

## Who will go for us?

A sermon by the Rev. Frances Savill

Sunday May 30, 2021

Isaiah 6:1-8 Romans 8:12-17

“In the year King Uzziah died” is how our passage from Isaiah begins.

When there is no king in Israel the land is troubled, and the future uncertain.

So, in the year King Uzziah died, the prophet Isaiah said, I saw that the Lord is King.

We might say: In the day the government fell, or on the Prime Minister was killed, or in a time of great uncertainty when the land was troubled, I had a vision, says the prophet, I saw the Lord God on the throne, high and lofty.

God was and is King overall.

Isaiah saw the truth that the hem of God’s robe filled the whole temple, or just the hem of God’s robe filled the entire Parliament buildings, and the throne room shook and the house was filled with smoke.

And I saw Seraphs, other worldly creatures attending the throne room of God, superimposed over my own world.

In view is the majesty of God – the holiness of God- the greatness of God, and the assurance that God is on the throne and God is over all things.

As Isaiah is given this vision of God’s presence and the throne room of Almighty God his words are;

“Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips”

Woe is me!

When the disciple Peter was confronted with the power of Jesus and Jesus was revealed as a holy man of God, Peter's words are;

“depart from me Lord for I am a sinner”

In that moment of seeing God there is recognition of self too. We are a people of unclean lips and unclean hearts. We tremble in the presence of God. We are overwhelmed by the greatness of God, and the holiness of God. But God moves towards us – our sin doesn't stand in the way of the King.

Immediately God's grace was offered to Isaiah. The Seraph took the burning coal and touched Isaiah's lips saying;

*“now your guilt is taken from you.”*

God sees our sin.

God does not whitewash over it,  
But God speaks and God acts:

Do not be afraid, your guilt is taken away.

And then Isaiah heard the voice of God asking;  
Who will go for us? Who will we send?  
It is an invitation to an adventure... and without hesitation Isaiah answered; “send me.”

How is he able to do that?

Consider the other passage from Romans:  
*For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit (of God) bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:15-17a).*

According to Paul, we are not only God's children, but also heirs, and not just heirs, but co-heirs with Christ.

Now, stop here for just a moment and think about what Paul is really saying.

God considers us co-heirs – that is, equal inheritors of all God has to give – with Christ, God's only begotten Son.

Not only that, but Paul goes on to describe the difference it makes.

Rather than being afraid – of the future, of what people may think of us, of our status, of our standing with God – Paul invites us instead to imagine a life of courage, the courage of those who have been adopted by God and invited into the full measure of God's blessings and riches.

It's an invitation to a new life, a called life, a life free to live for God.

It gives us the courage to respond as Isaiah did –  
"Here I am send me."

From The Message the Romans passage is translated;  
*This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next,"*

When we answer God's call, when we say "Here I am, send me," or when we live in courage and adventure as God's beloved children, God sends us to serve in every place we find ourselves.

We serve with the gifts we've been given, we serve according to the needs around us.

How many of you have a sense of your calling- a sense of the adventure of your life of faith?

How many of you did something for someone in the

name of Jesus Christ this past week?

Did you respond to a neighbor or friend in Jesus' name?

Did you pray for the needs of a brother or sister, or for our world?

Did you give of your finances, your time, your talents in response to the needs around you as God has called you?

Did you pick up the phone and make a call, or send a note, or email someone you were concerned about?

Did you do your work, making your living in a way that reflected God's love to others?

Did you serve your family, a parent, a child, someone in Jesus' name?

All those things can be living out the call that God has placed on your life.

God is calling us, each one by name.

Inviting us to pray and serve others, letting the love and light of Jesus be visible to the world through us.

*This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next,"*

I pray that God will give you joy as you live out that "What's next..." knowing that we are co-heirs with Christ.

Prayer: Holy, holy, holy are you Lord God Almighty, give us ears to hear your call, and eyes to see your vision for our service. Lord give us hearts fixed on you, believing, living the incredible news that we are joint heirs with Jesus our Lord. Give us hearts of courage, ready for our next adventure responding to you; Here I am send me, in the name of Jesus our Lord we pray. Amen.