

Isaiah 65:17–25 – Discipleship is Preserving with Purpose

Theme: *Discipleship means continuing in faithful work and witness, even when the world shakes.*

Scripture: Isaiah 65:17–25 (NIV)

Introduction

There's something about watching a building rise that stirs hope. You can almost imagine laughter in the rooms and light through the windows. But when progress stops—when weather, worry, or weariness interrupt—the silence feels heavy. That's the scene in Isaiah's day. God's people had come home from exile expecting joy and found only rubble and fatigue.

Into their discouragement, God speaks—not with a plan for repair but with a promise of *re-creation*. He says, "I will create new heavens and a new earth." The same word used in Genesis 1—*create*—appears again here. God isn't patching up the old world; He's beginning something entirely new.

For disciples who live in a world that shakes, Isaiah's message is still the same: God's story doesn't end in ruins. It begins again in resurrection.

When the Old World Falls Apart

Isaiah's people stood among ruins, caught between memory and hope. They remembered Solomon's temple but saw only emptiness. God didn't tell them to rebuild the past; He told them to look ahead. "See, I am doing a new thing."

We know that feeling. Churches change, communities shift, familiar ways fade. Yet discipleship isn't about clinging to what was—it's about trusting the God who still creates. The shaking may unsettle us, but it can also be the sound of His renewal.

The Hope of Holy Perseverance

When God promised a new creation, He told the people to *rejoice before they saw it*. That kind of joy is defiant—it refuses to be dictated by circumstances. Perseverance, John Wesley said, is grace rooted deep enough to keep showing up when we'd rather quit.

Faithfulness isn't measured by visible results but by steady obedience. Isaiah's people wanted restoration; God wanted transformation. The same is true for us. God calls us not just to survive but to persevere with purpose.

God's Vision of Renewal

Isaiah paints a practical picture of redemption. Children thrive, the elderly flourish, homes are secure, and work is fruitful. That's not fantasy—it's God's justice made visible.

Every act of mercy and kindness we do participates in that vision. Feeding the hungry, comforting the grieving, forgiving the stubborn—all of it joins God's ongoing creation. Wesley called those acts "means of grace." The gospel doesn't hover above daily life; it takes root in it.

Faithfulness in a Shaking World

We live in an age that trembles daily—politics, pandemics, wars, finances, even the Church. But Isaiah's vision reminds us: God's kingdom isn't fragile. The same Spirit who hovered over chaos in Genesis still hovers over the chaos of today.

The prayer no one hears still matters. The small church that keeps loving its town still matters. The caregiver sitting by a hospital bed still matters. God measures success by faithfulness, not by scale. Perseverance is our quiet defiance against despair.

The Nearness of God in the Work

“Before they call, I will answer,” God says. He’s already leaning in, already listening. That’s the promise of discipleship—God’s nearness in our labor. Prayer becomes the breath of the new creation: we breathe in grace and breathe out trust.

Even in silence, God hears. Even in weakness, He works. Perseverance isn’t powered by willpower—it’s fueled by His presence.

The Peace that Comes After Perseverance

Isaiah closes with a breathtaking image: wolves and lambs feeding together, creation at peace.

The world that once tore itself apart now rests in harmony. That’s the end toward which all perseverance points. Every act of forgiveness, every injustice confronted, every conflict healed is a small rehearsal of that peace.

Wesley said salvation begins when grace enters the heart and continues until creation itself is renewed. God’s peace begins within us and moves outward into the world.

Apologetic Reflection

Isaiah’s promise is intellectually and historically trustworthy:

- **Historically**, it fits Israel’s real post-exilic world.
- **Theologically**, it continues the same redemptive arc seen from Genesis to Revelation—creation, fall, renewal.
- **Philosophically**, it gives meaning in a shaking world: goodness and justice aren’t illusions; they’re grounded in the Creator’s character.

Application: When skeptics ask, “Where is God when everything collapses?” we answer, “He’s still creating.”

Cross References & Application

- **Genesis 1:1–3** – God’s Spirit still brings order from chaos.
- **Isaiah 11:6–9** – A preview of peace fulfilled in 65:25.
- **Romans 8:18–25** – Creation groans for redemption; disciples persevere in hope.
- **2 Peter 3:13** – The promise of new heavens and a new earth sustains faith.
- **Revelation 21:1–5** – The final fulfillment: “Behold, I make all things new.”
- **1 Corinthians 15:58** – “Your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

Each passage reinforces that God’s renewal is both cosmic and personal—it begins in the heart and extends to all creation.

Key Thought

When the world shakes, disciples keep building. Every act of love, forgiveness, and faith is another brick in God’s new creation.

Closing Prayer

Creator God,

You never stop building, even when the world trembles. Teach us to keep our hands steady and our hearts hopeful. Let our small acts of faith join Your great work of renewal. Fill us with courage to persevere, joy to endure, and grace to trust that You are still making all things new. In Jesus’ name, Amen.