



Isaiah 40

- ¹ Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.
- ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.
- ³ A voice of one calling:
"In the wilderness prepare
the way for the LORD;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.
- ⁴ Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
- ⁵ And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- ⁶ A voice says, "Cry out."
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
"All people are like grass,
and all human faithfulness is like the
flowers of the field.
- ⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the LORD blows on them.
Surely the people are grass.
- ⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever."
- ⁹ You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
- ¹⁰ See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,
and his arm rules for him.
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.
- ¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

LIFE Community Leader's Guide

Sunday, December 3

Big Idea: Without voices, the world might have missed the coming of the Savior.

Key Verse: ⁹ You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!"

Opening Question: Would people say that you are a person who loves to speak or a person of few words?

Study/Discussion Questions:

- Has there ever been a time in your life when the words that someone spoke changed you in a significant way?
- Read through the passage together.
- Isaiah is writing this book to Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel. In the earlier chapters of his message he speaks words of judgment. Beginning in chapter 40, Isaiah looks forward to a time of forgiveness, prosperity, and the coming of a saving king. What are some of the ways Isaiah characterizes the readers past, present and future?
- Given the circumstances of their past, what does Isaiah's emphatic word of 'comfort' mean? What word of comfort do the three 'voices' bring (3, 6, 9)? What images does the Lord use to assure his people of their forgiveness?
- In Isaiah's time, the coming of a king was announced by a herald. People literally leveled the roads the king would travel. What king is in view in vs. 3-5? What does it mean to prepare the way for him?
- In his message on Sunday, Pastor Bryan spoke of the importance of voices, signs, and words. Words have the power to express truth, to change hearts, and to clarify reality. What kind of change might these words have made in the lives of the hearers in Judah?
- This passage in Isaiah speaks about the reality of the coming Messiah. What are some of the characteristics of the Messiah or the life of Christ that are referenced in these verses?
- Christmas is the season in which we celebrate the birth of the Savior. What are some of the important voices/words/signs that shape your experience of Christmas?
- What would it feel like if all of the voices at Christmas were silenced? How do you fill your Christmas with words that bring appropriate meaning to the celebration? Is there someone in your life that needs to hear words that speak of the significance of the true meaning of Christmas? What might you do about that?
- End your time together by preparing for the season by reading the Christmas story together and thanking God for sending His son to fulfill the words of Isaiah. The story is found in Luke 2:1-20.