

Isaiah: A Prophet for Our Time
True Worship
Isaiah 66:1-24

One of the dominant principles of our culture today is best described as the autonomy of self. We believe in self-rule without self-accountability. We think we are capable of defining our own reality or our own identity or our own version of spirituality. What is interesting is that this particular philosophy actually undermines the society that is promoting it, but for many the option of chaos and incivility created by the autonomy of self is better than order and peace created by the only truly autonomous entity in the universe, our Creator.

1. God accepts humble and penitent worship.
2. God blesses joyful and heartfelt worship.
3. God gathers and invites us to eternal worship.

Every reader must decide what destiny is most desired: (a) the joy of living in the wonderful kingdom of God before the very presence of His glory or (b) enduring the sword, fire, and worm of God's judgment. The first choice comes with life-changing challenges and requires a complete commitment to trust God. Only those who love and serve God are able to enter His kingdom. (Smith, *New American Commentary*, 753.)

Reflection

Take some time to consider the implications of the glory and majesty and infinite greatness of our God who cannot be contained inside a temple made with human hands. Why must we seek to understand that God made everything even those things that we offer back to Him as a sacrifice in worship. What does it take for God to look favorably on us? What do these verses tell us about the outward acts of worship? What has the potential to make worship that was prescribed by God (specific sacrifices for specific purposes) false worship? Is true worship about outward actions and performance or is it more a matter of humble lifestyle and obedient hearts? How does the concept of a new heaven and new earth bring you comfort and joy? What should the prospect of hell for those who refuse to trust God mean for you? How do we develop a gospel lifestyle that allows us to enjoy life and serve Christ's mission at the same time?