

**Epiphany 2C 2010**  
**Isaiah 62:1-5, John 2:1-11**  
**Sermon for Advent LC**  
**January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

### **“The Lord Delights in You”**

Dear sisters and brothers, grace to you and peace from God the Father and our promised Messiah, Jesus Christ. Amen.

I found myself pretty overwhelmed as I watched the reports on the terrible, tragic earthquake in Haiti this week. I was moved to intense sadness and almost despair wondering how these people would move on and how I could help...if I could help. Now certainly this is not the first time that we have witnessed a disaster like this happening and not the only time suffering at a catastrophic level has taken place and most likely it won't be the last. But yet it did happen now and I imagine all of us had some kind of emotional response. It was almost like I wanted to be able to hit the reset button and get rid of the stunning images that continued to flash in my mind so I didn't have to think about it. But of course...I couldn't. Then as if my own mind was not enough of a burden it seemed that everyone I saw – at my hair cut place, the coffee shop I frequent, and a couple other places expected me to have the God answer. I think I heard the question “where is God?” in some form in reference to Haiti a hundred times this week from various people who assumed that since I was a pastor I could answer that. Now that is a fair expectation and I tried, but every time I heard the question I wondered a little more myself...where is God? What is God going to do through this horrific reality? What will be the witness of the body of Christ in response to this epic new reality for Haiti? What is God's word for this kind of thing?

Now my intention today is not to simply give a sermon on Haiti– but I will admit that I did have a completely different sermon written in my head about Jesus and his miracle of turning water into wine, and the beauty of that in how it reminds us that God's love is everywhere and pours out in abundance like the wine did in that story. But then when the Earthquake happened I found myself led a little differently. So...like I said the sermon today is not about Haiti rather it is about you and where God is at for you, in your life when you face the uncertainty of your own world– when you face the darkness of your life– when you face the reality that everything isn't peachy keen but rather a royal mess. Now a friend of mine once said to me that I seem to bring up the brokenness of life a lot–that life is hard and that we need God– I wasn't sure how to take that, but I guess he is right and I'm okay with his accusation. It's not that life is always dark and broken, but rather that there are times when it certainly is, and there are times when we need to be reborn and it happens that I believe the church and me as preacher needs to address that reality and that the church must be the tool which helps people navigate through the broken times of life to wholeness and restoration. And this week, this huge disaster was a wakeup call for me– about the earthquakes in our relationship with God, in our lives that we live, where are we broken, where are we hurting, where are we in darkness? Where are you hurting? Where is your life in darkness? What things have forsaken you from the grace that flows from your God? And finally what is God's word to you where you are at?

Here is the cool thing – God does have a word for the world we live in, and for you and your life wherever you are at. God does speak to us a new word in the midst of disaster and destruction – whether personal, communal, or global. As I was troubled by the events of the week, as I thought about people that I know and love who are part of this community and others whose lives are very broken and hard, and who are facing real tests of faith I sat down to write this message and began reading through the texts for today. The promise that Jesus is God incarnate is good and the fact that he has power as we see in the Gospel is great. But the word for you today I think and for us and for our world comes from our first Reading in Isaiah. God declares through the prophet Isaiah that he cannot keep silent– when the nation of Judah has just come from destruction he won't remain silent and refuses to stay still. God takes the people who are barren and beaten, defeated and downtrodden and promises to be active in their rebirth and recovery. You see our God our Good God promises to be with people to walk with them to be active to create his kingdom with them–not resting and staying silent when life is hard but rather being loud and creative promising to be their God. That word friends is the beginning of hope for Haiti and for you and me as we face the demons of our life as we deal with our own brokenness that hurts and haunts. But...it doesn't end there– no the word of God continues to speak hope– in verse four Isaiah says, **“You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her...for LORD delights in you!”** Dear friends that promise is an essential part of who God is– God delivered the people from their brokenness, from their state of despair so that they would be his people, his hands his feet his very being on the world.

Now...there is a danger in saying that we are the people God is talking to, or Haiti will be restored like Judah was...for that is most certainly not what the scripture tells us. But...like Israel we know that God comes to us and, walks with us in our struggles, swoops us up and gives us a new name– God through his love and power transforms you friends, changes you...calls you to be changed and picks you up....friends let go of whatever it is that crushes you, that you are holding on to, that you are feeling identifies you and pulls you away from God, whatever has you feeling desolate and forsaken– give it up....give it to God....and now hear the word of God for you....you are the Lord's the Lord delights in you– let that promise break you down and then fill you, cover you, give you hope, and restore you....

God loves you and so do I. Amen.