

To Worship In Truth

Selected Passages

Do you ever feel like your world is increasingly spinning out of control? This frustration was recently voiced, “I feel so pulled in so many directions with so many competing demands from an unending number of people. I just have no time to focus on what I know is important in my own life.”

How do we isolate ourselves to be alone with God long enough to reflect on Him, His character, and how all that He is and has done relates to each of us? How, in the midst of late appointments, missed deadlines, tardy assignments, unanswered e-mails, piled up return calls, and short nights can we find the time and undisturbed attention to be consumed with God and His place in our lives?

This month we have attempted to extract four fundamental distinctives of our faith which we celebrated at Christmas. In the aftermath of families and festivities, our desire has been to identify and define the implications of these four distinctives. Today, in an attitude of worship, let’s ask God to speak to us in a fresh way, to teach us in any expectant way, and to renew our minds in a transformational way as we simply isolate ourselves as a family to focus upon Him.

Life Response

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on Psalm 51:10, “*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*”
2. Through the use of your concordance (in the back of your Bible) find the word “holy”, “holiness”. Turn to the respective referenced passages. Read them. Meditate on them. Make personal observations as they might apply to you. Pray God gives you a personal understanding of His holiness.
3. How is the value one places on the revelation of God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, most observably revealed in our lives? Consider John 1:14 together with 2 Cor. 3:2-4 and Col. 1:28-29.
4. Draw a mental picture of what God would look like if the Father and the Holy Spirit were revealed in the flesh as Jesus is. Now picture what it would be like to become an intimate part of the three in such a way you could never be separated. Read Romans 5:8-11. How does this mental picture shape your thinking and purpose?

5. Col. 1:18b, "...so that He might come to have first place in everything" could be one of the most profound passages in all of Scripture on a personal/applicable level.
- (a) What influence does God's revealed holiness, His revelation in the flesh, and His grace for reconciliation have on your allowing Him to have first place?
- (b) What are some of the road blocks that keep it from happening?
- (c) How can we as a church help? (Send your comments in on the web, e-mail them, or send a note.)

The Holiness of God in Christ

Luke 1:30-35

Song: Speak, O Lord

What is Holiness?
 What place does it have in our lives?
 What is its essence?

Responsive Reading: Isaiah 6:1-5/ Psalm 99:1-5

What is the impact of holiness?

Humbles	"woe is me"	Exultation	trust/security
Unclean lips	attitude	Praise/kingship	worship

Christ's impact on our lives will be to the degree we come to capture a glimpse of His holiness.

By His Grace: Regardless of how little we know of His holiness as those who have a personal relationship with the Son of God – God's holy offspring

1. We are holy before Him at spiritual birth. 2 Cor. 5:21
2. We are conformed to practice His holiness. Eph. 4:15
3. Holiness completed at Christ's return. 1 John 3:2

Congregational Prayer

Lord God,
 I thank You for Your character of holiness.
 I thank You for Your "holy offspring" Jesus, your Son.
 I thank You for the gift of holiness provided by the cross of Jesus.
 I ask that You create in me a deeper understanding, a greater desire, and a personal practice of holiness as a way of life.

Song: Holy, Holy, Holy

In Incarnation of God in Christ

John 1:1-3; 14

How do we value the revealed Son of God in the flesh?

Exodus 33:18-20

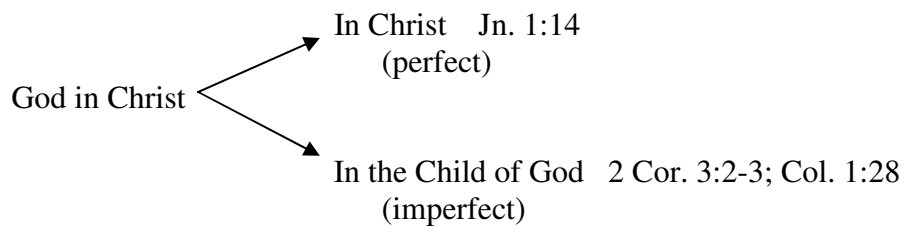
Col. 1:25-27

What does it mean, . . . “to behold” God in the flesh?

Responsive Reading: Phil. 2:5-11

Songs: Thou Who Was Rich Beyond All Splendor
And Can It Be

Two fold dimension

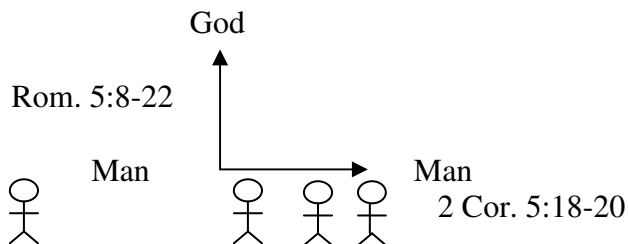


How do we value each other?

The Reconciliation of God in Christ

Isaiah 9:6/Luke 2:14

The governing principle of all relationships; Man with God and Man with Man.



Jesus breaks the barriers

Eph. 2:13-16 (context Eph. 2:1-8)

The value of sacrifice required

Responsive Reading: Isaiah 53:4-12

Three effects of reconciliation

1. Directly effects a change in sinful people so they no longer desire alienation *from God*.
2. Directly effects a change in sinful people so they no longer desire alienation *from each other*.
3. Directly applies the work of grace in that we can do nothing to earn our relationship nor can we do anything to lose our relationship *with God*.

Song: Jesus Paid It All

The Preeminence of God in Christ

Colossians 1:15-18

We are confronted daily with the choices of allowing Him to come to have first place in every aspect of our lives.

It's transformational

Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Cor. 4:16-18

It's visible

1 Peter 1:11-17

Responsive Reading: Psalm 34:1-14

Song: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name