

Dear Friends,

Isaiah 6: 6-8

Isaiah of Jerusalem is in the presence of God. He does not feel worthy to be there. He has heard the seraphs praising God. He knows that his lips are unclean. He does not feel worthy to join them in their song.

A seraph uses a pair of tongs to pick up a piece of burning coal from the fire on the altar. The seraph flies to Isaiah and touches his lips and mouth with the coal and says "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out".

There are ways in which you have missed the mark and gone off the right track. You are not what you could be. The good news is that your wrong doing has departed. It's gone, never to return. Your sin is dealt with. It has been covered over. You are forgiven. God declares that you are worthy to be in God's presence. You are worthy to join the heavenly hosts in singing God's praise with your lips. You are worthy to be God's servant and share in God's great mission of love. You are worthy, because God says so.

Those who look from heaven and eternity can see the world as it is, in its fallen state. They also see the world as it will be when God completes the work of making all things new. They therefore say, "the whole earth is full of God's glory". In the same way those who look from heaven and eternity can see you just as you are and they can see you as you will be, changed from glory into glory, taking your place in heaven. You are worthy. You are full of God's glory. You are God's beloved child. God is delighted with you.

Isaiah has become aware of the presence of God. He has recognised his sin and been assured that he is forgiven. Now, he is ready to be sent out as one of God's servants to share in God's work. God says, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Notice the courtesy of God. God could just demand that Isaiah go and do as he is told. But no, God makes Isaiah aware of a need and then waits for him to make himself available.

Isaiah says, "Here am I. Send me". He is not saying "I'll run an errand for you and then get back to doing my own stuff as quickly as I can". No, he is making a life-long commitment. He is offering himself now and forever, for good and all. He has no idea what God wants, where God will send him, what it's going to be like. Perhaps he should first ask for the job description and terms and conditions. But he doesn't. He knows only that it is right for him to give himself to God. He is saying "I am no longer my own but yours. I freely and whole heartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal".

God still makes the same declaration. "You are forgiven. You are worthy. You are full of the glory of God". God still asks the same question "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" How do you respond, what do you say?

God bless you,

Tony