

# God of Holiness and Hope (Part 2)

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[ 0 : 00 ] We're back in Isaiah chapter 6 verses 1 through 8 this morning and if you would please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Above him stood the seraphim, each had six wings. With two he covered his face and with two he covered his feet and with two he flew.

And one called to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

And the foundations of the thresholds shook as the voice of him who called. And the house was filled with smoke. And I said, Woe is me, for I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.

[ 1 : 18 ] For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar.

And he touched my mouth and said, Behold, this has touched your lips. Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

Then I said, Here I am, send me. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? The main idea for this morning's sermon is that God is holy and makes holy. God is holy and makes holy. If someone asked you to define the word holy, how would you define it?

I think for most of us, purity is the word that we would think of and use to define what it means to be holy. And the Bible does use holy in reference to things that are pure and things that have been purified.

[ 2 : 31 ] But when the seraphim here sing their song of praise to God and they are saying to each other, to him, about him, holy, holy, holy, they are saying much, much more than that God is purity, purity, purity.

Though he is absolutely pure, totally sinless. The primary meaning, though, of holy is separate. It's separate. And it comes from an ancient word that means to cut or to separate. For example, take a holiday, for instance.

Holiday is an old English word that means holy day. It is a day that is set aside to commemorate or to memorialize something that is special.

A day that we separate ourselves from our busy lives in order to celebrate and honor something that is special to us or special to our culture.

[ 3 : 43 ] Here's another example. Say you're watching a Hollywood award show. Well, I don't know why you would do that anymore. But say that you are. And one thing that people like to see is how are the movie stars dressed, especially the ladies, the starlets.

And they walk the red carpet and they've got their beautiful gowns on. But there's always one, it seems, that is especially beautiful. One that is especially dazzling.

One that is especially stunning. And when we see a garment like that, someone will comment on it and they'll say what? That is a cut above the rest.

When we talk about God being holy, yes, we talk about how God is a being who is totally pure. But more so than that, we are talking about His being wholly separate.

Wholly other. God is above. God is beyond us. God is transcendent. God has absolute power over all things.

[ 4 : 51 ] He is unbound. He is infinite. He is separate. He is other. And though we bear His image, He is so different still.

And so much greater than us. You know, a term used in the sports world these days is goat. Have you ever heard that?

He's the goat. And what they mean by that is He's not, you know, some smelly animal with horns. But He's the greatest of all time. So we use that in reference to like Babe Ruth.

When it comes to baseball, He's the goat. He's the greatest of all time. We use that in reference to Michael Jordan about basketball. When it comes to basketball, He's the greatest of all time.

When we talk about hockey, and we don't really talk about hockey in Oklahoma, but we know that Wayne Gretzky is the greatest of all time. And I confess, and the Georges aren't here this morning, which makes it easier to say this for me.

[ 5 : 53 ] In the NFL, when we're talking about the goat, it's Tom Brady for now. Until Patrick Mahomes has his career complete, right? But he's the greatest of all time.

What we're saying is there's good and there's great. But there's this wholly other category that is few. It's small.

And when it comes to sport, it's one. One, that guy, He's the greatest of all time. You maybe have been in a situation like that where you see someone, whether you're singing in a choir or out playing sports or someone in the classroom, and they just astound you with their ability and their skill.

And you just kind of stop. And everybody just watches them doing what they're doing. And you think, they're cut above the rest. They're separate. They are other than us. They are great.

But when it comes to God, there is none greater. There is none greater, right? All debate ends with who's the greatest of all time? Well, it's God. It's Jesus Christ, His Son.

[ 6 : 54 ] He is other. He is separate. He is a cut above the rest. So when the Bible talks about being holy, we must understand that that term is expressing more than just being morally and ethically pure.

To be holy is to be different. To be holy is to be set apart. And God is holy. And God has the power and authority to make things holy.

The Bible is filled with examples of God taking common things, ordinary things, calling them, consecrating them, and separating them for a task.

