

I Saw the Lord

by Anne Graham Lotz

Anne Graham Lotz's sermon calls the church to awaken to God's presence and authority amidst the alarms of our world.

Duration: 46:52

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experience of preparing for a series of messages at a seminar. Initially, he was focused on preparing the messages and was seeking God's help in understanding the Bible passages. However, God redirected his attention to focus on a personal conversation about his own life. The speaker reflects on the brevity of life and the importance of doing things that will have a lasting impact beyond one's lifetime. The sermon then transitions to the reading of Isaiah chapter 6, where Isaiah sees a vision of the Lord seated on a throne, surrounded by seraphs. The speaker emphasizes the holiness and glory of God and the transformative effect it had on Isaiah.

Transcript

The following is presented as a ministry of Calvary Community Church, a Grace-Centered Bible Teaching Church in Phoenix, Arizona. Isaiah chapter six, and this may be a familiar passage for you. And my prayer is that God will speak through it to your heart this morning.

While you find Isaiah six, I just want to underscore the fact that I'm so grateful to be here and grateful for your pastor and for Leslie, who have a heart and a vision to bring revival to the hearts of God's people and love what God is doing in your midst. And God is at work in Calvary Community Church. It's obvious.

And I'm thrilled to be a part of what God's doing here. So sweet to think this is a sacrifice. But this is a high privilege.

So I'm honored and humbled to be here with you. Isaiah chapter six. I'm going to read the first eight verses and then I'll pray and then I'll share with you the message I feel God's put on my heart.

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, too.

They covered their feet, too. 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. At the sound of their voices, the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. Woe to me, I cried.

I'm ruined. For I'm 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 atoned for.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for us? And I said, Here am I. Send me. Pray with me. Father, we bow before you this morning and so aware that your presence is in this place.

Thank you for the beautiful worship team that led us into your presence through the music. And we just want to linger there now. And we're going to give you our full attention and ask that you speak to our hearts, whether it's because of the message or in spite of it, Lord.

But right now, we, your children, bow before you and we're asking that through your words, you would speak as we choose to open our ears and listen for that still small voice of the spirit. So we ask now that you would pour out your blessing upon us. We don't want anything less than everything.

It's in your heart to give us this morning. And so we're asking that you would bless us, not because we deserve it, but because we ask humbly, boldly claiming it in the name of Jesus and for his glory alone. Amen.

You know, have you ever slept through your alarm? I bet if you did, you missed something important, didn't you? We set our alarms because we want to wake up because we have something to do. And several years ago, I was taking a series of meetings. They stretched over four days.

The night of the third day, I was so exhausted. I carefully set my alarm for 430 the next morning because I wanted to get up and have plenty of time to prepare for my last sessions. And so when I went to bed, I was asleep before my head hit the pillow.

I woke up the next morning and I was lying under the covers and the sun was warming my face and I was dreamily thinking, you know, I didn't know the sun was up at 430 in the morning. And then it hit me. The sun is not up at 430 in the morning.

And I looked at my clock and it said eight o'clock. I had slept through my alarm. I jumped out of bed.

I grabbed that alarm, got you stupid clock. Why didn't you wake me up when actually it was? And you stupid person, you didn't wake up when the alarm went off. And I had to call somebody to take my first session for me.

I just made a mess because when the alarm went off, I didn't hear it. I didn't wake up. Now, I'm going to suggest to you that there are alarms going off in our world today.

9-11 was an alarm. Hurricane Katrina was an alarm. The earthquake in Haiti is an alarm.

The record-breaking forest fires and tornadoes and floods, those are alarms. The underwear bomber on Christmas Day, that's an alarm. The war on terrorism, those are alarms going off.

And I believe God is trying to wake us up. Trying to get our attention. Now, I don't believe he sent those things, but I believe he allowed them because he's trying to get the attention of the world saying, wake up.

You never know when you're going to step into eternity. And it's time to get right with me. It's time to repent of your sin and get right with God.

But you know something? As I watch the world, I don't think they are getting the message. I don't think they recognize the alarms for what they are. I'm not so concerned about the world.

I'm more concerned about the church. And this is what deeply concerns me. I don't see the church hearing the alarm either.

I'm talking about generally speaking, okay? Not just the Calvary Community Church. I mean the church generally speaking across the board doesn't seem to be hearing those alarms either. And God's saying, wake up! You need to get right with God and I want to use you to help other people get right with me before it's too late.

