

How 1 Encounter With God Changes Everything

The prophet Isaiah had a crisis encounter with God in Isaiah 6 that defined his calling. When Isaiah encountered God's holiness and presence, he cried out, "I'm doomed. I have filthy lips." Isaiah got a revelation of his own sin in God's presence.

"Woe to me!" I cried. "Woe is me! For I am undone because 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" (Is. 6:5).

God didn't leave Isaiah in his sin. "Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

Isaiah's guilt was taken away when God took action to set him free. Isaiah's innocence and humility in receiving the touch on his mouth brought a life-changing commissioning. In the next verse, God asks "Whom shall I send?" Isaiah asks God to send him.

Every believer needs a crisis encounter like Isaiah had with God. In this moment, you'll see your own sin, darkness and desperate need for the hand of God to set you free. When you respond and He steps in with freedom, you'll know His presence and become responsible for maintaining His presence in your life.

When we started in our ministry, my husband, Steve, had an encounter like this with God that set his calling into motion. Steve woke up one morning with swollen, bruised lips. "Why did you hit me?" he asked. I didn't hit him. Then he said, "Kathy,

God put a coal on my lips. I've been called to preach."

We had another crisis encounter with God on March 24, 1996 at 6:12 pm that changed our ministry. He gave us a new calling to the nations and redefined our ministry. We were pastoring a church in the middle of nowhere when God came down. That crisis encounter brought over a quarter of a million people in 3 ½ years to an outpouring.

Your response to your encounter with God could thrust you into a ministry or calling you've never thought of. The way you handle the responsibility of that encounter determines your future. Of course, you don't want to live from encounter to encounter. You want to maintain His presence in your life by living in such a way that you're attractive to Him.

Strife, contention, lying, passivity, disunity and disinterest in His presence will keep Him away. Showing the fruit of the Spirit—love, peace, joy etc.—attracts His presence. An encounter with God is a holy event. Let that encounter define you for the rest of your life with His presence.

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