Hearing The Lord

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 31 December 2023

Preacher: Pastor Ken

[0:00] Please open up to Isaiah 6, Isaiah 6. We are actually going to be in several passages today, so be ready, get those fingers ready to either type in the passage that we're going to be at or to flip the pages, whatever it is you need to do, they will not be on the screen.

And as has been made abundantly clear, 2023 has come and gone quickly. We are one day from 2024 starting off, and if you're like most people, and I used to be one of these people, I am sometimes if I remember, you may be contemplating what lies ahead.
What is the year going to look like for you? People even set goals, we call them New Year's resolutions, and some of them are physical or financial concerning the health of an individual.
Mine is always physical health, and I always, always manage to break my New Year's resolution by January 2nd. But that's what the goals are made for, right, to be broken.
Or maybe they're made to be met. No, records are made to be broken. I don't want to be setting bad records in my life. But the reality is that's what people do. They plan their year, they make resolutions, set goals.
[1:21] Maybe they want to spend more time with family or friends. Maybe they want to spend more time reading the Word and in prayer. And truth be told, as a pastor, I am thinking an awful lot about our church and our church people and what's going on in their lives.

And I'm thinking about these things for myself as well. Always, I would like to spend more time in prayer and more time in the Word. And I don't know how many pastors are honest about that, where they feel deficient.
And I do. I spend a lot of time in the Word in preparation, but I need it for personal edification as well. So that's something I pray about. And one thing I've been praying about a lot lately and thinking about a lot lately is the future of our church.
Now, what's it look like? What's God got planned for us five years from now, 10 years from now, 15 years from now? And the answer is, I mean, I have absolutely no idea.
I mean, nobody really does right here. I mean, if you know, please come step forward and let's chat after service because I want to write this down. But the reality is, is that I have no idea.
[2:35] All I know is I'm going to continue to remain faithful, to preach the Word and to pray and to feed the sheep and all that as I'm called to do. And I pray that you will continue to seek to be faithful to the Lord and to His Word and to seek Him out.

Seek His commands for your life and to seek Him in prayer. Those are the things that I pray for and I hope are your concerns and goals, not just in the coming year, but in the coming years that it is your life goal.
So along these lines and along the lines of it being New Year's, I did an about face pretty suddenly this week. Usually pastors, like when they have kind of a long-term plan for preaching set, they don't usually change it up.
And I had a plan. I was going to get into the book of Colossians and we're going to look at the supremacy of Christ and ultimately in our lives personally as well. But I did an about face this week and decided that I want to spend the next several weeks talking about our vision.
Talk about the vision of the church, talking about developing a biblical vision and setting goals as a church. And as it comes to this topic, I feel like there's kind of muddy waters to be strapped.
[4:05] Because when you think of vision and you think of setting goals for the future, you tend to get a corporate mindset and a business mindset, business mindedness.

And that's not at all the intent or desire that I have. So I wanted to start off this study about vision and our vision here at First Baptist Shapley by first dealing with what I feel is the most important thing, the most important aspect.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20

And that is that we first hear from the Lord and His desires for us. So that's what we're going to look at today in Isaiah 6 is his personal experience, Isaiah's experience of hearing the Lord and His response.
And what we can take away for ourselves and what we can take away as a church moving forward. So if you're in Isaiah, we're going to read chapter 6 and then we'll break it down.
Isaiah 6 verse 1. In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up and the train of His robe filled the temple.
[5:18] Above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings. With two He covered His face. And with two He covered His feet. And with two He flew. And one called to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of His glory. And the foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of Him who called. And the house was filled with smoke.
And I said, Woe is me! For I am lost! For I am a man of unclean lips! And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips! For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!
Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that was taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my hand and said, Behold, this has touched your lips.
Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?
[6:21] Then I said, Here I am. Send me. And he said, Go and say to this people, Keep on hearing, but do not understand.

Keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.
Then I said, How long, O Lord? And he said, Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste.
And the Lord removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.
And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled.
The holy seed is its stump. There's a lot in those 13 verses.
[7:34] There's a lot we can glean and take out and dive deep into, but I want to just kind of give an overview of this experience. This is Isaiah's call to ministry.

