



Scripture: Psalm 30

Big Idea: This moment is holy, because God is holy, and He is here.

INTRO

[TEACHER NOTE: For this message, students will want to have a Bible, a journal / piece of paper, and something to write with.]

When you think of the word holy, what comes to mind? When I say that God is holy, what do you think of? What do you feel?

In the Old Testament, we read about God meeting a man named Moses in a burning bush. In the beginning of their interaction, God told Moses to take off his sandals because *the place that he is standing on is Holy ground*. To be holy, means to be sacred and set apart. As I imagine what that must have been like for Moses, I am in awe. Something that I find to be fascinating about God's invitation to Moses, is that there was nothing inherently different about the ground he was standing on. It was just dirt, and maybe grass. Yet, God Himself called it holy. This was true about the ground, not because it was special dirt, but because God was there. Let me say that again, **the ground was holy, because God is holy, and God was there**. God Himself is always sacred and set apart, and there is never a moment when God is not near. This means that everywhere we go has the potential to be “holy ground.”

[TEACHER NOTE: Tell a story about a time when you encountered God's holiness by slowing down.]

Let me tell you about one of my days from the other week. I had just made it a goal to have my phone on airplane mode as often as I could, because I was noticing that too much time spent on my phone was causing my mind to feel unhealthy. The first day that I did this, I changed diapers, did dishes, fed my baby, and put my baby to sleep. It was a pretty average day in my

life. Even though these are things that just about consume my life right now, this specific day was different. It was one of my favorite days. Why? Because I was consumed by God's goodness almost all day. As I was doing dishes, and my mind was slow enough to be present, I realized what was always true: God was there with me in that moment. As I was on the third attempt of putting my sweet baby to sleep, God was there with me in that moment too. I could have felt frustrated or annoyed that he was not falling asleep, but instead I was consumed to an overflow with God's presence. I knew that snuggling my fussy baby was not an inconvenience, but instead a holy moment because God was there with me.

By the end of the day, I ended up asking myself this question. "What if my constant need to stimulate and fill the space in my brain is just a distraction from how holy each moment truly is?" My day was filled with holy moments. My day was filled with beautiful sacred moments, not because I was experiencing anything extremely out of the ordinary. It was a very ordinary day. **The moments were holy, because God is holy, and God was there** - as He always is. My heart was simply still enough, and my mind intentionally directed towards Him.

This moment is holy, because God is holy, and God is here.

Tension

Do you believe that? Did you know that encounters with God are not just for pastors and people like Moses in Scripture? God's beauty, perfection, fullness of love, and peace are also for you. Not only does God want for you to encounter His holiness. He actually created for you to be holy as He is. Something that is really beautiful, and so important to remember, is that we do not have to strive for it. We do not have to be the most righteous for God to be with us. We simply become like God as we dwell with Him. We become who we were created to be, as we dwell in the presence of the One that created us. How do we do that? It might actually be simpler than you'd think. It has so much less to do with a list of things we must accomplish, and so much more to do with how we posture our hearts.

TRUTH

In this series we are going to be talking about that; what it means to live life as worshippers. The next couple of weeks we will be spending some time in the book of Psalms. The word Psalm comes from the Greek word *psalmos*, which means “a striking of musical strings.” In other words, this book is filled with songs sung to the Lord. It is a book of worship. The goal of this series is not necessarily to teach us what songs to sing, but rather how the songs that were sung in Scripture, should impact the way that our hearts are postured.

As you begin to read, you will notice pretty quickly that there is lot of variation chapter to chapter. There is not a one-size-fits-all for these songs of worship. In some, the authors share their greatest joys and in others their deepest pains. In some they share their confidence in the Lord while in others they write about the things they grieved and feared. And yet all of them made it into the Bible as songs of worship. There are a couple of common themes that you will see throughout the book:praise, thanksgiving, royal, pilgrimage, wisdom, and lament (*view slide for definitions) Here is a quick explanation for each of these:

[*You can make this into a slide for students to take a picture of.]

Praise - Praise psalms are celebratory in nature, expressing adoration and worship to the divine. They acknowledge God's greatness, mercy, and the wonders of creation.

Thanksgiving - Thanksgiving psalms describe a situation of distress and how God delivered the psalmist. These psalms show us our need to acknowledge God's work in our lives both in hardship and blessing.

Royal - focus on the themes of kingship, often celebrating the reign of God as the one true King.

Pilgrimage - meant to inspire and uplift those traveling to Jerusalem to worship, which was a regular rhythm in the life of the Jewish people.

Wisdom - Wisdom Psalms impart practical insights and moral teachings, offering guidance on living a righteous and fulfilling life.

Lament - heartfelt expressions of sorrow, grief, or distress. They provide a space for individuals to pour out their emotions.

Grab your Bibles and open them with me to Psalm 30. This is a thanksgiving psalm. As you are getting there, here is some context. This was likely written after David sinned by conducting a census. In other words, he sent out his officials to count how many Israelites were under his rule (you can find this story in 1 Chronicles 22.) David took pride in how powerful his army was instead of how powerful his God was. He was warned that it was the wrong thing to do, but chose to do it anyway. When we intentionally sin, it separates us from God. It's not necessarily because God turns His back on us, but by intentionally sinning, we are turning our back on Him. A beautiful thing about our God is that even when we don't pursue Him, He pursues us. As soon as we make the choice to return, God is there. This psalm was written after David made the choice to return.

As we read, I want to encourage you to slow down and focus your mind and heart on the Lord. **Remember this moment is holy, because God is holy and God is here.** Let's take a moment to ask God to continue to speak to us as we spend time in His word. [Pray.]

[TEACHER NOTE: The goal here is to really soak in Scripture. You can encourage students to partner up, turn on instrumental music and read it on their own, or read this together as a big group, or have a variety of students preselected to take turns reading. Do whatever works best for the context of your group.]

PSALM 30 (Niv)

I will exalt you, LORD,

for you lifted me out of the depths

and did not let my enemies gloat over me.

LORD my God, I called to you for help,

and you healed me.

You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead;

you spared me from going down to the pit.



Surface Question

1. What is a song, movie, or show that you've had stuck in your head recently? How did it make you feel?

Serious Questions

2. Why do you think the things we constantly listen to, watch, or think about can influence our emotions and attitudes so much?
3. Have you ever had a time when preparing ahead (for school, sports, or life) made a big difference in how you handled something? What happened?

Spiritual Questions

4. Psalm 37 refers to trusting in the Lord and taking delight in Him (Psalm 37:3-4). What does it practically look like for you to "delight in the Lord" in your everyday life?
5. The speaker said, "The question isn't are you being formed? It's, who or what are you being formed into?" How does this challenge the way you think about the media and influences in your life? (Reference: Romans 12:2)
6. Psalm 37 promises that when we commit our way to the Lord, He will make our paths firm (Psalm 37:5, 23-24). How does trusting God give you confidence even when life feels uncertain or hard?
7. What are some "ingredients" (habits, relationships, spiritual practices) you can intentionally add to your life now to help you pursue God's wisdom before you face difficult choices? (Reference: Psalm 119:103)
8. The message reminded us that God's wisdom leads us to true freedom, not boring rules. How has following God's wisdom (even when it's hard) brought real life or joy into your life? (Reference: John 10:10)

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