

## **PURPOSEFUL WORSHIP**

**Isaiah 6:1-8**

Guest Speaker: Michael Uyeda

I. Worship with the purpose to change your view of YOURSELF.

**Isaiah 6:1 In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.**

II. Worship with the purpose to change your view of GOD.

**Isaiah 6:2-3 Two Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."**

III. Worship with the purpose to change my attitude toward SIN.

**Isaiah 6:4-7 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs. And he touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven."**

IV. Worship with the purpose to change my perspective on LIFE.

**Isaiah 6:8 Then 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!"**

## **PURPOSEFUL WORSHIP**

Isaiah 6:1-8

Guest Speaker: Michael Uyeda

I. Worship with the purpose to change your view of YOURSELF.

**Isaiah 6:1 In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.**

It has been said that Christians without a PURPOSE are a little like Alice in the fairy tale ALICE IN WONDERLAND. In a conversation between her and the Cheshire Cat, Alice asked, "Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?" "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat. "I don't much care where," said Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the cat.

Like Alice, it seems that our sense of direction and purpose has also been missing in many of the activities of the church, including WORSHIP. This is evidenced by a survey conducted by the Barna Research Group, which found:

\* Enjoying or appreciating worship is not synonymous with experiencing the presence of God. Nearly two-thirds of regular attendee's say they have never experienced God's presence at a church service.

\* 48% of regular church attendee's have not experienced God's presence in the past year.

So, maybe a good place for us to start our study is to ask ourselves, "What is the PURPOSE of our gathering here, today"? I am not sure if you ever stop and ask yourself that question each Sunday, but I think it is pretty important to God. Let me come clean and share with you some of the PURPOSES that have sometimes driven MY ATTENDANCE in a worship service, over the years:

- \* Sometimes my motivation is simply that, "I like to SING"
- \* Sometimes, I have gone to church just because "I feel a little guilty if I DO NOT GO"
- \* I often go because "I like to hear good PREACHING"
- \* Many times I go "simply out of HABIT"

I do not know if any of YOU can identify with those things as YOUR purpose for coming, but I know in my heart, that those are probably not the GREATEST MOTIVATIONS for worshipping God. In fact, as I evaluated those reasons, I noticed that my purposes had very LITTLE to do with GOD and EVERYTHING to do with ME!

You and I do not need to go to seminary to figure out that there is something a bit DEFICIENT about that. In other words, if we say that we are coming here each Sunday to WORSHIP GOD, the FOCUS of our thoughts and attention SHOULD BE upon the ONE that we seek to worship, right? However, you and I both know that in reality, a CONFLICT exists (in worship) between doing what PLEASES ME and what truly PLEASES GOD. For example:

- \* Some of us approach worship just as we would a BUSINESS MEETING -- we like things to be very FORMAL, NEAT, and with a rigid agenda. We want the "meeting" to start on time and end on time.

- \* Some of us approach God in worship as though we were GETTING TOGETHER with a good friend. We share a CONVERSATION, say nice things to each other, EMBRACE, and go our separate ways.

- \* Still, some of us approach worship as if it were a CONCERT or a SPORTING EVENT -- we feel the EXCITEMENT of the occasion, we find OUR SEAT, we check the PROGRAM and then we sit back and wait to be ENTERTAINED.

The point is that most of our worship today is really focused on ourselves. We may not see it

that way, but the truth is that we often see OUR Desires and OUR Concerns as being EQUAL to God's! But, how can you really "WORSHIP" someone when you consider Him your EQUAL?

In our text this morning, we get to be witnesses of what TRUE WORSHIP looks like through the experience of the prophet, Isaiah. Isaiah was a man called by God to prophesy to the Nation of Judah, preaching on the JUDGMENT and SALVATION of God. At times, you could say our approach to worship is similar to Judah's.

Similar to today, this account takes place in a time of great rebellion, where men and women have lost all Godly perspective on WHO they are in relation to the ONE WHO CREATED them. From the moment you read the book of Isaiah, you find that he seems thoroughly confused about the foolishness of man, as he states in verse 3, "An ox knows its owner, And a donkey its master's manger, Israel does not know, My people do not understand. Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, and they have turned away from Him." I give this to you as an example of what was happening at the time when Isaiah received this VISION of God. Turn with me to Isaiah chapter 6 verse 1.

