

Lesson 3

A God Worth Worshipping

Worshipping Nomads

Types of Churches

- Mega Church - easy to slip into and out of – come and go like a ghost
- Small Church – Intrapersonal everyone knows if you are there or not.
- Warehouse Church – Can seem scripted
- Mainline Churches – lyrical -scant engagement with the scripture. Like being at a civic club meeting.
- Community Churches – Feel Good – Self Help
- Still a growing uneasiness, spiritual dissatisfaction. WHY ?
 - No sense of the sacred, of the God's Holiness.

Close Encounters

- Many characters in the Bible, how does the author describe their encounter with God? (pg. 28)
- How does this differ from popular descriptions?
- If we hope to trade the shallows for the deep, we must rediscover the holiness of God.

Holy, Holy, Holy

- Isaiah 6
- Seraphim radiated celestial light, not only heralds of God's holiness put also agents of purification.
- A powerful experience - *mysterium tremendum*

Lesson 3

A God Worth Worshiping

Long Altitude

- Why is understanding God's Identity most important?
- What is the problem with creating an impersonal God?
 - *We don't recognize a god not worth praying to.*
 - *Is God's name really Howard?*
- A study of modern worship
 - Our Music
 - Our language - a casual view of Jesus
 - What is missing or "*out of balance*" with only referring to the intimacy of Jesus (pg. 36)

God Strange Again

- Have we met those who seem to have God all figured out?
 - Have what they need from their God relationship and do not need to know more?
- Have we ever experienced *vertigo or holy disorientation* with God?
 - Share an example.
- How does the bible make God Strange?
 - How does the Bible lift God out?
 - What are the benefits to the worshiper for making God strange? (*last paragraph pg. 39*)

Benediction: Philippians 4:4-7

Lesson 4
A Vision of Holiness

Page 43 – Redeeming Holiness

- We have a hole in our Holiness pg. 44
- A lack of concern, we really do not care about “it” (God’s Holiness) *WHY?*
- *Discuss a life “Called to Holiness” VS. “striving for holiness.”*
- *Discuss the “lopsided understanding of God” described on page 45.*
- *So What?*
- *What might be a consequence of neglecting a part of God’s Nature?*

Page 46 – The Reflex of Worship

- Explain what it means to “sense” God in a room.
- How would we describe our natural reflex to worship? Pg. 48
- For worship to be worship, it must contain something of the otherness of God. A vision of God’s holiness is essential to worship.
- How does our worship experience need to change for us to feel the otherness of God in worship?
- Discuss Proverbs 29:18 – Why is a prophetic vision significant?
- The overwhelming mystery of God fascinates and attracts. It terrifies and captivates. Ultimately, it results in joyful and reverent worship. Page 49

Pg. 49 – Righteousness Relief

- What level of suffering or sacrifice are we willing to endure for the sake of holiness? *(How much change are we willing to consider)*
- How would you explain that holiness is a relief? Why is it a relief?

Pg. 51 – Identity Issues

- What might be a consequence of understanding the “otherness” of God?
- How might a culture focused on “equality” affect our response to God’s holiness?

Pg. 53 – Relief and Joy

- After reading this section, what can change a person from a feeling that they have to drag themselves to church or force themselves to serve others to a sense of joy and desire to live for Christ?
- What allows us to see God? What does it mean to see God?

Lesson 5

Dangerous Living

Introduction pg.55

Pg. 56 - Have we ever considered being a Christian dangerous to the world because *“We are the bearers of the most wild, dangerous, untamed force for the good in the world!”*

Inconvenient Truth

Pg. 57 Study the text on this page.

- How absurd is a holy God who judges sin absurd to us today?
- How afraid are we that there is a God who judges you?
- Are we reluctant to acknowledge, let alone celebrate, a dangerous God?

Fear and Following

- Pg. 59 - How do we feel about the statement *“only a God who punishes evil and wrongs is ultimately a God of Love?”*
- Pg. 60 - What would it look like for us to be *“dangerous to evil and injustice, a holy threat to anything that preys on the innocent, crushes the powerless, and enslaves people to sin?”*

The Danger of Safety

- Pg. 61- What prevents us from becoming a threat to the kingdom of darkness?
- Was Jesus one who played it safe, easy listening, using non-offensive lyrics? Was he careful to speak in such away to not incite a rage?
- Pg. 62 – How much to prayers for personal safety dominate our prayer lives?
- Pg. 63 - What did the disciples pray for?
- What types of questions should we be asking if we want to re-form our worship?

