

Worship 2 Witness: God's Son given to us.

Series Intro

Isaiah 9.6a, 7

MPS: Christians bear a faithful witness to the world from an awe-filled worship of Jesus.

OBJ: Every Christian should move true worship to faithful witness because of 3 motivations.

READ Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Isaiah 9:1-7

INTRO What do you want for you and your family this coming holiday season?

I want LifePoint to be “consumed with sharing” this Christmas. I’m not talking about sharing cheer on Facebook, or entering arguments because everyone doesn’t celebrate the season the way we do. I want us to be so consumed with worshiping Jesus that we witness to Him.

Christmas is traditionally a time of year when people are most open to the gospel. I don’t know if that could still be said or not. I do know the arguments over the season provide a great opportunity for us to clarify our hope in the Savior.

God reveals himself to us (Incarnation) and calls us to himself that we might worship Him (exaltation), then commissions us to go that we might make Him known (mission). **True worship produces a faithful witness.** When worship doesn’t lead to faithful witness, it is something other than true worship.

In this “Worship to Witness” series I will focus on two principles aspects. First, **WHO is this God that who has come to save us?** This is the promise of Christmas set forth in the names of the Messiah given in Isaiah 9:6. Four names for the Savior Son will help us know and worship God. Second, **how does His work for us, as we will see today, motivate us to bear a faithful witness in the world?** We will begin with 3 primary motivations that move us through our worship to faithful witness.

LifePoint, we must be a people that never cease to share Jesus with the world because we are His people. And that begins with every person. We share not out of obligation, but wondrous awe; not out of duty, but delight; not out of guilt, but love. But we never allow feelings to determine whether or not we share. Worship is incomplete until it becomes faithful witness. Witness is powerless without preceding worship to enflame our hearts and empower our lives. God has come and spoken to us in Jesus. Therefore we must go and tell the world. **God sending His son is the defining mandate and motivation for us to go tell the world about Jesus.**

MPS: Christians bear a faithful witness to the world from awe-filled worship of Jesus.

TRANS There is real reason to share Jesus.

OBJ: 3 motivations move true worship to faithful witness to make Jesus’ name known.

1. **Salvation: God rescues people to new life.** .2-5

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them a light has shone. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire."

Isaiah spoke to a people in a time of great darkness over the land. Isaiah 8:22 provides a situational snapshot in the land when it says, *"And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness."* Darkness dominated the land because the people were proud and rejected God. "Darkness" describes everything from the moral climate, to the emotional and psychological state of the people, to the security of the nation. There was no sign of hope on the earth. **Darkness thickens to envelope as life plummets further away from God.**

With the backdrop of complete darkness, Isaiah turns their eyes and heart to the Lord. For all who listened to Isaiah, hope was not lost but a light would shine. We walk among the prison yard of darkness' domain every day. And while we are free from its domain, so many remain enslaved. What better place to tell people that God rescues from darkness than those who are in darkness. What better people to tell those still in darkness about God's rescue than those who have been rescued! **This first path that moves worship to faithful witness is salvation.**

Isaiah 9:2f tells of a change in the midst of darkness' domain. A people have seen a great light that has shone on them. This is no ordinary light, but one that is distinctive in degree, magnitude and in its effect. This light is making a difference. They are experiencing a blessing of growth, joy, hope, celebration and generosity in the midst of the darkness. The weight of darkness' oppression does not hold them because the light has broken it. The light reverses everything the darkness oppressed. The light has trampled their enemy.

- ? Can you remember what it was like to live enslaved to your sin?
- ? Do you remember when the light of Jesus shone in your heart, and you were saved?

People without Jesus live in darkness, a kingdom that enslaves to deception. Christians are no longer enslaved to the kingdom of darkness that once held us captive. We've been rescued and transferred to the kingdom of God's Son, Jesus. Rescue forms the essence of salvation, people set free to live with God. *"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,"* (Col 1:13) **Jesus shines his most glorious light in darkness' thickest domain and rescues people to new life.**

When Jesus saves, he doesn't just fix us up. Jesus makes people a new creation. In salvation we are rescued from darkness and born again. (John 3:3) *"Born again"* means receive a new heart and a new spirit. (Ezek 36:26) Nothing demonstrates a different person than a changed heart and spirit within them. **Salvation in Jesus makes people new, no longer the same as we were before Jesus.**

APPL Are you wearing your "new" today? Did you 'put on' the Lord Jesus Christ today, or are you covering him up under that shabby, rag cloth of the old you?