I. Worship with the purpose to change your view of YOURSELF.

**Isaiah 6:1** In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.

God wants our worship OF Him to be driven with the purpose to CHANGE our view of OURSELVES. Isaiah tells us that he had a real worship experience with God "In the year of King Uzziah's death". What is the significance of Uzziah's death in relation to Isaiah's VISION of God? Well, Uzziah was basically a GOOD and RIGHTEOUS king, for MOST of his 52 year reign, but his death SHOCKED the Nation of Judah. Uzziah became POPULAR and POWERFUL by helping to make Judah a Super Power among its surrounding nations.

Similar to the effect that Bill Clinton's presidency had on THIS COUNTRY, King Uzziah's reign symbolized SECURITY and PROSPERITY to JUDAH. You see, as long as they saw that Uzziah was sitting on the throne, everyone was happy, comfortable and content. The death of Uzziah was a SEVERE WAKE UP CALL to the ENTIRE NATION of Judah, because he had become MORE IMPORTANT and more REVERED than God. When God cannot even pry away the things in our lives that we love and trust in more than Him, sometimes, He may need to remove those things COMPLETELY so that we can see what we are REALLY worshiping.

Is there a "King Uzziah" in your life, that you are trusting in and depending on INSTEAD of God? Is there something in YOUR life that you are holding up HIGHER than GOD? When we come to worship God, there should be a self-evaluation of what we are clinging to, what we are trusting in, and what we are holding up as HIGH and EXALTED, and that may be hard for us to see.

You see, in our sinful nature, we have the tendency to put ourselves on the throne, or other things, or other people. But, here is the question that God is asking you and me: what will YOU DO when your "King Uzziah" dies? The God that we have come to worship is MADLY IN LOVE with us and He will do WHATEVER IT TAKES to turn our hearts back to worship Him! God created you and me to worship HIM alone. He wants our worship to CHANGE the way we view of ourselves, because HE knows that if we direct our worship anywhere else, we will be unfulfilled and incomplete AND thereby develop a FALSE sense of SECURITY. I urge you, brothers and sisters to worship God, and GOD ALONE because, when you LOSE YOUR JOB, When you LOSE a loved one, when your INVESTMENTS GO SOUR, or when your MARRIAGE FALLS APART, you can CONFIDENTLY KNOW that the REAL KING is STILL seated on HIS throne and is in control! Like Isaiah, we NEED to come through

those doors with a VISION OF GOD, seated on HIS throne, HIGH and LIFTED UP!

A NATURAL RESULT of worshipping to change our view of WHO WE ARE will be that we Worship with the purpose to change our view of GOD, too. Look at verse 2 and 3: NOT ONLY did Isaiah see God seated on a throne, but, he saw burning angels called seraphim. It says, they, "Stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

II. Worship with the purpose to change your view of GOD.

**Isaiah 6:2-3 Two Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."**

These seraphim are angels that minister to God ETERNALLY. In other words, their activity and worship of Him never stops! You see, God does not just give Isaiah a glimpse of Himself, I believe he lets Isaiah see these angels worshipping Him so that Isaiah could understand what TRUE WORSHIP looks like. You and I need to pay attention to this because, this HEAVENLY WORSHIP, reveals to us, what WE SHOULD BE doing in our EARTHLY worship! Let us compare our personal and corporate worship to God's standard here, in verses 2 and 3:

Isaiah tells us that these seraphim have SIX WINGS and ALL six wings are put to use in worship --

\* "...With two he covered his face ..." What does this mean? Covering their faces is an acknowledgment that they are in the PRESENCE of GLORY. They are acknowledging the glory and MAJESTY of God. Remember, that these angels are SINLESS creatures of God and yet, THEY KNOW THAT THEIR ONLY PROPER RESPONSE in worship is to COVER

THEIR FACES in His presence! When we walk through those church doors, are we "covering our faces" and acknowledging His presence among us? By our actions, are we telling God that we understand HE is GLORIOUS and MAJESTIC, or have we lost a sense of REVERENCE and AWE that is fit for the KING of KINGS and Lord of Lords?

