

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Holiness of God

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

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I have been asked to speak on the holiness of God and I think that R.C. finds some delight in giving me subjects that he has mastered. I'm not sure why he does this, although once when he asked me to speak on election, I said why would you at your conference have me do that? And he said, "Because I want to hear what you have to say about it." It was sort of a test, I think, to see if I got it right. All of us who have known R.C. for any time at all are profoundly indebted to him for his treatment of the sixth chapter of Isaiah, which I think for all of us who are his students will forever and always be the portrait of God's holiness, which is most memorable.

And I understand why because it is so critical to an understanding of God's holiness and we will get there hopefully at the end.

In speaking of the holiness of God, it is good, perhaps, to begin with something of a definition. It was Hodge who said, "The holiness of God is not to be conceived of as one attribute among others. It is rather a general term representing the conception of God's consummate perfection and total glory. It is His infinite moral perfection crowning His infinite intelligence and power." He said it is infinite moral perfection as the crown of the God-head, holiness is God's total glory crowned.

It was Thomas Watson who said, "Holiness is the most sparkling jewel of God's crown, it is the name by which He is known." R.L. Dabney wrote, "Holiness is to be regarded not as a distinct attribute, but as the result of all God's moral perfection together." They are recognizing what the prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 57 verse 15 when he said, "For thus says the high and exalted one who lives forever, My name is holy." Holy is His name.

It is something along the lines of what we just heard. As R.C. spoke upon God's being, His self-existence, His being is utterly separate from ours, and He made that so clear. His is being and ours is becoming,. He is utterly distinct from us. The Hebrew is *qadach*, the Greek, *hagios*, meaning distinct, separate, He is other than we are as to the essence of His existence, His nature. Therefore nothing in the creation, no one in the creation even man created in the image of God compares to God in

essential nature. He is incomparable. He is infinite perfection. That is why His name is separate, distinct, or holy. And thus does Exodus 15:11 say, "Who is like you, majestic in holiness?" And there, I think, is what those mediaeval theologians were after, to add majestic to utter distinction somehow is an expression of worship. First Samuel 2:2 says, "There is no one holy like the Lord. There is no one beside You," no one exists in Your category of being but You. Psalm 111 says, "Holy and awesome is His name."

When we think of God's holiness, we think of His utter separation from sin because everything in the creation is effected and influenced by sin. But there's more to His separateness than that, however, that for us is the graphic illustration. It's hard for us to metaphysically comprehend the difference between being and becoming. We see clearly God's distinction from us in the matter of His moral, perfection and sinlessness. As Habakkuk the prophet wrote, "Your eyes are too pure to approve evil. You cannot look on wickedness." Job 34:10 says, "Far be it from God to do wickedness, to do wrong." In Revelation 15:4 it says, "You alone are holy." There are many other statements. That gives you sort of a broad picture across Scripture.

We could talk about those statements but I want to go a little bit beyond that, if I may. There are more than statements regarding God's holiness in Scripture. There are revelations of His holiness. In fact, every revelation of God, every disclosure of God, every manifestation of God is a revelation of His moral perfection, every one. You can study any of God's revelations of Himself and you will find there His moral perfection. Let me give you some illustrations of that.

We could study God's holiness by studying creation. You will remember that at the end of His creation, Genesis 1:31, it says, "God saw all that He had made and behold, it was very good." This is a reflection of His essential nature, it couldn't be anything else. On the previous days it was said that it was good and that was applied to all the specific details of His creation. But in the end when He saw all of it, the whole creative complex in its totality, it was not just good, it was very good. In fact, Ecclesiastes 7:29 speaking directly of man says, "God made man upright." Of course, He could do no other. Whatever came from His hand from His being had to be perfect. Made in His image, man was free from sin.

You could also look at the Law of God and you would find revealed in the law of God His absolute perfection. Psalm 19:7, "The Law of the Lord is perfect." Romans 7:12, "The Law is holy, the commandment is holy, righteous and good." Everything that comes from God, every manifestation of God's nature is a reflection of His moral perfection.

