



Show Me Your Ways Through Worship (Isaiah 6:1-8)

In Isaiah 6:1-8 we learn about Isaiah's call to be God's messenger to the people of Jerusalem. As Isaiah entered into the presence of God he cried out, "Woe is me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord God Almighty." Isaiah was so overwhelmed and affected by the greatness of God, and his realization of his own human shortcomings. The enormity of God was pressing upon him so that he felt crushed. His sins were exposed and he felt his death was imminent, as he had seen God with his own eyes.

When Isaiah's lips were touched with a live burning coal, he received the cleansing of God. His guilt was removed, his sins paid for. As a result of his cleansing, he was able to hear and respond to the call of God upon his life. He answered with enthusiasm even knowing that the people to whom he spoke would not listen.

Worship is turning to God, listening to God, and responding to God. In our traditional worship services, there is a familiar flow to which we move. As we enter into our worship space, we encounter God. We come into contact with our family, neighbors and community, many of whom have greatly influenced our faith journey. We know that God has called us all to come and worship together. In our midst is the Holy Spirit, moving and compelling us to worship together. We prepare ourselves to worship God with our Call To Worship. Often it is a scriptural quote such as Psalm 95:1, "O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!" The call proclaims that the focus of our time together is to worship God and that we should prepare ourselves for the Holy Spirit to move in our midst.

Next, just as Isaiah did, we come face to face with how sinful and unworthy we are to be in the presence of God. We fall short of who we should be as God's children, both as an individual believers and as a community of faith. But, as a result of God's grace and goodness, we are free to admit our guilt and wrongdoings not in fear, but in the comfort of our faith. We are called to confess our sins and the sins of the world, to turn back to God, and ask God to make right those things that we have done wrong.

Following our time of confession comes our Assurance of Pardon. We are reminded and reassured that God is a gracious and forgiving God. We are reminded that Jesus died for our sins and we are thus reconciled to God. Nothing can separate us from the love that God has for us.

Because we are forgiven, we are free to worship God, hear God's calling for us through His Word proclaimed, and act on that calling. We can hear the Word of God proclaimed with open ears and open hearts. Together we seek to understand what it has to do with our lives, both individually and as a community of believers.

We are then given a charge to “Go!” God commands us and empowers us by the Holy Spirit to go out into the world and follow the Word of God, to let our very lives be an example of God’s love and grace.

Discussion Questions and Reflection Activities

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-8, Psalm 95:1-7

As Christians, worship is the central avenue through which we praise God, receive forgiveness, hear the Word of God read and proclaimed, and receive direction as we strive to live lives that reflect our faith.

Questions:

- Why does God call us to worship?
- How does God call us to worship?
- Why do we come to worship?

Have members of your group look up these scripture references:

Psalms 124, 34, 100, and 95; Ruth 2:4; Romans 1:7; Luke 24:34; Romans 5:5; Isaiah 57:15; John 4:24; and 1 John 4:7-8.

What is the passage saying?

Find a word (or words) that describes God or Jesus.

What is being said in your passage that calls to us as Christians?

Next, ask the group to write a call to worship based on one or more of these Scripture passages. Small groups may be formed for this part of the activity. Invite them to share their calls to worship.

How does a call to worship set the tone for the rest of the worship service? What would our worship service feel like if there were no call to worship? How can we present the call to come and worship to members of our community who do not currently have a place of worship?

Using the word **WORSHIP**, write an acrostic poem that helps define the word in the context of our lesson for today.

Prayer:

Close with prayer asking God for direction in calling others to worship. Pray for guidance for living a faith-filled life, one that draws others to the love of Christ. Pray for meaningful worship experiences so that we can share the joy of Christ with others who may not know His love.