\* Then, Isaiah says, "...With two he covered his feet ..." In Scripture, FEET often symbolize HUMAN or PERSONAL ACTIVITY. By covering their feet, the angels are HUMBLING THEMSELVES. They are acknowledging the fact that, there is a DISTINCTION between THE CREATOR and HIS CREATION. In the same way, you and I must acknowledge that ALL of our activity comes from ONLY ONE SOURCE -- the GOD that we worship. We PRIDE ourselves in how much money we can give, we TAKE CREDIT for how well we can sing or play an instrument. We boast in education or other accomplishments -- forgetting that the ONLY REASON we can do these things is because ALMIGHTY GOD has taken from HIS RESOURCES of power, wisdom and wealth and GIVEN us the ABILITY and MEANS to offer it BACK to HIM!

\* Lastly, Isaiah tells us that, "...With two he flew." As I said before, seraphim minister to God continually, without ceasing. This act is to represent the SCOPE of OUR MINISTRY to HIM. Notice the ORDER in which Isaiah describes the activity of the seraphim in worship - Ministry and worship that is pleasing to God, MUST be accompanied by acknowledging His Glory and Majesty and HUMBLING ourselves. The fact that these seraphim minister eternally should tell us that the SCOPE of our WORSHIP is not confined to this sanctuary or 90 minutes each Sunday; what happens HERE, is just the beginning of our worship during the week! (I will talk more about this later).

Do you see how our worship, here on earth, is to be a reflection of what is already

happening in HEAVEN? Let us worship with the purpose of making ourselves smaller and MAGNIFYING GOD in His glory - so that, instead of coming each Sunday and saying in our hearts, "What AM I going to get out of it?" WE WOULD come with the attitude that says, "What is God going to get from MY WORSHIP? What am I PREPARED to give to Him today?"

Isaiah goes on to tell us that these seraphim call out to one another in their worship of God, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory". Of ALL the ATTRIBUTES OF GOD mentioned in Scripture, HOLINESS is the ONE that's mentioned MOST OFTEN, because it encompasses EVERYTHING about God; all the other attributes of God flow from the fact that he is HOLY. Holiness, here, comes from a Hebrew word which means WHOLE, or COMPLETE. That is because there is NOTHING about God that is DEFICIENT, or INCOMPLETE. GOD is PERFECT in every way, completely SEPARATE from his CREATION. From this passage, we can see that it is God's HOLINESS that is at the CENTER of this worship experience. It is not the songs or the preaching itself that we are to focus upon. The songs and preaching in our worship are simply the MEANS by which our hearts and minds are MOVED so that, we CRY OUT with these angels, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is the LORD OF HOSTS!" But, that is easier said than done because it is very difficult to get to this place of recognizing God's holiness -- if we just dabble or play games in worship.

At home, I have a water filter on the kitchen faucet, where the water runs through it and supposedly filters out all the impurities before it goes in my cup. When I first installed that thing, I ONLY did it to make my wife happy, because she said it would make a BIG difference. I humored her and installed it, thinking to myself, "This is a big JOKE!" I SAID this because, for the first DAY or so, I watched the clear water go through the filter and into my glass and the water looked the SAME to me. But after a FEW WEEKS, I noticed that the filter was not

WHITE anymore. It became severely discolored. What I could not see was that there were a lot of dirty particles in the water. The more water I allowed to pass through that filter, the more impurities got picked up. Like that water, God wants us to RUN our LIVES through his filter of HOLINESS (in worship), to purify us. But, you will not get rid of all the impurities if you are content with JUST being a "SUNDAY WORSHIPER," You must actually LIVE a LIFE of WORSHIP!

To summarize, we worship with a purpose to correct our perspective of ourselves and God, and intentionally seek to LIVE a life of worship to see his HOLINESS. And, if we are TRULY seeking and worshiping Him this way, we will come to the SAME CONCLUSION that Isaiah did: That we are INDEED a people of UNCLEAN LIPS and that we are ALL in DESPERATE need of God's grace and mercy.

III. Worship with the purpose to change my attitude toward SIN.

**Isaiah 6:4-7 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs. And he touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven."**

The REASON God wants you to see His holiness is because it serves as a BRIGHT CONTRAST against our sin. It helps us to see (more clearly) what is really wrong with us. (I venture you didn't realize there was something wrong with you). If you ever go in a nice jewelry store, notice how they display their diamonds. Many times, you will see the diamonds displayed in a separate area, draped over a BLACK BACKGROUND. The reason they do this is because they do not want you to miss how BEAUTIFUL these stones are! God wants to drape HIS holiness over the background of our SIN so that we can see HOW BEAUTIFUL HE

IS, and what we can look like when we abide WITH HIM. Submitting our lives to God, against the backdrop of his holiness will surely CHANGE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD SIN.

