

WHAT TO BRING TO WORSHIP | A Holy Terror | Week 3 | February 15 & 16

Proverbs 1:7; Hebrews 12:28-29; Isaiah 6:1-8

These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.

Context: What is the meaning of worship? What practice do we pursue? How should we think about each Sunday morning? In our first week we learned we are not the spectators—God is. And as we worship Him, we seek His applause. Last week we learned the humility of never comprehending all of God—he is beyond all we could ever imagine. This week we ask, “Is he safe?”

- How do you react to the phrase “the presence of God?”
- How does an awareness of God’s presence shape how you worship on Sunday? Does it? I mean really, does it? Journal or talk out as a group.
- When do you find church is too safe?

Approaching the PRESENCE: Read Proverbs 1:7 and Hebrews 12:28-29. “The fear of the Lord... is the beginning of wisdom” and “acceptable worship with reverence and awe.”

- Are these characterizations familiar to you?
- How would you describe your fearing the Lord in your own words?
- How and/or when does reverence and awe manifest itself in your worship on a Sunday?
- What is your objective in coming to church on Sunday?

A Measure of Influence: Pastor Dan questioned if we had “that sense of “trembling awe” - that the Scriptures say is the beginning of transformation. Think about someone who has influenced you in your life.

- What caused or allowed that influence to change or form you? Perhaps a parent or a teacher or a coach.
- What was significant in that relationship that caused you to listen and change?
- What do you consider when you listen to someone? Give an example.
- How do you measure their influence on you? How does their presence affect you?

Holy in Being and Doing: Pastor Dan teaches us ontological (being) and ethical (doing) holiness. Read Isaiah 6:1-4. As Isaiah is mourning King Uzziah’s passing after 50 years of reign, he was disconsolate because of the void that seemed impossible to fill. Then he sees a vision and gains perspective. Pastor Dan says, “...the magnificent edifice that the great Uzziah had restored wasn’t big enough to hold even the cuffs of the trousers of God.”

- How do you imagine the size, shape, glory, power of God?
- Take a minute with the group and brainstorm what other images you would use to help understand the magnitude of who God is and what God does?

Descriptions Fail: The picture from Isaiah highlights creatures of unimaginable strength who are attending and worshipping a God, who, by implication, is powerful by “unimaginable squared.”

- What are the implications for our worship?
- How do you enter the presence of such a being?

Holiness: Pastor Dan says, “ holy” doesn’t just mean “wholly other” in being; it also means “wholly pure” in doing.” The contrast, the inadequacy, the comparison just keeps growing....”God is holy in all his ways and you and I are not.”

- Do you carry this kind of vision of the wholly other God into worship?
- What would change for you if you imagined this PRESENCE as you sing or pray? Does anything change? Journal or share as a group.

The ONLY answer: Isaiah gets the picture in vs 5. Woe and Ruin. But then we learn as C.S.Lewis says, “ Aslan [the lion] is not safe. But he is good.” Read vs. 6-7. Our omniscient, omnipotent God found the loving way so that he could invite us into his PRESENCE. He wants us to have relationship with him.

- What words would you use to describe worship—be honest.
- Do you ever think of the word privilege in worship?
- How can you enrich your awareness when the community is together in God’s PRESENCE?

Practice of the week: Isaiah 6:8 concludes our text for the week. “Whom shall I send?” the mighty PRESENCE asks. Isaiah answers “Here am I, send me.” Isaiah was a prophet, we are students, bankers, Moms and Dads - you get the idea. Consider the wholly other God’s PRESENCE each morning this week. What are you being “sent to” in your day ahead? Pray to Almighty God that you may see and hear the sending and then respond in worship and gratitude for the privilege of His presence.

We'd love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you or your small group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these study guides in your lives.

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