**The Word of the Lord**

**The Word**

Ezekiel 6, 20, and 28:25-26

**The Big Picture**

God’s motivation in doing what he does (whether bringing judgment or salvation) is that people would truly know that he alone is God and would come to experience just how awesome and unique he is. Likewise, our motivation in doing what we do should be to bring him glory and to help others experience his greatness.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider the basic premise of Sunday’s message: At the center of God’s own heart is a burning passion for his own glory and honor in the world, and that is ultimately what motivates him to do the things he does. How do you respond to that idea? What questions and issues does that raise in your mind?

2. Consider God’s bringing both judgment and salvation on Israel “that you will know that I am the Lord.” Share a time in your life when the full reality of who God is was made very clear to you. It could be a time when you experienced God’s clear discipline, or it could be a time when you experienced his overwhelming grace and mercy.

3. Consider the Lord’s prayer: “Father, hallowed be your name.” Imagine for a moment if, like Jesus, that prayer was the deep passion of your heart all the time. How would you be living differently than you are today? What’s one specific way you think your life would change?

4. Spend some time praying for each other. Perhaps you can each pray for someone else in the group: that God would reveal his glory to him/her and that God would use that person to show his glory to others in this next week.

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. Introduction

A. Last week we focused on the greatness of God through the vision of his glory he gave Ezekiel in chapter 1.

B. This week we focus on the greatness of God through key words he speaks in the book of Ezekiel that reveal his motivation in doing what he does

II. “Then you will know that I am the LORD”

 A. This phrase often occurs in passages of judgment (such as chapter 6)

 1. The context of the judgment is Israel’s long standing idolatry and disobedience

2. God’s glory had grown dim in the people’s hearts and they lived as if he wasn’t watching and wouldn’t hold them accountable

 3. His judgment will have the effect that they will know that he is the LORD

a. This phrase means that they will truly come to terms with the fact that he alone is God and he holds every personal accountable

b. The “awful” reality of who he is will be experienced in an undeniable way

 B. This phrase also occurs in passages of salvation (such as 28:25-26)

1. God will act in a powerful and gracious way and do things for Israel that she could never do for herself

2. It will be an “awe-ful” experience where they are truly amazed at God’s grace and power on their behalf

III. “For the sake of my name” (ch. 20)

 A. See the repeated phrase in v. 9, 14, and 22

B. God is not so much motivate by pity and compassion for Israel as he is motivated “for the sake of his name”

1. God has a reputation to protect among the nations

2. God wants his honor and glory to be upheld among the nations, so for that reason he maintains his faithfulness to Israel and forgives her

IV. Conclusion

A. God is thoroughly “God-centered”: he has a passion for his own glory and for the world to experience his own glory

1. It is inappropriate for us to be self-centered, but it is appropriate and necessary for God to be self-centered in this way. It’s better for everyone.

2. Thank God he deals with us “for the sake of his name” and not in accordance with our attitudes and behaviors. His own honor is bound up with his covenant with us (much like faithfulness in a marriage is bound up with the vow one makes).

B. Jesus taught us a God-centered prayer: “Father in heaven, hallowed by your name.”

1. That was the prayer of Jesus’ heart as he walked into every situation of his life

2. Let’s make that the prayer of our heart as we go into each situation of our lives