

. . . *apart from me you can do nothing* (John 15:5)

***Before we can faithfully fulfill our calling as God's servants in bringing sight and freedom to this world for the sake of God's glory, we need God's Servant to bring sight and freedom to us.***

**A. God's servants in bringing sight and freedom to this world for the sake of God's glory**

The church has the privilege of being God's servant in bringing sight and freedom to this world for the sake of God's glory. Faithfulness to this calling is important because of the world's enslavement to the things this world and its blindness to glory of God. ***In the first Servant Song, Isaiah reminded Israel of this calling because she appeared to have forgotten it because she was afraid God was no longer interested in her and abandoned her.*** But nothing was further from the truth because Israel was still precious in his eyes because He loved her and made her for his glory (43:1-7). As such, God still intended to use her as his servant / representative for the fulfillment of his purposes in this world (43:8-13). Moreover, God was going to restore Israel and bring her back into the Promised Land. Cyrus would arrive on the scene. Babylon would be defeated. Jerusalem would be rebuilt (45:1-3; 46:1-4; 48:20).

**B. Before we can faithfully fulfill our calling as God's servants in bringing sight and freedom to this world for the sake of God's glory, we need God's Servant to bring sight and freedom to us.**

But it's one thing to be brought back into the Promised Land. It's another to be brought back to God. Cyrus would take care of the former; who would take care of the latter? ***For before Israel can faithfully fulfill her calling as God's servant in bringing sight and freedom to this world for the sake of God's glory, she needs someone to bring sight and freedom to her first because of her own inner blindness and captivity to sin.*** Well, the last three Servant Songs deal

with this question. The first is our text of this morning. The one who will bring Israel back to God calls the whole world to listen to the unfolding of God's plan of salvation. For God loves his world and the people of this world. He will not let Israel's unfaithfulness spoil his plan of salvation. There is more than one way to accomplish this. Listen and see. ***The servant had the right to speak with this authority because he had absolutely no doubt that God had called him into his service.*** He had been called from the womb, so his calling was no secondary thing in his life (v. 1; cf. Jer. 1:5; Gal. 1:15). ***Moreover, he had absolutely no doubt that God had prepared him to be his servant. While God had raised up Cyrus to conquer by military strength, He had raised him up to conquer by the power of his word.*** For only the Word of God can open the eyes of the blind and grant release to the captives. Like a sharpened sword, his word will have a cutting function. Like a polished arrow his word will penetrate into people's consciousness. He will accomplish what God called him to do because God will protect him in the shadow of his hand. ***How different this servant is than the nation Israel.*** And yet God calls his servant "Israel"! ***Because the next verses clearly show that this servant Israel has a ministry to the nation Israel, this servant cannot be Israel herself. Instead this servant is no one less than the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, Israel's representative.*** He is the one who has the authority to speak to the world the way He did. He is the one whose calling was no secondary thing because He had been called from the womb. He is the one who absolutely had no doubt that God had prepared him to be his servant. He is the one who will conquer not by military strength, but by the power of his word. He is the one

whose word is like a sharpened sword and a polished arrow (Heb. 4:12-13). He is the one in whom God will show his glory, i.e. that He is a God who desires to live in a relationship of love with us. ***And the Lord Jesus Christ did this perfectly in a way that Israel never did or could do.*** This is how He was Israel's representative doing for her what she could not do herself. And what He did for her by the Spirit, He wants to do in her with his Spirit. In doing so, He will bring Israel back to the LORD her God by healing her of its blindness and captivity to sin. Moreover, He will enable her to faithfully fulfill her calling as God's servant in bringing sight and freedom to this world for the sake of God's glory. ***At times, like the prophets before him, the Lord Jesus will think that his work was in vain (cf. 1 Ki. 19:14).*** After all, the religious leaders opposed him, his disciples did not always understand him and those He helped did not always thank him. God, however, gave him the perseverance to continue for He believed that his reward was with his God, i.e. he trusted his Father to bring the salvation He promised and to reward him for his efforts with a spiritual offspring that would one day be his. Yet, restoring Israel to God is too trivial, even though the Lord Jesus Christ was honored to do so. ***Because God wants a greater display of his glory than in Israel alone, the Lord Jesus Christ will be a light to the nations and salvation to the ends of the earth.*** In doing so, He will not only do for Israel what she did not and could not do. He will also be fulfilling the promise God made to Abraham (Gen. 12:3). This is ultimately how the Lord Jesus Christ, the Servant of the LORD, will restore Israel to God as the nations of the world are grafted into Israel (Rom. 11:17-24).  
Surrey Covenant Reformed Church