Separating them for something that He wants them to do, used in a way that serves Him, making that common thing a separate thing, a holy thing.

The things that are holy are things that our holy God sets apart, separating them from the rest.

[ 8 : 04 ] They are not commonplace anymore once God has called them and once God has consecrated them because He who is holy is able to make holy.

So if you remember last week, we just went through the first couple of verses and there we saw that though Uzziah, Isaiah's king, was dead, God lives.

Though his earthly king was dead, God rules. That God is glorious. And that God is praiseworthy. And all of those things in those first two verses are really good things and really great things.

But you know what? They're really just the appetizer of where we're at today. You know, you think when you go to someplace like Texas Roadhouse, you love their rolls with the bread and whatever they put in the bread.

I'm looking at the Crawfords, that cinnamon butter. Man, that's good. That's good. But we don't go to Texas Roadhouse to eat their rolls, do we?

[ 9 : 02 ] We go there. Some of you might. I don't. I go for the steak. That's just the appetizer that leads up to the meal that I'm there for, which is to bite into a big, juicy steak.

And so that's where we're at today. We have a steak before us to feast upon. And we're going to eat steak this morning. Not literally, but figuratively. Talking of Isaiah's vision of God and the seraphim's declaration there that he is a God who is holy, holy, holy.

And so my prayer has been that the Spirit will fill you and will satisfy you this morning with his word in Isaiah chapter 6, verses 1 through 8.

And we're really going to zone in on verses 3 through 8. The first thing we see here, the first lesson we learn, is that God is holy in verses 3 through 5. God is holy. There, the vision Isaiah sees, he records seeing these angelic beings who are completely different than any kind of being that we see in this world.

They are holy beings created to worship God, and they are singing of God, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. And so again, here we encounter the crux of Isaiah's vision of God.

[10:21] It's this song of these seraphim, and they're singing to him, and they're singing just one word. And it's sung successively. Here, three times in succession.

Bible scholars refer to this song as the Trisagion, which really means three times holy. What are the angels communicating about God?

Here, when they say that he is not just holy, or holy, holy, but holy, holy, holy. I know a couple of weeks ago, when Nick was in Psalm 1, he talked to you about Hebrew literature, and how in Hebrew, when they wanted to emphasize something, they would use repetition.

For example, in Genesis chapter 14, there is a battle recorded between kings in the valley of Siddam, and it mentions there these pits that some of those kings fell into.

And so, in our English translations, when we come across that passage, it refers to those pits as either tar pits, or asphalt pits, or bitumen pits. But in the original Hebrew, if you read that in its original form, it literally reads pit pits.

[11:41] Pit pits. Signaling to the Jewish reader that, you know what, there are pits. But then there are pits. You know?

And these pits are pitier than other pits. And this pit is the piteiest of all.

That's the pits. To be in such a pit. Amen. We see this in the New Testament with Jesus, our Lord. Whenever he was teaching, and he wanted to specifically emphasize something, he would repeat the word truly.

He would say, truly, truly, I say to you. The English word that we have, that we translate for as truly, is the Greek word amen. And we use amen at the end of a prayer, but Jesus would use it at the beginning of what he was about to say to signify to those who are hearing that what I'm about to tell you is of absolute importance, and you must understand what I have to say.

But it's rare in Scripture to find something repeated three times. That's rare. To mention something three times successively is to elevate that thing to the highest degree of importance.

[13:04] And I was thinking about that. It reminded me of a friend I had growing up. His name was Matt. Matt. And Matt was a little bit of a troublemaker. And he was Southern, and his mom was from the South, and she was a tough lady.

And whenever Matt was annoying, she would call him Matthew. And when she said Matthew, that was her way of saying, you're being annoying.

Stop it. But then whenever he was getting into trouble and he was being more than annoying, she would say Matthew, and then she would add his middle name, right?

