



## *Reaping Repentance*

*In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two wings they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory"...*

*"Woe to me!" Isaiah cried out, "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."*

*Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin is atoned for."*

*Isaiah 6:1-10*

While brought before the holiness and majesty of the Lord, Isaiah experienced humility, reverence and repentance. Being exposed to God's splendor caused Isaiah to see his own sin and bow his knees before the Holy God in desperation for salvation. God's righteous character magnified Isaiah's guilt of sin as never before. And yet, Isaiah did not run. Instead, Isaiah bowed low to the ground in repentant fashion, crying out: *"Woe to me...I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."* It was Isaiah's cry of guilt that brought God's healing mercy to him. God sent his angels to touch Isaiah's mouth with a coal straight from God's smoldering altar, restoring his guilt ridden condition to a place of peace.

Just as Isaiah was brought to a place of repentance and restoration through a glimpse of God's holiness, I cannot help but think of the people in my life that have the same effect on me. God has placed people in my life who exhibit his holiness and mercy through their character and behavior in such a way that I cannot help but see my own guilt of sin when I am around them. But just as Isaiah was not left in his shame, as I draw

closer in relationship with these reflectors of God's grace and truth, I am also moved to a place of repentance from my sin. Pastor Mike Yearley and his wife Lin are two people in my life who move me toward God's holiness and grace, reaping a personal repentance from me in order that I may be restored more and more into the image of God I was created to be. Just being around them reminds me of my need to spend more time with Jesus so that I can become more like Jesus. In catching even a glimpse of God's holiness in their character and behavior, I am made clearly aware of my own shortcomings. But it is also in their humility before me that I find the courage to bow down to God as Isaiah did and receive the same mercy. Contrary to human shame or scorn, just as Isaiah did not run from God's presence, nor am I shamed to run from these precious people in my life. Instead, it is their own humility before God, obedience in changed lives aligned with God's directives and mercy toward others which causes me to come to my own state of repentance, running directly to Jesus for restoration.

God's holiness did not only grant Isaiah peace from his guilt, Isaiah then experienced divine restoration and purpose for his life. It was this moment of repentance that Isaiah was granted both peace as well as purpose. As he surrendered himself to God's holiness, Isaiah heard God calling out from his heavenly throne, "Who shall I send, and who shall go for us?" As Isaiah experienced forgiveness from his confessed sin, embracing God's peace in exchange for his guilt, Isaiah was able to respond to God's call, "Here am I. Send me!" God's Holiness not only brought Isaiah peace from his guilt, but divine purpose for his life.

As I align myself more and more with God's will and remain in a place of humility and obedience before the Lord as Isaiah did, I too can have this same impact on those I come in contact with. With the Spirit of the Holy God living in me, bringing both myself as well as those around me to a place of truth and mercy, God's Spirit can reap repentance and restoration for me as well as through me. As a redeemed woman of God, I have the opportunity to reveal both sides of God's character: righteousness and mercy. As I humble myself in reverence, repentance, and a radically changed life aligned with God's heartbeat, my own transformed life of grace and restoration can bring others to the journey with me. My hope is that I can be the kind of person who has the same impact on others as Isaiah experienced before God's throne. Do my actions point to God's holiness, helping others to see their sin and their need for a Savior? Is my life a reflection of the Living God of righteousness, truth, and mercy? Is my life a vessel of God's glory, leading those around me to become both aware of their sin as well as God's grace? As leaders in God's kingdom, are we living testimonies of God's power to judge, forgive, and restore to those around us? May we be a people who not only live repentant and holy lives, but may we also reap repentance and restoration in the lives of those we lead.

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