



NEW FOUNTAIN
BAPTIST CHURCH

**CHURCH WORKERS
RETREAT 2024**

**SAT. 3RD
FEBRUARY**

**STARTS @
9AM MAT**

an THEME:
obedient
church
worker

Isaiah 6:8

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AN OBEDIENT CHURCH WORKER

Being a Teaching Presented
At New Fountain Baptist
Church, Ipaja, Lagos Workers'
Retreat **By Rev Timothy
Olatunde Tijani.**



Isaiah 6:8 - Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here [am] I; send me.

WHY IS IT SO?

- All of us know that we must obey God, but somehow we still act in rebellion and many times end up into trouble as a result of our disobedience
- Even when we know what God wants us to do we act otherwise?
- Could it be we don't really understand the meaning of Obedience or we forget how important it is? Or we need help on how to obey?
- We know we will be judged on our obedience to our God-given calling in life. (Romans 11:29 - for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable; Eph. 4:1 – Walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called). Yet, we disobey. Why is it so?



INTRODUCTION

I count it a rare privilege to be here after some time. May God continue to transform His Church to His glory alone in Jesus' name. Our theme for this retreat appears simple, yet, very fundamental to pleasing and satisfying God as a church worker.

A church worker is an individual selected or elected through the knowing of God to join God at work as a partner in His Vineyard (among His people) to better their lives and the peace of the World.

It is a privilege to be referred to as a worker in God's vineyard – the church. Meanwhile, there are different kinds of workers in His vineyard. Approved and unapproved workers (2Tim 2:14-19), Wicked and Lazy workers (Matt. 25:23, 26), hardworking and faithful workers (Matt. 25:23,26), disobedient (Jonah), and obedient (Paul, Jesus, Isaiah, Esther etc.) workers, we also have spoilers, betrayers (Judas Iscariot, Gehazi) as workers in God's Vineyard. Equally there are sacrificial, honest, committed, loyal, exemplary workers among others.

For this year's workers retreat we are considering "An Obedient Church Worker!" Among several examples of people in the Bible who obeyed the Lord as a worker in His Vineyard, this Retreat will focus more on Prophet Isaiah's obedience for our learning. He was divinely chosen, cheerfully willing and Sent by the Trinity.



WHAT DOES OBEDIENCE MEAN?

- In simple terms it means hearing the word of God and acting on it promptly.
- It implies aligning our will to God’s will; doing what God has asked us to do accordingly.
- It is when we completely surrender to His authority and base our decisions and our actions on His Word.
- Who then is an obedient church worker?

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ISAIAH 6

Isaiah 6:1a opens to the announcement that King Uzziah has died. This opening fails to account for how the death of King Uzziah affects Isaiah, but since he was the only king Isaiah had known, as well as the growing sense of doom building from the Assyrian threat by Tiglath-Pileser III’s ascendancy, it might have affected him greatly. Isaiah’s confidence in the king of his youth must have been smashed as Judah’s leader succumbs to shame, stupor, leprosy and finally death; certainly the stability of his homeland without its king was in his worries. It is likely that Isaiah knew of the Prophets Hosea and Amos (2 Chronicles 26) earlier warnings to the economically and militarily successful King Uzziah and his people that their societal sins would bring punishment from God. Without question, at the time of his death, his people are ripe for judgment against their sins by an angry LORD God that had lost His patience.



ISAIAH 6

It is important to note that young Isaiah saw his king rot and succumb to the leprosy of uncleanness, and at his king's death, he visualizes standing in the midst of God's realm with supernatural visions that reveal the righteous and holy, holy, holy Lord of hosts sitting upon His throne, lifted high above the degeneration of human depravity that was encroaching the land of Judah (v. 1, 8). But we saw the following about Isaiah.

1. He was spiritually alive/ had spiritual connection with God. (Isaiah 6:1)

The opening perceptions of Isaiah where he sees the Lord sitting in verse 1 connects strongly to verse 8 where he hears the voice of the Lord.

2. He Experienced Transformation. (Isaiah 6:2-3)

It seems Isaiah becomes transformed through the words of unending praise from the Seraphim, as if his very spirit is raised high to join them in the praise of His Lord then plunges to the depth of despair when he realizes the condition of his unclean lips (v. 5).

