

“Here I Am Lord, Send Them?”

Scripture Focus

Isaiah 6

Key Verse

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

Overview

Conviction is an essential part of the Christian life. It is brought about by God's willingness to show us what is wrong with us and direct us toward His resources for change. As a result, conviction has broad sweeping implications for personal change and salvation of the lost.

Theme

Conviction is essential and requires believers to cultivate a keen sensitivity to God's leading.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will grow in his understanding of conviction and its role in salvation and discipleship.

Outline

- I. Conviction Is Initiated by Revelation (vv. 1-4)**
- II. Conviction Is Induced by Repentance (v. 5)**
- III. Conviction Is Imparted by Redemption (vv. 6-7)**
- IV. Conviction Is Identified by Responding (v. 8)**

Getting Started

The influence of postmodernism's "me" oriented society has produced an effect on the missionary call unlike any before. Many believers today will hear that there are 1.7 billion people in the world who have absolutely no opportunity to hear the gospel, no missionary near by, no Bible, no church, and no chance of hearing the name of Jesus, and will mentally separate into a world of "that is not my reality." The stress and demands of life cause us to call out to God saying, "Here I am, Lord, help me," but failing to cry out to God "use me." There are fewer believers with the conviction to seek God's plan and commitment to walk in it no matter what the call. We learned from Abraham that God's call comes when we are in a state of willingness to alter our lives. The question now comes, "How do we get to the state of willingness to change our lifestyle at the call of God?" In simple terms, from where does the conviction to say, "send me" come. You as the teacher have the opportunity to open the window of heaven and allow your students to be motivated to go by seeing God's glory.

Searching the Scriptures

Read: Isaiah 6

Ask: What uses does snow have when it is frozen? (list on board). What uses does it have when thawed? (list on board). There are more uses for snow when it is transformed into a liquid than as a solid. The same is true when Christ transforms our lives. We can accomplish useful tasks apart from Christ, but in Christ we are transformed to carry out useful ministries that are far beyond our ability and power. One of the changes Christ makes in our life is a heart conviction to follow His call.

Ask: What would be included in a definition of conviction? Lead the class in arriving at something like: Conviction is the passion to do what God says do because of who He is. Isaiah experiences what is called a Theophany: a temporary physical appearance of God. Jesus was a permanent physical revelation of God; Isaiah saw a temporary physical revelation of God. Within Isaiah's vision of glory we learn four principles of conviction.

I. Conviction Is Initiated by Revelation (vv. 1-4)

Explanation: In the first five chapters we learn that Israel had become uncaring and unconcerned for 52 years but was arrogant, profaned the temple, contracted leprosy and died in shame. Isaiah and the nation of Israel had seen the throne of Israel become low and ungodly. Israel's throne stands in stark, reminding contrast to the throne Isaiah was about to see. Let's join Isaiah and examine what he saw as heaven's window opened before his eyes.

v. 1: "Lord sitting on a throne" – Isaiah had served under of king that was wicked; now he sees a king that is wonderful. The throne was a seat of power: other kings' power could be removed, but not this King; Seat of Authority: other kings' authority could be weakened, but not this King; Seat of leadership: The leadership of other kings was subject to moral decay, but not this King. "high and lifted up" – The Lord on His throne is a revelation that our God is above all rulers in authority, nature, power, and glory. "train...filled temple" – Picture of the glory and majesty of the Lord. There is no place in God's presence that one can hide from His glory. This is a revelation of His infinite glory of which nothing can consume.

v. 2: "Seraphim" – Literally: "burning ones" Their primary function as with all of God's creation (including every person in your class) is to glorify God. "**covered face**" – a symbol of humility in the presence of greatness. The glory of God is too great to be looked upon; even without sin they cannot stand to have the holy God look upon their created nature. He and He alone is holy. "**covered feet**" – a symbol of humble submissiveness in the presence of authority.

v. 3: “Holy, Holy, Holy” – Literally: “Separated from Sin, Separated from Sin, Separated from Sin is the Lord of Hosts.” The primary theme around the throne of God is the purity of our Lord. He is totally free from any moral defilement in His nature as well as His works. “...full of His glory.” – God is not an absent creator, He is an active caretaker.

v. 4: “...post...were shaken...” – demonstration of God’s great power. The revelation moves from the perfect nature of God to the unmatched power of God. “...filled with smoke” – Represents the complete presence of God. This God who is separated from sin, involved in the lives of His people, and all powerful is also all present.

Application:

Ask: What symbols of royalty would we see if we travel to the following places: England (Queen, prince, palaces); Hindu Temple (priest, idols); Washington, DC (President, monuments). Say: None of these can compare to God. The royal throne of England changes, but our God is forever unchanging; The gods of the Hindu Temple are false, but our God is real: The leaders of Washington are fallible and subject to unwise decisions, but our God will never lead us to sin for He is perfect in His nature, all knowing, and all powerful. Ask: Why should we worship God? Why should we serve God? Why should we have the heart conviction to do all that God calls us to do?

