

# Fix Your Gaze on God's Holiness

- Psalm 99 -

## 1. The PROBLEM OF DISTRACTION

A. Examples of women who are distracted

B. The fruit of distraction: unholy fear (fear of man, fear of the future, fear of failure...)

C. Our purpose? *To glorify God and enjoy Him forever* (so we can worship Him and become like Him); only possible if we see Him rightly

D. The CROSS CHART

Guides our journey to the Father (in union with Christ)

1. *Satan's Scheme:*

a. DISTRACTION

b. DECEPTION

c. DESPAIR

2. *God's Solution:*

a. FIX your gaze on God's holiness

b. FACE your own sinfulness

c. FLOURISH in union with Jesus

## 2. OUR HOLY GOD

A. Definition of *HOLY*

B. Encountering God's Holiness (Isaiah 6:1-7)

C. God's Holiness is Beautiful: Woos us to both BEHOLD and BECOME more like God (holy, as He is holy)

D. How do we dare to approach God in His holiness?  
Only in union with Jesus!

## 3. GOD'S HOLINESS expressed in His reign (vs. 1-3)

God the King is enthroned on high...

A. "between the cherubim" (vs. 1)

B. "at His footstool" (vs. 4-5)

C. "from the pillar of cloud" (vs. 6-7)

D. "at His holy mountain" (vs. 8-9)

## 4. GOD'S HOLINESS expressed in His righteousness (vs. 4-5)

A. The holy King loves justice

B. Established equity (fairness)

C. Executed justice and righteousness in Jacob

D. How must we respond? Exalt Him!

## 5. GOD'S HOLINESS expressed in His relationships (vs. 6-9)

### A. Those who CALLED on the Lord

1. Moses and Aaron
2. Samuel

### B. How did God Respond?

1. God Answered them (vs. 7-8)
2. God Forgave them (vs. 8)

### C. How can a holy God hear and answer the prayers of sinful people?

### D. How must we respond?

1. Cry out to Him
2. Keep His law
3. Exalt Him!

## 6. THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING!

Encountering God's Holiness... (Isaiah 6:1-8)

A. Wakes us up spiritually

B. Reveals God's mercy and grace for us in Christ

C. Restores our fear of God

D. Humbles us--restores our perspective on ourselves and our "place"

E. Forms the foundation of our calling

F. Drives us to JESUS, to remove our sin and give us His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21)

**G. Compels us to look at God's holiness through the lens of Jesus!**

## PRAYER OF RESPONSE

Write a prayer of response to God *based on how He is speaking to you from His Word.*

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What form does distraction take in your life? What is it stealing from you?
2. How has distraction from God opened the door to unholy fear in your life (and caused you to live more as a spiritual orphan than God's much-loved child)?
3. How does the Cross Chart clarify the journey of sanctification/growth in Christlikeness you are on?
4. Share about a time you began to understand God's holiness. What changed in your perception of God – and yourself – as a result?
5. How does God's holiness expressed in His Kingly REIGN change you?
6. How does God's holiness expressed in His RIGHTEOUSNESS affect you?
7. How does God's holiness expressed in His RELATIONSHIPS encourage you?
8. Why *must* we look at God's holiness through the lens of Jesus?



# Face Your Own Sinfulness

- Psalm 32 -

## 1. The PROBLEM OF SIN/DECEPTION

A. Examples of women who are deceived

B. Seeing the effects of The Fall each day: war, poverty, disease, famine, disaster, trafficking, starvation...

Where did it all begin? (Gen 3)

C. The Backstory of Psalm 32

D. The CROSS CHART

1. *Satan's Scheme*: Distracting us from God's holiness, we lose sight of our sin and become deceived about it and its only solution in Christ.

2. *God's Solution*: God helps us face our sin; then calls us to regular rhythms of gazing on His holiness and repenting of how we fall short.

## 2. A TAXONOMY OF SIN (v. 1-2)

A. Transgression

B. Sin

C. Iniquity

3. The **CURSE OF SILENCE** about Our Sin (v. 3-4)  
(a Sign of Spiritual Orphanhood)

A. Instead of confession, we do what we think will make us feel better.

1. Self-justification

2. Blame-shifting

3. Self-saving (becoming our own savior)

4. Shame (and then doing penance)

5. Compensation (learning more, trying harder)

B. SILENCE = lack of confession

C. Effects of silence about our sin: bones waste away, groaning

D. Constant conviction from God

E. Loss of Strength

4. The **BLESSING OF CONFESSION** (vs. 5)  
(a Sign of Sonship/Daughterhood)

A. Acknowledging our sins

B. Not covering, but exposing our iniquities

C. Confessing our transgressions

1. Sins of the Younger Brother (or Younger Sister) (Luke 15:11-32)
2. Sins of the Older Brother (or Older Sister) (Luke 15:11-32)

D. What God does with our sin because of Christ:

1. Forgives
2. Covers
3. Refuses to count it against us/impute it to our account

## 5. THE TIME IS NOW! (vs. 6)

- A. Therefore, offer God our prayers of repentance **while He may be found.**
- B. Judgment is coming; God's protection in Christ is available now.