Which is her way of saying, this is your warning. Whatever you're doing, stop it. But then when it got to the third level, when it was Matthew, middle name, last name, and I'll keep that private for his sake, you knew it was over.

It was over. It was over with his mom. All opportunities to seek forgiveness had been exhausted. The final warning had been given.

[14:10] The three names were repeated together. It was over. Duck for cover. For me, I knew it's time to go home. Yeah.

In Revelation 8, verse 13. There, the Bible speaks of a dreadful judgment.

And it's the judgment of God. And in that text, the word repeated three times is woe. Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth.

Meaning that this coming judgment is unavoidable, it will be total, and it will be absolutely devastating. In Isaiah chapter 6, verse 3, though, we have the only instance, the only instance in Scripture where a characteristic of God is repeated three times.

Only once in Scripture is an attribute of God elevated to the third degree. The Bible lists many of God's attributes and many of His characteristics.

[15:21] That God is powerful. That God is eternal. That God is merciful. That God is faithful. That God is loving and gracious. It also talks about how God is a God of wrath. That God is jealous for His glory.

He will not share it with another. And that He will punish sin in judgment. But none of those attributes or characteristics of God are elevated to the third degree in Scripture.

The only one is His holiness. The Bible says that God is loving. But the angels don't say here that God is love, love, love.

The Bible says that God is merciful. But the angels don't declare here that He is mercy, mercy, mercy. The Bible says and reveals that God hates sin and punishes sin.

But the angels don't sing here that God is wrath, wrath, wrath. It is His holiness that the angels elevate to the third degree.

[ 16 : 26 ] When the Bible uses holy of God, it is not signifying an aspect about Him or naming just one of the many other traits or characteristics that He has.

It's calling attention. It's calling our attention to the reality that everything about God and everything about who He is and what He does is holy.

Totally uncontaminated by sin in any way. God is holy, God. God is a God who loves, but His love is a holy love.

God is merciful, but it's a holy mercifulness. God is knowledgeable. He has all wisdom. It's a holy knowledge. God is powerful, but it's a holy power that He has.

God is spirit. It's holy spirit. God is just, and it's a holy justice. God is wrathful, and it's a holy wrath that He has against sin.

[ 17 : 30 ] He is holy, and we observe His holiness. The angels continue on in saying that the whole earth is full of His glory.

Holy Spirit. I read a theologian recently who spoke of the holiness of God, and he said that holiness is the Lord's hidden glory.

Glory is the Lord's omnipresent holiness. What he's saying is that holiness is His intrinsic worth, and glory is the outstreaming, the outpouring of that revelation of His holiness.

God is showing forth that He is supreme, that He is of supreme value and worth. God's glory, which is seen through all of the earth that He has created, testifies to His being holy, to His being of supreme value and worth.

You know, this past week, the theme for Falls Creek, and it's been all summer long, glory. That's been the theme. And I remember Friday night, after all that we had experienced as a group that week, leaving the sanctuary.

[ 18 : 57 ] And again, just another great evening of worship, another great night of seeing God at work clearly in the lives of those around us. And we walked outside, the moon was full, and it was hanging low on the horizon, and it was glowing brilliantly.

And you ever seen the moon like that, and it just kind of sends shivers down your spine? And that happened. And so I remember just thinking about what we had just seen, looking up in the sky and seeing and beholding what God had made.

And again, looking back over the rest, thinking and reflecting over the week and how many lives were impacted and changed. And you go out and you see how beautiful creation is, and it just declares how much more beautiful God is.

And it's moments like that where things come into the right perspective, don't they? Have you had a moment like that? It's like, wow. And when moments like that, when things come into perspective, the only really thing that seems to fit when you're praising God for it is, God, you're holy.

Psalms 8, 3-4 says, And so I want to tell you this morning, as we're talking about God's holiness and how He makes holy, that God is reaching the next generation.

[ 20 : 31 ] That God is mindful of them. And I want to tell you that the gospel is as effective today with this generation as it's ever been.

