

July 19, 2009

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WHOLEY HOLEY HOLY

Living in the presence of The Holy One

(Isaiah 12:6) “Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

Good morning! Thanks to Blaise for such a nice introduction earlier! In response, I want to manage your expectations. I, like you, am on a faith journey. I am learning and growing, just like you are. Part of my journey has involved a return to school part-time at Tyndale Seminary. My strategy then, today, is to share some of the highlights of what I have been learning. Since last summer, I have been immersed in studying the Old Testament and I learned something really radical – I love the Old Testament! I thought I didn't like it at all, because I thought it was so overwhelming!!! I used to be kind of afraid of it, because it was so different and so unfamiliar. But it is amazing.

One thing I have come to realize is between the Old and New Testaments that the Bible is full of mysteries and tensions. There are pairs of truths that seem like they can't both be true but somehow, in God's mysterious way, are. There is one in particular that I have been wrestling with all year, and that's what I want to talk about today. As I worked through the Old Testament, and especially through the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Isaiah, I was struck with a picture of God that was quite different that the one most often comes to my mind. The Old Testament spends a great deal of time talking about God as a Holy God. God is to be feared, to be held in awe, to be revered. To be worshipped, to make sacrifices to and for. God is powerful, He is Sovereign of all of creation. For those of you raised in the Catholic church, or perhaps High Anglican, this might reflect your early pictures of God.

This is a different picture than the picture of God I have in my head. The snapshot I have of God, is my loving Father. He is my friend. He loves me. He cares for me. He comes to me in times of trouble, and provides for my needs. He knows my name, and the number of hairs on my head. He loves me just the way I am, warts and all. He has forgiven me, and he has a plan for me – a plan to prosper me and not to harm me. He has given me a hope and a future. In my times of trouble, I pull out my picture of God and I look lovingly at this Father and friend of mine, and I know that he will deliver me. That in my struggles he will never leave me. He will never abandon me, or forsake me. This is a true and accurate snapshot of God – everything I just said comes from Scripture. But it is a one-dimensional picture I was carrying and I am afraid a terrible thing happened. The amazing news of his grace and his mercy was becoming replaced by a sense of familiarity. Of commonness. Instead of “God with us”, he was becoming “God is one of us.” I was taking my friend for granted.

Here is a picture of my family – my husband Elias, our daughter Olivia, and our twins, Megan and Michael. Even though it is a few years old, this is one of my favorite pictures of our family. Do you know why? Everyone is smiling and laughing. We have our arms around each other. There is a lot of love in this picture. Elias is in a tuxedo, which is my favorite look for him. The kids are clean, hair brushed, teeth brushed, and they were on their best behavior that night, as it was their first wedding and they were suitably impressed. This

picture is true. We do smile and laugh a lot. We really do love each other a lot. We are often clean, and we do brush our hair and teeth most days, and I am thankful that our children are overall pretty well behaved. But...you probably know where I am headed with this....this is only one picture. If you wanted to get to know my family, you would need to see more than one snapshot. You would need to see the picture of me announcing to the 3 kids that I had listened to enough fighting and they were to spend the rest of the night in their rooms, separated from each other. You would need to see the pictures of Elias in the clothes I don't like. You would need to see the photo of the morning after the wedding, when everyone was sleep deprived and suffering from sugar hangovers from the dessert table. Same family. Same people. Different image.

I realized that I had been carrying around one snapshot of God when I really need the balancing picture. And as I have read more, and studied more, and talked to people about it, I think that it is a problem not just for me, but for the church in the North America. Over the last 30 or so years, I am struck by how we have taken the whole of Scripture, and reduced it to the parts that are about us as individuals, and about what God will do for us – save us, care for us and take us to heaven – and we've downplayed the parts that require a response or commitment from us.

We have focused on a God who loves us the way we are. We celebrate the fact that we can come to church in jeans and a t-shirt, and we aren't all about the robes, candles and stained glass windows. But maybe we have lost something.

