Isaiah 50:1-6 Thus says the Lord: “Where *is* the certificate of your mother’s divorce, Whom I have put away? Or which of My creditors *is it* to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, And for your transgressions your mother has been put away. **2**Why, when I came, *was there* no man? *Why,* when I called, *was there* none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Indeed with My rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness; Their fish stink because *there is* no water, And die of thirst.
**3**I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering.” 4 The Lord God has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to *him who is* weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. **5**The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away. **6**I gave My back to those who struck *Me,* And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

 We’re with Isaiah again tonight. Isaiah 50 is a powerful chapter in God’s Word. It’s convicting and it’s empowering all in the space of 11 verses. Tonight, we’re looking at verses 1 through 6.

Our assignment as Christians is to be a missionary. We are given the Great Commission. We are told to go out and spread the Gospel. The Gospel is not meant to be shouted, but lived. People must see the Gospel in the way we walk, not just in the way we talk. We can have bumper stickers covering our car, t-shirts for every day of the week, and sing nothing but Christian songs… but, if people do not see our walk matching our talk, Jesus will not be heard no matter what we say.

Have you ever considered Jesus as a missionary? He is. He is the greatest missionary ever to walk the face of the earth. He came from further than any missionary – they crossed oceans… He crossed millennia. They come from one place to another… He came all the way from Glory to die on the Cross so we might leave our sin at the foot of the Cross and travel all the way to Glory. What a glorious Missionary our Master turns out to be?

Let’s look at verse 1 - Thus says the Lord: “Where *is* the certificate of your mother’s divorce, Whom I have put away? Or which of My creditors *is it* to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, And for your transgressions your mother has been put away. God opens with a powerful statement that reaches through the ages and finds a home with us tonight. In times of old, a man could put away his wife on a whim, sell his children on impulse. In order for a man to be divorced, he only had to provide a certificate of divorce and come up with a reason she found no favor in his eyes. God asks – where is your certificate? God has not put us away. When we find ourselves alone, we have chosen to be alone. God has not put anyone away. It is we who have stopped our ears and closed our eyes. God had not put the Jewish people away and He has not done it to us. It’s our sin that separates us. We choose separation. We choose the lonely darkness of self over the warm embrace of God. God welcomes all, but we must come humble of spirit and contrite in heart.

Verse 2 - Why, when I came, *was there* no man? *Why,* when I called, *was there* none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Indeed with My rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness; Their fish stink because there *is* no water, And die of thirst. We’re reminded of the power of our God. He called. No one answered. Everyone was too busy with their own pleasures. Had the nation repented, redemption was still available… we’re never so far that God’s hand cannot reach us. He’s powerful to redeem those who call. He has power to deliver at the sound of our cry. We’re never alone; we’ve only drawn the curtain. The eyes of the Lord are upon us even as we set ourselves up for struggle and surround ourselves with a sea of sin. But, at the cry of our repentant voice, God is quick to dry the sea, He is powerful to offer a way in the wilderness.

Verse 3 I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering.” God set the stars in place. He will save a repentant heart. What are our earthly problems to the One who set the stars in place? What are our challenges when we consider the details and complexities of His creation? Our God is a God of unending power, abundant Mercy, and infinite Grace.

Verse 4 - The Lord God has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to *him who is* weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. In the verse, we now we meet the Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ. Once again, we see Isaiah introduce us to the coming Messiah. In Luke 2:46-47 Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. Luke 4:31-32 Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. Jesus had the tongue of the learned, but He gives all glory to God for the success of His Mission. He recognizes that God is the source of His wisdom and His words. God is the source of life, awakening Him morning by morning – giving Him ear to hear – not as the wicked, but as the wise. God opened Christ’s ear to hearing and His heart to understanding. Do we awaken each morning to hearing? Is our tongue full of the Wisdom of God and our heart full of the Mercy of our Teacher? I hope so… I hope so.

Verse 5 The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away. Notice the obedience. Jesus had a choice to make. There were distractions all around Him. There was wine and music and things that led people astray. He CHOSE not to be rebellious. God opened His ear, but He followed the call. We must follow God’s call. I’ve met many who hear a prompting from God and never follow. John 6:38 - For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. Matthew 26:42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” He was obedient, even unto death.

Let’s finish it up with verse 6 - I gave My back to those who struck *Me,* And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. Matthew 27:27-31 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then, they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. We know He was scourged with leather cords with glass tied in them to cut and rip the flesh. We know He told the people not to weep for Him, but for themselves. In the end, in Luke 23:34 Jesus said -“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” Though He was mistreated, spit upon, beaten, hated for no other reason than His loving statement of the Truth, Christ did not turn away, He did not become discouraged, but willingly offered Himself as sacrifice, offered His cheek and then the other, offered His back for the rod, offered His Body for the Cross, that we might live.

 As we leave tonight, let us pray for the tongue of the learned, the words of wisdom, and a spirit of discernment. There are many who are weary, who are tired in both body and soul, who need a soft word spoken in due season. Proverbs 15:23 reminds us - A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, And a word spoken in due season, how good it is! As we awaken each morning, let us awaken with ears to hear and eyes to see. Let us pray that we are obedient to God, realizing that our righteousness came only because Christ willingly accepted our wretchedness.