

MODULE 3 OUR GOD



INTRODUCTION

Describe a time when you bumped up against a righteous standard (maybe a parent's requirement, or an officer, etc...) and were given grace instead of punishment.

EXAMINING THE PIECES

Read Isaiah 6:1-8

in 1-4, describe what Isaiah saw.

In order to begin to come close to understanding this passage, we have to gain a bit of an understanding of holiness. When you think of holiness, what comes to mind?

R.C. Sproul says, "...the word *holy* calls attention to all that God is. It reminds us that His love is holy love, His justice is holy justice, His mercy is holy mercy, His knowledge is holy knowledge, His spirit is holy spirit."

But, more than holiness having a moral dimension (in other words, his love is pure, his justice is pure, etc...), holiness has another meaning - to separate. It comes from the word, "to cut" and could literally be translated, "a cut above something".

Read Exodus 15:11. How does this verse bring out this definition of holiness.

Now, going back to Isaiah 6:1-4, describe things in this scene that show God's holiness in this way (that he is altogether higher, in fact, altogether different than us). To ask it another way, as you look at the passage, what things would be missing if you were the one on the throne?

What's the point?

Where do you start when trying to fit "God" into a 45-60 minute Bible Study. The web version of CruDoctrine touched on issues related to the Trinity and God's attributes.

But, if there was one word that calls attention to all that God is, the sum of all of God's attributes - it is the word Holiness.

As we grow in our apprehension of God's holiness, we not only see his moral perfection, but we see him as utterly different, separate, and uniquely distinct from all that we are and all that we know.

As a result, we become increasingly aware of how we don't deserve to come into the presence of one so perfect, so beyond us, so majestic, so unblemished, and so merciful. One who graciously lets us come into His presence.

What's the problem?

The problem lies at the heart of the gospel - that there has to be bad news before there is good news. The bad news is that, apart from Christ, I stand condemned before a holy God. We get that.

For many Christians, though, the problem lies in the fact that we don't grow in our apprehension of God's holiness. As we walk with Christ, we should grow in our understanding of God's holiness, and as a result, a greater understanding of our sinfulness. Instead, oftentimes, God isn't that holy, and we aren't that bad.

EXAMINING THE PIECES CON'T

In 6:5, what is the natural response to seeing this kind of holiness?

Fortunately, God doesn't leave Isaiah in his desperate state of brokenness, according to vs. 6-7, what does He do?

So What?

Why is it good news to actually see that we are far worse than we could have ever imagined?

How do you try to avoid seeing yourself the way Isaiah saw himself?

Instead of an angel and a coal providing atonement, our greatest need for atonement is ultimately met in Christ. How does the cross scream at us: "you are far worse than you could have ever imagined, but far more loved than you ever dared dream"?

It is after seeing this vision of God and experiencing his redemption that in v. 8 Isaiah ultimately says, "here am I, send me." How does our seeing God as utterly holy propel us to wholehearted obedience?

What would your life look like if you regularly lived with a grander vision of who God is?

What's the solution?

Not only did Isaiah see holiness that made him want to repent. But, he was able to see the place where holiness meets atonement. In other words, at that moment, holiness intersected with grace.

It is ultimately at the cross that we most clearly can see the holiness and grace of God. So, the solution is to look to Jesus - seeing in the crucifixion the meeting of divine holiness and grace, anger and mercy, justice and love, condemnation and forgiveness.

What's our response?

Like Isaiah, truly seeing holiness and grace meet leads to a willing obedience to do whatever, go wherever, and say whatever this holy, yet gracious God calls us to. And, we don't do these things to try to "earn" the favor of this God. When we truly apprehend how high this holiness is and how deep this grace is, "earning" isn't anywhere in our vocabulary anymore. So, we respond with wholehearted obedience because we have caught a vision of a holy, yet gracious God.