3. He made a Self-Evaluation. (Isaiah 6:5-7)

It is noteworthy, that Isaiah blames himself, not the people he dwells with that also suffer from this sinful condition; this accountability, most certainly is made possible through self-evaluation because of the purifying smoke that penetrates his being, and the powerful viewing with his own eyes the King, the Lord of hosts, that brings repentance and shame.

4. Separation from worldliness/Purified. (Isaiah 6:6)

Isaiah 6:6 records the cleansing of Isaiah's lips touched by a hot, fiery coal held by the tongs of one Seraph that sears the impurities, takes the iniquity away, and purges the sin.



It is interesting that Isaiah speaks of two results to the touching of his lips with the hot coal to be “thine iniquity - wrongdoing is taken away” and “thy sin - wickedness purged.” Both the unholy action and the wicked result are purged from Isaiah by the fiery coal – glowing coal.

5. Recognition of the reigning King

Isaiah’s recognition of the Lord of hosts as his King connects the death of his human king to the very alive and powerfully reigning King of Kings. Any despair that Isaiah feels upon the death of King Uzziah has been replaced by the recognition of his awesome, glorious and eternal King and Lord that sits upon the throne of God.

6. He gave himself unreservedly. (Isaiah 6:8)

Isaiah volunteered for sacred service, gave himself unreservedly. He did not say, Here am I; use me where I am, but send me. Where to? No condition as to place is so much as hinted at. He gives obediently, for he pauses not to ask directions. It is not, Here am I; away I will go, but Here am I; send me.

QUALIFICATIONS TO BE AN OBEDIENT CHURCH WORKER

Again, Isaiah 6 is filled with brilliant imagery, passion, and religious depth that stir the calling of God in the souls of believers, especially in the first eight verses of the chapter.

The placement of Chapter 6 shows its dependence upon chapters 1-5 that record accusations against the people’s unwillingness to obey God. The Temple of God that will soon be raised again as Cyrus the builder’s arrival is announced in Isaiah 44:28.



Isaiah 6 bridges the fallen state of Judah with the raising of a Temple connecting God's people to the Lord with His throne in Heaven.

Against this background,

Isaiah 6:8 – The call of God starts with a question that demands an answer, “Who shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah’s purged, clean lips answers “Here am I; send me.” Then God commissions Isaiah as His mouthpiece, “Go, and tell this people.” The message that follows spoken by Isaiah, God’s messenger, with the words directed for him to say, will affect God’s People, both the Jews and later the Christians, from that point on as God warns of desolation to come upon His people as spiritual obstinacy is placed upon them in punishment for their disobedience to Him. **What qualifies Isaiah for this divine assignment, qualifies us as church workers.**

1. WILLINGNESS - God will not commission an unwilling individual as His messenger and as His mouthpiece. V.8

2. PURITY - Isaiah though willing to be God’s messenger, but, was purged, and had clean lips. Isaiah’s obedience to God and the purging of his sin recorded in Isaiah 6:1-8 is in direct contrast to God’s people’s disobedience to Him, and their plunging to blindness and deafness a direct result of their sinful nature against God.

3. SACRIFICE - Obedience is not easy; it can be hard. It takes sacrifice.



4. LOVING RELATIONSHIP - By having a loving relationship with God. Let us decide to honor God with our decisions and actions by doing what He tells us Our primary motive for obedience must be to please God because 1.we love Him. It's easy to do something when we do it out of Love even when it's uncomfortable.

5. ENCOUNTER - Thematically, Isaiah 6:1-4 describes Isaiah's vision of the LORD God and claims to present specific words from God originating from a face-to-face encounter. Isaiah experiences a sense of unworthiness in 6:5-7 and receipt of God's commission in 6:8-13 in a structure similar to other Old Testament call stories that contains divine confrontation (6:1-2), introductory word (6:3-7), commission (6:8-10), objection (6:11a) and reassurance (6:11b-13).

6. SPIRITUAL AWARENESS - Isaiah's dirtied lips show that when dwelling amongst others of sinfulness, the dirty condition is apt to come upon even the most devoted to God. The process of spiritual awareness and understanding is critical upon the eyes and ears and heart. These three senses are controlled by God; it is His grace that opens them for His spiritual message to be received. And it is God that closes these senses down to prevent the disobedient from receiving his teachings and grace.

7. SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING - The Lord Jesus Christ is fully aware of this condition that is brought upon the disobedient, and patterns His teachings to His followers to give them new spiritual understanding without revealing the same to those God has brought stubbornness upon. Even today, the condition of stubbornness prevents Jewish



interpreters from reaching the Christian understanding of prophecy in matters like contained in Isaiah 7:14 about the future virgin birth of Christ, and the prophecy Christ’s suffering in Isaiah 53. Isaiah 6 is filled with deep spiritual teachings that provide believers with understanding of the holiness of God, His will for His People, and the desolation that disobedience to Him brings.

8. GOD’S QUALIFICATION - God specially qualifies His messengers. How does He in a special manner fit men for His highest service? i. By an awe-inspiring sight of Himself. ii. By distressing convictions of personal sin. iii. By sanctifying all the faculties to His use.

IMPORTANCE OF OBEDIENCE FOR A CHURCH WORKER

Isaiah, in demonstrating his Obedience to God suggests its importance in the following ways:

- It is an act of worship - demonstrating his love for God and sets him apart. John 14: 23-24.
- It is an act of Faith - Our choice to obey therefore demonstrates our trust in God. It shows that even though it’s hard, even though it doesn’t make sense we will still do it. It shows God that we trust Him. (It is a demonstration of our faith).

- Mention others.

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ANY REWARD FOR OBEDIENCE AS A CHURCH WORKER?

Suggest some of the rewards Isaiah got:

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Obedience shows God that we love Him and we trust Him which in turn activates His power in our lives; but most importantly there is a reward for obedience.

1. SUCCESS

Everyone wants to be successful at what they do; interestingly, God in His Word gives us a simple secret for success which is reading His Word and obeying it. God has a plan for each and every one of us; Plans to prosper us and plans to give us a future. (Ref Jer 29:11), Joshua 1:8.

Are you being successful? Perhaps all you need to do is to go back to the basics; Read His word and act on it.



2. BLESSINGS. ISAIAH 1:18-19

God has promised to bless us if we fully obey Him. The challenge with the twisted gospel today is that we are sometimes misled that for as long we believe in God, pray we will be blessed. The prosperity gospel emphasize on rewards without necessarily emphasizing on obedience. But the Bible is so clear... We must fully obey first. Deuteronomy 28: 1-14 outlines the blessings that God has promised for us if we obey them. Notice the blessing will come if we FULLY obey God.

The rewards for obedience are clear:

Verse 12: You will be blessed where ever you go; Your children will be blessed; God will protect you; He will grant you abundant prosperity; Everything you set your hand on will be successful; The Lord will help you to stand out.

Verse 13: If you pay attention to the commands of the Lord your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom.

Verse 14: Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.



CONCLUSION

Isaiah's history is a picture of what many and many a true Christian labourer may expect. Isaiah was sent to preach very unpleasant truth, but like a true hero he was very bold in preaching it. Isaiah was very bold servant of God. Now, if you are called of God either to preach or teach, or whatever it is, remember the things you have to preach or teach will not be agreeable to your hearers. (C. H. Spurgeon).

Gods call should meet with a ready response. He desires volunteers, Who will go for us? The constraint of love is the omnipotent motive force. The call is heard individually - I heard the voice of the Lord. The call provokes self-surrender - Here am I. The call demands entire self-abandonment - Send me anywhere, on any errands, at any time, in any capacity.

Isaiah 6 gives Christian workers today both an understanding for the work of God and disobedience to His work. Be willing to do the hard things obediently, even when it doesn't make sense because you know a blessing will follow, for yourself, and for your family. Although difficult, obedience sets us apart as authentic children of God. God will know us by our obedience, even those around us will be inspired by our obedience.

Obedience demonstrates our faith and trust in God; Obedience is the key to our success; Obedience is the sure and promised way for unlocking blessings for our lives. For us to be able to fully obey, we must read His word every day and ask God to empower us with His holy spirit so that our life is going to honor Him.

Thank You for Listening!