And the church is concerned with the color of the carpet and the style of music and who gets a parking place out there, you know? While the world is desperate for Jesus. And then I wonder, what's it going to take to get our attention? If we don't wake up with 9-11 or Hurricane Katrina that wiped the city off the map, what is it going to take to get our attention? So that's what's happening. I believe nationally, worldwide, but alarms can go off in our personal lives, can't they? So what alarm is going off in your personal life? And sometimes we don't recognize it as an alarm because of the way it comes.

And several years ago my mother sent me a birthday present and it came wrapped in brown paper through the mail. It was a multicolored basket stuffed with tissue paper. And I thought my sweet mother had lost her mind because it costs more to send that package than the basket would have cost.

And I picked up the phone and I called her and I thanked mother for my present. And she said, well, Anne, what'd you think? And I said, well, mother, what I got was a, you know, basket stuffed with tissue paper. And she said, no, what'd you think of your real present? And I said, well, mother, that's what I got.

And she said, oh no, Anne, your real present was inside the tissue paper. And I said, well, mother, I threw it away. And so she said, well, go get it.

So I went out to the trash can. I had to go through the trash. I came across a little wad of tissue paper and inside was a little gold ring with a piece of lapis lazuli.

And somebody from the British museum had given it to her. And it had been part of the pavement of the shoe shown palace where Queen Esther was said to live with King Artaxerxes. I had thrown away a priceless treasure because I didn't like the way it was wrapped.

And sometimes God sends us brown packages, doesn't he? And there are alarms going off in our lives, something unexpected, unplanned, unwanted. And it shows up in our life and we don't like it. And we pitch it out before we look for the treasure that's on the inside.

So what's the alarm that's gone off in your life? What's the brown package? The death of a precious loved one, a divorce, the diagnosis of a disease, a job loss, bankruptcy. You know, it's a brown package that shows up and we don't like it. In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah chapter 6, that's the brown package that showed up in Isaiah's life.

And I'm going to unwrap that package for you to give you an idea of what it was and perhaps you can relate to Isaiah, but Isaiah, I believe, some people believe he was a distant relative of the king. He certainly was a good friend because we believe he lived in the king's palace. So when Uzziah died, then you know that it was an emotional brown package because Isaiah's friend had just died.

And so he would be going through the emotional grief, but I think it was more serious than that because the Bible tells us when Uzziah died, he was still shaking his fist in God's face. He wasn't right. He wasn't ready to meet God.

And Isaiah was his pastor or his mentor or the person who had been sharing the gospel with him. And I don't know if you've had that experience where you have a friend who stepped into eternity and you'd been witnessing and you'd been sharing the gospel. And as far as you know, they went into eternity and they weren't ready to meet God.

That's devastating, isn't it? Because death is so final. And just parenthetically, if that's happened to you, you never know what happens at the last minute. So you just trust God to be the judge of all the earth who does the right thing.

But I believe Isaiah, it was emotional brown package. I think it was a financial brown package because if he lived in the king's palace, then you know his financial needs were met, but the king died. And you wonder if Isaiah's cashflow was suddenly cut off.

And in some way, has your cashflow been affected by this economic downturn? Maybe you've lost your job or the divorce or prescription drugs or your children in school and the tuition can eat up your savings and you know, in some way, has your cashflow been affected? That can be a brown package. I think it was also what I would describe as a personal brown package because one moment Uzziah was alive and the next moment he was dead. And I wonder if Isaiah in seeing the body of his friend thought, you know, eternity is so close.

Just a breath away. I remember two and a half years ago, I was standing beside my mother when she was breathing one moment and the next moment she wasn't and it made heaven feel so close, but it also made me wonder what was I doing in my life that was going to last beyond my lifetime. And I wonder if Isaiah had that same impact.

What was he doing that really mattered? What kind of significance did his life have from eternity's perspective? And so that was the brown package that showed up in Isaiah's life. And so I don't know what the brown package is in your life, like an alarm going off. And when the brown package shows up, so often we examine the brown package, we get so caught up in it, don't we? I mean, why did those terrorists fire their planes into the towers and why did the levees break in New Orleans? And is it global warming? It's causing all these record breaking, whatever, and, and we're looking at the brown package and I think it's appropriate.

But at the same time, I think we need to look up and Isaiah, when the brown package showed up in his life, he had the sense to look up and say, God, are you trying to get my attention? You know, what is it you're trying to say to me? And Isaiah looked up when the brown package showed up in his life and he saw the Lord. And John chapter 12, verse 41, Jesus said, Isaiah saw my glory. This is a vision of the pre-incarnate son of God, Isaiah seeing Jesus before Bethlehem.