God saves people. God transforms lives. And when you see a generation of young people that a lot of people, even people within the church, have already written off as being hopeless causes.

We don't know what they like. We don't know how to talk to them. Here is God communicating to them clearly through His, through the clear declaration of His gospel. And you see them weeping.

And you see them worshipping. And you see them surrendering their lives to God in a moment. And then you head outside and you behold the moon in its fullness glowing over this camp where God is at work in powerful ways.

And again, in a moment like that, you just can't miss how awesome God is. And the only term that seems to fit is, God, you are holy. You exist in a class all by yourself.

[ 21 : 41 ] Nobody else can do these things. Nobody else can give this hope. Nobody else can create as you create. No one else can take what is dead and give it life. You are different. You are set apart.

Yet, yet, you are intimately involved with your people in your creation. Infinitely holy, but still mindful of sinful men.

And choosing in your grace to bridge the gap of separation by sending your son, your only son, to usher us into your presence through faith in Him and His death for our sins and His burial and His resurrection to new life.

In that moment, again, seeing God's creation and having seen Him transform lives all around you, the only word, the only term that best fits is to say, God, you are holy.

You are holy. No one else can do what you can do. No one else can create like you create. No one else can save like you can save.

[ 22 : 48 ] No one else can transform like you transform. You're different. And I praise you that you are so different. And by faith in Jesus Christ, He who is different makes us different too.

Psalms 29, 1 through 2. Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings. Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name.

Worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness. When God saves you, God transforms your life, you realize that you know you weren't born holy.

No one is born holy. No one outside of Jesus Christ. We are made holy. And I'll be talking about that in a second. But we are made holy by God, the Holy One, through faith in His Holy Son, Jesus Christ, who is and has always been holy.

John 1, 14. We were there quite a while ago. But there, the testimony of one of Jesus' closest disciples begins with, The Word became flesh, speaking of Jesus.

[ 24 : 09 ] He made His dwelling among us. And we have seen His glory. The glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

In Matthew's gospel, Matthew, another one of the twelve disciples, he testifies of a time when John, along with Peter and James, saw Jesus' glory, beheld His holiness before His resurrection.

They saw the outpouring of Christ's holiness on the Mount of Transfiguration when the veil of His flesh for a moment was lifted and they beheld His deity. It was exposed before them.

Matthew 17, 1-2 records that event. After six days, Jesus took with Him Peter, James, and John, the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There He was transfigured before them.

His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. Out of the depths of Christ's divine and holy nature, there in this moment was this bursting forth of light which was emanating from Him, out of Him.

[ 25 : 25 ] Let me ask you a question. What color is an orange? Thank you. Took you a little while.

Not a trick question. An orange is orange. Let me ask you another question, though. What color is an orange when the lights are turned off?

Is it? Is it? Let's think about this. Let's think about this. Hold on. All right. Now just listen to what I have to say. When the lights go off, say I was holding an orange right here, and an orange is bright, right?

Say I've got the brightest orange I could find at Walmart or wherever. When the lights turn off, can you see orange in my hand? Do you see an orange orange in my hand?

No. Because it's not a primary characteristic of what an orange is. An orange is orange because it reflects, when light reflects off of it, it puts off that orange color.

[ 26 : 31 ] But it's not intrinsically orange. You hear what I'm saying? When the lights go off and orange doesn't glow, orange. When we think about Jesus and His holiness, here when He's transfigured, He's not a reflection of holy.

He's not a reflection of glory. It's inherent to who He is. It's a primary characteristic of who He is. His deity.

His holiness. It's who He is. A primary characteristic. In that moment, if God snapped His fingers and the sun went out, His glory would have filled up creation with light.

And guess what? One day that's how it's going to be. When the sun is no more and we have this new creation, it will be the glory and the holiness of God that fills up and illumines everything because He is holy.