## 6. EXPERIENCE GOD AS YOUR HIDING PLACE (vs. 7)

- A. "You are a hiding place for me."
- B. "You preserve me from trouble."
- C. "You surround me with shouts of deliverance."

## 7. GOD PROMISES TO GUIDE & COUNSEL YOU (vs. 8-9)

- A. "I will instruct teach you"

B. "I will counsel you"

C. Warning: Don't be like a horse or mule. STAY CLOSE TO ME!

## 8. REJOICING for the UPRIGHT in HEART (vs. 10-11)

A. Sorrows of the wicked vs. Steadfast Love (hesed) for those trust the Lord

B. Be glad and rejoice!

## 9. TURNING THE CORNER on the CROSS CHART (Rom 8:1)

A. Are we "in Christ"? "There is therefore now no condemnation for us."

B. Seeing Our Sin AND Seeing Ourselves in Union with Christ

C. Confessing Our Sin as Beloved Daughters (not Orphans)

D. Rejecting the deceptive path of self-reliance and relying wholly on Christ's propitiation of our sin and His gift of righteousness

## **PERSONAL REFLECTION**

1. What does our sin have in common with the root of Adam and Eve's sin in Genesis 3?
2. Where have you seen evidence of Transgression, Sin, and Iniquity in your life?
3. How have you "kept silent" – trying to be your own savior? (In Self-justification, Blame-shifting, Self-saving, Shame (penance), Compensation (learn more, try harder)?)
4. What has keeping silent cost you?
5. In dealing with sin, have you operated more as a spiritual orphan or a much-loved child?
6. How is God's Holy Spirit working to convict you? Will you receive this as a loving gift from your holy heavenly Father?
7. Following the instructions in Psalm 32:5, are you ready to confess your sin?
8. CROSS CHART: Write out the promise of Romans 8:1:

9. Are you ready to “turn the corner” and see yourself in union with Christ, seeking God as your “hiding place?”

10. Are you willing to stay close to God, seeking His guidance and counsel?

11. Will you rejoice in God’s power to forgive your sin and draw you closer to Himself through Christ?

## **PRAYER OF RESPONSE**

Write a prayer of response to God *based on how He is speaking to you from His Word.*

# Flourish in Union with Christ

- Psalm 22; Matthew 27:32-56 -

## 1. The PROBLEM OF DESPAIR

A. Examples of women in Despair

B. The CROSS CHART

1. *Satan's Scheme*: Through Distraction and Deception, he wants us to rely completely on ourselves in dealing with our sin – which leads naturally to Despair (“You are on your own.”)

2. *God's Solution*: He invites us to remember and live in light of our union with Christ – and flourish. (“Because I am united to Christ, God is with me and for me.”)

## 2. “THE PSALM OF THE CROSS”

A. A Psalm of David; prophetic picture of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 40-55)

B. Psalm 22 – Jesus sings His song of lament at the crucifixion

C. (Read Psalm 22 and Matthew 27:32-56 antiphonally)

### 3. THE SUFFERING SAVIOR (v. 1-24)

A. CHIASM (a literary device that inverts grammatical structure or ideas) (vs. 1-24)

B. Because Jesus was forsaken, we are never abandoned in suffering

1. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (vs. 1)

2. "...and not hidden his face from Him, but has heard when He cried to Him." (vs. 24)

3. "X" marks the spot: "But you, O LORD, do not be far off! O you, my help, come quickly to my aid!" (vs. 19)

C. Jesus teaches us how to pray in suffering (vs. 1-5; 9-11; 19-21)

D. Jesus was crushed for our transgressions (vs. 6-8; 12-13; 14-18)

### 4. THE EXULTANT SAVIOR (vs. 22-31)

For the joy set before Him...Jesus trusted the Father to resurrect Him.