You could also see the holiness of God manifest in His judgment. All His verdicts, all His adjudications from the divine bench are holy. Shall not the judge of all the earth, Genesis 18:25, do right? Second Timothy 4:8 says, "The Lord, the righteous judge."

You could get a glimpse of heaven and maybe it's a good thing to do for just a moment. In the fourth chapter of the Revelation we are taken in to the heaven of heavens and in verse 2 of Revelation 4, John in the Spirit, that is being given a revelation by the Holy Spirit in the form of a vision, sees a throne standing in heaven and one sitting on the throne and He who is sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance. Very much like Ezekiel 1. "And around the throne were 24 thrones and upon the thrones I saw 24 elders sitting in white garments and golden crowns on their heads. I take it that this is a reference to the redeemed. And from the throne proceed flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God, sevenfold Spirit as mentioned in Isaiah 11. Before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal and in the center and around the throne four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind, and the first creature was like a lion and the second like a calf, and the third creature had the face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings are full of eyes around and within and day and night they do not cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God the Almighty who was and who is and who is to come.'" You see, in heaven this moral perfection, this utter holiness in the *tri-hagion* which can, of course, even be a Trinitarian reference, but certainly is multiplied to emphasize the utter and absolute distinction of God's moral perfection. And by the way, what you have happening here in Revelation 4 is very similar to what was happening in Ezekiel 1, it is the cranking up of the divine war machine as God in His holiness begins to move toward the judgments that break loose after the heavenly vision is completed in chapters 4 and 5.

God then is holy in His heaven where He dwells. God then manifests His holiness in everything that He does, whether it's in creation, the giving of the Law, in His judgments, and you can take it from there. God can only manifest that which is absolutely holy and thus does James say, "Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." You cannot cast a shadow on the absolute goodness of God, the perfection of God. Every representation of God, every manifestation of God, every revelation of God indicates this perfection. To think any other than that is, says James, to be deceived. You can see glimpses of God's holiness in the tabernacle, even in the incense that was to be used to be offered before God, the recipe for which was never to be used by anyone else for any personal use, and if they did they were to be killed cause that which belonged to the Lord was so distinct from His creation.

Having said all of that by way of possibility, let me take you where I want to take you to look at the holiness of God. And we could go in to any of those, but I want to take you to another place. I believe

that the most clear, the most discernable, the most understandable manifestation of the holiness of God seen in the boldest way against the blackest backdrop, therefore making it the clearest, is the revelation of God's holiness in the incarnation...in the incarnation. Because I am a human becoming, I live in this world, I can't get outside of it. I can think rational thoughts, I can follow the gift of reason that God has given to me and I can comprehend at least intellectually the idea of God's perfection and God's holiness. I can, like John, get some kind of an idea of the reality of the vision in heaven. I can to some degree understand the perfection of creation in its initial form. I can understand to some degree the perfection of God's law and to some degree the perfection of His justice. But nothing is more clear to me than the holiness of God as manifest in the incarnation because this is the world I live in. This is the world you live in. John tells us that when Jesus came, He declared God. Verse 18 of John 1, "No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten God who was in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." Whatever you want to know about God, Jesus explains. Certainly that's true of His holiness.

In Hebrews 1 we read, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers and the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son whom He appointed heir of all things through whom all things He made the world and He, the Son, is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature." So if I want to know anything about God, the clearest representation of that, that I will ever be able to comprehend is manifest in Jesus Christ.

And we could look at Jesus Christ with regard to His entire life. For example, Luke 1 Gabriel comes to Mary who was espoused to Joseph and he makes the great announcement about the birth of the Son of God, the Christ. Verse 30, "The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God and behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father, David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and His kingdom will have no end.' And Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" Listen to this. "And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit....'" The what spirit? "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you and for that reason the Holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." The Holy Spirit and the Holy God sent the Holy Offspring, the Son of God. Contrast that with David's statement in Psalm 51:5, "In sin did my mother conceive me."