In my studies over the last year, I have been shown another snapshot of God. The God who is with me, my friend and my redeemer, is also the God who is over all the universe, the Creator. Immanuel, which means "God with us", is also The Holy One. I believe we have compromised our understanding of God's holiness. I believe we have a wholely holey understanding of holy!

So this morning, I want to go on a journey. A journey to balance our current image of God with the equally important understanding of our Holy God. We need to see him in his holiness, so then we can respond fully to his call to us to be his holy people. So, are you ready for today's journey?!

OK Let's pray, starting with verses from Psalm 99:

(Psalm 99:1-5, 8)

**The LORD reigns,
let the nations tremble; he sits enthroned between the cherubim,
let the earth shake.**

Great is the LORD in Zion; he is exalted over all the nations.

Let them praise your great and awesome name — he is holy.

**The King is mighty, he loves justice — you have established equity;
in Jacob you have done what is just and right.**

Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his footstool; he is holy.

**Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain,
for the LORD our God is holy.**

Heavenly Father; *We desire to see you clearly this morning. All of you. Our Holy King, full of majesty and glory, and our Immanuel, full of compassion and love. We pray that you would teach us all through your Word, to greater understanding and obedience. Thank you that you have already been at work preparing our hearts to receive your Word, and that you will continue to be at work nurturing the seeds we sow today.*
In Jesus name, Amen.

God's holiness is shown through the whole Bible. It begins in Genesis with a Holy God creating all things and ends in Revelations with a vision of a Holy God surrounded by a holy people in a holy place. I did the Biblegateway keyword search and the word "holy" appears 532 times in the Bible, 348 of them in the Old Testament. It is a key feature in the covenant that God made with Moses and Leviticus Chapters 18-26 are often referred to as the Holiness Code.

So what does it really mean to "be holy"? How many of you, when you hear the word "holy" think first of perfection: absolute moral perfection? I certainly thought that. We have expressions like "he has a holier than thou attitude", which usually means one person thinks they are morally superior to another person. And certainly "holy" does include a superior standard of morality. However, that is not the primary meaning of holy. The Hebrew word for it is **qodesh** and technically it means, "**for sacred use; withheld from ordinary use, to be treated with special care**". In the first part of the Old Testament, what the Jewish Bible calls "The Law" – the first 5 books of the Bible – the word holy, or qodesh, is rarely used of God, but of the people, places and things set aside specifically for God's use.

- In Exodus, God separates the nation of Israel for his use. "**you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**" (Exodus 19:6)
- Exodus 20 is where God gives the Israelites the Ten Commandments, and the 4th one sets aside a holy time. "**Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.**" (Exodus 20:8-10)
- God also designates holy places where he will dwell:
 - o "**Put limits around the mountain and set it apart as holy.**" (Exodus 19:23)
 - o "**the Most Holy Place behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark... I will appear in the cloud over the atonement cover.**" (Leviticus 16:2)

The key, then, is that things are holy not primarily because they are morally perfect, but because they belong to God, and are for his specific purpose.

Things are holy because they belong to God, and are for His use.

And what about God himself being holy? The word "holy" is actually used to describe God in the OT more than all other descriptors combined. It is what sets God apart from his creation. It means he is unique. It means he is totally and altogether different from humanity. While

we are said to be made “in his image”, that can be a little misleading, because we can think of God as like us only much, much better. Being made in his image is not about what we look like or what we are made of. Being made in God’s image is about being his representatives on earth – his standard bearers. We are to imitate who he is, but at the same time we have to recognize that he is totally and completely above us, distinct.

The word transcendent is often used to try and communicate the totally different plane or measure that God is about. Since that word gets used a lot in New Age religions, I needed to be clear what we are saying about God. Webster’s defines it as follows:

Transcendent

1 a : exceeding usual limits : surpassing b : extending or lying beyond the limits of ordinary experience

2 : being beyond comprehension

- Webster’s Dictionary

The prophet Isaiah did a much more poetic job articulating just how transcendent God is. **“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:9 TNIV)**

Isaiah asks:

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance? (Isaiah 40:12-14)

The answer is God alone.