That believe you me, was a treasure in the brown package. Sometimes we have to have an alarm go off before we look up. And Isaiah looked up and he saw the Lord and he saw him seated on the throne.

That meant he saw the power of Jesus. He was in charge, in control of everything that was taking place in Isaiah's life as well as the whole universe. Did you know that Jesus is seated on the throne today? And have you doubted that? And you know, when we tend to doubt it is when the brown package shows up.

When we lose our job, when our unmarried teenage daughter says she's pregnant, when our son is picked up on drugs, when we're diagnosed with that disease and we say, Jesus, are you on the throne? Are you in control? Twelve years ago, my son called and said, Mom, I have cancer. And after we talked about it, I realized he had life-threatening cancer and nobody in my family had ever had cancer. And so on the phone, talking to Jonathan, I can remember just shifting back in my faith and resting on the confidence that Jesus is seated on the throne.

That the cancer caught us by surprise, but it didn't catch Jesus by surprise. It was part of his plan and purpose for my son's life. We just hadn't known about it.

And so right on the phone, I said, Jonathan, God's purpose for you is not that you be healthy, wealthy, prosperous, problem-free. God's purpose for you is that you bring him glory. And you can bring him glory if you die from the cancer.

You can bring him glory if you go through surgery and you're healed. You can bring him glory if right now as we pray you're healed. But your purpose is to bring him glory.

And so on the phone, we prayed together that God would use his life for his glory. And that was 12 years ago. He's still in remission.

He had to go through the surgery and the radiation. And I know that there are people here and probably watching through all the connections that you have that have had cancer and not had a positive experience. And you've not come through.

Maybe your loved one has been lost. You're still going through some of the treatments. And God handles each one differently.

But listen to me, the point is this, that Jesus is seated on the throne. He's in control. He's in charge.

For a child of God, there are no accidents, no mistakes. The end of human history, the apostle John in Revelation 4 said, I saw heaven opened and Jesus is still seated on the throne. And listen to me, when we look at our world today and it's starting to unravel, have you ever seen such? And all these changes taking place and it seems like our very foundation is breaking loose.

When everything falls apart, you and I know it's just falling into place right at the feet of Jesus. He's in charge. He's in control.

He is seated on the throne. And Isaiah had a fresh vision of his power and a fresh vision of his position because he says he was high. No one higher than Jesus.

He has the highest position of authority in the universe. You know, I think the highest position of authority on this planet may be the president of the United States because we still are a world leader. And the president of the United States has that position of authority for four years.

If he's reelected, eight years, then he writes his autobiography, goes to the golf course, you know, maybe like president Clinton pops up from time to time, but pretty much an oblivion. And Jesus has the highest position of authority, not just for four years or eight years, but forever and ever, not just on planet earth, but in all of the universe. The Bible says when God raised him from the dead, he seated him at the right hand of the father and he put all authority under his feet.

So he holds the ultimate position of authority. So when you pray, you know that you're going to the person who has the authority to answer your prayer. What he says is so.

So if he says that God loves you, God loves you because he says so. If he says you're forgiven of any sin and all sin, you're forgiven because he says so. If he says you're God's child, you're God's child because he says so.

If he says you have eternal life, you have eternal life. He says so. And if he says that his spirit lives in you, his spirit lives in you because he says so.

And if he says you have the power to overcome, you have the power to overcome because he says so. And if he says your life has eternal significance, your life has eternal significance. And if he says one day you're going to be welcomed into his father's house, you're going to be welcomed into his father's house because he says so.

What he says is so. He has the ultimate authority in the universe. Amen.

Praise God. What he says is so, it's the truth. And Isaiah's eyes were open to the fact that he's high.

And then he was open to the fact that of his person that he's exalted. No one is greater than Jesus. One of the things that disturbed me after 9-11 in the effort to bring us all together and unify us as a nation, other religions were brought in on an equal level with Christianity and Judaism.

And it's as though you could have, you know, whatever God you choose, if you choose Allah or Muhammad or Buddha or Confucius or Jesus or whoever, it's okay. Just pick your God and pick your religion as though they're all the same. And listen to me, Jesus is exalted.

There is no one like him. He stands in the solitude of himself. And you and I need to recognize his uniqueness.

