
Sermon Notes

May 3, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Holy, Holy, Holy
Isaiah 6:1-7

Holiness

- ❖ For many today, holiness is a completely foreign concept
 - ❖ Holiness is one of God's most prominent and frequently mentioned attributes
 - holiness denotes that God is distinct (separate) from His creation
 - there is a gaping chasm between God and what God has made
 - God is infinitely superior and set apart from all He has made
 - holiness also points to God's moral purity
 - all God's decisions and judgments are perfect
 - God is flawless
 - ❖ Our English word, "holy" comes from the same root word as the word, "whole"
 - everything about God is marked by His wholeness
 - "holiness is God's beauty" (Stephen Charnock)
- ❖ Isaiah's vision of God's holiness comes at a specific moment in Israel's history
 - Uzziah reigns over Judah for 52 years
 - Uzziah's kingship starts well (2 Chr 26:5)
 - Uzziah's kingship does not end well (2 Chr 26:16)
 - the Lord strikes Uzziah with leprosy
 - in the year Judah's earthly king dies, Isaiah is given a vision of Judah's heavenly king
 - ❖ What does Isaiah see?
 - God almighty, robed in splendor, dazzling in kingly majesty
 - 6 winged seraphim
 - "burning ones"
 - although the seraphim are sinlessly perfect, and they mirror the power and purity of the Lord, even they are not capable of gazing directly at the Lord of glory as He sits upon His throne (they must cover their eyes)
 - not until we receive glorified bodies with glorified eyes will **we** be able to look upon our holy, awesome, glorified God in heaven
 - ❖ What does Isaiah hear?
 - continuous calling out of ***Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!***

- God's holiness is the only attribute of God that is being declared around His throne day and night
- Isaiah hears (and feels!) the foundations of the thresholds shake [similar to Exodus 19:18]

Responding to God's Holiness

- ❖ How does Isaiah respond?
 - the vision of Himself that God gives Isaiah shakes him to his core (Isaiah 6:5)
 - Isaiah is confronted with his own unclean, unworthy nature
 - for the first time, Isaiah begins to grasp who God is even as he comes to terms with who/what he is
 - WOE = CURSED
 - "I am ruined/undone/disintegrated/coming apart from the inside out"
 - similar reactions by Moses (Exodus 3:6), Peter (Luke 5:8), John (Revelation 1:13-16)
- ❖ How do **WE** respond in the presence of our holy God?
 - has the overwhelming, crushing holiness of God ever descended upon your heart?
 - we are invited to come boldly to the Lord's throne of grace to find help in our time of need
 - but boldly does not mean carelessly or casually
 - we must not come glibly, halfheartedly or flippantly

- we come to God in worship, love and service only by and because of what Jesus Christ has accomplished for us on the cross of Calvary
 - we are to come expectantly and reverently
 - as we come, we must remember that God hates sin (Psalm 5:5, 7:11, Habakkuk 1:13)
- in our natural sin-scarred, sin-stained state, none of us could ever come into God's presence
 - sin can never be dealt with without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22)
 - our Substitute (Jesus) has shed His blood on our behalfes so that we can come into His Father's presence
- ❖ Through Jesus we gain access to and relationship with our holy God
 - God sets us apart as His children and commands us to be holy as He is holy
 - be whole as God is whole

Personal Reflection

1. How does a greater understanding of God's holiness lead to a greater appreciation of God's saving work?
2. How does what God reveals about Himself to Isaiah influence and shape our worship in the church today? Do you believe there is such a thing as "casual worship"? Why or why not?
3. Read 1 Peter 1:3-21 and consider how God's holiness ought to influence the way you live?