So, you know, it doesn't always make sense on how these things take place. This is chapter 6, not chapter 1. Why is that? Well, that's just the way God intended the compilation of his account for us from Isaiah.
But here, Isaiah is called to ministry, and he's called to do the work of the Lord. And I think there's important aspects we should take away from this account here in chapter 6.
First, in verses 1 through 4, we are given a glimpse of who the Lord is. Who the Lord is. When you're reading in Scripture, and you're reading the Bible, and you're, you know, you are being exposed to God's revelation to you or to his people.
You know, we are exposed, and in that revelation, he reveals himself. He reveals his plans. He reveals his intentions. He reveals his expectations.
[8:43] And so one of the things that we see here in verses 1 through 4 is we see him revealing himself. Revealing who he is.

We see first that he is the king on the throne. So King Uzziah has died. That's a big deal, right? The leader, the king of the nation has died, and now the Lord is seen sitting on a throne, and he's high and lifted up.
This is a reminder that he is in charge. He is in control. He is the king on the throne of all creation in the universe.
He is over it all. There is nothing above him. He's in charge, and he does whatever pleases him.
And Psalm 47, verse 8 tells us that God reigns over the nations.
God sits on his holy throne. There is nothing that happens in this world apart from God's knowledge and without being under God's control.
[9:52] That can be hard to accept. The sovereignty of God is a very difficult thing to comprehend and to apply, especially when you see and look around in this world, and you see hate, and you see war, and you see violence, and it just seems to be getting worse and worse.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20

And it seems like God's not in control. But I can assure you that he is. And Isaiah has seen the king on his throne high and lifted up above all else.
Psalm 115, verse 3 tells us our God is in the heavens. He does all that he pleases. His will is done on earth.
He knows the beginning from the end. He knows how it's all going to end up. And he has revealed to us some of that plan. He hasn't revealed to us every detail, right?
But as one of my favorite Southern Gospel songs says, I've read the back of the book, and we win. Right? Despite all the chaos, despite all the trials, and all the hardship, God has revealed the fact that in the end, victory is his.
[11:05] And it's ours if we're in Christ. What else do we learn about the Lord? Well, he's the Holy One. You have these angels who are proclaiming the primary attribute of God.

They're proclaiming the primary attribute of God. They're saying, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. They're not saying, love, love, love is the Lord of hosts.
One of the aspects in church ministry over the years that we've focused so much on the love of God that we don't give enough attention to the holiness of God and the justice of God.
Now, the, what I would say, the not so desirable to talk about traits of God, but are very true. And we see here as Isaiah sees him lifted up, holy, holy, holy is the Lord.
Yes, God is love. Yes, he does have love. And he shows that love. And he is good. And he shows his goodness. And he is forgiving.
[12:16] And he shows his forgiveness. And there are many other characteristics and attributes of God. I had contemplated doing that for a Sunday school series, and maybe I'll still yet do that, going through the characteristics of God so we can know him more and better.

But there's no more important characteristic in Scripture that we are exposed to about God other than his holiness, his being set apart and different and pure.
He's the holy one. And we're told that the earth is full of his glory. Psalm 19 verse 1 says, The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
The glory of God is revealed to man. Turn to Numbers 14. Numbers 14. And we'll go to Romans 1 after that.
So in the book of Numbers, chapter 14, we see this concept of the glory of God being revealed to man and the rejection of it, of his glory, being the basis on which the guilty are being charged.
[13:30] Numbers 14 verse 20. Numbers 14 verse 20. Then the Lord said, I have pardoned according to your word, but truly as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give their fathers, and none of those who despised me shall see it.

So God's saying here, he's revealing the fact that the men who have seen my glory and my signs, who have seen me work directly in Egypt, who have disobeyed me these, not one time, not two times, not three times, not four times, but ten times.
He's saying they've disobeyed me ten times. They've ignored the fact that they've seen my glory and seen my work. They've rejected that, and now they will not enter the promised land.
God's revelation of himself to them, that they have rejected or have forgotten or have not acted on, is the basis on which they are judged and not permitted to go into the promised land.
Turn we to Romans 1. Another area of scripture, one that is, I don't want to say relevant, because even Numbers 14, what we learn from that, the principle is relevant for us today.
[15:14] But in Romans 1, verses 18 and following, I mean, I would take it at the end of the chapter, but we're not doing a sermon on Romans 1, and I don't want to take too much time on that.

