

## Ready For God's Use (Part 2) – Isaiah 6:6-8a

Is 6:6-8 (p.571)

This is part 2 of a message I started last week, on how to be ready for God's use in your life; Ready for the big things *and* the little ones, the public *and* the private – 24-7, 365

And though some people already are, many aren't; And maybe that's you  
Maybe you have the desire to be used by God, but lack the preparation; Or the perspective; Or maybe you have no desire at all; You could care less  
Whatever the case, Isaiah's example speaks to it (**Part 1**)

Showing us first of all, that we need to . . .

**See God for who he is (v1-4)**

*High and lifted up*, as **King of kings** and **Lord of lords**

**Full of glory and accompanied by power**

With *the train of his robe* filling the temple, and the angels' voices shaking the foundations

And then **shrouded in mystery** and **deserving of reverence** – with the smoke filling the house and the angels covering their faces and feet

All while calling out – *Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!*

An expression of worship that indicates he's worthy of it – **worthy of worship**

If you're going to be ready God's use, you need to open the eyes of your heart and see him for who he is (**Summary**)

- And you know you have, if you're overwhelmed by his greatness and pierced by his holiness; Present tense  
You not only *have been* overwhelmed and pierced, like when you *first* saw him and entrusted your life to him – but you still are; It's unavoidable

Indifference just means you haven't really seen him

In which case you're not only ill-prepared to serve him, you're probably not saved  
Don't kid yourself (**Summary**)

That was the first point – see God for who he is; Second, was . . .

**See yourself for who you are (v5)**

That was certainly Isaiah's experience; After seeing God for who *he* was, Isaiah saw himself in his light; And he was **undone**; Absolutely broken and completely hopeless  
Hence his cry of despair – *Woe is me!*

Not only that, but he was **unclean**; Undone and unclean due to his sin  
Which once again, was unavoidable; Apart from Christ, you *can't* stand in the presence of holy God, and see yourself any *other* way; The contrast is too stark  
He was unclean and knew it

Making him **unfit** as well; Unfit to speak in God's presence, and unfit to speak on his behalf; Especially in light of his self-righteousness; He was unfit

And last here, he was **exposed**; Exposed to the consequences of other people's sin  
Not the ultimate consequences, but the temporal ones, the earthly ones

If you're going to be ready for God's use like Isaiah was – you too need to see him for who he is, and yourself in his light

And if you already have, you ought to be painfully aware that apart from Christ, you're *dead* – dead in your trespasses and sins (**Summary**)

- The very way I felt as I stood at the door of the elderly lady I told you about last week  
The one I threw rocks at on the way home from school as a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grader  
And the one who called my parents  
And the one who stood looking down at me on her front step, as I apologized and asked for her forgiveness

In that moment I was dead; Undone

B/c I saw myself for who *I* was, in light of someone who had done me no harm

But it was *her* words and *her* response that rocked my world

With her arm holding the screen door open, she looked me in the eye, and with all the tenderness in the world said – “That's okay; Just don't do it again”

Not a word about how it endangered her; Not a word about how it hurt her; Not a hint of vengeance or retribution or payback or picking *up* the rocks or anything  
Just – “That's okay”

And in *that* moment, I received a wave of grace that was greater than all my sin (**Sum**)  
The very thing Isaiah received as well; That's the point

**Receive God's grace for all it is (v6-7)**

If you're going to be ready for God's use, you have to receive God's grace

After Isaiah saw the Lord, and himself in his light, it says in v6-7 . . .

*Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. [7] And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”*

To get what's going on here, you have to understand first of all, that the *altar* is a reference to the OT sacrificial system of atonement, or reparation

It was the means by which wrongs were made right, and God's people were made fit, to serve and worship him; That's the idea of the altar

And the *coal* from the altar, represents the cleansing *power* of the sacrifice

The cleansing power that was perfectly *applied* to address Isaiah's sin – *he touched my mouth* Isaiah said, the *focal* point of his sin

And removed his guilt, and compensated for his sin

So the coal represents the cleansing power of the altar sacrifice, as applied by the angel on behalf of God

All of which is one great big expression of God's grace

Grace that we *must* receive for all it is

Starting with the fact that it's . . .

• **An act of favor in coming to you (v6a)**

Receive God's grace as an act of favor in coming to you; Just like the angel came to Isaiah  
Isaiah didn't go to the angel, the angel came to him

And neither did *you* go to *God*; He came to you  
Not with a coal from an altar, but with Christ on the cross; It was an act of favor

And just like Isaiah didn't deserve it, neither did we  
In fact, we deserved just the opposite for our sin  
Which makes it an act of *unmerited* favor; Grace

Nor is it just a thing of the past  
Jesus not only came 2000 years ago as an act of favor toward us, he still does; Via his  
Spirit; Pricking our hearts with conviction, and indwelling our souls with his presence  
It's an act of *ongoing* favor that's ours to receive  
And receive it we must, if we're to be used

Second, God's grace is . . .

• **An act of sacrifice on your behalf (v6b-7)**

Just like the *altar* sacrifice was made on Isaiah's behalf, and applied w/ a coal to his *lips* . .  
So too, Jesus sacrificed *himself* on our behalf, and applies his *blood* to our soul  
Not from a distance with iron tongs, but up close with the loving touch of his Spirit

But once again, you have to receive it; Just b/c he did it, doesn't mean it's yours  
The grace of his sacrifice has to be applied to your account

Third, and another part of God's grace to be received, is . . .