We could look at the gospel of Luke, for example, in the third chapter and see another glimpse of the holiness of Christ. At His baptism and again the Father is present, and the Spirit is present, and as I said, all that emanates from God, all that comes from God is holy and the affirmation of that is here, verse 22, "Jesus was baptized and while He was praying heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove and a voice came out of heaven, 'Thou art My

beloved Son in Thee I am well pleased.” That’s an affirmation of the Son’s moral perfection, is it not? Contrast that with Acts 2:38, “Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins which is said of us.”

We could look at His death and certainly we have. It’s been commented on numerous times. In looking at His death we see again the revelation of His holiness. Second Corinthians 5:21, “God made Him who knew no sin, sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Fifteen Greek words, the great statement on imputation. But the identification of Christ with these words, “Him who knew no sin,” indicates again His holy perfection. In 1 Peter 1, “You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood as of a lamb unblemished and spotless...the blood of Christ.” Again whether you’re looking at His birth, or whether you’re looking at His baptism, or even looking at His death, His holiness is manifest.

In fact, in Hebrews 9:14, a verse that just came to mind, it says, “How much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God?” When I hear these people say that on the cross Jesus became a sinner, it is a grievous blasphemy really. The only way He was made sin in a sense that He bore the wrath of God for us. But even God couldn’t look upon Him and abandon Him in that moment.

Now we could look at all of that. We could look at any of that and see and do see His holiness. But I want to look at His life and not all of it, by any means. I am obviously fascinated with the person of Jesus Christ, the most compelling person by far who ever walked this planet. I cannot it seems at any point in my ministry be not teaching one of the gospels, or if I’m not teaching one of the gospels, I need to be in Hebrews or Colossians, somewhere where Christ is exalted. I happen to be now about five years in to the gospel of Luke and I’m in chapter 11. This is something of a triumph for me. And it isn’t that I’m missing Sundays, I’m not. It’s that I just cannot let go of the riveting compelling glory of Christ.

But I don’t think we always understand how much His life is a manifestation of the holiness of God. He was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin. He was in all points tempted. At all points simply means that at every point chronologically, at every point socially, He was at all points tempted like as we are yet without sin.

I was reading some old things from Augustine a week ago and I found an interesting comment. Somebody asked Augustine to comment on the sign of the fish, you know, the little acrostic from ichthys, Jesus, God’s Son, Savior. And this is what Augustine said. “It is a suitable sign for Christ because He was able to live without sin in the abyss of this mortality as in the depths of water.” He

literally came down and sunk Himself in this wretched world. And I think that the truest test of holiness is not how it holds up in heaven, but the truest test of holiness is how it holds up here. Not how it holds up in a perfectly holy environment, but how it holds up in an utterly sinful environment. And thus we look at Jesus to see this most interesting view of God's holiness. In John 8:23 He said, "You are from below, I'm from above. You're of this world and I'm not." I'm not.

In the forty-sixth verse of that same eighth chapter, He said, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" I've come from another world. I'm another kind of being. I cannot be convicted of sin.

In the fourteenth chapter of John in the thirtieth verse, Jesus said, "The ruler of this world is coming...I love this statement...and he has nothing in Me." He doesn't say he has nothing on Me, there was nothing in Him to even respond to Satan, or to the world. Theologians want to make a distinction here, and rightly so. They want to say that He was *non posse peccare*,

not posse non peccare, that is to say He was not able to sin rather than He was able not to sin. Do you see the difference? He was not able to sin. He's a completely different kind of being.

You know, when I read my Bible and it tells me about living in this world, it's just loaded with warnings. I am so susceptible to this world, even though I am redeemed, even though I have been walking in the faith for a long time, many years, I've been studying the Bible...I will tell you, this world is a threat to me at every turn.