But we see in Romans 1, verse 18 through 20, Verse 20, And we'll pause there because there's a lot more after that that goes really deep, fast.
But the reality here is, God is saying that man stands before him guilty, because God has been plainly revealed to all people in creation.
And many people have suppressed the truth of the reality of God. And have, if we were to continue, verse 22, I'll say, Claiming to be wise, they became fools.
And they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. And they came up with explanations as to how we got here, where we came from.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20

[16:59] They created their own idols that they worship. They created their own philosophies in which they're explaining things apart from God's miraculous work, such as our very existence and our origin.

And he's saying, Man has suppressed the truth of the reality and the glory of God in all of creation. And claiming to be wise themselves, they became fools.
And they have rejected God. And because of that, man stands condemned before God. So who is the Lord?
He's the king on the throne. He's the holy one whose glory fills the earth. Going back to Isaiah, verses 5 through 7. We get now, what is man?
Or what man is? Got to get back there. Isaiah 6, verse 5 through 7. And I said, woe is me, for I am lost.
[18:04] So what man is? In the presence of God, he's ruined. Man is ruined in the presence of the Lord. Isaiah says, woe is me, for I am lost.

There's no hope. I don't know what to do before the holy God of all creation, the king upon the throne, the one whose glory fills the whole earth. Exodus 33, verse 20.
God speaking to Moses, but he said, you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.
Isaiah understood the consequence of seeing the Lord, that he cannot stand before God and live.
The temple sacrifice, you think about the way the temple's set up. You've got the court of the Gentiles, and you've got the court of women. And then as you go further in, you've got the holy place.
Then you've got the holy of holies. And the holy of holies, that is where the ark of the covenant, that is the holy of holies, where the presence of God was among his people.
[19:12] And the priest could go in, and they could serve through the temple. They could go through the different courts. They can go through the holy place, and they can light the altar of incense.

And they had the altars in which they offered sacrifices and all that. But how many times could they go into the holy of holies? What? Once a year.
They're allowed once a year on the day of atonement to enter into the holy of holies, to enter the presence of God. And even then, they couldn't just do it willy-nilly.
Right? They had a plan. There was something they had to do. What did they have to do? What? Purify themselves, yes. What did they have to do with them?
The blood of the sacrifice. Right? Together, we're all getting there. Right? They had to bring the blood of the sacrifice in with them and pour the blood on the ark of the covenant to appease the justice of God.
[20:18] Because sinful man, standing before a holy God, cannot stand and live. If a priest walked in and said, oops, I forgot the blood of the offering.

Well, guess what? All that got out of his mouth was oops, and that would have been it. He needs to bring the blood of the offering to pour on the altar as an offering to God for the sins of the people.
But he couldn't just come in and do that. One of the things about the high priest who would go in to the holy of holy on the day of atonement, I've heard this said before, and I'm assuming it's true, is that they had a rope or something attached to him.
Like, so that should he die in the presence of God, they could pull him out of the holy of holies.
Because if he dies in there, guess what's going to happen to the next guy who goes in to get him?
You can't just say, oh Lord, I'm just here to get, no, no, I'm here to get Joe out of here. No, no, he dies too. That's just the reality of man. In the presence of God, we are ruined.
[21:29] We are lost. We are without hope. We are sinful and he is holy. God's holiness is such that we can't even look at him and live unless he allows it.

And he does. Right? In Genesis 16, we saw that Hagar lived after seeing the Lord. And in Genesis 32, Jacob lived after seeing the Lord and they wrestled.
And Jacob lost. He was seeming to win, but guess what? God wins. Exodus 3, Moses lived after seeing the angel of the Lord in the bush.
Right? Have you ever noticed that? Like, we always talk about the burning bush, the burning bush, the burning bush. But one detail that's in there, it's the burning bush, right? But in the bush is the Lord. Now, I don't know if it's like a little person.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20

I mean, I don't know that, you know. But it's like the presence of God is there and Moses could live. And God also, John chapter 1, verses 14 and following, takes on human flesh and has revealed his truth and glory to us through his son, Jesus.
[22:35] Jesus. But in the presence of God, apart from the grace of God, we're toast. Turn me to Jeremiah 9.