Let us read how this happened with Isaiah. **Verse 4, "And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke." Verse 5, "Then I said, Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."**

We need to understand that Isaiah was considered one of the most righteous men in the land -- SURELY, if ANYONE could come and sing songs and put money in the basket with a clean conscience -- it would be ISIAH! But, instead (verse 5), he says "Woe is me, I am ruined!" The King James translates it, "I am undone!" What he is passionately exclaiming is that he is coming apart at the seams -- he is becoming UNRAVELED inside. Let me ask you a question: "When you confess your sins to God, do you FEEL yourself becoming unraveled inside? IN other words, does the confession of your sin break your heart to the point where you feel like you are just a mess inside? I have got bad news and good news: If you answered "No" to that question, it probably means that you are just going through the motions of confessing something to God so that you can move on to the NEXT SIN. CONFESSING our sin to a God (who is HOLY, HOLY, HOLY) should turn our insides out.

If that happens (and it will if you are allowing God to transform your life) you shouldn't be alarmed when you feel like your life is starting to come "unraveled" -- this is EXACTLY what God wants! And instead of immediately looking for the NEAREST EXIT, we SHOULD BE looking for God.

The reality, however, is that we turn to everyone and everything else, and we respond

poorly. You see, many of us want to HEAR from God, be BLESSED by God, be HEALED by God, but when He confronts us with our sinfulness, we are not always willing to deal properly with our sin. If we come here every Sunday and say "I'm alright" ... "I'm not that bad", then our lives will CONTINUE to be messed up. The effect of being in His presence is to "unravel" you. In fact, Scripture teaches us that in order to MATURE us. God will need to "unravel" you many times until the OLD you is dead and the ONLY thing alive in you is the part that looks just like JESUS CHRIST. That is why the Apostle Paul could say, *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* (Gal.2:20)

IV. Worship with the purpose to change my perspective on LIFE.

**Isaiah 6:8 Then 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!"**

But, until we can see how MESSED UP we really are, we will never see WHY WE DESPERATELY NEED JESUS IN OUR LIVES, AND we will just CONTINUE living MESSED UP lives! If we really want to see God, if we really want to have the mighty presence of God in our lives, then we MUST WORSHIP WITH THE PURPOSE TO CHANGE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD SIN.

One of the things I have learned in my walk with Jesus is that when we walk away from Him on our own and we rebel AGAINST HIS PLAN FOR OUR LIVES, HE WILL actually LET US go through with OUR plans so that we can see that it is impossible for us to live without Him! He will allow us to try and work things out by ourselves until things begin to unravel and we see that the ultimate truth in life is that WE DESPERATELY NEED JESUS -- and I'm not just referring to those who are not saved. You see, that is the LIE we buy from our enemy -- that just because we are "Christians" we do not NEED Jesus anymore. If you believe that lie,

Satan has just neutralized your effectiveness as a Christian. We NEED JESUS in EVERY ASPECT of our lives.

Some of you have been struggling with an area of your life that continues to become unraveled, but YOU ARE so STUBBORN, and you REFUSE to acknowledge your sin and say, "Woe is me! I am ruined". I also know that some of you do not face that sinfulness honestly because you are afraid of God and think that He just wants to condemn you. Well, today, I want you to know that God loves YOU so much, that he will continue to (graciously) allow that part of your life to become undone until you're willing to acknowledge that YOU ARE NOT God and you NEED HIS help. Now, if you are willing to do that, God is ALSO gracious enough to HEAL you. We read in ISA verses 6 and 7, "Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs. And he touched my mouth with it and said, Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven."

That sounds painful, doesn't it? Why did God need to use a burning coal on his lips? Because there is a big difference between just being SORRY for your sin and REPENTING of your sin. Being sorry for your sin means, "I'm sorry I got caught". Repenting of your sin means "I'm going in the wrong direction and, whatever it takes, I need to turn around completely and return to God". CLEARLY, repentance is the more difficult and painful of the two choices. But, the pain God allows into our lives is for the PURPOSE of MATURING us and TRANSFORMING us to be like Him. You see, if God did not allow some things in our lives to be painful, we would continually wander away from Him. We would go right back to that sin or the source of bondage in our lives and God LOVES US TOO MUCH to let that happen (without SOME resistance). When we have a change of heart regarding our view of OURSELVES and

GOD, and our attitude toward SIN, we are given the ability to hear from God. ISA 6:8, "Then 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!"