There is something in me in my remaining flesh that responds to Satan and the world. And I have to be reminded not to love the world. I have to be reminded of Psalm 1, I have to go back and remember that I must not walk in the council of the wicked, I must not stand in the path of sinners, I must not sit in the seat of scoffers because that has devastating result upon me. And the difference is clearly laid out, I think, in the seventh chapter of Mark. You remember this passage, or you will when you hear it. Listen to what Jesus said in verse 18. "Are you so lacking in understanding? Do you not understand that whatever goes in to the man from outside can't defile him?" It doesn't matter what came at Jesus. Couldn't defile Him because it's not what comes from the outside that defiles you. He says from the outside it doesn't defile because it doesn't go into His heart, but into His stomach and is eliminated. That's a rather graphic analogy. It is that which proceeds out of the man that defiles the man, for from within out of the heart of men proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man. There is a rottenness, there's a corruption on the inside that makes us susceptible to all these wicked influences. That's why the Bible warns us. Proverbs warns again and again and I went through Proverbs one time and just listed all of the warnings to stay away from angry people, lying people, murdering people, godless people, etc., etc., etc., because of the influence they have on you. Don't you know...says Paul to the Corinthian church...you've got to get that sinning man out of your church because a little leaven

does...what?...leavens the whole lump. You allow sin in your church, it will corrupt the whole thing. That's why we have to do church discipline.

First Corinthians 15:33 says, "Bad company corrupts good morals." Jude 23 says, "Look, where you're going over there to snatch those brans from the burning, when you're going over there to rescue those people from the corruption in your evangelistic enterprise, when you're going over there to pull the people out of the apostasy they're in, be very careful that you don't get your own garment stained." We live a very fragile existence in this wretched world. I have to watch my life. I have to beat my body to bring it into submission. I have to guard my eyes. I have to guard my ears. I have to keep my feet from going certain places. I have to keep my distance from certain people. I have to live a circumspect life in this world so that I do not put myself in a position to be devastated because even in my preaching to others, I have the potential to be so badly corrupted that I would be *adokimos*, disqualified from ministry.

When people ask me, what appeals to me about heaven, it isn't transparent gold streets. I can't get too turned on about that. It's nice, I'm glad it will be there. I'm sure I'll enjoy it when I arrive. It isn't pearl gates and precious stones in the foundation. I'll tell you what appeals to me about heaven, the absence of sin. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of it. When Jesus Christ came into the world, He said, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" He said, "Satan has nothing in Me." There was nothing in Him of corruption. He didn't have to protect His holiness by taking a monastic vow, going into a cave and contemplating His navel for the rest of His life, castrating Him like some ill-conceived monk. It's no such necessity for Him.

Quite the contrary. I spend most of my life trying to be isolated from sinners, don't you? I really do. Bad company corrupts good morals. I don't mind preaching at them. I don't mind giving them the gospel, but I don't want to be where they are. I don't want to go where they go. I don't want to go to their parties because I...yi-yi. Satan does have something in me.

Look at the contrast. Turn to Luke 5. Now my control factor needs to kick in here because I've been in Luke so long, I'm tempted to just go on and on and on. Luke 5:27, "After that, He went out and noticed a tax gatherer named Levi." This is Matthew and he was a small-time tax gatherer. He was a *mokus*(??), not a *gibbi*(???). A *gibbi* was a big-time tax guy who owned a regional tax franchise from Rome and hired these little *mokus* guys to do the dirty work. They sat at the crossroads and they taxed the wheels on the cart, they taxed the beast of burden that pulled the cart, they taxed the letters you were carrying to give to someone else, they taxed the goods that you bought. And every time you crossed the intersection, they took money from you and extorted all they could, not only to give what the prescribed rate was to Rome, but to make the rest of their own fortune, of course, extortion was

great. They were the more hated of the tax collectors than the big guys cause the big guys nobody saw. You began to despise that guy sitting at the crossroads. Well here's one of them named Levi. And, of course, in order to collect taxes, he had to have a group of thugs and scum balls and riff-raff around him who strong armed the people to get them to pay up. And if they didn't pay up, then they had to be treated like the Mafia treats people, you know, you have the guys go around, beat them up a little bit and get what they want to get. This was the scum of all scum in the society, not only because of the low life extortion that they engaged in, but because they had become the basically the agents of a pagan invading occupying Roman government which was despised and hated by the Jews. And so they were all unsynagogued, they were booted out of the synagogue, they couldn't worship there. They had literally traded their birthright for a mess of pottage.