God is holy. But we are not intrinsically or born holy. And Isaiah fully realizes that as he is in the presence of God.

[ 27 : 48 ] Look at verse 4. And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of Him who called and the house was filled with smoke. Now before anyone gets ideas, no, this verse does not justify us buying smoke machines for our time of worship.

The smoke in God's throne room isn't manufactured. It's not dry ice that people put out in front of their house on Halloween to scare poor little children. It's real.

And it symbolizes His holiness. It symbolizes and it relates to His wrath and His judgment against sin. And so how does Isaiah respond to this?

What does he say? Does he say, hey God, I'm sure you already knew this. My name is Isaiah. This is a nice place you got here a little bit on the smoky side, but I just want to thank you for inviting me upstairs and I'm eager to hear what you might have to say.

Is that how Isaiah responds in the presence of God who is holy? Not at all. Not at all. How does he respond? Verse 5. He says, Woe is me for I am lost.

[ 29 : 07 ] I'm a man of unclean lips. I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

As the temple quakes around Isaiah, so does Isaiah. He says, Woe is me. You know, people don't use that term these days.

I think the last time I heard it was probably in a Popeye cartoon or a Mickey Mouse cartoon where the damsel in distress is crying out to the hero for help saying, Woe is me! Woe is me! But in Scripture when we hear that, it's a powerful word of impending doom.

In Scripture, the message of a prophet was announced either with good news or with bad news. If it was good news, it would begin with the word blessed.

Think of the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus had to say, blessed are you when this, blessed are you when that. But when the message was one of bad news, it began with the word woe.

[ 30 : 21 ] Speaking of impending judgment, we see Jesus do that as well, don't we? When he talks to the scribes and the Pharisees, woe, woe are you. Scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites, you are doomed.

And so Isaiah here in the presence of God's immaculate nature perceived for the first time just how truly sinful he was and how his nature was so unlike God's nature.

And he said, I am lost. But I think the better translation is the one in the King James Version which says, I am undone. What Isaiah is saying here is before you God, I am unraveling.

I am being shattered in a million pieces in your presence. I am disintegrating. Comparing yourself to other people, right, will make you feel a lot better about yourself.

But here Isaiah, a man who other people consider to be a righteous man, a good man, a godly man, a respected member of his community and in the temple.

[ 31 : 27 ] But in the presence of God, all it took was for Isaiah to take one small glimpse of God and who he was and be completely and totally unraveled, shattered, and undone in his presence.

His sin was exposed under the light of God's holy gaze. One thing that me and my friends used to do in college, went to a Christian college, and sometimes when couples would want to get away from under the eye of the faculty and other students who tattled, they would go out to parks and park someplace in their car and just have time together.

And so what me and some of my friends would do is we would go and we would go to Walmart and we would buy a spotlight, one of those battery-powered spotlights. And so sometimes on Friday and Saturday night, what we would do is we would drive through the parks and we would see these cars and we would stop, you know, maybe 50 to 100 feet behind them and we would just shine that light in the car.

Just shine that light in the car and just wait and just hold it there. And it wouldn't take long before that car engine would start and they would hightail it out of there.

It's uncomfortable, isn't it? Whenever light exposes your sin and your shame and your guilt and the things that you thought you could keep hidden, there's nothing that can be hidden from God.

[ 33 : 13 ] Isaiah experiences that. And that's what it's going to be like for everyone who stands before God in judgment. Nothing will be hidden. He knows it all.

Everything will be fully exposed. No matter how good you think you are right now, no matter how many good things you think that you have done, no matter how good you think you are compared to other people, God doesn't hold you to that standard or your own standard.

He holds you to His standard, His perfect standard. and you may be good compared to other people, but you are not good compared to God.

You don't measure up, I don't measure up, and it's not even close. Hell is an eternal separation from God. It's a place reserved for those who have rejected Him, who have rejected Christ.

