The King Is in the Room

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 | Series: A Chasing After the Wind

Big Idea

There is a godless way to worship God: going through the motions, thoughtless and careless, with lips near and hearts far. Solomon's corrective is the fear of God, which means awe and reverence, not dread.

Key Passages

- Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 (guard your steps; listen rather than offer the sacrifice of fools; keep your vows; fear God)
- Exodus 3:1-6 (holy ground because God is present)
- Psalm 24:3-4 (who may ascend the hill of the Lord?)
- Isaiah 29:13 and Matthew 15:7-9 (lips near, hearts far)
- 1 Samuel 3:1-10 ("Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening")
- Matthew 5:33-37 (let your "Yes" be "Yes")
- Hebrews 4:16 and 12:28-29 (boldness and reverence together)

Discussion Questions

1. When you hear "fear God," what is your first reaction? How did the sermon's definition (awe and reverence, not dread) match or challenge it?
2. Solomon says the "fools" are religious people, not pagans. Why is that sobering? What might "checking the religious boxes" look like today?
3. The ground before Moses was holy because God was present, not because the place was special. How does that shape the way we think about a church building or a Sunday gathering?
4. Read Isaiah 29:13 and Matthew 15:7-9. What is the difference between honoring God with our lips and with our hearts? How can we tell which one we are doing?
5. The sermon said the cross didn't change God but changed us. Why is it important to hold together God's holiness and our freedom to approach him boldly (Heb 4:16; 12:28-29)?
6. We don't relate to God as equals, yet he invites us into a genuine relationship. How do those two truths fit together? What happens to our worship if we lose one of them?
7. Be honest: what tends to pull your mind away during worship? What would it look like to "guard your steps" before and during a Sunday service?
8. Listening was a big theme (Samuel and *Selah*). Where do you build moments of silence and listening into your week? What makes that hard?
9. Have you ever made a promise to God in a hard moment and let it fade? What does it mean to be a person whose "Yes" is simply "Yes"?
10. The sermon ends with the Father's love and the gift of righteousness. How does knowing you are loved change the way you think about reverence?

Closing

11. What is one concrete step you will take this week to come to worship more mindfully?