



THE FACES OF GOD

Worship

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Sunday, February 21, 2010



Intro: My dream for us as a church is for us to have a real and genuine encounter with God. I pray that we see His face. I want us to know that His presence is there for the taking and that He descends when we seek Him and there is nothing that compares to those moments when you know beyond the shadow of a doubt that He is surrounding you and that He is working in you and He is loving on you and He is changing you and healing you. I want us to learn how to truly worship God! I don't want us to be bound by denominational boundaries. I just want us to have a true God encounter!

In English, “**worship**” means *“to greatly love, admire or respect somebody or something and to show it by engaging in acts of prayer and devotion to God or to something they have put in God’s place.”*

The Bible, however, was originally written in **Hebrew** (Old Testament) and **Greek** (New Testament), languages that can be much richer in texture than English. English translations of the Bible use a single word, “**worship**”, to communicate the meaning of four different Hebrew words and six different Greek words, but each of those Hebrew and Greek words carries a specific meaning that offers greater insight into the meaning of worship.

Don't worry I'm not going to go over all ten words. What I do want to do this morning is share with you what God taught me several weeks ago as I studied worship through these ten words and looked at different passages that relate to worship. I want to share with you what I learned from those passages that relate to being in the presence of God and how people responded when they had a God encounter.

I want to draw your attention to one particular passage found in **Isaiah 6:1-9**. Let's look at a man who had an encounter with God...his name is Isaiah. Let's

look at his very own words as he records what happened when he saw the face of God. **Isaiah 6:1-9, “It was in the year that King Uzziah died that I saw The Lord (Did you see it? He saw The Lord! He had a God encounter) He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Attending Him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. They were calling out to each other, ‘Holy, holy, holy is The Lord of Heaven’s Armies! The whole earth is filled with His glory.’**

Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations and the entire building was filled with smoke.

Then I said, ‘It’s all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.’

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. He touched my lips with it and said, ‘See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven.’

Then I heard The Lord saying, ‘Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?’ I said, ‘Here am I send me.’”

Isaiah had an encounter with God. He saw God high and lifted up...he saw God sitting on a throne and he was completely blown away by the presence of God. He saw God for who He really is...Isaiah saw the face of God. He watched as the seraphim showed reverence, glory and honor to God...he watched as they showed their respect to the awesomeness of God.

And that is what we pray happens every single week when you walk through these doors. We pray that through the music or whatever forms of art that God leads us to use, we pray that you experience the presence of God. We pray that you see the face of God.

But here's what God showed me: Worship is the response to His presence...real worship is all about what happens after we see His face. And I'm not talking about hands raised in worship or people showing some type of physical public display in response to being in the presence of God.

In fact I would say that God isn't interested in our ritualistic worship at all. Look at what Isaiah records in the very first chapter of this book that bears his name.

Isaiah 1:11-18, “What makes you think I want all your sacrifices?” says the Lord . ‘I am sick of your burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fattened cattle. I get no pleasure from the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to worship me, who asked you to parade through my courts with all your ceremony? Stop bringing me your meaningless gifts; the incense of your offerings disgusts me! As for your celebrations of the new moon and the Sabbath and your special days for fasting—they are all sinful and false. I want no more of your pious meetings. I hate your new moon celebrations and your annual festivals. They are a burden to me. I cannot stand them! When you lift up your hands in prayer, I will not look. Though you offer many prayers, I will not listen, for your hands are covered with the blood of innocent victims. Wash yourselves and be clean! Get your sins out of my sight. Give up your evil ways. Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the cause of orphans. Fight for the rights of widows. Come now, let's settle this,’ says the Lord.”

You see true worship is all about our response to seeing His face. It starts with repentance...that's what Isaiah did...he repented. He said, **“It's all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord of Heaven's Armies.”** Isaiah repented and in chapter one God said, **“Wash yourselves and be clean! Get your sins out of my sight. Give up your evil ways.”** Seeing the face of God leads to worship and real worship starts with repentance.

And true worship is all about service. Isaiah in response to God's question of, **“Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?”** Isaiah responds by saying, **“Here am I. Send me.”**

So this morning we want to give you a unique opportunity to respond to seeing the face of God.

4 responses:

Salvation—your first act of worship is the full surrender of your life to Jesus.

Prayer—with a partner

Prayer--Private

Communion

Stand where you are and worship.

This is your time to experience God through worship. So in an orderly fashion we just ask you to respond to the presence of God.

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