Isaiah asks:

Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding? “To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. (Isaiah 40:18)

The answer is no one.

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. (Isaiah 40:28)

Isn’t that amazing? What beautiful language. God’s holiness means we can never fully grasp him. God’s holiness is not to be taken lightly. God is to be held in awe. The Bible often refers to it as the fear of the Lord. This doesn’t mean unhealthy fear, in that we are to be afraid to draw near to him. We are to have a healthy fear, where we look on God with awe and respect and reverence. He is the King of Kings. The Lord of Lords. The Alpha and the Omega. The Lion of Judah. As C. S. Lewis in his Chronicles of Narnia reminds us, “He is

not a tame lion.” God is all-powerful, all-mighty, all-Sovereign. We cannot use him for our purposes. He is holy.

And remember earlier, that I said that holiness must carry with it a standard of moral purity, or righteousness. For God to be holy also means that he is morally pure, righteous and just. Isaiah said,

“But the LORD Almighty will be exalted by his justice, and the holy God will show himself holy by his righteousness.” (Isaiah 5:16 TNIV)

Righteousness, then, is God’s holiness as it is applied, or lived out, in his relationships with his creation. God’s innermost being is altogether different from ours, because he is pure and distinct, and his thoughts, purposes and works are pure and perfect and without sin.

The Book of Isaiah provides us with a great description of the holiness of God. It is found in Isaiah Chapter 6:1-8. Isaiah was a prophet in the 8th century BC. He was sent by God to the nation of Israel to call them to repentance, and to give them a fresh vision of their God, and their purpose in history. This passage is the account of God calling Isaiah to his ministry, and from this we not only get an amazing picture of the holiness of God, but we also understand what our response needs to be. Let’s read it together.

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 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."

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

"Woe to me!" I cried. "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 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!"

Did you hear the description of God’s holiness?

- He is “high and exalted” - he is above anything on earth;
- he is holy – so much so that it is repeated three times, which is the only time this happens in all of scripture

So poor old Isaiah was probably just going to the temple one day, to make his sacrifices and pray, when he was hit with this heavenly vision. God revealed himself to Isaiah, to reveal his holiness.

QUESTION:

My question then is “Why?” Why was it so important for Isaiah to see God in his holiness? And since it is part of the Scriptures, why is it them important for us to see our Holy God?

REASON 1:

One reason is that it is the supreme truth about God. God reveals himself to us so that we will know him. God reveals himself to us so that we will know him. Israel in the 8th Century BC had lost the complete picture of God. The snapshot they carried was one dimensional, just like me, and they were so concerned with the Temple and the rituals necessary for keeping God present, that they forgot that the One living among them, the one “enthroned between the cherubim” was holy. Isaiah was called to remind Israel. It is why he created the name “The Holy One of Israel”. It summarizes perfectly the balance. The Holy One, the separate one, the above one, the transcendent one becomes the attached one, the one living among the people, committed to the nation of Israel. Isaiah, fresh from his vision of God in his temple, made it clear that Israel’s God was a Holy God. In fact, Isaiah summarized by saying “**his name is holy**”. (57:15)

So, we fast forward almost 3 millenium, and here we are, the Church of Jesus Christ, and once again, we are off balance. So the vision that Israel needed is the vision that we need also. God, in his wisdom and love, gave this vision to us too. We need reminding that God is holy, unique, set apart.