So what man is ruined in the presence of the Lord. And then, as Isaiah says, he continues, he says, I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips.
Dishonest. People of unclean lips. That's what I put for what man is. People of unclean lips. Jeremiah 9, verses 2 through 6.
Jeremiah writes, Oh, that I had in the desert a traveler's lodging place that I might leave my people and go away from them. Ouch.
I mean, Jeremiah, prophet of God to the people, didn't even want to be around him. Like, Lord, I want a lodging place away from people.
[23:47] And I know there are some people here who love to have that. They would love to have a cabin deep in the mountains, in the woods where nobody could find them and they would feel satisfied that way.

And to some degree, some of that is because of the sinfulness of man. A lot of it, actually. So the fact that Jeremiah has this feeling, some of you can understand.
So he says that, I might leave my people and go away from them, for they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men. They bend their tongue like a bow.
Falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land, for they proceed from evil to evil and they do not know me, declares the Lord. Let everyone beware of his neighbor and put no trust in any brother.
For every brother is a deceiver and every neighbor goes about as a slanderer. Ow. What railing, you know, accusations against God's people here.
[24:48] You are a deceiver, a slanderer, a liar, an adulterer. I mean, everyone, verse 5, deceives his neighbor and no one speaks the truth. They've taught their tongue to speak lies.

They weary themselves committing iniquity, heaping oppression upon oppression and deceit upon deceit. They refuse to know me, declares the Lord.
Man. That is not a good testimony to have. Deceit after deceit, deception after deception, lie after lie.
As I was thinking of this, I mean, that's exactly how I felt the first time I was in Second Ani and just hearing one occasion after another of people who were trying to work against the sires and the ministry they had there.
And one lie after another piled up against, like, things that would not benefit the people. They're just trying to get Travis out for whatever reason. Right?
[25:53] And so that's the thing. That's what I was thinking of as I was reading this. I'm like, people of unclean lips who are constantly lying and not telling the truth. And the way it's written in Jeremiah, it's basically become the way of life for the people.

And the way it is in Kenya and other places, it's like the way of life for people. And you don't have to travel 3,000 miles to find it. You don't have to travel too much further than our area here and you'll find people whose way of life is full of lies.
One lie after another. One delusion after another. I mean, the focus on their deception and their evil speech.
Romans 1, 29 and 30, the key passage on the depravity of man says that they were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They're full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness.
They're gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents. This is man. This is the natural man.
[27:08] Murderous. They're of unclean lips. That's like a summation of deceit, gossiping, slandering, boastful.

But ultimately inventors of evil and haters of God. That's man. Apart from the grace of God apart from being in Christ, we're people of unclean lips.
And we know that we are people in need of forgiveness. The sacrificial system of the Jews was put in place to remind the people that they fall short of God's perfection and they need to be atoned for.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20

And that was the deal with Isaiah. He recognized he's before a holy God. He is unclean. He says, For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then one of the seraphim flies to him, having in his hand a burning coal that he's taken with tongs from the altar, and he touched my mouth.
He says, Behold, this has touched your lips. Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for. The recognition that that is what needed to happen. And God set that atonement for Isaiah in the moment.
[28:13] And that is why Jesus was born at Christmas, was to be the Lamb of God who atones for the sin of the world.

Then Isaiah 6, verses 8 through 13, you got what the call of God is. What the call of God is. First, the call of God is general.
He asks, Who will go? Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? A general call. God is looking for someone to proclaim his message.
God is looking for someone to go to the people. There's work that needs to be done and need for people to do it. In Matthew 9, verse 38, Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.
Right? The harvest is ready but the laborers are few. Romans 10, verse 14, How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?
[29:24] And how are they to hear without someone preaching? How can people get saved if they don't hear the message? How can they hear the message unless people go out to them? It's not, hey, let's bring them in so they can hear the gospel.

Let's bring them in so they can hear the gospel. Let's bring them in so they can get saved. No, I was just having a conversation this morning with somebody. It's not about what we can do to bring people in to hear the word of God. If people choose to come in and hear it, praise God, let them listen and sit and listen and be taught and pray that the Holy Spirit will work in their heart.
But the fact is God sends people out into the harvest. God sends people out to the other people to hear the message.
He's given us a message to share that they can hear and believe but they can't hear and believe unless someone preaches and someone can't preach to them unless they're sent, sent out.
And we need to go. And that's what Isaiah was told to do, go. And he answers the call to go. And the message that he's given, it's not one that's going to cause people to jump for joy or hey, I'm next up.
[30:38] I'm going to go and do this. It's a message that he's given is one that's going to cause the people to become dull to the Lord. Literally, it's going to make their hearts fat.