If there is one verse I want you to remember from this morning, it is this one -- because THIS is the GOAL of our worship. THIS is the ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF OUR WORSHIP; it is to have the SAME response Isaiah had after HIS worship service was over: "HERE AM I -- SEND ME!"

You see, there is NO GREATER PURPOSE to our corporate or PERSONAL worship than that to SURRENDER our lives to God in OBEDIENCE and SERVICE! May I submit to you today, that if THAT is NOT OUR REPSONSE to God after singing songs and listening to the message Sunday after Sunday, then we've just WASTED our time? Unless our minds are TRANSFORMED and our hearts are MOVED to get our lives right and SERVE Him, we have participated in something OTHER THAN the worship of JESUS CHRIST!

I want you to NOTICE THE ORDER, again, of what HAPPENS in worship. Isaiah (first) HEARS the voice of the Lord, and then RESPONDS to it by saying, "Here am I, send me!" This process of HEARING and RESPONDING is defined in the New Testament as "FAITH," and that is how Christians are to LIVE their LIVES. Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Unless we HEAR from God and RESPOND to His voice, we CANNOT say that we live a life of worship and faith. Remember that without FAITH, it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God.

Often times, AFTER a worship service, we will hear people say, "THAT was an AWESOME time of worship!" Or "I really felt the presence of God!" And while that MAY BE TRUE, we do not realize that the time we JUST SPENT in the worship service will not mean

much in God's eyes, UNLESS there is a RESPONSE to His VOICE IN OBEDIENCE. The problem is that we treat God and our SUNDAY WORSHIP, like it is a DRUG. Monday through Saturday, we live apart from God and go into withdrawal. Then, by the time Sunday rolls around, we FEEL THE NEED to come to church and get a "WORSHIP FIX" so that we can get SPIRITUALLY HIGH!

Well, GOD IS NOT interested in whether you get a spiritual high every Sunday. HE wants to know if we are REALLY SERIOUS about what we preach pray and sing ABOUT. He wants to see what happens when we LEAVE the sanctuary and how that will be LIVED OUT in the workplace, in our homes, and in our ministry. That is why WE NEED TO WORSHIP WITH THE PERSPECTIVE TO CHANGE OUR VIEW OF LIFE!

If THIS CHURCH is GOING TO GROW, spiritually, then we NEED TO STOP thinking of worship as something that we do for 90 minutes every SUNDAY. Actually, the Scriptural view of worship, for Christians, is to think of worship AS LIFE ITSELF! Romans 12:1, says, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual (reasonable) act of worship." If we blow that command off or fail to live it out in our lives, then we have just MISSED OUR PURPOSE in life. That is right, the single GREATEST REASON why YOU and I could MISS our PURPOSE in life, is because we have chosen to view ourselves as EARTHLY BEINGS having a SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE, when we should be looking at ourselves as SPIRITUAL BEINGS having an EARTHLY EXPERIENCE! God gave Isaiah a "heavenly experience," in order to bring about a change in his EARTHLY response. The same is true of you and me, today. All that we do here on Sunday is merely preparation for the battle on Monday through Saturday. But, how tragic is it, when our Commander In Chief speaks to us, heals us, and

prepares us for battle, but there is NO SOLDIERS WILLING TO FIGHT when He asks, "Whom shall we send and who will go for us?"

In CLOSING, I want to share with you some words written by John Piper, from his Book, Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ. Listen to how he captures the essence of what it means to fulfill our purpose in worship by glorifying with our lives.

John Piper, Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ, pp. 21,22.

**"We were made to know and treasure the glory of God above all things; and when we trade that treasure for images, everything is disordered...We are all starved for the glory of God, not self. No one goes to the Grand Canyon to increase self-esteem. Why do we go? Because there is a greater healing for the soul in beholding splendor than there is in beholding self. Indeed, what could be more ludicrous in a vast and glorious universe like this than a human being, on the speck called earth, standing in front of a mirror trying to find significance in his own self-image? It is a great sadness that this is the gospel of the modern world. But it is not the Christian Gospel...The Christian Gospel is about "the glory of Christ", not about me. (But) when it is - in some measure - about me, it is not about my being made much of by God, but about God mercifully enabling me to enjoy making much of Him forever."**