A second reason we need to see God’s holiness is shown in Isaiah’s response. When faced with God’s holiness, Isaiah could only see his own state, which he described as ruined and unclean. We don’t like to use the word “sinner” today. We don’t even like to talk about “sin”. We like to say that we have made mistakes. We have made bad choices. We are human, so we can’t be expected to be perfect. We like to say that that we all have fallen short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23**), but we often skip past the first part of the verse, which reads “**All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.**”

A while ago, I had to accept a really difficult reality. Just like Isaiah, I am a sinner before God. Not only have I made mistakes, but I have done it intentionally and repeatedly, choosing myself over others, myself over God, others over God, things over both others and God....every permutation and combination you can imagine. Every one of us is a sinner. We disobey his rules, and compromise on the uncompromisable. When we have trouble seeing how truly ruined, unclean and corrupt we are, we need a fresh vision of our pure, perfect and Holy God. That is the standard to which we are to compare ourselves, and we fall short. Our sin is absolutely disgusting to our Holy God. ...And it separates us from Him.

Here is the problem. When we fail to see God as the Holy One he is, when we fail to see him high and exalted, over us, pure, perfect, transcendent, then it is really easy to make excuses for our own sins. If we only carry the snapshot of God as friend and forgiver, then we can think...I am not so bad. God loves me as I am. It’s not like I am a murderer, or a serial rapist. I haven’t embezzled millions of dollars from people’s savings. I haven’t hurt anyone, really. Really? Really? The Bible says that ALL sin hurts God. That is why David, who committed adultery and murder sings to God,

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight... (Psalm 51:3-4)

So ready for some good news? And for me, this is the most amazing thing about God - even though he is The Holy One of Israel and we "the unholy ones of Earth", even though he is totally above us in every way, in his grace, he CHOOSES to also be IMMANUEL – or God with us. And to do that, God has made accommodations for our sin in order that he can live among us. If he didn't, his holiness, his purity, would kill us. Without God's mercy and grace, we cannot stand in the presence of God.

Isaiah spoke of a time to come where God would send a Servant who would atone for the sins of all people of all nations. He described the Servant's role in the following terms:

**But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was upon him,
and by his wounds we are healed.**

**We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.**

This Servant, often referred to as the Suffering Servant, was God's ultimate accommodation for the sins of man. As God sent his servant, the seraph, and provided the atonement for Isaiah when he confessed his own sinfulness, God promised to send another Servant to provide the atonement for all who would confess their sins.

Living on this side of history, we know that Servant was Jesus Christ. God sent his son, Jesus, to be the sacrifice needed on behalf of all people to allow us to live in the presence of God. On Jesus was laid the iniquity of each one of us, and he bore them obediently, so that we could each enjoy a life in God's presence.

Let's go back to our original question, "Why do we need to understand the holiness of God?" The first answer was because it is the way God revealed himself to us so that we would know him. The second answer was that we needed to see God in his holiness, if we were ever to truly understand ourselves in our unholiness & acknowledge our sins.

REASON 3:

The last reason it is important to understand how Holy our God is, is without a clear understanding of God's holiness, we are not able to respond to his call on our lives, and become the holy people he wants us to be.

Let's look back at Isaiah's call. He saw the Lord in his holiness and responded with the confession that he was unclean. God atoned for his sins, and his sins were forgiven and his guilt removed. Then, in verse 8, Isaiah hears God speak:

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!"

Isaiah's vision of God and his atonement is followed by the right response, which is willing obedience and service. While God's purifying fire was required to bring Isaiah's holiness, Isaiah need to accept that cleansing, and accept the call to follow God.

God saves us to send us. God saves us to send us. His plan is not to forgive us then hand us a ticket to heaven. He saves us, and then calls us to his service. God is at work in the world, redeeming all of creation. And his plan is to work with and through his holy people to accomplish this redemption. The question is whether or not we will accept our calling. When faced with the holiness of our God, will we allow him to send us for his purposes here on earth?

Isaiah said Yes.

I have to be honest with you and tell you what Isaiah said Yes to. Isaiah was sent to deliver a message of judgment and impending destruction for the people of Israel if they did not change their ways. This is not the job I would like to be given.

