a good option for us at this time.

3. Expand our present building. This is a reasonable option.
- E. The deacons have been exploring this third option for about a year and a half. The architects have given us two proposals.
 1. *Proposal #1*: Expand the auditorium size, foyer and office area at a cost of 1.6 million.
 2. *Proposal #2*: Modify and make additions to our current building at a cost of \$350,000.
 - a. Modify seating in the present auditorium with the use of theater seating.
 - b. Expand the parking lot on the north side of the building.
 - c. Convert the current workroom into two offices for our preachers.
 - d. Build a new workroom and storage room at the north end of the classroom wing.
 - e. Redesign the stage area to accommodate better lighting and video.
- F. *Proposal #2* is cost effective and will give us room for growth in our present facility.
- G. Why do we want to do this? It is not for our own benefit, but for the sake of our mission.
- H. Jesus wants His church to convert as many as possible. Growth requires planning and work.
- I. Even though our congregation has grown, the credit belongs to God who has blessed us.
- J. The deacons have decided that *Proposal #2* will best serve the congregation.
- K. The cost of *Proposal #2* is minimal compared to alternatives and is easily within our budget.
- L. The expansion we are planning will be a great thing for the growth of the kingdom.
- M. As we go through these changes, we must “endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” [Ephesians 4:3](#). We ask for your support in this important work.
- N. We have a great opportunity before us. Let us re-examine ourselves and the commitment we have made to the work of the Lord.
- O. Let us pray that God will continue to bless the Dowlen Road church.

III. Remember our mission.

- A. While our mission is implied by the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament in [Isaiah 11:9](#), our mission of seeking the lost—evangelism—is one that is found throughout the New Testament.
 1. It began when Jesus spoke to those first disciples in [Mark 16:15](#).
 2. It continued when many of those early disciples were driven from their homes in [Acts 8:4](#).
 3. It continues today as we accept the challenge in our generation to take the gospel to as many as we can, [Luke 19:10](#). We want to tell our community about the Savior who came to seek and save. We want to carry that message to the world. As we grow and add more disciples, we will not only do more work in our own community, but we will be enabled to do more in other places. We believe we have a worldwide mission. That’s why we support preachers in the U.S., Mexico, Central America, South America, and countries in Africa.
- B. David recently told us about some churches that are building gymnasiums and workout centers; our expansion is directly related to our mission of seeking the lost. We do not seek the building up of the human body, but seek the building up of souls and the growth of the body of Christ—the New Testament church. To that end let us commit ourselves.

Conclusion:

1. Our congregation has a tradition of growth, working and unity. Let that continue.
2. As we give the Lord’s invitation, we want to extend an opportunity to those who need to become Christians to obey Jesus today (Mark 16:16). We also extend the opportunity for those who need to come back to God to be restored to fellowship with Him (Galatians 6:1-2).
3. Can we also add a special element to the invitation? Will we accept the Lord’s invitation to truly be workers in His kingdom? Read [John 4:35](#). Can we lift up our eyes and see what Jesus wants us to see? Workers do not need to come to the front of the auditorium to answer this invitation. You can answer it in your own heart and mind as you commit yourself to seeking the lost. Will you do it?