

Lesson #7 | The Throne & the Altar

Lesson Summary

The holiness of God exposes our corruption, but his grace provides the remedy.

This lesson is based on C.H. Mackintosh's essay "The Throne and the Altar."

Study Point #1: A sinner is utterly ruined in the face of a Holy God

➔ Read Isaiah 1:1 - 1:7

Notice the majesty of the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up on a throne, with the seraphim proclaiming "holy, holy, holy." In this light, Isaiah was undone.

What are we when viewed in the light of Christ - how do we compare?

➔ Read John 8:28 - 8:29 - Can we say we always do those things that please the Father?

Our response to the conviction of the Word of God should be that of Isaiah. Can you imagine yourself standing before God on His throne as Isaiah did? What would your reaction be?

God sees into our very hearts. Was Isaiah's response "I'm not quite what I should be" - or was it something more than that?

Study Point #2: Isaiah was not upset about his deeds, it was something else

Isaiah did not say "I wish I had done more" or "I should have been better." What was his exact response in view of the throne?

As discussed in Lesson 6, the holiness of God revealed a problem with Isaiah's root - not his fruit! His conduct was not in question, but his very nature. Do you think Isaiah could have offered God any excuses about who he was or about his conduct at that point? Do you think you could have?

Would you have said "Woe is me!" with Isaiah? The Word teaches us that light exposes darkness.

➔ Read John 1:9 and 1 John 1:5 - In John 1:9 it is the light that exposes us and shows what we truly are.

Study Point #3: God has the remedy that can be swiftly applied

Notice the altar is associated with the throne. Once Isaiah saw the truth of who he was, something happened - what happened?

What action did the seraphim perform to touch the coal to Isaiah's lips?

Study Point #4: God's remedy is all sufficient for the problem

What was taken away from Isaiah after the coal touched his lips?

What did the seraphim say about his sin? What does that word mean? What about Isaiah's iniquity?

Notice that the remedy was completely sufficient to remove all barriers between him and God - it was the perfect purging of all of his sin. God convicts perfectly and God purges perfectly.

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Study Point #5: Christ is our remedy

- Read 1 Peter 3:18 - Christ brings us to God.
- Read Acts 13:38 - 13:39 - Christ brings us forgiveness which could not be brought about by the law.

Isaiah did nothing to purge his own sin, but afterwards he did much for the one who purged it for him. This should be the result of every Christian.

We should see our ruin, our sin nature. We should see the remedy - the Lord Jesus freed us from the penalty of sin by the blood of the Cross. And hopefully we will have the proper result - an attitude like the servant of God in the Bible who says "Here am I; send me."

Study Questions

1. In the presence of a holy God, Isaiah stated that "I am _____."

2. Once Isaiah saw what he truly was, was God's remedy fast or slow? _____ How did the seraphim get to Isaiah after getting the hot coal? _____

3. What did the seraphim tell Isaiah about his iniquity? _____ What did he say about Isaiah's sin? _____ Is this also true of your sin if you have trusted Christ as your savior?

4. Did God have to repeat the procedure, or was one time sufficient to purge Isaiah's sin? _____

5. What should be the resulting attitude of someone who has been saved from sin? _____