Don't back off of his name. And our culture today tries to intimidate us. Maybe you can talk about God, maybe you can talk about your church, but don't name the name of Jesus because there's just something about that name.

And it's because he's exalted. And when God raised him up from the dead, Ephesians 1 says, and seated him at the right hand, he put all authority under his feet. And the Bible says there are principalities and powers out there in the unseen world.

There are other, if you want to call them little gods, but none is greater than Jesus. All authority is under his feet. And Isaiah's eyes were opened to his presence.

It says the train of his robe filled the temple, which means there was no place he was not. Fully present in every age, every generation, every world, every planet, his presence fills the universe. Fully present with me here on this platform, fully present with my daddy where he is and my husband where he is and my children and my grandchildren, fully present with you and your families.

And because I have him fully present with me, doesn't mean you have him less. He is fully present everywhere, all the time. He never spreads himself thin, but if we can make this more personal, he said the train of his robe filled this temple, his presence filled the temple.

And we could liken Calvary Community Church to the temple. What would it be like if the spirit of Jesus, the presence of Jesus filled not only this sanctuary but the other sanctuaries and the Northwest Campus and all the other venues, Hebrews and the other places you all gather and the spirit of Jesus filled not only where we gather but the back halls and the children's rooms and the parking lot and when you leave the parking lot and try to get into the traffic and the New Testament says that you and I are the temple of the Holy Spirit. What would it be like if every single one of us was filled with the presence of Jesus? That would be revival, wouldn't it? And let me tell you a precious thing because the phrase in the Old Testament, the train of his robe, is the same phrase as I understand it in the New Testament, the hem of his garment.

So do you remember when the woman who had the physical difficulty and she'd struggled for years and she reached through the crowd and she just touched the hem of his garment and her life was transformed. She was healed, she was changed and I thought, you know, what would it be if just my life was filled with the train of his robe, the hem of his garment? Surely if people brush up against me, maybe they wouldn't be healed or their life changed but at least they ought to know they've brushed up against Jesus and if not that, if they don't know his name, at least know there's something different about me. The train of his robe filled the temple.

How I long for the train of his robe to fill my life so that when people brush up against me, work with me, sit on the plane next to me, they know there's something different and they're drawn to Jesus through me. And lives are changed and lives are saved. Isaiah's ears were opened to the praise of Jesus.

They were singing, holy, holy, holy and it said the doorpost of the temple shook and the temple was filled with smoke and that wasn't wood smoke, that's the glory came down. Because when God's people begin to praise him, he inhabits the praises of his people and the glory of God is not just like a shining cloud, it's the character of God and it's when God's people begin to praise God, I mean really praise him, not just in worship music on a Sunday morning, but the way they live their lives and other people see us praising him then they're drawn to Jesus. They see his character.

Listen, if you always look beautiful, handsome, your clothes always fit, your children always obey you, your neighbor always speaks well of you, your car always starts, you always have enough money in the bank, you're always healthy and you praise Jesus, nobody cares because anybody can do that, right? It's when you just feel miserable and you've got a splitting headache and your children are disobeying you and your spouse walks out on you and your neighbor is slandering you and your boss fires you and you don't have enough money to make it through the month and you're still praising Jesus, then the people around you want to know you're Jesus. That's why Peter said, don't be surprised when these fiery trials

come into your life. God has allowed them to come into your life because when you're in that fiery trial, that's when the glory of God is revealed, the character of God.

And they see your goodness and your faithfulness and your thoughtfulness and you know, your kindness and they want to know you're Jesus. So what's interrupted your praise? It's when the brown package shows up, isn't it? You're offended with God? Offended because he's let this, you thought if you were good, bad things wouldn't happen to you. You didn't understand that you can be the best person there is and God can allow something to happen to you in order to reveal through you his glory to somebody who's watching.

Isn't that the story of the cross? Bad things happen to good people. Bad things happen to those God loves. But in the midst of that bad thing, he's going to be with you.

And Isaiah's eyes were opened to his purity because they were saying, holy, holy, holy. Jesus is absolutely pure in his words, in his decisions, in his deeds, in his methods, in his motives, in his emotions, in his thoughts. In Jesus there is no unkindness, no rudeness, no meanness, no pridefulness, no selfishness, no bitterness, no unforgiveness, no sinfulness at all.

And the Bible says you and I are to be holy as he is holy, which means in my life there should be no meanness or selfishness or unkindness or unforgiveness or bitterness or rudeness or pridefulness or sinfulness at all. I'm to be holy. But you know, I tend to compare myself with other people.

