**Isaiah 53:1-6 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? 2For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, *There is* no beauty that we should desire Him. 3He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripeswe are healed. 6All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

 We’re in the book of Isaiah tonight. Isaiah is a fascinating book. Writing around 740 BC, Isaiah prophesies around both the current events facing Judah and the coming Messiah. Prophecy after prophecy, he brings… telling of the virgin birth of a Messiah from the root of Jesse preceded by John the Baptist and performing miracles only to be despised, spat upon, beaten, silent before His accusers, numbered among the transgressors, and buried in a rich man’s tomb. More than 700 years before Jesus, Isaiah was spot on, inspired by God.

When we study the book of Isaiah, we understand the providence of God. It is an assurance to us that God is in control. He knows the ending from the beginning. He doesn’t just vaguely grasp what might happen in the course of time. God names names!! Isaiah 44:28 - Who says of Cyrus, ‘*He is* My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, “You shall be built,” And to the temple, “Your foundation shall be laid.” ’ We know from the book of Ezra that a king named Cyrus reigned 150 years later. He restored Jerusalem and reigned when the foundation of the new temple was laid.

Tonight, we consider the first six verses of Isaiah’s Messianic prophecy. Isaiah begins, **Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?** In order for one to believe in Jesus, that person must choose to believe the report. A believer must receive the Truth of Jesus based on faith. There are no pictures of Jesus, no one painted His portrait, no documents that He wrote exist. Belief in Jesus is a step of Faith. The word for revealed in Greek is gawlaw – this means to be completely revealed, stripped so nothing is hidden. God chooses who He will reveal Himself to. It is only through that believing and seeking, tender heart that we can see the revealed Christ.

Verse 2 - **2For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, *There is* no beauty that we should desire Him.** The idea here is that Jesus is a shoot sprouting from the root of Jesse. Israel has separated itself from God. Silence has echoed through the land for more than 400 years. No prophets cry in the street. From this spiritually arid place, Christ sprouts. He has no form or comeliness – no beauty that people should follow for that reason. Jesus was not taller than everyone else, more beautiful than everyone else, more charming than everyone else… when we see the picture of the beautiful man hanging on the wall, this is not what the Bible teaches about Jesus! People didn’t follow Him for His worldly beauty. They followed Him for the Spiritual beauty He offered. When people followed, it was because of His teachings and the fact that they had seen the revealed Christ!

It is the same today!! We don’t follow Jesus for eternal life… we follow Him for He is the only Way that we might find our God! We seek the face of God, our Creator… Jesus reveals this way.

Isaiah continues: verse 3, **3He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.** Men despised and rejected this physically unbeautiful Man. They didn’t reject Him because He was not beautiful. They rejected His teachings and His Truth. Still today, people reject His teachings and His Truth. People seek ways to have their own way. Jesus was a man of sorrows – the word used here means deep and painful anguish – and He was acquainted with grief – the word here means disease, incurable sickness – that disease was Sin. Like the people Isaiah speaks of, the men of Jesus day hid their faces from Him because He convicts us. Hid here has the meaning that we hide because of our aversion to His teachings. This is not shame, but pride that causes us to hide our faces. We don’t want to be convicted of the sin in our lives… we only want the Christ that forgives… not the Christ who convicts. As a result, we esteemed Him not – we took the Son and killed Him, hoping to gain inheritance from the Father without the work of repentance required.

**4Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.** Here in Verse 4, we learn that Jesus bears our griefs and carries our sorrows. The word carried is the word sawbal… meaning burdensome. He shouldered our sin burden and carried it to the Cross, where He was struck by God and afflicted, not for His sin… but mine… and yours. God allowed the death of His own Son, so that the sin brought by Adam might be purchased and forever paid by Jesus.

Verse 5, **5But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripeswe are healed.** The word wounded means profaned… Jesus was profaned by our sin. The perfect lamb of God had imperfection transferred to Him for our transgressions. It has the idea of something pure becoming polluted. He was bruised… crushed for my iniquities. He was punished so that I might gain peace with God… by the nails in His body, the wounds in my soul were healed.

Let’s finish, verse 6 **6All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.** All, meaning everyone, like sheep have gone astray – we have erred. In John 8:7-11 we read of a woman caught in adultery, So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” **8**And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. **9**Then those who heard *it,* beingconvicted by *their* conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest *even* to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. **10**When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” **11**She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.” The only sinless Man refused to condemn. He was the only One there without sin… He qualified to cast the stone… and refused… knowing she would sin again and knowing that her sin would come with Him to the Cross. The Lord God laid ALL our iniquity on Jesus. How can we condemn any one when we have been so rescued?

Tonight, let’s meditate on the work of Jesus, foretold 700 years before His birth by Isaiah. We all have gone astray and Jesus comes seeking. Often, it’s when we think we are most squarely in the center of His will that we have actually started our walk astray.

The fact that Isaiah was able to speak specific Truth so long before Jesus came gives us confidence that God knows us, He knows our heart, He knows our trouble, and He is leading our path. God called the name of Cyrus 150 years before Cyrus was born. God spoke of Jesus’ virgin birth to Isaiah 700 years before Jesus was born to a virgin. We can rest easy tonight that God is intimately familiar with the details in our life as well, and He chooses to love us anyway.