

First Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
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Isaiah 6:1-8
May 30, 2021

Live with a balanced fear of the Holy LORD, our God.

- Think how God is commonly depicted in heaven. Anything like Isaiah 6? Not at all!
- The cover of our Worship Folder, rich in symbols, pales in comparison to Isaiah 6.
- To be expected. Sin's crime is failing to treat the Living God as GOD.
 - ◆ That was Israel's problem. Yahweh - taken for granted, ignored, open contempt
- This special call of Isaiah equipped him and was recorded for us. (Romans 15:4)
 - ◆ Teaches us and reminds us who our God is and how we became his people.
 - ◆ Scripture calls this right relationship: *the fear of the LORD*.
 - ◆ Proverbs teaches (13 times) *the fear of the LORD* is critical to living in reality.
 - *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.* Proverbs 9:10
 - ◆ *The fear of the LORD* not just for Old Testament believers.
 - After the conversion of Paul: *Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed peace as it was strengthened. It grew in numbers as it lived in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.* Acts 9:31
- Isaiah 6 invites us into the presence of the Living God for a reality check, a call to...

Live with a balanced fear of the Holy LORD, our God.

❖ Fear that stands in awe of the majesty of the Holy One

- Dorothy and company were filled with the fear of the Wizard by the facade of fire, smoke, intimidating voice and room that sent the lion running through a window
- No facade here. The LORD draws back the curtain to reveal the real Living God.
- The majesty, authority, power, and dominion of the Living God is encountered.
 - ◆ The Lord - his throne - his expansive robe & train
 - ◆ The 6 winged seraphim, while impressive, are humbled to be in God's presence.
 - Their appropriate praise shakes the temple's thresholds. - Smoke like at Mt. Sinai.
- *Holy: set apart.* Preexists creation. Independent of and over all creation. Superior.
- *Yahweh:* the God of faithful covenant loving-kindness
- *Yahweh of Armies:* In charge of his holy angels. They serve at this command.
- *The whole earth is full of his glory.* Even this broken sin-corrupted creation still reflects the wonders of his *eternal power and divine nature.* Romans 1:20
 - ◆ Creation's breathtaking wonders, new life, interdependency, powerful forces
 - ◆ The rising up of nations and their accomplishments - their fall to dust and ruin
 - ◆ All of this gives him glory - praising him even when people don't.
- The grand incomprehensible majesty of the Holy Triune God humbles holy angels.
 - ◆ Humbled because they are creatures. *The fear of the LORD* without an ounce of terror.
 - The simple profound constant state of standing in awe over all God is and does.
 - ◆ He alone is worthy of worship - ascribing the worth that exclusively belongs to God.
 - ◆ If his creation fills one with awe, how much more its Creator. To him be the glory!
- His angels stand in awe of his goodness, wisdom, righteousness & loving-kindness.
 - ◆ Those qualities produce fear's just terror in Isaiah and all sinners. *I am doomed.*
 - ◆ He is holy - set apart from sin. Sin has no place in him or with him. *I'm toast.*

❖ Fear that stands in awe of the mercy of the Holy One

- Look what Isaiah confessed: *I am a man with unclean lips ...a people with unclean lips*
 - ◆ Jesus taught us: *...whatever comes out of the mouth comes from the heart. That is what defiles a person.* Matthew 15:18
 - ◆ Our lips offer abundant evidence that we don't treat God as he deserves - as our God.
 - ⁸ *But no one is able to tame the human tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.* ⁹ *With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people, who are made in the likeness of God.* ¹⁰ *Blessing and cursing come out of the same mouth. My brothers, these things should not be this way.* James 3
 - This is a great wickedness. Who can stand before a just and righteous God? None!
- Standing with Isaiah we are stunned by God's solution. *Holy - set apart - unparalleled*
 - ◆ Yahweh provides the solution to make us fit to be his people - to dwell with him.
 - ◆ From his altar - the place of his substitutionary sacrifice for us - comes his gifts.
 - *Look, ...your guilt is taken away, and your sin is forgiven.*
 - *taken away* - fully completed action - the burden and punishment of your misdeeds
 - *forgiven* - intensive and ongoing - covered over with the righteousness of Messiah
 - ◆ Fear's terror flees, replaced with love for this Unique Set Apart One who saves.
- Stunned! Relieved of the guilt that convicted, burdened, and doomed - **stand in awe**
 - ◆ That's *the fear of the LORD* that *fears, loves, and trusts God above all things.*
 - ◆ Completely devoted to, attracted to, committed to, living in service of the LORD.

❖ God's people live with a balanced fear of the LORD

- *What young people need today is the fear of the Lord. - No! What they need today is the love of the Lord.* (An contentious conversation at a 1980 Confirmation celebration)
 - ◆ Both men spoke an element of truth, but they both lacked a balanced understanding of the truth.
- *Fear of the Lord* focused on God's majesty and righteousness - terror of the law
 - ◆ **Without this fear** there is no need for a Savior.
 - ◆ **Only this** results in either rebels, self-righteous, or doomed sinners
- *Fear of the Lord* focused on God's mercy and love, tends to forget sin is serious!
 - ◆ Soon God is my buddy, an equal, not a Lord. Maybe even one I expect to serve me.
- Repentant sinners delight in God's absence of sin and his desire that I be without sin.
 - ◆ God's righteousness that takes away my guilt, sin's control, and eventually my sin nature as he welcomes me to dwell with him - is my only hope - the ultimate gift!
 - ◆ A life of peace, joy, and wisdom are found with this balanced *fear of the LORD*
- Where do you find and maintain this balanced fear of the Lord - this reverence?
 - ◆ Standing in God's presence - worship, prayer, devotions - aided by this vision.
 - ◆ Sound worship is designed to cultivate this law/gospel respect and awe.
 - ◆ Coming into God's holy presence - acknowledging our sin - lips touched with the cleansing gospel in Absolution, Sermon, and Jesus' body and blood.
 - Those engaged in God's presence, seeking his mercy - stand in awe he did it again!
 - Sent out by God's blessing they go to...

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