And I think, you know, I'm a little bit better than that person, I'm as bad as that person, so I guess I'm okay. And God doesn't compare us with each other, he compares us with the perfection of his son. And he says you're to be holy as I am holy.

And I believe that what God's people need today is a fresh vision of the holiness of Jesus because we look at the standards of the world, if we compare ourselves with each other they have no standards. And we need to get a good look at God because his standards haven't changed. And he says that you and I as his people are to be holy as he is holy.

And Isaiah, when that brown package showed up, he looked up and he saw the Lord. Maybe that's why God has allowed the brown package to show up in your life. Maybe that's why he would allow Pastor Mark to invite me here to just get your attention, help you understand what the brown package is, that it's an alarm going off trying to get your attention to look up.

And Isaiah, when he had a fresh vision of the holiness of Jesus, he saw himself as God saw him. And Isaiah had been in ministry, he was what you might call a committed Christian, he was active in his church, if we can put it that way, an Old Testament standpoint. So if you'll look at chapter 5, he's giving a sermon, I just want to give you the contrast now.

He has six points to a sermon, they all begin with woe. Very positive. Verse 8, I'm not going to give you the points, I'm just going to point it out.

Woe to you. Verse 11, woe to those, woe to you. Verse 18, woe to those, woe to you.

Verse 20, woe to those, woe to you. Verse 21, woe to those, woe to you. Verse 22, woe to those, woe to you.

In other words, he's preaching a sermon, and he's just pointing his finger, isn't he? Woe to you, woe to you, woe to you. Like when I watch the evening news, or I get it on the web, or I'm reading the newspaper, and I react the same way, woe to you, woe to those, woe to those. I can't believe they're doing that.

And I would be right, because I hold up the standard of God's word, and they just don't measure up, and I can't believe the things people are doing today. Woe to you. But when Isaiah sees the Lord, and he has a fresh vision of the holiness of Jesus, what does he say in chapter 6, verse 5, woe to me.

You see the difference? Suddenly Isaiah is aware that he's responsible for sin in his own life. He's been pointing his finger to everybody, who have you been blaming for your sin? Oh, we're so good at that, aren't we? Because we consider ourselves victims. So we blame our parents, the way we were raised or weren't raised.

We blame our boss. We blame our co-worker. We blame our spouse.

We blame our neighbor. We blame our child. We blame, you know, anybody but ourselves.

And we just consider ourselves a victim, poor me, and we blame it on somebody else. And Isaiah had to come to the place that he wasn't blaming anybody else for his sin. And he was saying, woe to me, I'm responsible for the sin in my own life.

When did you accept responsibility for your own sin and stop blaming somebody else? Because you know, and I know in a crowd like this or a crowd that's watching through the connections that there are people here who have been abused. People have done you wrong. And listen to me.

The Bible says that vengeance is mine, says the Lord, I will repay. He's going to deal with that other person. Do you hear me? He keeps the books.

So you don't have to. And God's not so concerned. He'll deal with that other person.

But right now he's concerned with your attitude towards that injustice or that abuse. Attitude of bitterness, unforgiveness, rage, whatever it is. And that's what he says.

You've got to take responsibility for it because other people can push us into sin, tempt us to sin, lead us to sin, but the choice to sin is our own, isn't it? It is. So it's time we accepted responsibility for the sin in our own lives and leave that other person to God. God will handle them.

That's his word. He says so. He will take care of them.

You just guard your own hearts and your minds. And Isaiah said, not only woe to me, I'm responsible for sin, but I'm ruined by it. And I think he was ruined himself, his self esteem, that feeling that he had gotten it together, that God really, you know, was fortunate to have him serving him.

And he was really active in church and doing a lot of good things. And suddenly that just crumbled. And in our society, we're told to build up our self esteem, especially as women, assert our rights, don't let anybody walk on us, you know.

And the Bible says you and I are to die to ourselves, we're to crucify ourselves. And it doesn't mean that you don't have self esteem in a sense, it's not self esteem, it's Christ esteem. And I found that at the cross, when I found out who Jesus was and that he gave his life for me because I'm so precious in his sight.

And it's that kind of self esteem, but it's not my pride. And Isaiah just lost his pride. I'm ruined, he said.

And not only ruined himself, but ruined in his service. He said, I'm a man of unclean lips. He was a prophet.

He served God with his lips. And so he was saying, I'm not worthy to serve the Lord. Anybody here feel unworthy? To even name his name.