The only person who can bridge the separation between a holy God and sinful men. And so those who spend their eternity there will, like Isaiah here, at least in this moment, will grovel in the reality of how lost they are.

[ 34 : 26 ] And it will be a place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. It will not be a party. Habakkuk 1.13 speaks there of God, and it says, you who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong.

You cannot make yourself holy. God is holy. We've seen that, and in verses 6-8 we see that God makes holy. God is holy, and He makes holy.

Look at verses 6-7 again. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, Isaiah says, as he was groveling, as he was coming undone, as he was shattered in his sin, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with his tongs from the altar.

And he touched my mouth, and he said, behold, this has touched your lips, your guilt is taken away, and your sin is atoned for. So we see, and we've seen, that God is holy, but here we also see that God is gracious.

He's gracious. And His grace is a holy grace. He doesn't leave Isaiah to continue to wallow in his woefulness over his sin.

[ 35 : 36 ] He takes steps to help him ordering one of his seraphim to go to him to cleanse him, to cleanse his mouth, to remove his guilt, and to atone for his sins.

The seraphim takes a white hot coal. All of these things that are in heaven, the temple is just replications, models of what it's really like there.

And so he takes a burning coal from the altar of incense, and he brings it, and he touches Isaiah's lips with that. Could you imagine that? You know, I'm careful.

Like, I was careful this morning when I got my coffee to make sure I blew on it pretty good before I put it to my lips. Because it's painful, isn't it?

When burning things touch your lips. I think of, like, going to Hideaway Pizza or something like that, and when that pizza comes fresh out of the oven, and it's steaming hot, and you're so hungry, and you just want to devour it, but you know, like, if I eat this and I take a bite, the roof of my mouth is going to be on fire for the rest of this day, and it's going to last with me all week long.

[ 36 : 46 ] This is a burning coal, and it's touched Isaiah's lips, which is one of the most sensitive parts of your body. This is a painful action, but it has a cleansing effect.

Isaiah was wounded, but it had a cleansing effect. It was a wound that would heal him. Isaiah was purified by the holy fire of God, and a few seconds of pain brought with it a healing which would last forever and ever.

After a moment of wounding, Isaiah was restored, purged of what defiled him, and ready to respond to the Lord's call.

And so here in verses 6 and 7, what we have is a picture of genuine repentance. And genuine repentance is painful, isn't it?

It's mourning. It's mourning over your sin. It's mourning over who you've been and what you've done. It's mourning over your lostness, of your separation from God, of the lengths that He had to take in order to forgive you of your sin by sending His Son to bleed and to die and to perish in your place.

[ 38 : 16 ] It's a coming to grips, repentances, with your guilt. The guilt that you've committed against your Holy Creator and knowing that He is totally just and totally right to punish you for what you've done.

It's seeing sin for what it is. And it's seeing God at the same time for who He is. And it's realizing how much better God is.

And it's turning away. It's turning away from your sin. It's turning to God. It's desiring to be separate from that sinful person that you've been.

And wanting to be separated unto God to be holy as He is holy. True repentance is more than just saying, God, I'm sorry.

It's knowing why you're sorry and what you're sorry of. Danny is great with our kids and one thing I admire of her is, of many things, is when our kids are in trouble and they've done something wrong and she'll talk to them about what was wrong and she'll say, are you sorry?

[ 39 : 35 ] Or maybe they'll know, like I've done something bad and they'll just come to her and say, Mom, I'm sorry. And you know what she says most times? Well, what are you sorry for? What are you sorry for?

And sometimes it's, you know, a lot of times, I think actually, it just catches them off guard. Like, I don't know. I just know that I should be sorry and I don't want you to be mad at me and so I'm just hoping that these are some magical words that will appease you and let me continue on doing whatever I want to do without getting punished.

You know, mothers and fathers, don't you? And you've seen it even if you're not a mother or a father. If you're a teacher or you have nieces and nephews, you know when someone is truly repentant, don't you?