And so, Jesus comes to Levi, the last person on the planet you would ever choose to be an apostle of the Messiah if you were on the Jewish Apostle election committee. He said to him, "Follow Me, you're My man." And he jumped up from his tax table and it was like taking a hand out of water, believe me, there was no gap because somebody was in line...whoever had the strongest right arm in the gang that surrounded him sat down and said, "I'm in charge, guys." So he couldn't go back, he left everything behind. He rose up, began to follow Him. And Levi gave a big party at his house and there was a great crowd of tax gatherers. That must have been some event. This is the meeting of the Mafia. And, you know, the kind of people that associate with the Mafia. And it says this, I love this, "And others." Others of the riff raff. And they were reclining at the table. You know, they didn't do the fast-food thing. They did the slow food thing, you actually sort of got prone on your arm and you just dropped the grapes one at a time and you talked and you conversed and this went on and on. One can only imagine what they were talking about. It wouldn't have been the most edifying group. And the conversation would have been a little racy. And the Pharisees with all their scrupulous perspective, verse 30, and the scribes began grumbling at His disciples saying, "Why do You eat and drink with the tax gatherers and sinners?" And there you have the world that describes "the others," all the rest of the social scum.

What are You doing in there? And Jesus answered and said to them, "It's not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick." You see, the amazing thing about Him is He can go into the most contagious ward on the planet and catch nothing...catch nothing. "I haven't called the righteous but sinners to repentance." This is frankly one of the great illustrations of the holiness of Jesus. He could hang around the most wretched people in the society, sinners probably and surely embraces prostitutes. And it says this was an extended event. Not only this event but there must have been many others like it because in Matthew 11:19 it says, "Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners." So, you know, when these people got together it was about gluttony, it was about drunkenness, it was about extortion, and it was about iniquity. What else

would they talk about?

And the Pharisees, who knew their own wretchedness, who knew their own corruption, who knew their own hearts, kept their distance. It's hard enough being a hypocrite without hanging around those kind of people.

Turn to the seventh chapter of Luke...seventh chapter of Luke. I wish I had time to unpack this whole story. One of the Pharisees, verse 36, was requesting Him to dine with him. So He entered the Pharisees house and He didn't mind being with the self-righteous hypocrite, and He reclined, again prolonged event. And the way they used to do it from the history that I've read is that the houses tended to be somewhat open and there would be this meal going on with the dignitaries and people in the community were allowed typically to stand around the outside and listen to the conversation. Apparently that's what happened. And behold, there was a woman in the city who was literally an immoral woman, a prostitute. And when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume. Some historians say that small thin alabaster bottles containing perfume were sealed up at the top and they were actually carried around the neck of women. Now for a prostitute, this was a part of her operation. Sounds like Proverbs, doesn't it? I'll perfume my bed.

And so, she must have been a fairly successful one because her's was an alabaster vial. And she brought this vial and standing behind Him, verse 38, at His feet. Now wait a minute. On the outside, you know, you could stay. She's moved in. Jesus is there reclining. His feet are up here and his arm perhaps like this. She comes up behind Him and weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears. This is outrageous. Are you kidding? And then she is wiping His feet with the hair of her head and kissing His feet. And then she breaks the neck of the alabaster bottle and she starts pouring the perfume on Him.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him." This is just too touchy. "That she is an immoral woman." The Pharisee, of course, is operating out of his own heart, right? What sinful man is going to have a prostitute doing that to his feet without having an illicit thought?

Well, the way the story ends, you can read the middle, verse 48, instead of the woman corrupting Him, He says, "Your sins have been....what?...." Who. Instead of sin corrupting Him, holy grace reaches out and justifies her. And they said in verse 49, "Who is this who forgives sins?" And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you, go in peace...go in peace." She was an *hamartolos*,

especially wicked, immoral and filthy is how that word is used as translated in lexicons. But she was on a mission. Luther says the only water she had was heart water and so she used her tears. The only cloth she had was her hair, so she used her hair. And the only gift she could give was what she used for her immoral relationships. It had no effect on Him at all except to draw out of Him forgiveness. That's because Hebrews 7:26 says this, "We have a high priest who is...listen to this...holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens who does not need to offer up sacrifices for His own sins. He is a Son, verse 28, made perfect forever."