And Isaiah felt unworthy, I'm ruined, I'm a man of unclean lips, how can I speak? And then he says something remarkable, he says, I live amongst a people of unclean lips. In other words, I'm no better than the people at whom I've been pointing my finger. That's a remarkable thing, isn't it? Because somehow we think we're better, don't we? I mean, even if you just go to church on Sunday, you think you're better than those who don't.

And we think somehow, somehow we're better because we're here and we're much better than the people on the street or the people that are living under the bridges. And actually, we're all sinners. And there's no room for pride or self-righteousness because the ground is level at the foot of the cross.

And we all have to come in humility and dependency and needing a savior. And Isaiah said, I'm a man of unclean lips and I'm no better than the people at whom I've been pointing my finger. The only thing for you and me is that we've been to the cross and we've been forgiven.

And that ought to compel us to go outside that door and hit the people on the street and tell them, I'm a sinner too, but listen to me, I found a savior, somebody who can take away my sin and give me purpose and meaning and hope and eternal life and heaven when I die. And let me tell you how you can get right with God. But it's not because we're better than them.

And Isaiah acknowledged he was responsible for sin in his life and he was ruined by it. Hopeless, helpless, because you know something, it's not just the specific sins in your life, it's the fact that you and I have a sin nature. We're born sinners so that when you give a baby a choice to sin, that baby will choose the sin.

He'll do the wrong thing because it's just his nature. We're sinners by nature. And so our sin ruins us in God's sights.

We're hopeless, we're helpless. James says, if you've ever committed one sin in all your life, you're guilty of all the sin because you're a sinner. So if I knew to get up this morning and spent extra time in prayer and Bible reading and I just rolled over and went back to sleep, that's sin for me.

And James says, if you've done one thing, you know, the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. I think the greatest sin is just not loving the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. For me, that's both those things.

There are lots of sins just in those two areas. And so I'm ruined by sin because I'm a sinner. Hopeless and helpless.

When have you acknowledged responsibility for your sin and that you're ruined by it? Four years ago, I was writing this book and in the process of writing it, I was to give a series of messages at a very intense seminar. So I set aside 10 days to prepare the messages. It was sort of like a retreat for me.

And the first day of the retreat, I opened up my Bible and I went to prepare the first message and there was silence. And so I was praying and saying, Lord, you just need to help me open up this passage and understand and silence. And so I thought, well, I just need a good night's sleep.

So I went to sleep and got up the next day and pulled out my pen and pad and opened my Bible and tried to work on the passage of silence. And so I said, God, you know, I've got to prepare these messages and I've got to give them. And can you help me? And then it came to my mind, Ann, I don't want to talk about the messages.

I want to talk about you. And I said, well, God, I don't have time to talk about me because I'm here to prepare these messages. I've got to give out.

And he went silent again. So finally I said, all right, what do you want to talk about? And he began to convict me of sin in my life that I didn't know was there. And it was triggered.

I was reading a book on revival about an old timey revivalist who's long since dead. And in his book, he had written a list of sins and he said for the reader to read it three times. And so I thought, well, to humor this old dead man, I'll read it through three times.

And the first time I read it, I was very pleased with myself because I thought I'm as good as I thought I was. I don't see one of those sins in my life. And then the second time I read it, I thought, well, I might see a couple of them.

Third time I read it, I saw every sin in his list in my life in one form or another. And that just began seven days of being on my face, weeping before God. Every scripture I turned to, everything that seemed to speak to me from the word was convicting me of sin after sin after sin, peeling me back like an onion layer after layer.

Listen to me. This was four years ago. This was when I was in ministry.

I was converted as a little girl. And I've been serving the Lord for 33 years outside my home. And God was convicting me of sin in my life that I didn't even know was there.

And so I know that there may be sin in your life that you didn't even know was there. And that's what hinders you from not only pleasing God, but experiencing the fullness of his blessing and experiencing personal revival. And so just to give you the idea, I wrote down a list of sins in this book.

And some of these are mine and some of these are yours, and I'm not going to tell you which is which. Okay. And I'm only going to read them once.

And so we won't go through them three times, but just to give you the idea. In gratitude for what blessing or answered prayer have you neglected to thank God? Neglect of Bible reading. How many days have you gone without opening your Bible? How many days have you read it, but you can't remember what you've read? Unbelief.

What promise has God given that you doubt will be fulfilled? Are you doubting even now that he can forgive any sin and all sin? Prayerlessness. How often are your prayers just spiritual chatter offered without fervent or focused faith? And remember, daydreaming or fantasizing is not prayer. And that one was mine.

