

### What More Could He Have Done?

If you truly love someone, and that someone is lost, not doing what he is supposed to be doing or acting the way he is supposed to be acting, after a time, because you truly love that someone, you will do whatever you have to in order to wake him up, so that hopefully he will finally listen. Spouses, parents, teachers, employers, supervisors, officers, do you know what I am talking about?

The prophet Isaiah did. He loved his people so much that he tried something different to wake up them up and warn them of their godless, fruitless lives. Instead of preaching his sermon, he sang his sermon. He didn't care if it looked silly or sounded strange. He loved his people too much to care. The truth of what God had done for his people and how the people were wasting it had to be told. The spiritual welfare of God's people was at stake. And if only a few would actually listen to him singing his sermon, while the others scoffed and laughed, it would still be a blessing. The message was that important.

Listen to Isaiah's song sermon:

**<sup>1</sup> I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: "My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. <sup>2</sup> He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.**

**<sup>3</sup> "Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. <sup>4</sup> What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? <sup>5</sup> Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall and it will be trampled. <sup>6</sup> I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it."**

Did you listen carefully to Isaiah's sermon? Did you imagine him singing it? What do you think the refrain of his song is? The refrain is: "What more could the owner have done for his vineyard? What more could he have done?"

The owner did everything for his vineyard so that it would be fruitful and prosper. He chose a rich hillside, open to the sunlight, which grape vines love. He tilled the land, removed the rocks, and built a watchtower to guard against raiders. He even had a wine vat made, expecting juice from the grapes to flow like a river. He spared no expense or detail for his vineyard. But as he waited patiently for the harvest, it only yielded rotten, unusable grapes.

Why? Why did the vineyard produce rotten, unusable grapes after all the owner had done for his vineyard? Can you imagine his mood? "Dumbfounded," I imagine. "Angry," for sure. So angry, the owner

abandoned his vineyard and turned it into a wasteland. He took away all its protection, let predators trample it, let briars and thorns overtake it, and did not let it rain.

Can you hear the eerie refrain echoing throughout that abandoned vineyard, “What more could he have done? What more could he have done?” The owner did absolutely everything for his vineyard, and it didn’t produce. He meticulously attended to his vineyard, and it only yielded bad fruit. He gave it tender loving care, and it only left a sour taste in his mouth. “What more could he have done?!? What more could he have done?!?”

Has it become obvious to you who the owner is and the vineyard is? Listen to verse 7: **“The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.”**

The owner of the vineyard is the Lord Almighty – Creator, Savior, and Preserver of us all – and the vineyard is God’s people. In other words, the vineyard is us. The question is: What kind of fruit does the Lord find in our lives? It’s a fair question because of all he has done for us. From the clothes on our back to the food on our tables to the shelter over our heads to the sacrifice for our sins to the promise of forgiveness to an eternal home in heaven, the Lord Almighty has spared no expense for us, not even his one and only Son. Yet when he patiently waits to see what we will produce in response to all he has done for us, what does he find? What kind of fruit does he find in our hearts? What kind of fruit does he find in our lives? What kind of fruit does he find in our homes? What kind of fruit does he find in our church?

Does he find at times the opposite of what he deserves and expects from us? You might find it interesting that Isaiah’s song in verse 7 is a play on words. The word for “*justice*” in Hebrew is “*mispat*” and the word for “*bloodshed*” is “*mishpah*.” They sound similar but are completely opposite. It’s the same with the words “*righteousness*” and “*distress*” in the Hebrew. They are “*tsedaqah*” and “*tse-a-qah*.” Again, they sound similar but are completely opposite. Isaiah used this play on words to expose the sin of God’s people, to show them that they were only God’s people in name but what they said and how they acted were completely opposite.

Words in English can’t capture Isaiah’s poetic brilliance, but they can capture the same message. It’s the message where the Lord Almighty looks for godliness in our lives. But instead of godliness, does he find godlessness? Where he looks for reverence in our lives. But instead of reverence, does he find revolt? Where he looks for truth in our lives. But instead of truth, does he find treachery? Where he looks for heart in our lives. But instead of heart, does he find habits? Where he looks for sacrifice in our lives. But instead of sacrifice, does he find self-centeredness? Where he looks for faith in our lives. But instead of faith, does he find fear?

Dear people of God, if we continue to produce the opposite of what the Lord has done for us and all that he has given us, at some point he will abandon us like the owner abandoned his vineyard. He will leave

our lives trampled, our homes destroyed, and our church a wasteland. And it will be no one's fault but our own. Because what more could he have done for us? What more could he have done?

But do not forget the spirit of Isaiah's song. The spirit is love. Remember when you love someone who is lost, and he's not doing what he is supposed to be doing or acting the way he is supposed to be acting, what will you do for them because you love them so much? You will do anything to wake them up.

Now consider what that "anything" means from the God's perspective and your lost sinful condition. His anything was his *justice* that canceled your debt of sin by nailing his own Son to the cross in your place. His anything was the *bloodshed* of his Son that has washed away all your sin. His anything was his *righteousness* that he took from his Son and has given to you. His anything was the *distress* of his own Son as he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me," so that you would never be forsaken.

What more could the Lord have done? Do you see how the Lord's anything is your everything? The cross of Christ is the overarching truth that affects every part of who you are. If you would humbly see this, then the question changes. Then the question you ask yourself is: "What more can I do? What more can I do to show my heartfelt gratitude for all the Lord Almighty has done for me?" And the answer is: Everything! You can do everything that gives God the glory he deserves. That everything is living an obedient life. That everything is maintaining a Christ-centered home. That everything is supporting a mission-minded church. That everything is faithfulness, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and self-control.

That everything is living a life of love for him who loved us and gave up himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God for our sins. Because humbly and honestly speaking, what more could he have done? Amen.