

This year our focus is on... our FOCUS...

So often our FOCUS can get off... it can get out of line and out of whack... seasons of life can make us lose our FOCUS. The hope for this entire year is to *consider our FOCUS*...

Tonight, we begin a study on God... I know you're thinking... well what else would be studying... but specifically our focus for the next few weeks is on God himself... the attributes or characteristics of God

God ought to be the focus of our entire lives especially our walk with him!

God's glory was Jesus' focus... that should be our focus too.

This entire series is all about God... we're answering one question – *who is God? (what is God like?)*

For ex. if we were to ask you to describe _____ how would you describe them...

Similarly, there are characteristics about that help us understand him better...

It's helpful to us following God if we know him better, deeper... who he is... what he is about... his heart... Learning about God helps us understand why he does what he does and what he desires of us.

We start out with, not just an attribute among others, but a characteristic that seemingly encompasses all that God is... *holy*.

Main Focus: God is holy, and he requires us to be holy.

Isaiah is a prophet of the Lord... someone who would hear or see from God and share with his people. In the middle of Isaiah's declaration of judgement and hope we find his incredible vision of the Lord.

Read: *Isaiah 6:1-8*

1. God is Holy...

What does that even mean?

The word holy literally means set apart... sacred... pure...

So, God being holy means two things – *he is set apart and he is pure*

God is far above and apart from everything else in the world... there are none like him... he is infinitely great! But also, God is totally separated from sin... meaning he is fully good, fully right, fully perfect – there is nothing in him that is wrong or bad.

God being a holy is a good thing and a scary thing... good in that he is over all... in charge of all things and everything that is in his control... is fair... is right... is true... there is comfort there!

However, God being holy also brings a bit of fear... God is holy and in him there is no bad... nothing bad can exist in his presence...!

This is what John says in *1 John 1:5 - This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

God cannot be in the midst of sin...

Remember how the angelic beings acted in the presence of God?

They cover their faces and feet... Isaiah acknowledges he is not worthy to stand in the Lord's presence... all of this for one reason – **God is holy**... there are none worthy to stand before him...

2. We are not Holy...

God requires holiness...

God himself, to his core is holy... and he has required holiness... specifically he desires that his creation be holy... he has made us in his image to reflect him...

1 Peter 1:15-16 - but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." The call is for us to be holy...

We can't be what God Requires...

Unfortunately, this is difficult because we by ourselves are not holy... we are separated from God... we have no good within us...

Listen to how Paul quotes the Psalmist in *Romans 3:10-16* - Not good huh?

Just like Isaiah said in Isaiah 6 when he is confronted with God... he says, "*Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.*"

Isaiah knew he had no business being in the presence of God – he wasn't worthy!!

**Illustration... Jonas Bros... Dansby Swanson... the president... you'd freak out... you'd feel below them... This is how Isaiah and even the seraphim felt... times a million!*

We could look at our lives even just today and see that our lives are ridden with unholiness... we say things... we do things... we think of things... that mark us as unholy... and if nothing else... we were born in sin... by nature we are apart from God!

We are in trouble... this is a big problem... to be in the presence of God one must be holy... but it is clear... no one is holy... we have problem we cannot fix... our unholiness, our sin separates us from a holy God.

So... God is holy and will not be around sin... he is separate from sin... yet we are dead in sin... this means we have no way of being in the presence of God..... ***until God stepped in!***

3. Jesus Steps in...

There is no doubt in our own unholiness... but thankfully God has made a way through Christ...

Jesus is holy...

Jesus lived a life marked by holiness... He is God in the flesh... he never sinned... he at all times was holy and because he was holy... his undeserving death and his resurrection was the perfect sacrifice...

Jesus makes us holy...

God himself has made a way for us to be holy... what we were unable to do... he has done through Christ... what we lack he makes possible and satisfies through his sacrifice! ***Heb. 10:9-10***

God through Jesus has made a way to come into the presence of God... he has made those he calls to himself pure... he *atones* for their sin... making them innocent in his sight...

We saw an awesome picture of God atoning for unholiness in Isaiah's vision... ***woe is me... he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."***

Christ is that coal for us... he is what takes away our guilt and atones our sin... Jesus make us holy...

Jesus is our only hope...

Our only hope of holiness... our only hope of glorifying God is the holiness Christ offers!

In the holiness Jesus makes is this idea of the ***already but not yet***...

For the believer... when God saves you, you are as holy in his eyes as you could ever be... you are righteous... he is looking at you through Christ!

However, at the same time we still have room to grow... there is sanctification to be had. (*moving to the right*)

In the eyes of the Father, we are seen as holy yet we still fight with sin... there are aspects of our lives that do not align with what God desires for us... the hope is complete holiness in Christ... while we can't reach that just yet one day we will be able to... in the new heavens and new earth... all will be made new including us...

So, God is holy, we are not... Jesus steps in and enables us to be holy!

The Challenge tonight is to continue in that holiness!

We are not called to just *know* that God is holy... he has called us to be holy as well.

He desires us to look like him... to represent him... to ultimately glorify him... ***So, how can we do this?***

1. Trust in Christ's holiness... God has literally made a way and that is through the work of Jesus... trusting in what he did through his death and resurrection! Trusting in Jesus – that's where holiness comes from.

2. Strive for holiness... personal holiness... Being holy through Christ is not the end result but just the beginning,

- ***stay in the Word***... Paul said that we are to be sanctified or made cleaner, or more holy through the Word! As we spend more time in God's word, we are confronted with more of our sin and are led to live holy!

- ***pray... that the Lord would lead us in holiness and show us where we are lacking***... that he would bring about a continuous change through the Holy Spirit that lives in us!

3. Strive to live holy... our holiness in Christ should flow into the rest of our lives..... at home, school, work, friendships, relationship... in every avenue of our lives we are to pursue holiness... we are to display God's holiness at all times!