



BLINDSIDED BY IGNORANCE OF WHO WE ARE

Isaiah is about to learn something very important. Uzziah's reign as king of Judah for 52 years had come to an end. Isaiah soon had a vision. He saw God on His throne in Heaven and for Isaiah that spelled "doom" because no one is allowed to see God's face and live—not seraphim, not even Moses. God had plans for Isaiah as a great prophet and at this particular moment, Isaiah saw just how big God is and how very small he himself is.

Isaiah's Commission

Isaiah 6:1-7: ¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."



We've all heard the phrase "garbage in-garbage out?" It isn't hard these days to be influenced in a negative way without even realizing it. We are inundated by cultural litter in such abundance that it has become the "norm" and we have become numb. It seems if we see someone of influence doing this or that it must be ok...normal. Believe it or not there are some people who believe everything they see on TV. Simply put, if they see it on TV, it must be true!

Question: Do you think we put too much confidence in ourselves to get from salvation through the process of sanctification¹?

¹ To be set apart. First: a once-for-all positional separation unto Christ at our salvation. Second, a practical progressive holiness in a believer's life while awaiting the return of Christ. Third, we will be changed into His perfect likeness—holy, sanctified and completely separated from the presence of evil.

John 15:5 *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”*

Pastor Rob: “We place too much confidence in our goodness, in what we can do apart from God or even FOR God on our own from salvation to sanctification. ISAIAH, as a relatively "righteous" man who would be chosen to be a prophet, was shocked to his knees when he realized how far short he fell to God's pure righteousness. We see throughout the scriptures that whenever God came down, knees buckled and faces went to the ground.”

Isaiah said, *“I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips”* but burning coal from the alter cleansed his lips. Likewise our conversion and cleansing comes at a point in our life when we fall to our knees in submission and surrender. For many of us-that’s as far as the bus travels though. As Pastor Rob puts it “wholly submitting, surrendering and syncing; crucifying ourselves, along with a sense of our own goodness and ability, giving way to God's grace is the ONLY way for salvation or sanctification to occur.” Syncing, you could say, is the hardest part. Syncing requires action. Syncing requires participation. Syncing requires commitment.

Question: Why is syncing (being in alignment with God) the hard part?

We already acknowledge that apart from God we can do nothing. We also know that the media, Hollywood and even our circle of friends can threaten our sanctification process. In many ways we are not that different from children when it comes to being impressionable. So what do you do?

Pastor Rob: “Focus on the importance of balancing time with those that are far from God with those that are closer to Him than we are; that in addition to friends who love us enough to hold us up when we fall. We need to be sure that we are in a community of love and positive spiritual encouragement that inspires us to be moving forward. One of the best ways to avoid backsliding is to not stand still long enough to fall back!” If you give the enemy time to work on you, he will find his way in and he knows your weaknesses.

Question: What does the bible say about idle hands?

Laziness is not a godly trait. Laziness and idleness will result in disaster as your life (and your house) falls apart around you. **Ecclesiastes 10:18**~*Through laziness, the rafters sag; because of idle hands, the house leaks.*

Sanctification is facilitated when we surround ourselves with like-minded believers-yes but there is more to it than that. We need to surround ourselves with those that are closer to God than we are as well. That is not to imply someone more in love with God but rather more in sync with Him, more in touch and tuned in to the Holy Spirit. **Proverbs 13:20**~ *Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.*

Question: What prevents many believers from seeking wise counsel? In what ways or in whom can we find wise counsel?

Iron Sharpens Iron: While being mission-minded, seeking and reaching the lost and broken is extremely important and close to the heart of God, He is also very interested in our spiritual growth and sanctification.

We should be careful not to neglect our growth-why? Because as we grow and continually seek wise counsel we become wiser in the process and this can be passed on to the same lost and broken we are reaching out to. Iron sharpens iron.

Bringing It Home

Did you know that it's possible to get hypothermia even in temperatures in excess of 70 degrees? It's true! Unlike warm-blooded animals that have a layer of fur or blubber to keep them warm, you and I need an extra layer of clothing to keep us warm when it's cold outside. Without that extra layer of clothing, more heat escapes from our body than it can produce. If too much heat escapes, the result is hypothermia.

Life has a way of exposing us to harmful conditions. Many times we find ourselves exposed to people or situations that are unfeeling, insensitive, unforgiving or just plain cold. Before you know it-the dangerous condition of over-exposure has begun. It's important to recognize danger signs before it's too late-before we lose that heat-that fire that burns within.

When hypothermia (in the clinical sense) takes hold, death can be mere minutes away and there are warning signs such as chattering teeth, shivering, inability to reason-to think. Similarly spiritual hypothermia has warning signs of its own. We can be drawn into a false sense of security, warmth and comfort and in the process overexpose ourselves to the elements of culture and association; elements that are marginal at best, and although seemingly safe, pull us into situations or circumstances that are all but that.

It's crucial to be on guard at all times against even those subtle temptations that can lead us astray. We need to prepare for spiritual hypothermia and have extra layers of clothing on hand. These layers are friends, family and the wise counsel of spiritual leadership that have your best interest at heart. Keep close to you, those that are supportive and eager to be there for you when you need help and who have your well-being in mind. Surround yourself with those that will be there to cover you when you are at risk of over-exposure to the elements before hypothermia sets in. One of the best ways to avoid spiritual hypothermia is to remain part of a life group and seek wise counsel.

Gospel In-Goodness Out

Spread the Word