Salvation means Christians live in a new kingdom first, God's Kingdom. Jesus didn't come to improve and perfect our self-help. Jesus brings a new kingdom. "The Kingdom of God is here." (Jesus) In Luke 10:9 when Jesus sends out the 72 two-by-two to "tell people 'the kingdom of God has come near to you.'" **Christians bear faithful witness to the Lord Jesus and His Kingdom because He has rescued them from sin's enslavement.**

APPL WHO better to tell the world of God's saving power than a person who has been rescued from the cold darkness of that domain?

Salvation is our first motivation to move worship of Jesus to a faithful witness; we've been rescued from darkness' domain.

2. Righteousness: God sent His Son Jesus to rule with righteousness. .6-7c

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

God establishes his throne in righteousness. Isaiah prophecies of a son who is given to be a ruler. His kingdom will be distinguished by expanding blessing, justice and righteousness. People will enjoy peace under his rule. And as distinctive as His Kingdom will be, above all the kingdoms of the world, the true distinction of the Kingdom will be the King himself. **God's throne is not one only ruled by right law, but a righteous Ruler. Jesus is King who rules to bring peace and justice by His righteousness.**

The child who is given is God's own son, His only begotten Son. The point is not simply what he will do for the Kingdom, but who he will be for the kingdom. The blessing will not simply be the changes that come about but because the one bringing those changes about. God has not only given a great ruler to His people. God has come among His people. **The new kingdom that comes is because the true King has come.**

TRANS What a difference the right Ruler can make! The one that rules the heart always determines what the Kingdom is like.

Jesus changes everything because His kingdom is not just about outward conformity, but inward transformation. The real influence of this promised son was how his Kingdom would be ever-increasing and expanding. Isaiah spoke in ultimate terms here, not just immediate, earthly kingdoms. **God's righteousness put on us in Jesus Christ places an eternal priority and perspective on our life to live for more than just this world.** When Jesus' righteousness is placed on us he redeems us to walk with Him daily. His presence is increasing in our lives for the rest of our lives. **Christ's righteousness makes the Christian's life about 'walking with' and 'living for' the glory of God's name in the world.**

"He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name sake." Psalm 23:2

Jesus places His righteousness on those who by faith trust in Him. The glory of the Christian life is not an individual glory, but Jesus' glory. As Christians, we are who we are only and all because of Jesus. The change He brings and difference he makes is because his presence remains in us and power works in us. We are no longer what sin said about us. We are no longer what our sin enslaved us in. Because of Jesus we are not longer slaves to sin. We are changed; transformed from within. Now we are children of the King. **Jesus places his righteousness on our life to move us from where sin enslaved us to where He rules us. Jesus' righteousness put on us brings about His redeeming work within us.**

King Jesus has set His righteous kingdom in our hearts and lives. We are not our own. Though we live in this world, we are not "of this world". We are Christ's, "OF" His Kingdom. Our lives declare the redemption that He brings. The redeeming power of Christ's righteousness in us declares the glory of God's redemption in Jesus Christ. As Jesus redeems us to walk in righteousness and holiness, he moves us through awe-filled worship to faithful witness. **The Christian life is one of Jesus' redeeming work to walk in righteousness and holiness, as He is righteous and holy.**

ILLUS I talk a lot about Jesus' redeeming power that changes us. The main reason is that I need to be constantly reminded of His change. Satan's wants me to believe that nothing's changed. And sometimes He almost convinces me. But he's not right. I'm a new man. Righteousness that Jesus has put on me is my new identity, purpose, and life.

Righteousness, the second motivation, moves true worship to faithful witness as we declare God's redeeming power in our lives to walk in righteousness and obedience.