Yet, because Isaiah had a clear picture of a Holy God on his throne, he fulfilled his mission. Isaiah does what God asks him and faithfully delivers every message he is given, through the reigns of 4 separate kings of Judah. And let me tell you, it was not an easy calling to fulfill. Historic tradition has it that the last king Isaiah served, Manasseh, rejected all of Isaiah's warnings and guidance, and had Isaiah sawn in two.

There is no guarantee that our callings will be easy. There is no guarantee that they will be cheap, or pain-free, or without struggle and sacrifice. In fact, just the opposite since Jesus asks us to carry our crosses and count the costs. Isaiah never saw the incredible blessing his ministry had – how it encouraged the Israelites in exile and gave them hope. How it pointed the way to Jesus Christ. How it has spoken to 2000 years of believers all over the world about our Holy God and his Holy Purposes.

Isaiah was able to accept a holy calling because he saw a holy God! And that is why you and I need to see our Lord, seated on his throne, high and exalted. How often have we missed our calling, because we didn't have a good perspective of our Holy God? From our small perspectives on the world, we need to see God as so holy, so set apart, so different.

If we have a diminished view of God's holiness, then, as his holy people, we will have a diminished expectation of our own holiness. If we don't see God in his moral purity, we will never expect ourselves to be morally pure. If God is common, then the church of Jesus Christ will be common. If God is just not that spectacular, then what we accomplish will not be that spectacular. We reflect to the world what we see. And that is the danger. **How we see God has a direct correlation to how we respond.**

God is at work in this world redeeming all of creation, and he has CHOSEN to do with and through his church, the Body of Jesus. We cannot be common. We cannot be indistinguishable. We can't blend in or move with the crowd. If God is ordinary, our calling is ordinary. But God is not ordinary!!! God is Holy Holy Holy. He is high and exalted. And therefore, our calling is not ordinary. Our calling is radical. It is nothing short of cosmic

warfare. It is controversial and divisive. It is earth-shattering, empire-destroying, heart-changing, life-saving and death-defying. There is nothing ordinary about it!

Yet we are in danger of being ordinary. I don't want that, and I believe you don't want it either. I want to stand in heaven one day, and I want to be part of the party that celebrates the full and final completion of God's plans to redeem the world, to free it from sin and death, and I want to be at that party because I was part of the solution.

Sometimes I worry that I am not that different than anyone else around me. I do some good stuff, sure, and I try and be generous and kind and forgiving. But I don't think I am radically different than most of the people I know. And TOB does some great stuff too. Ken talked about the nurse at Markham Stouffville who pointed a women in crisis in Emergency to us, saying "The Olive Branch helps people in your situation. That's a good thing. But would the community around us say we were holy? Are we really different from the rest of the community? Radically different? Are we earth-shattering, empire-destroying, heart changing, life saving and death defying? Being one of the founders of TOB, I can't tell you how desperately I want to say YES. And how shamefully I stand here and say NO. I don't think that we are who we set out to be yet. But we can be. And we must be. We must find a way to live out our holy calling.

Jesus' life is our example of holiness. God has revealed himself to us in Scripture and in the person of Jesus Christ, and I want to challenge us to make a habit of getting to know him through the study of the Bible. The Message has a beautiful translation of Hebrews 12:

"...Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!"
(Hebrews 12:1-3)

Do you need an adrenaline shot into your soul? I do! Let's agree to set apart a time of day, a holy time, that is for the purpose of knowing God better. Jesus story is OUR story. We need to know OUR story. We need to commit to reading the story, and to praying about and reflecting on what we have read. There is no short-cut to getting to know Someone better – we have to spend time with them! Seeing our Holy God more clearly will help us to see our holy calling more clearly.

In the book of Matthew in Chapter 5, Jesus gave some pretty clear direction on what being a holy people means. He tells us how we are to stand out, through a life of purity. He told us to be humble, to hunger and thirst for righteousness. We are to show mercy, and be pure in heart. We are to let our light shine so brightly that we glorify our Father in heaven. No only are we not to commit murder, we are not even to harbor hate in our hearts. Not only are we not to commit adultery, we are not to look at others lustfully. We are not to seek revenge, but to offer more to those who steal from us. When Jesus says love your neighbor, his definition includes our enemies – the people the rest of the world hates.