A. Jesus sees the future fruit of His atoning work  
—among his "brothers" (vs. 22-24)

B. Jesus sees the future fruit of His atoning work  
—among the "great congregation" (vs. 25-26)

C. Jesus sees the future fruit of His atoning work  
–among “all the families of the nations” (vs. 27-29)

D. Jesus sees the future fruit of His atoning work  
–among “the coming generation” (vs. 30-31)

5. “HE HAS DONE IT!” (vs. 31)

A. CHRIST United Himself with us

B. OUR Union with Christ

1. In suffering
2. In worship
3. In prayer
4. In evangelism

C. Christ’s completed work for us

6. THE CROSS CHART: a picture of our UNION WITH CHRIST (2 Cor. 3:12-18)

A. Turning the corner from DESPAIR (“I am alone in my sin.”) to HOPE (“Christ is with me.”)

B. Believing there is no Condemnation for us (Romans 8:1)

C. Journeying to the Father as much-loved children (instead of orphans)

D. Trusting our union with Christ all the way into the Throne Room (Hebrews 10:19-23)

E. Coming with “boldness and confidence” (Hebrews 4:16) through the “new and living way” (Hebrews 10:20) – No wallflowers!

F. Enjoying a fully restored relationship with the Father as a much-loved child

G. Beholding God; Becoming like Him

## **PRAYER OF RESPONSE**

Write a prayer of response to God *based on how He is speaking to you from His Word.*

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What does it mean that Christ has united Himself to you?
2. What essential lie of the enemy does union with Christ silence forever?
3. Are you living so deeply in union with Christ that He is empowering you to proclaim the gospel to “the coming generation” (Psalm 22:30-31)?
4. How do you process the torturous suffering Jesus endured to restore you to the Father?
5. Have you lived at arm’s length from God? How does Jesus’ suffering and completed work on your behalf shift that for you?
6. In what area of your life do you most need to remember your union with Christ by faith?
7. In light of Christ’s completed work on your behalf, are you now able to respond to God’s invitation to come with “boldness and confidence” into the Father’s presence?
8. Will you leave spiritual orphanhood behind – and come as a beloved, blood-bought daughter all the way into the Throne Room?
9. As you behold God with an “unveiled face,” will you ask Him to make you more like Jesus?



# Find Freedom to Be Transformed in God's Presence

- 2 Corinthians 3:7-18 -

## 1. The PROBLEM OF HIDING

A. Examples of women in hiding

B. The CROSS CHART

1. *Satan's Scheme*: The enemy tempts us to settle for far less than all God has for us in Christ.  
("Just settle for an arm's length relationship with God.")
2. *God's Solution*: He invites us to remember and live in light of our union with Christ—and be transformed into His image, from glory to glory.  
("Because you are united to Christ, I now look at you through the lens of Jesus. Nothing can hold you back from coming all the way into My presence, where I will change you into the glorious likeness of Jesus.")

## 2. CONTEXT of 2 Corinthians

A. The Issues in Corinth Paul addresses in the letter

B. The practice of Hiding vs. the calling to Boldness (vs. 12)

3. A Tale of Two COVENANTS (2 Corinthians 3:7-15)

<b>OLD COVENANT</b>	<b>NEW COVENANT</b>

4. A Tale of Two GLORIES (2 Corinthians 3:7-15)

<b>OLD GLORY</b>	<b>NEW GLORY</b>

5. "Veiled" Faces (vs. 13-15)

- A. The Veil of Personal Comfort
- B. The Veil of Fear of Condemnation/Rejection
- C. The Veil of Isolation
- D. The Veil of Unbelief
- E. The Veil of Independence

6. "Unveiled" Faces (vs. 16-18)

- A. Revealed as we "turn to the Lord" (vs. 16)
- B. Result from the freedom found in the Lord/Holy Spirit (vs. 17)
- C. Ready us for Change/Transformation (vs. 18)
- D. Restore Us as God's Image-bearers

7. **BEHOLDING God; BECOMING like Him** (vs. 18)

- A. Beholding the Glory of the Lord (as in a mirror)
- B. Becoming like our Glorious God (metamorphoo)
  - 3. Transformation
  - 4. Transfiguration
- C. From Glory to Glory

## 8. The CROSS CHART:

A Picture of Our UNION WITH CHRIST (2 Cor. 3:12-18)

A. No wallflowers in the Throne Room!

B. The Father's Invitation: "Lift your eyes to Jesus, and come all the way into My presence, where I will make you more like Him."

