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Isaiah 6:5-8 | Part 2 of 2

Isaiah 6:5-8
Jeremiah 7:4
Revelation 8:13

August 23, 2026

THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Isaiah 6:5-8 | Part 2 of 2

Last week we saw Isaiah's vision of the holy God, high and exalted, surrounded by seraphim crying, "Holy, holy, holy." This week we look at his response, in Isaiah 6:5-8 (NKJV), and see it as a picture of the Gospel unfolding in four movements.

1. **The holiness of God** (v. 3): Isaiah sees God as He truly is - other, set apart, perfectly pure - and realizes he's been measuring himself by the wrong standard.
2. **The conviction of sin** (v. 5): The instant Isaiah understands who God is, he understands who he is. He cries, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" Like Habakkuk and Job before him, encountering God's holiness brings trembling, not comfort. Isaiah's "unclean lips" become the picture of his sin - the very mouth meant to praise God had instead been used to lie, hurt, and blaspheme.
3. **Atonement and grace** (vv. 6-7): God doesn't scold Isaiah or leave him in his shame. A seraph takes a burning coal from the altar and touches his lips: "Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for." The coal doesn't punish - it cleanses, foreshadowing the cross, where Jesus bore our judgment so we could be made whole.
4. **Surrender and mission** (v. 8): Cleansed and forgiven, Isaiah hears God ask, "*Whom shall I send?*" His answer - "*Here am I! Send me*" - isn't an attempt to earn favor. It's the grateful response of someone who has already received mercy.

This is the pattern of the Gospel: God appears, we're undone, God forgives and heals, God sends. Jesus didn't come to turn bad people into good people - He came to make dead people alive. We, as people made alive in Christ, can now go out into the world in gratitude, joy, and hope because of what He has done for us.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

ISAIAH 6:5-8 (NKJV)

So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged." Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."

1. **Isaiah's first response to seeing God wasn't relief — it was terror. Have you ever had a moment where you suddenly saw yourself clearly, for better or worse? What brought that on?**
2. **Read Isaiah 6:5-8 aloud together. Notice the order of events — confession, cleansing, then calling. Why do you think it happens in that order? Why is that significant for us?**
3. **Isaiah's guilt centers on his "unclean lips." What does the coal touching his mouth symbolize, and why the mouth specifically?**
4. **The pattern in this passage is: God appears, we're undone, God forgives and heals, God sends — from brokenness to mission. Where do you find yourself in that pattern right now?**
5. **Isaiah's response was honest confession, not self-comparison or excuse-making. In what ways do you tend to "judge yourself by yourself" rather than by God's holiness? How does seeing yourself in light of God's story, rather than your own, change that?**
6. **How does Jesus' work allow us to see ourselves as we truly are without condemnation and shame?**