II. Conviction Is Induced by Repentance (v. 5)

Ask and Explain: How many of you have ever met a famous person? Call on a volunteer to tell who was met, why that person was famous, and what the response was to meeting this person. **Explain:** Upon seeing the perfect purity of God in His holiness one would expect Isaiah to first run through the streets telling that he had for a moment been allowed to witness heaven’s glorious worship. But a bold public pronouncement was not Isaiah’s initial response to his glimpse into glory.

v. 5: “Woe” – A term used to express great anguish in one’s heart as a father would weep over the body of his only son. “Me” – Isaiah does what most people are unwilling to do today. He accepts responsibility for his sin. [Give examples from the news of people shirking off their responsibility for wrongs done.] He was personally broken hearted over his sin. Isaiah’s first response to seeing God’s holiness was a realization of his own impurity of heart. God’s perfection reveals all imperfections. “undone” – interestingly Isaiah uses another word for separated here. In equal proportion to God being separated from sin, Isaiah realizes his sin causes him to be separated from God. “...unclean lips...” – To the Hebrew people the words of the lips referred to the condition of the heart. Isaiah was at a dilemma knowing that in light of God’s perfection, his heart was defiled.

“...people...” – He not only recognizes his own personal sin, but also understands that all the people around him are separated from God as well. The holiness of God not only prompted his heart to repent of his own sin, but also gave him a passion for the souls around him.

Application:

Until Isaiah saw his sin in light of God’s glory he was not prepared or passionate about union with God. Many of our missionaries share a common testimony. Their testimony is that as they begin to paint a picture of Holy God, people will begin to cry out in agony over their sin. Our worship must begin with a focus on the nature of God instead of our own needs and ourselves. We should not enter a time of personal or corporate worship without the expectation of seeing God in His glory, worshipping Him in His holiness, and being changed as a result of an encounter with His purity.

III. Conviction Is Imparted by Redemption (vs. 6-7)

v. 6: Seraphim was just a messenger of salvation. **“live coal”** – Fire was a means of purification to the Israelites. A live coal from God’s altar reminds us that behind the love that takes away our guilt and the freedom we have in Christ is a painful cross on which our Lord suffered in order to purge our sins. **“altar”** – Place where sinners are brought into right relationship with God. Place of submission, confession, and humbling before God.

v. 7: “purged” – Isaiah was cleansed of his sin and declared pure before God. Was Isaiah saved? YES!! We look back 2000 years and place our faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. Isaiah looked ahead 770 years and placed his faith in the future work of Christ (slain before the foundations of the world) on the cross.

Application:

This is the message the missionary carries to foreign lands: God is perfectly holy, so there is nothing we, with sinful natures, can do to please Him or get to Him. We are separated from God because we are sinful and He is sinless. In light of His holiness it appears we are hopeless and without help, but He sent His Son that we might receive the righteousness of Christ, be cleansed from all our sin, and be made acceptable to God through Jesus.

IV. Conviction Is Identified by Responding (v. 8)

Explanation: “send” – God did not say who shall sit, stand, stay, but whom shall I send. From the days of Abraham God’s missionary call has been to go. God is a sender of people so that the Savior of people might be seen by people. **“Here I am, Send ME”** – As a result of Isaiah being cleansed of his sin by grace through faith, his heart had a conviction to do what God says do because of who He is. He heard God’s call for someone to go. Isaiah knew:

1. **God Is Holy**
2. **Man Is Sinful**
3. **God Can Cleanse**
4. **Man Must Hear**
5. **He Must Go**

Isaiah became a piece of metal in God's cleansing fire and was now convicted to cut through the darkness of sin with sword of the Word of Life. The evidence of his cleansing was his passion to tell others that their sins could be purged. Throughout the NT we see the same result of transformed lives; hearts filled with a passionate conviction to tell others that Jesus cleanses. Ask the class to imagine going to heaven and sitting by Jesus. He opens a picture book, which chronicles their life. The first picture is of their salvation. The second is of them in Bible study. The third is of them enjoying fellowships with their class. The fourth is of them sitting in a pew. All the rest of the pictures are the same. He closes the book and you see the cover is titled: "**Whom Shall I Send?**" Say: Don't let that be the picture book of your life.

Ask and Discuss: What is the passion of your heart since you have been cleansed of your sin? Has our "me" oriented society dulled down your passion for souls being saved or has the fire from the altar of God so ignited your heart that you live a constant mode of "here I am, God, send me." America makes up only about 5% of the world's population, yet 95% of the world's Christian resources never leave our border. Will you come before holy God, ask for His cleansing, and cry out, "Here I am, Send Me"?

Making It Personal

Based upon what you have just taught, encourage your class to realize that we, human beings, are often blind to our failures. Therefore, we need conviction from God, the Scriptures, and each other so that we might wake up, repent, and take action toward God's purposes. Instruct your class to discuss over the course of this week ways in which they can spur one another on toward drinking more deeply of the gospel themselves and making more of the gospel among the lost.

Review

Remind your class of the central role of conviction as God's way of changing us into Christ's image. Therefore, a major concern for them should be their sensitivity to God's supernatural and providential guidance.

Memory Verse

Encourage your class to memorize Isaiah 6:3.