• **The relief of guilt due to your sin (v7)**

Isaiah says in v7 – *He* [the angel] *touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away*  
God's grace not only comes to us as a *gift*, and pays the price we deserve – but it  
relieves us of our *guilt*

IOW no longer do we have to worry about the eternal *consequences* of our sin; Temporal  
ones sometimes, sure; Discipline maybe; But not the *eternal* consequences  
Our guilt has been relieved; Expunged; Deleted  
Just like a judge who declares someone “not guilty” in a courtroom

When you receive God's grace, the gavel is struck; You're free; Relieved, once and for all  
The *record of debt that stood against you with its legal demands*, is canceled; That's  
what the Bible says; It's done away with; Nailed to the cross (Col 2:14)  
The only thing left, is to receive the relief, for all it is

Fourth, God's grace includes . . .

• **The reconciliation you desperately need (v7)**

*This has touched your lips* [the angel said]; *your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned*  
*for*; As in taken care of for the purpose of reconciliation  
That's what the word atone means at its core – to make enemies into friends  
To reconcile them, by averting punishment and appeasing wrath  
Or, more simply – it means to be “at one” with

So when the angel says, *your sin* [is] *atoned for* – he's saying that Isaiah's sin was dealt  
with and forgiven due to God's acceptance of the sacrifice . . .  
And therefore their relationship, is reconciled; Restored; Made whole

Once again, the very thing God does for us through the cross  
He atones for our sins once and for all, by not counting them against us, and reconciles  
us to himself, so that we are “at one” with him forever and ever (2 Cor 5:18-19)

It's the reconciliation we desperately need  
B/c without it, we're *enemies* of God, and face eternal punishment

And then last, God's grace includes . . .

• **The renewal you can't do without (2 Cor 4:16)**

Renewal for service; Renewal for ministry; Renewal for life  
It's not explicit here, but it *is* implied; B/c 2 verses earlier Isaiah was at the bottom of  
his barrel, and 2 verses later he would learn of a *very* difficult assignment  
Both requiring a supernatural renewal that only God's grace could offer

Ever been in that situation? Or at one of the extremes? I know you have  
And the fact is, whether you're down in the dumps, or deep in sin, or fighting the good  
fight – you need the renewal of God's grace each and every day  
You need his salve for your wounds; You need his forgiveness for your sins; You need  
his strength for your battles  
And you need the confidence of his grace so as not to lose heart

It's like the Apostle Paul said in **2 Cor 4:16**, in the midst of hardship – *Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.*

It was a renewal he couldn't do without, not even for a day – and neither can we

B/c the decay of our *outer* nature never takes a break

Which means that when you skip devotions or miss church, you're flirtin' with disaster  
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We need the renewal of God's grace when we *first* receive him, *and* throughout our lives  
Grace that's greater than all our sin, all our shame, all our troubles, and all our pain

The question is, have you received it? And do you continue to receive it?  
If so, you're *more* than ready for God's use (**Summary**)

And able to . . .

**Hear God's call for what to do (v8a)**

If you're going to be used by God for his purposes and glory, you need to hear his call for  
what to do, just like Isaiah did

Look at v8; After hearing the angel, he said – *And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”*

*Us* most likely reflecting the royal verbiage of Isaiah's day, where kings would refer to  
themselves in the plural; Often times to bolster their image and inflate their ego  
Neither of which is the case here, b/c we know from other Scriptures that God is indeed  
3 in 1; One God comprised of 3 persons; Distinct, yet sharing the same essence  
Different in their roles, yet sharing the same attributes

The point being, Isaiah heard his call  
Having received God's grace for all it is – his ears were open, and his heart attuned

And yours can be too . . .

- **By focusing your attention on the things of God**

If you lack focus in your walk, or you love the things of this world more than the things of God – you’ll never hear his call (phone); Or if you do, it’ll be garbled  
You’ll constantly be asking – Are you there? Are you there?  
To which God will constantly be saying – “Hello, I’ve always been here; Where are you? Are *you* there?”

If you’re going to be used by God; If you’re going to hear his call – you have to focus on *his* things, *his* work, *his* kingdom  
You have to set your mind on things above, not on things below (Col 3:2)  
You have to turn your eyes upon *Jesus*, and look full into *his* wonderful face  
You have to have *his* mind, his perspective

And you do that by reading your Bible, praying every day, coming to church, and serving  
That’s it; Worship Christ, Walk with Christ, and Work for Christ  
That’s how you focus your attention on the things of God, and hear his call for what to do; It’s not easy, but it *is* simple

Second, remove distractions that interfere; You hear God’s call . . .

- **By removing distractions that interfere**

Have you ever been in a big city and tried to see the stars? You can’t; The *light pollution* as astronomers call it, is too great, too bright; Even around here

Which is why I look up so much when I’m in the country; And can’t believe what I see  
I can’t believe how *bright* the stars are, and how many there are  
Not to mention the vastness of the Milky Way  
But around cities it’s a useless exercise b/c of all the light; It interferes

And the same is true of our lives; Only instead of *light* pollution, it’s *life* pollution  
Like busyness, and noise, and passions, and hobbies, and screens, and sports, and music, and movies, and who knows what else  
It’s life pollution that prevents us from seeing God’s grandeur, and hearing God’s call

The solution to which – is to remove the distractions, or get away from them  
To the extent that they interfere with hearing God’s call, remove them; Or get away from them; Like you get away from the city to see the stars (**Summary**)

Focus your attention on *his* work, and remove the distractions of *yours*  
That’s when you’ll hear God’s call for what to do (**Summary**)