3. **Mission: God will accomplish His mission.** .7d

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isaiah's promise will come true because God will make it happen. The Lord's zeal will do what Isaiah has promised. **Wouldn't you love to speak of something with this kind of confidence?** You can. As a matter of fact, it is wrong to speak of the Lord's work in any other way. God is more committed to conquering our sin than we ever will or could be. This is militaristic language for God. **God's mission is to conquer sin for His glory.**

Consider the context of this passage. None of this prophecy was a reality for Israel at the time it was given. But none would be forgotten by God. We may wonder why so much sin and its influences remain in the world. We may wonder why so much remains in our lives too. But God will not be thwarted nor denied. He will accomplish His mission for eternal glory. God has conquered sin in Jesus. By faith, sin can have no victory in your life because of Jesus. The only time sin wins is when we get consumed with life 'here and now' and lose sight of eternity. **Christian, mission begins when you look at the context of your life and live in light of the God's eternal plan.**

We worship a God who is infinitely powerful and glorious. But all the power and glory we see now is but a fraction of God's true being. God is working. And as we join His mission, we work with God by His power and for His glory in this world, and in our lives. **Mission begins in worship as we consume our hearts and minds with God's glory and our eyes and lives with His purpose in this world.**

We see 'what God has said' MORE than 'what the world is saying'. We must remember when we meet people that what we know God can make true of their lives is NOT what we are looking for in them, but what we are sharing for them. We meet people in darkness and show them God's glorious light. This is why the awe of God in our worship is so important. When there is no "awe" in worship, there will be no action in witness. We are living in a kingdom that is not yet fully come, but is here and now. **Christians are living ambassadors of God's kingdom that will come in fullness.**

Ambassadors live in hostile territory to represent the Kingdom. Ambassadors live in darkness' domain, but they have all the resources of the Kingdom of light at their disposal. We use every Kingdom resource God makes available; an armor that enables us to stand and weapons that destroy strongholds. Every resource God gives is sufficient for the work we are commissioned to do. We are not here for our enjoyment. We are here for the fame of God's name. **Christians labor in God's mission to clothe our worship with actions of faithful testimony.**

Mission moves worship to faithful witness as we engage the battle against darkness to declare the glorious light of Jesus.

CLOSE **Isaiah's prophecy is no ordinary birth announcement.** The promise of *Isaiah 9.6* tells of deity birthed, news that forever altered history and proclaimed the revelation of holy God. This news declares closure of the cosmic gap between the physical and spiritual world, between damnation and salvation, between condemnation and glory. God became man: *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.* **Isa 9.6**

APPL I want us, LifePoint, to move our worship to faithful witness. In this season I want you to consider how you can worship the Lord in salvation, righteous redemption and mission to be a faithful witness to your neighbor, in our city and the world. Encouraging people in evangelism is one of the most challenging roles as a pastor. For one, it's a challenging practice for me because I have never felt particularly "gifted" in it.

ILLUS **Some are gifted in evangelism.** A fellow pastor in seminary started an 'apartment complex church', with 3-4 people attending. As seven of us sat in the small meeting room, he shared his message for the day then asked us to bow our heads. He told me that morning that he believed a couple of the people were close to accepting Christ. I began to pray hard for their salvation. When he asked for anyone who wanted to receive Christ to lift their hand, I thought he said 'whoever had prayed to receive Christ', so I raised my hand. Three times this happened. I couldn't figure out why he kept asking for people to raise their hands who had been saved. And, why didn't just ask people to accept Christ.

Not everyone has the gift of evangelism. But every Christian is commissioned with the mandate to share the gospel. This past week at our PlantOzarks quarterly training Dr. Chuck Lawless said, “We stop sharing the gospel because we’ve lost fascination with Jesus and internalized the gospel.” **Christians bear a faithful witness to the world when our worship of God is awe-filled.**

LifePoint, let’s get so awed in worship of Jesus that we get serious about faithfully witnessing to people around us.

- ? **Why have you come here today?** Christians don’t get filled to be full of it. We get filled to go share.
- ? **What moves you from where you are to where God is leading you?**
- ? **Who can you be a faithful witness to this week?**