So they're going to keep on hearing but do not understand, keep on seeing but do not perceive, make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy and blind their eyes.
This is what the Lord said would happen before they went into the promised land in Deuteronomy 31 verse 20. He says, for when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey which I swore to give to their fathers and they've eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them and despise me and break my covenant or my covenant.
So Isaiah is given a message to go to the people and the result of his preaching is that these people are going to grow dull, their hearts are going to grow fat, they're going to have deaf ears and blind eyes and they're going to turn from God and serve other gods and idols and they're going to despise Yahweh and they're going to break their covenant with him.
That's what he promised in Deuteronomy 31 and that's what he said to Isaiah would happen when he preached to the people. The message is to be proclaimed as he's told until judgment comes on the nation.
[32:05] Right? Verse 11 How long, O Lord? And he said until cities lie waste without inhabitant houses without people and the land is desolate waste.

A desolate waste by the way is not a good thing but you know that, right? It's not a good thing until judgment comes on the nation. He'd be a preacher to a people that will grow increasingly less sensitive to the things of the Lord and the fruit of his labor will be an increasingly shrinking population of faithful followers.
All I can say is if that was ever given to me in a job description I don't think I would take it. That's discouraging.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20

In a world where success is determined by the amount of followers that someone has or how quickly growth is taking place Isaiah would be deemed a failure. The fact is that the sign of a healthy church or ministry is not about the size of the group following the leader or whether or not the ministry is growing by leaps and bounds.
The sign of a healthy ministry, the sign of a healthy church is whether or not the message that has been given to it is faithfully preached and taken into the world. Isaiah's call to ministry was accompanied with a unique experience.
[33:27] We don't have these experiences. We don't see the Lord high and lifted up. We don't have that experience that Isaiah had. But it was not a desirous opportunity.

As a preacher, if I ever sat with a pulpit committee and they said, no one's going to listen to you, the church is going to shrink and they're going to despise you.
You know, just something about that tells me I don't really want that job. And that's what Isaiah had. But he was to proclaim a message to a deceitful people who would grow increasingly insensitive to the things of the Lord.
Consider what the church is called to. Matthew 28, 19, go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Matthew 5, 16, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
1 Peter 4, 14, if you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. If you're insulted for the name of Christ, you're blessed.
[34:38] Praise God for the persecution. Praise God for the hate and the people who despise you because you're faithful with the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The message that we proclaim to the world is offensive to them.

The world doesn't want to hear it. Even more so now than in years past. it causes them to either accept or reject the word of God and often they're rejecting the truth of the word and they ridicule the messengers.
They malign the people who bring it because we're just bigoted individuals who don't have any understanding and are deceived. Just like Isaiah, we're called to proclaim the message that we have heard from the Lord and to proclaim it until the time of judgment comes.
So let's be faithful to hear what the Lord has said and to proclaim it to others. Matthew 10, 24-28 A disciple is not above his teacher nor a servant above his master.
It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher and the servant like his master. If they've called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they malign those of his household?
[35:49] So have no fear of them for nothing is covered that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark say in the light and what you hear whispered proclaim on the housetops and do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body and hell. Let's hear from the Lord and do as he has commanded and is expecting us to do.
Father God, thank you for your word. Lord, as we think about the future of our church, Lord, we think about what you are calling us to do. Lord, what you've given us to do.
I pray, Father, that we would indeed have ears that hear and Lord, that we'd have feet to do and hands to work all for your glory all to point people to Jesus.
Lord, how can they believe if they've not heard? Lord, how can they hear if we don't have a preacher and how can someone preach unless they're sent? Send us, Lord. Send us from 600 Shapley Corner Road into the highways and byways, Lord, into Sanford and Newfield and Acton, Springvale, Lord, Tampa, Florida, wherever you call us, wherever we need to be.
[37:16] help us to take your message to proclaim your truth in a world that doesn't want to hear it. Lord, their hearts may grow fat and their ears are blocked, they're deaf, their eyes are blind to the truth, but may we proclaim it anyway because it's what you've called us to do.

We want to be faithful servants as your servant Isaiah was for you. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 23:11:20