Jesus could go to hell and be holy. He did. He did. First Peter 3:19, He could go into the teeth of a demoniac with a legion of demons and purify that man and leave him clothed and in his right mind.

Now I have to close. So go to Isaiah 6, in respect to my friend R.C. and that wonderful passage, I want to show you something. Isaiah 6:1, "In the year of King Uzziah's death," why is that important? Well, first of all, it's important if your name is Mrs. Uzziah. But apart from that, this is a sudden act of God in which Uzziah is killed by God, according to 2 Chronicles 26, after reigning for 52 years and sort of being a symbol of God's continuing blessing. And when he's gone, it really looks bad. Chapter 5 laid out six curses for grasping materialism, drunken pleasure seeking, moral perversion, corrupt leadership, etc., and promised the coming of the great enemy army and the captivity of Israel. Things looked bad. And I believe Isaiah goes to the temple and seeks God and it says here, "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted with the train of His robe filling the temple, seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings, with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, with two he hovered like a celestial helicopter." The angels just hovering in motion ready to be dispatched and go immediately to minister to the saints, as Hebrews 1:14 says. And then in an antiphonal pattern, one called out to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of host, the whole earth is full of His glory."

And you know the rest of the story, the foundations on the threshold trembled at the voice of Him who called out while the temple was filling with smoke and the response to this vision of the holy, majestic glory of the One on the throne produces a sense of guilt and devastation. And he says, "Woe is me," he used that word six times in chapter 5, he knows exactly what it means, it's damnation curse. He sees himself as cursed because seeing this holy vision, he then sees his own sin. He is overwhelmed. He says, "I am...in the Hebrew...disintegrating because I have a dirty mouth." Why does he say that? He has the best mouth in the land, he's a prophet? Because one's depravity is most frequently manifest through one's lips. He is affirming his depravity, the depravity of his people. He feels this way because he has seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

And in that contrast, feels the horror of his own sin. And you remember the account. One of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs, he

touched my mouth and there you have the picture of atonement and the application of the atonement personally applied. He is purified. Then the Lord says, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Whom shall I send and who will go for us? "Then I said, here am I, send me." I think he said it meekly, humbly, probably with the possibility that he would in having said that been struck by God for such audacity, having just confessed his wretchedness. But the Lord says to him, "Go and tell this people, keep on listening, do not perceive, keep on looking, do not understand, render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, their eyes dim lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, return and be healed." You go and know this, you're going to meet resistance. Their hearts will be hard. Their ears will not hear. Their eyes will not see. They will not understand. He says, "How long do I do that?" I mean, that sounds like a rather unproductive way to spend the rest of my life. "How long until the cities are devastated without inhabitant, houses are without people? The land is utterly desolate, the Lord has removed everybody away, nobody is left. Keep doing it." Why? Because, verse 13, "There is a holy seed, there is a stump, there is a tenth, there is the elect." That's a fast trip through here.

This magnificent vision of the holy, holy, holy one on the throne, with that in your mind, let me close by drawing your attention to John chapter 12. John chapter 12 and verse 36, middle of the verse, "These things Jesus spoke and He departed and hid Himself from them. But though He had performed so many signs before them, they were not believing in Him." Listen to this, verse 38, "In order that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled which he spoke," and it's right out of chapter 6, "Lord, who has believed our report? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" That part taken from chapter 53. "For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again...and here comes Isaiah 6...He's blinded their eyes, He's hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, perceive with their heart and be converted and I heal them."

And then notice this amazing statement in verse 41. "These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory and he spoke of Him." Whose glory? Christ. Who is Him? Christ.

Back to verse 37, "They were not believing in Him. And when Isaiah saw His glory and spoke of Him, he was speaking of Christ." There is a Christophany. There is the heavenly vision of the holy, holy, holy Son and Lord who manifest Himself in this world. Jonathan Edwards said, "God only appears in human shape in the Son." It is Him we love and Him we serve.

Father, we do commit to You this truth. We are overwhelmed by the glory of our Christ and His utter holiness. We thank You that we come to a high priest who sympathizes with our infirmities but who in it all triumphed and whose perfection has become our salvation. To Him we give all the glory. Amen.

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