## PRAYER OF RESPONSE

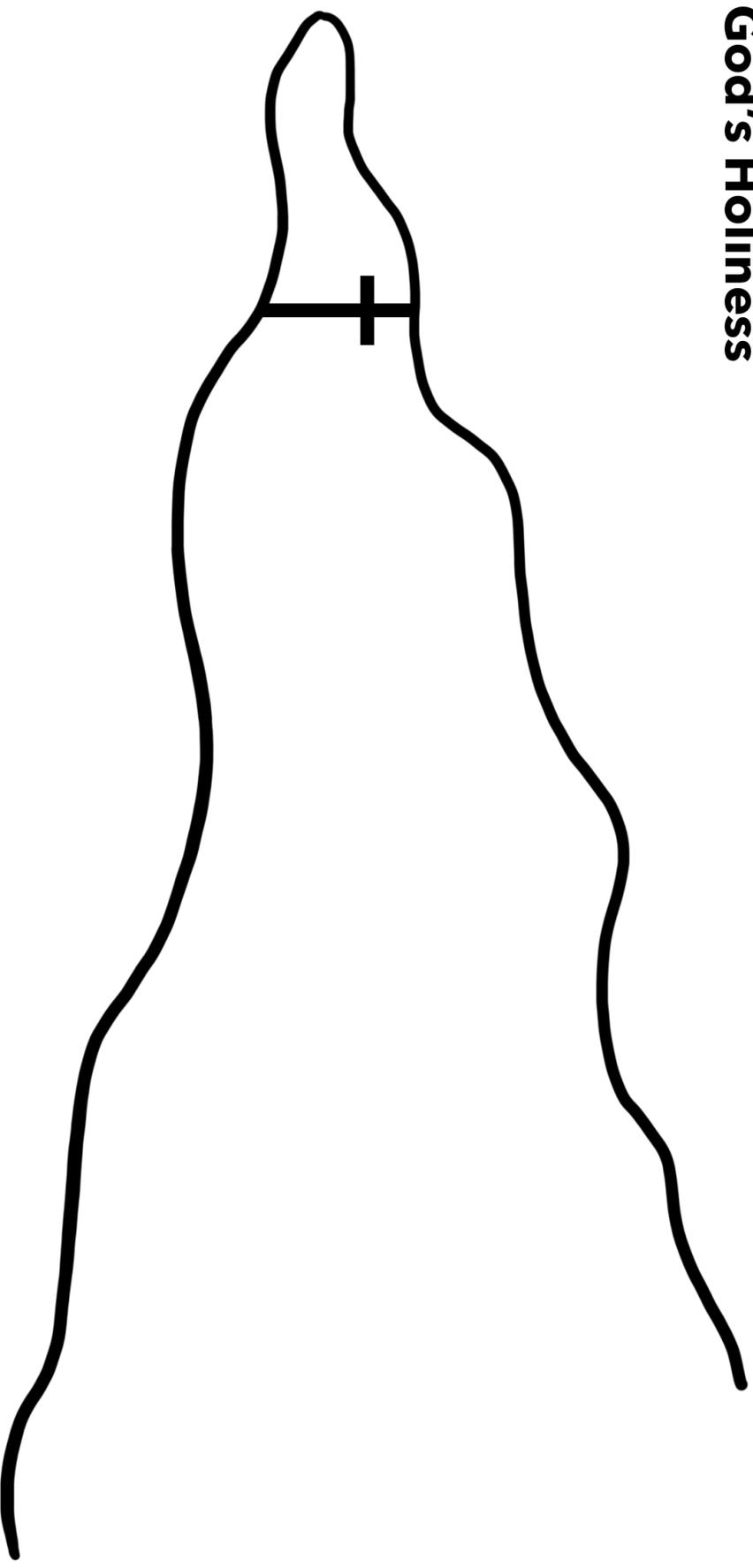
Write a prayer of response to God *based on how He is speaking to you from His Word.*

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. (How) have you lived with a “veiled face” – before God?
2. (How) have you lived with a “veiled face” – before others?
3. How has Christ removed your veil?
4. Have you been living out your faith as a “wallflower” in the Throne Room?
5. Are you ready to walk in the freedom Christ’s Spirit gives you?
6. What is God inviting you to?
7. With whom will you share this, asking for prayer and encouragement as God transforms you more and more into the image of Christ – for His glory?

