



Why Worship? Isaiah 6.1-8; 1 Peter 2.9

*Can you remember the first time(s) you went to a church worship service? If so, what stood out to you?
If you don't remember your first time in worship, what was worship like when you were a kid?*

Questions like these might get your juices flowing for our study this week—even for our fall series, *Why the Church?* We're unpacking the purpose of the church this fall because if we misunderstand our purpose, we will miss out on all that Jesus has for his church. This week, we're looking at the great call of Isaiah, which has for thousands of years depicted worship in all its glory. Join me on this quest to discover what it means to be the church!

Pastor Eric

Read 1 Peter 2.9, and then consider what God's stated purpose is for his "chosen people" (the church!) Some translations say that the church is to "declare the praises" of God, while others say we are to proclaim God's "mighty deeds," and others say the church is to proclaim "his excellencies." Since each are legitimate translations, what nuances do you get from each of them? Take a moment to read Ephesians 1.12 to add some contour to 1 Peter 2.9.

Based on these verses, in your own words, write out what you understand to be the purpose of the church. Then, allow yourself some free thinking: If the church's purpose is to proclaim God's greatness, what might that actually "look like" in our church? How does Community Covenant declare the praises of God, and what are other ways we might do that?

Read Isaiah 6.1-8. Summarize the content of the vision Isaiah had. Where did Isaiah find himself? Where was the Lord as he beheld God, and how is the image of the Lord described?

If you're up for a challenge, draw a picture of a seraph (no artistic skills required!). Speculate why it is they are described the way they are. According to the passage, what seems to be their purpose? What is it that one seraph calls out to the other? How would you describe holiness?

What happens to Isaiah himself during this amazing encounter? Why do you imagine he suddenly becomes aware of his own sinfulness? How is the awareness of his sinfulness dealt with?

What does Isaiah 6.1-8 say to you about worship? What is the place of God in worship? What is our own place in worship? At the end, Isaiah responds to a specific request of God. Have you ever experienced a call to respond in worship? Describe it.

While we don't want to be legalistic, what could be some ramifications when people miss worship? (Think big: Don't just think about the impact on the person who isn't in the worship gathering). What might *you* miss out on when you don't get to worship together with the church? Finally, are there ways that you can better prepare yourself for worship?