Unconcerned for the lost. Who do you know who has never received Christ as Savior? When have you shared the gospel with that person? Never? Hypocrisy. Are you pretending to be more spiritual than you are? Are you pretending to be anything that you're not? Pride.

Are you impressed with your own reputation and accomplishments? Are you offended, resentful when someone else receives attention? Neglect of God's family. Who has fallen into sin or disgrace within your church? What have you done to reach out to that person in love? Or maybe there's somebody in your church family who's lost a job or in some need and you've said glibly, I'm praying for you. Then you did nothing to help and you turned away and you didn't even pray.

Envy. Who seems more gifted, fruitful, recognizable than you? You felt jealous? Critical spirits. When have you found fault with someone because he or she doesn't measure up to your standards? Slander.

When have you told the truth about someone with the intention of causing others to think less of him or her? Lying. When have you either made a statement or inferred something that was contrary to the unvarnished truth? And the list goes on. Anger, jealousy, bitterness, unforgiveness, gossip.

Just a lot of sin in my life and your life. And in a moment I'm going to give you opportunity to confess your sin and to repent of your sin which means to stop it, to cut it out, to turn away from it. So I'm just giving you a heads up.

I'm not going to embarrass you. It's going to be private between you and God but just to give you a heads up. I know that after I went through this for seven days, finally I had this sense that God had dealt with me and that he had cleansed me as I just clung to the cross and asked for him to cover me with his blood.

And it was sort of like cancer. You know, I wanted to make sure he got every little sin in my life, every little cell and so I asked him to just keep working until he had done a thorough job and finally there was that sense that he had finished and I can't tell you, I've never felt so good to feel so bad if you can understand me because conviction is painful. But when it was over there was a feeling of relief and joy and like I'd had a bath on the inside and I went down to take the meetings.

They never knew what I'd been through but I think there was a sense of power in his presence and at least I knew in my heart I was right with God. Isaiah, responsible for his sin, ruined by it. Just at that moment his eyes were opened to the hope of the cross because one of the seraphs flew to me, he said, with a live coal in his hand which he had taken with tongs from the altar and 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 and the only place you can have your guilt taken away and your sin atoned for is at the cross. This is an old testament picture of the cross and I believe that live coal represents the blood of Jesus and it was applied to Isaiah's lips because he had just confessed that was the primary center of his sin. He was a man of unclean lips and I can tell you when that live coal was pressed on his lips it hurt and his lips blistered and I bet he never talked the same way after that.

The conviction of sin, especially if you're a believer and you come back to the cross and you realize what you've been doing and that it's broken the heart of God and you feel so ashamed, it's searing, scorching pain. And Isaiah went through that. His guilt was removed and his sin atoned for.

And I don't know what the sin is in your life but I believe this morning you need to come to the cross and have the blood applied to it. Let me tell you one reason. In the old testament Joshua was somebody that

took the children of Israel through the wilderness, excuse me, Moses took them through the wilderness, he took them out of the wilderness through the Jordan River.

They went into the promised land, they overcame the enemy stronghold of Jericho, the walls came tumbling down. They went up to the next little town of Ai and in their cockiness they thought well if they could take Jericho they could take Ai. So they went after Ai and the Israelites were defeated.

And Joshua tore his robe and he got on the ground and he said God have you just brought us into the promised land to be defeated by the enemy? And God said Joshua this isn't a time to pray it's a time to repent of your sin. There is sin in the camp. And God and Joshua went through the camp of Israel until he found one man named Achan who had taken something God said he couldn't have and he had buried it down deep under his tent.

And Joshua had to take that thing and Achan take them outside the camp, he actually put them to death before they could go back to Ai and have victory. And never again were the Israelites defeated as they took the promised land. Now listen to me, sin in the camp can cause you to live in defeat.

You won't get answers to prayer. You won't have the freedom in your spirit. You won't have that sense of God's presence in your life.

You won't have an awareness of his pleasure. There won't be power when you witness to bring people to faith. And it's because there's sin in the camp and then you start pretending and you start saying the lingo and you get active in church and you cover up the fact that something's not right in your spirits.

So let me ask you what's the sin in the camp? Buried down deep and nobody knows it's there. Have you had an abortion? Have you committed adultery? Are you locked into pornography on the internet and nobody knows it? Have you stolen something? Been dishonest in your tax returns? Maybe something everybody knows, a nagging tongue, you know, lying tongue, bitterness. It's just time to take that sin and put it to death.