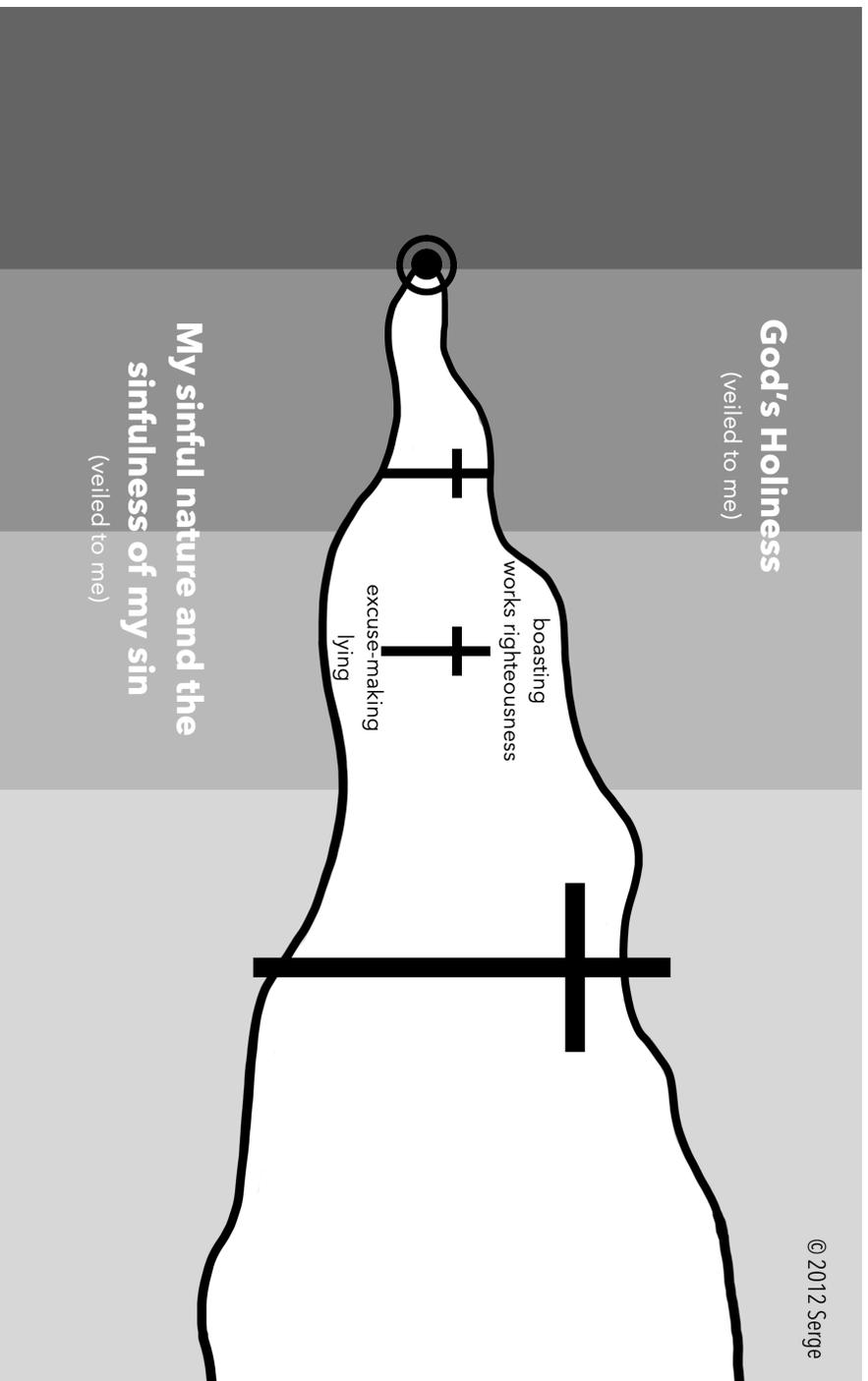


**God's Holiness**



**My Sinfulness**





1

**Before Conversion**  
The holiness of God, my sinful nature, and the sinfulness of my sin are veiled to me.

2

**After Conversion**  
I have a limited, fluctuating, but growing awareness of both God's holiness and my sinfulness.

3

**Adjusting the Record**  
I resort to dishonesty and performance to bridge the gap when my belief in the gospel does not keep pace with what I know of God's holiness and my sin.

4

**Boasting in the Cross!**  
As I daily believe in the gospel, the cross bridges the gap: I rest in my identity in Christ and his righteousness, which enables me to own up to God's holiness and my sinfulness without trying to adjust the record. Now, by faith, I am empowered and freed up to love God and my neighbor.



LORD, HIGH AND HOLY, MEEK AND LOWLY,

Thou hast brought me to the valley of vision,  
where I live in the depths but see thee in the heights;  
hemmed in by mountains of sin I behold thy glory.

Let me learn by paradox  
that the way down is the way up,  
that to be low is to be high,  
that the broken heart is the healed heart,  
that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit,  
that the repenting soul is the victorious soul,  
that to have nothing is to possess all,  
that to bear the cross is to wear the crown,  
that to give is to receive,  
that the valley is the place of vision.

Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from deepest wells,  
and the deeper the wells the brighter thy stars shine;

Let me find thy light in my darkness,  
thy life in my death,  
thy joy in my sorrow,  
thy grace in my sin,  
thy riches in my poverty  
thy glory in my valley.