Village Gods

- Pg. 64 - Being a Christian isn't hard (TRUE or FALSE)?
- Are we in danger of worshipping a small God?
- What kind of God do we worship? Are we praying to a village God?
- How might “Playing it safe” affect our witness for Christ? Pg. 66

Lesson 5

Dangerous Living

Risky Behavior

- What is *Risky Behavior* for the church?
- Why is sacrificial compassion risky behavior for a Christian?

Consider: What risky things might we do as a church?

Rethinking Sin

- According to the author, how do we fight sin?
- How would living a dangerous Christian life help to fight sin?
- Pg. 71 – Sin hurts people and ruins relationships; but sin also keeps us from _____.

Consider: What are we missing? What have we missed?

Closing Thoughts

- We do not have to go to a foreign mission field to answer God's Call. Sometimes we serve God right where we are. That does not mean we do not have to be a radical and dangerous witness of our faith.
- Are we not longing or drawn to a dangerous God? Shouldn't The same god who we want to radically intervene and rescue us from our lives of quiet desperation be the same god who judges sin and hates evil?

Lesson 6

God Incognito

1. Obvious and Overpowering
 - a. How does God show up in our lives?

2. **Singing on Skid Row**
 - a. What are some of the images in this story that bother us?
 - b. Discuss some of the images that seem to be uplifting.
 - c. Were there images that surprised us or we might not have considered?
 - d. Why do you think the homeless would not come to church; but would come for Karaoke?
 - i. How did the event sponsors respond to those who showed up?
 - ii. *“an opportunity to meet them, get our hands on them, and connect with them. The ultimate goal of building relationships is restoration.”*
 - e. What did karaoke night do for those who participated? Pg. 78
 - f. Discuss a time when you have gone into an event or project with one set of expectations and come away surprised at the “*visible manifestation of God’s presence.*”

3. **Hidden God**
 - a. We may often feel like God is hidden from us especially when we most want his presence to be felt. After reading this section how might *God revealing his presence to us* be happening?

4. **Divine Disguises, Perfect Strangers, Secret Identities** pgs. 81-88
 - a. Are we tuned into God’s language?
 - i. What do we expect to hear when we listen?
 - ii. How is our feeling of God’s silence related to this discussion?
 - b. How easy is it to recognize God in strangers?
 - i. How sharp is our awareness?
 - ii. Do we actively look for God’s presence in strangers?
 1. How would looking for God in strangers change us and the ones we meet?
 - c. Why did Jesus not need to reveal his identity? Pgs.85-87
 - i. Why is it so important that we reveal ours?
 - d. Our true identities are “hidden with Christ in God” **explain...**

Lesson 6

God Incognito

Reflection:

5. The Big Reveal ~ *Our Undercover Boss*

- a. In the mission field of the church (*our job, His company*) how do we treat the other employees, the new employee? Would we act differently if we knew the new employee or the customer was God? Why?
- b. What if we whispered to each other when we met someone, “*Be nice that person might be God?*” / “*Be nice that person has God in them.*”

Lesson Seven Loving A Lion

1. Up to this point in our study we have been looking at the “*otherness*” of God. His transcendence, those attributes that place him above and beyond His creation. In part two of our study, we will examine the “*nearness*” of God.

As we discuss this story consider how attitude towards worship look for key words that might relate to how we or others encounter God

2. On pages 93 -95 we have a description of visiting the lions at the zoo. When the family was alone with the lion, how could we describe the relationship?
3. When a larger group arrives what changed?
 - a. How did the child encounter the lion?
 - b. What words that are used to describe the setting prior to the large group arriving? *Pg.94 last para.*
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____
 - iv. _____
 - v. _____

A Beautiful Balance

4. What does it mean to say God is *Immanent*?
5. How is Christianity different from other near east religions
6. *Read Exodus 3:13-14.*
 - a. Why was it important for early religions to be able to identify or name their gods?

A Thought to Consider:

- b. Is there a part of us that wants some kind of control of God?

Identity Issues

7. God is loving and holy, beyond our world and yet powerfully present within it.

A Thought to Consider:

8. God is Holy, but..... God is loving, but..... Which attribute might we have a tendency to short change?
9. Without a healthy respect for God’s greatness, his affection loses value. WHY?

A Thought to Consider:

10. Are we like Philip Yancy’s fish in the aquarium? Is God still Glorious for us or do we tend to think that because He came to us as Jesus, He is on par with humanity? Pgs. 103-104

Lesson Seven
Loving A Lion