What if we took Jesus list as seriously as God's holiness?

As holiness is the supreme truth about God, we must make holiness the supreme truth about the people of The Olive Branch. I want all of us, the people of The Olive Branch, to join with all of the people of the Church of Jesus Christ. Together, I want us to go right from the throne of our holy holy holy God to our mission in the world to be a holy people, set apart for God's purpose.

CONCLUSION

So I need to ask the question. Have you seen the Holy One of Israel? Have you ever truly seen him in his Glory, so much so that you fall down before him, confess your sin and commit yourself to his calling? I know I need constant reminding of God's holiness. I need to confess my sin. I need constant reminding that I am set apart for his use.

At the beginning, I spoke about keeping things in balance - About the importance of keeping the picture of Immanuel (God with us) beside the picture of The Holy One of Israel (God over us).

In this balance, our friend Jesus meets God the Creator of the universe.

In this balance is where “God accepts you where you are” meets “God never leaves you where he found you”.

In this balance is where “give us this day our daily bread” meets “Hallowed Be Thy Name”.

In this balance is where God’s grace for our sins meets his command to “Follow Me” in the path of righteousness for his name’s sake.

In this balance is where “you are forgiven” meets “go and sin no more.”

In this balance our extraordinary, holy God empowers ordinary people like you and me to become extraordinary, holy people doing extraordinary, holy things.

Let’s pray.

God, thank you for being both our Immanuel and our Holy One. Thank you for your grace, and for calling us into your service. Forgive us Lord, for where we have cheapened your grace, and for where we have failed to realize the extraordinary mission we are called to. Give us fresh vision to see you, and anoint us again to be your holy people. In Jesus name, Amen.

Song – I see the Lord

HATN Prayer

Today is the last Sunday before the Hands Across the Nation team leaves for Bolivia, where they are going to build a school in one of the poorest regions. You may remember that last summer they took a team to Mali, West Africa. There are 12 People from TOB going, which makes up about half the team! Can I ask anyone who is going to please make their way to the front here. These are people who have said Yes when God called them. This morning, I would like us, as a church, to anoint and commission them for their mission, as well as pray for their safety. They are going to be working at an altitude of 13,000 feet above sea level, so let’s pray they’ll be able to breath while they work!

Join me now.

Holy, heavenly Father;

We bring before you our brothers and sisters, asking for your blessing on them. Lord, I thank you for each and every one of these disciples. I thank you that you have called them into your service, and I thank you that you have given them the love and courage to say Yes to you, and Yes to the suffering people of this world. Father we pray that you would anoint them with your Holy Spirit, so that everything they do would be in your strength and would witness to your love, grace, mercy and sovereignty. We pray for their safety. As you have prepared them in every way, protect them in every way – physically, spiritually and emotionally. Help them adjust quickly to the food, water, altitude and air. Help them work together in peace as a team, and avoid disunity and dissention. We recognize that you are

sending them into enemy territory, and so we pray that you would surround them with your angels, so that no attack of the enemy would affect their mission.

And God, may the school that they build be a place of honor for you. Bless and protect each child, each teacher and each family who is touched by it. Thank you for the incredible privilege of serving and supporting this mission.

In Jesus name we send them, in Jesus name they go out, and in Jesus name we pray,
Amen.

Thanks for being here this morning. Join us again next week. May I leave you with the following blessing:

Closing Blessing

May you see the Lord, seated on his throne, high and exalted. May you hear the song of the Seraphim, calling Holy Holy Holy. May you know that the whole earth is filled with his Glory. And then, may you be holy, as God is holy. May you find the peace and joy in belonging to God, and may you experience the sense of true significance that comes from separating yourself for his specific use. Let's be the holy people of God wherever we are.