Because you can see it in their face, you can see it in their actions, you hear it communicated with their words, that they know what they've done, they feel guilty for it, and they want to be freed of that guilt.

Repentance is godly sorrow. That's painful at first, but it results with you being more like Jesus, you tasting more of what is good, you experiencing life abundantly.

[ 40 : 53 ] So that has happened. And now we come to verse 8. And Isaiah continues by saying, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for us?

And it's interesting there, us, speaking of the Trinity. And then what does Isaiah do in response? He says, Here I am. Here I am. Send me.

Isaiah has seen the glory of God. He's heard the seraphim declaring His holiness.

He's felt the burning coal touch his own lips. Isaiah has seen God and now he hears God.

And he hears the voice of his heavenly Father. That booming voice. As we talked about with our teen boys this week, that dad voice.

[ 41 : 49 ] You know the dad voice? The dad voice is a voice that you don't mess with when it comes out. He hears his Father, his heavenly Father, speaking in that authoritative voice.

And when God speaks, people get silent. And God asks a question. Whom shall I send? Who will it be who goes for us?

God who is holy, God who is other, God who is separate, separates Isaiah and asks him this question.

Really separates him with this question. He calls him out. We can't forget that in all of this exchange between Isaiah and God, Isaiah is passive in all of it, isn't he?

He's totally passive. He didn't ask God for this vision. God didn't ask His permission to purify His heart by searing His lips.

[ 42 : 52 ] God drew him. God led him to repent. God was the one who called to Him. And God is the one who commissions Him for a task with a question who will go for us.

And Isaiah responds by saying, Here I am. Send me. Isaiah has gone through quite the transformation. He's gone from saying in one instance, woe is me in the presence of God to saying in the next, here I am.

Send me. He was profoundly aware of the depths of his sin in God's presence. He knew that God was great and that He was a great and woeful sinner, but He had experienced the grace of God which is greater.

The grace of God which runs deeper and wider than our sin. a grace that separates us from our sins and brings us into His holy presence.

Isaiah was set aside. He was set apart. He was consecrated by God to be His spokesman, to speak to His people on His behalf. He takes a common man and calls him and consecrates him, leads him to repentance, making him holy, and He gives him a message to go and to share.

[ 44 : 20 ] Hasn't God done the same for us Christians? Has He done anything differently with us? Has He not called you and transformed you? Has He not cleansed you and purified you?

Has He not made you who are common and lost holy? Has He not found you and separated you? And has He not given you a message to declare to the rest of the world?

You know, Paul was sure to remind the church of this when he would write letters to them. Because so often we forget who we are and what we're called to do. And the Corinthian church was a church

that I don't know that any pastor would be excited to be called to.

Those people were messed up. Those people were sinful. Those people were dealing with some things in that church that you would go in there and you would leave just feeling icky and gross. But what does Paul say of them when he opens up his first letter to them in verse 2? He says of them these sinful people these people who have forgotten what they should be doing and haven't been living the way that they should be living he says to them to the church of God which is in Corinth to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus saints by calling with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 45 : 44 ] their Lord and ours. And here Paul reminds them first of all you are the church. You are the ecclesia in Greek which means you are the separated ones.

You are the ones who have been called out by God and separated from the world and next he calls them saints. In the New Testament that word which literally means to be different or unlike or to be something that is other to be holy to have the nature of the Lord becoming different because we have been made different by him.

J. Vernon McGee who has been with the Lord for some time I used to love listening to his sermons and one thing that he would often say is this in this life you are either one or two things you are either a saint or an ain't you heard that?

You are either a saint or you are an ain't which are you? Which are you? Has the Lord called you out?

Has the Lord separated you? Do you know that he has covered your sin with his own blood?

[ 46 : 57 ] Do you know that he endured God's wrath for your sins on the cross and there died in your place? Do you know and do you believe that three days later Jesus Christ rose from the dead in demonstration that he has defeated it?