You're crucified. Put it out of your life. Turn away from it.

Stop it. Repent of your sin. The Bible says if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, it's not them out there, it's us in here.

We need to return, we need to turn from our wicked ways, repent of our sin, then God will hear from heaven, he'll forgive our sin and he'll heal our land. So I believe the time has come for repentance. And if God has convicted you of a sin and he's brought something to your mind, I've been praying that he would, that he would bring to your conscious mind sin that maybe has been buried down deep.

Maybe you haven't acknowledged it. Maybe you're aware of it because it's a habit or a relationship or an attitude. Something you've been involved in, thoughts, you know, I don't know.

But whatever it is, if God has brought it to your mind and convicted you of it and today you want to get right with God, you want to put it out of your life and you're willing to turn away from it and God will help you do that. Do you know that? You bring it to the cross and you put it under the blood and God will give you the power to turn from it. But if that's your decision this morning and he has spoken to you and convicted you of sin, I want you quietly to stand to your feet and then I'm just going to pray for you.

And I'm so grateful it's not everybody because that gives me the impression that those standing are making a genuine decision. But I'll tell you, if you've stood because somebody else is standing and you thought everybody would and this isn't a real decision on your part, then just sit back down. But if you're seated and your heart's pounding and you know what it's going to cost you to put that sin out of your life, break off the relationship, throw away the computer, cancel the magazine subscription, quit going to that club or that bar or whatever you've been doing and you know what it's going to cost you and you're scared, you just stand up right now.

Don't miss the opportunity to get right with God. The alarms are going off and God says now is the time. I'm going to pray for those who are standing.

So while I pray, if you want to sit back down or if you want to stand up, it's between you and God. So Father, we come before you now in this sanctuary, in the other sanctuary, in the Northwest Campus, in Hebrews, wherever we might be, we're standing before you and if there was room, we'd be on our faces confessing our sin. And right now we confess to you, would you just fill in the blank, I confess to you my, and before God quietly in your heart, you name it.

Don't switch the label that you give it, call it lust, jealousy, anger, bitterness, unforgiveness. Just name it before God, I've confessed to you my and I'm so sorry and I'm ashamed. And dear Jesus, I love you and I'm so grateful for what you did at the cross and I'm so sorry that I've been living my life as though it didn't matter.

Toying with sin that you died for, playing around with stuff that you hate. So right now, I confess my sin to you and I bring it to the cross and I crucify it. I nail it to the cross, put it to death.

Would you cleanse me with your blood? Cover that sin, put it under the blood of Jesus, please. And I believe your word that says, if I confess my sin, you are faithful and just to forgive me and cleanse me from all unrighteousness, any sin, all sin. None too big, none too small, none too past, none too present.

You can cleanse us with your blood. So Jesus, would you do that right now and even as you do it, we want to thank you. And I know, I couldn't have dealt with my sin in an hour's time.

Took me seven days. So Lord, I'm just praying that what you have begun here, everyone who's standing would have the courage to complete with you. And maybe they can deal with it in this hour, maybe it's going to take the rest of the day, maybe it's going to take the rest of the week, maybe it's going to take places together as a church we begin this journey to revival.

Whatever it is, Lord, we just want you to do a thorough work. Clean us up, clean us out, make us right with you. So that when the moment comes and we step into eternity, we have no fear, we can look forward to going home.

And we're right with you as we enter into our Father's house and it's by your grace. So I just commit those who are standing, those who are seated, Lord, who perhaps don't need to get right with you. They know they are, they keep short accounts with you, but maybe there's somebody seated who needs to stand up.

Would you continue to turn them every which way but loose until they get serious about the sin in their lives? And so we commit these decisions to you. The thoughts in our mind, the emotions in our hearts, the actions of our will. Help us to follow through, Lord, to turn away from that sin.

Break it off. Put it to death. Through all the practical things, maybe be the first to say we're sorry.

Place that phone call, whatever it means that we would follow through and do it. That we might be filled with the hem of your garments, the presence of Jesus, to the glory of God. And it's in your name, in the name of Jesus that we pray.

This resource has been a presentation of Calvary Community Church, a Grace Center Bible Teaching Ministry in Phoenix, Arizona. For more information on the ministry of Calvary Community Church, log on to calvaryphx.com or phone 888-970-3030 toll free. Now may the Lord richly bless you as you continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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