That sin has been vanquished? That in him there is no longer separation from God for those who have been clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ?

God makes holy and you may not feel like it brother or sister in Christ and we're going to talk about that next week but rest assured that your holiness does not depend upon who you are but on who Christ is and who he has revealed to you that he is and how he has set you apart and how he has called you out you who were sinful you who were common and he has separated you to himself for himself and he has declared you are holy you are mine you are different you are free from sin and its consequences it's a terrible thing to stand before God's holy presence without being covered in Christ's righteousness having your sins exposed and you literally in that moment will not stand cannot stand a chance you will kneel before the Lord of glory and so I ask you if that's you this morning why when God extends to you the gospel the good news of Jesus Christ that you can you can be forgiven that you can have eternal life that you can be separated from your sins why would you reject that why would you reject that why would you refuse to see the clear demonstrations of God's glory that you see before your eyes every single day and think well we're just here for no reason it just kind of happened yeah right it takes more faith to believe in that why would you refuse to behold what your eyes are telling you that they're seeing why do you want to live in sin and what it does to you and what it does to those around you and why would you reject and refuse God and Jesus

Christ your only hope to instead suffer and endure the eternal consequences of your sin when God today offers you life and he offers you peace and he offers you hope and he offers you purpose and he tells you I'll forgive you I'll be gracious to you you'll know my mercy you'll trust me and I will make you holy and he'll do it right now if you put your faith in Jesus Christ he'll do it right now and so I encourage you if that's you you do it right now you've heard the gospel and I hope and pray that God has called out to you and like Isaiah you would say Lord here I am send me and if you have been saved

I pray that you would remember and you would not forget that you've been separated for a purpose that is amazing that you would get your eyes off of what's going on in this world that you would put them on Jesus Christ and that you would continue to say Lord this life that I have is a life that you've given to me whatever you say whatever you ask me to do my answer is yes here I am send me don't let it be somebody else who you ask may it be me I want it to be me two questions of application for you to think about this the rest of today and this week first of all meditate on the person of God and when I say meditate I don't mean cross your legs and do your fingers like this and go hmm I'm talking about reading and reading over and thinking about this passage in the

person of God and how he has revealed himself to us in it and with that think about how does that change your view or how should that change your view of him and change your view of yourself and then secondly

[ 52 : 19 ] I want you to think about who or what God is sending you to right now and will you say here I am send me and again before I close in prayer if it's you and you've rejected and you've ran and you've refused and you realize today that right now you're tired of that and that you know that Christ is your Lord and Savior that he is your only hope that he is your only hope to be separated from your sin and to have eternal life which begins now and lasts forever we want to know that today I'll be here as we sing our closing hymn you can come and talk to me I'll pray for you if that's not comfortable for you you can reach out to me after church later this week whenever it is we want to know we want to celebrate that we want to encourage you we want to disciple you we want to be your church and your family let's pray heavenly father thank you for this day thank you for your word thank you for the hope that we have in Jesus

Christ God so often we get derailed from our purpose as believers we think that in order to please you we've got to earn it we've got to have the merits in order for you to love us or use us but God I pray that you would remind us that it was never about us it was never about our goodness it was about your grace and you're choosing to call us and you're choosing to lead us to repentance and to use our lives and so Lord I pray that for us today that we would just continue to look to you as the one who has made us holy and that we would rejoice in you because you have done that for us and that we would continue to say God here I am send me let me do whatever you would have me do and that we would trust and know that that will be answered and we will be stunned by the ways that you use us to advance your kingdom God for those who realize that they have not been separated to you they have not been separated from their sins they have not trusted in Christ that they have refused you that they have rejected you but today they realize that there is no hope for them apart from faith in

Christ and so Father I pray for them that today Lord you would call them right now and that they would return be separated from their sins that they would be declared holy as you are holy and that they would rejoice in knowing the hope that we have now and forever in Jesus Christ our Lord in his name we pray Amen