

# Holiness and Revelation

by B.H. Clendennen

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*The sermon explores the profound connection between God's holiness and His revelation to humanity, emphasizing the transformative power of His presence and the role of the law in understanding sin and holiness.*

**Duration:** 40:02

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:3, Exodus 3:4-6, Romans 3:20, Romans 7:7

**Topics:** "Holiness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of entering into a new life through faith in Jesus Christ. He explains that initially, one must pass from death to life by accepting Jesus as their personal Savior. However, once a person is saved, they face the challenge of breaking away from their old environment and living according to their new life in Christ. The preacher emphasizes that being born again is more than just a verbal confession; it requires a genuine transformation. He also highlights the importance of understanding the holiness of God, which reveals both His infinite distance and His infinite nearness to humanity. The preacher encourages listeners to study the Bible, particularly the first five chapters of Genesis, to gain a deeper understanding of God's principles.

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## Transcript

Chapter 3, And when the Lord saw that Moses turned aside to see, he called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. But you notice there, put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground. Why was it holy ground? We have just come through the message dealing with the Sabbath.

God sanctified it. That's the only time in the entire book of Genesis that the word holy is used. God sanctified the Sabbath by resting in it, by being in it, by God getting in it.

Now we have holy ground. Why was it holy? Because God had come and occupied that ground. There's no other grounds of holiness, folks, except God has come and occupied that ground.

God has come there and occupied. Where God is, there is holiness. In the presence of God, there's holiness.

Wherever God's presence is, that place is holy. If God lives in you and I, we're holy. We sometimes don't act holy, but we are holy.

God sees us in Christ. That doesn't make any excuse for us. We must become what God sees us to be, or else we'll be rejected of God.

But the Holy Ghost has put us in Christ, and Christ in us, and God sees us in Christ and reckons that the experience of Christ is our experience. So if God is in you, you're holy. After reading, Paul said, I will that men everywhere lift up holy hands unto God.

Those hands are only holy that are attached to a people in whom God is. And so wherever God is, He makes it holy. Now, this is the truth we met in paradise when man was created.

Here's where the Scripture used the word holy for the second time. It is repeated and enforced. Amen.

This is the second time this word is used, and it's repeated and enforced, and in the exact circumstances. That is, it is only the presence of God that makes holy. I must abide in that.

I must walk in that. That holiness will work itself out of me in an external manner. If it doesn't, it's not in there.

It's one thing to say that God's in you. It's another thing for God to be in you. And if God is in us, then that holiness that is there because of God will certainly find itself on the outside.

Men will know. They'll be able to take note of us that we are holy. What they may not recognize the term, but they'll know that we've been with God.

Now, careful study of the word holy in the light of the burning bush, I believe, will further deepen the significance. I want us to see what the history, what sacred history, what the revelation of God and what Moses teaches us of this holy ground. This morning, if I give it a title, I title it Holiness and Revelation.

Holiness and Revelation. Now, first of all, I want you to notice the place this first direct revelation of God to man as the Holy One takes in sacred history. This is the first personal, direct revelation of God to man as such.

Now, in our lesson last, in Paradise, we found the word holy used of the seventh day, the Sabbath day. Since that time, twenty-five centuries or twenty-six centuries about have elapsed. And we found in God's sanctifying the day of rest, the promise of a new dispensation.

A promise, the revelation of the Almighty to be followed by that of the Holy One making holy. All of this we find, the revelation of God Almighty to be followed by that. And yet throughout the book of Genesis, the word never occurs again, only the one time.

It never occurred, but He sanctified the Sabbath. Now, it is as if God's holiness is held in abeyance. It's not mentioned again.

First there that we read in the book of Genesis, then it's not mentioned again. It's as if it's been held only in exodus with a calling of Moses. Does it make its appearance again? Do we run upon this most awesome word, holy? The attribute of God that's spoken of more than any other, more than His love, more than His justice, more than anything else, this holiness of God is brought out in the Bible.

But from Genesis 3 to Exodus, you don't find it. Now, this is a fact I believe of great importance, just as a parent or teacher seeking early childhood to impress one lesson at a time So God deals in the education of the human race. And if you're going to make any study of the Bible, I mean any given subject of the Bible, then you ought to study thoroughly the first five chapters of the book of Genesis and find the beginning of whatever you're going to study.

For you'll find in the beginning, and the principle never deviates. It develops, enlarges, and matures. But the principles are all there, and you should find it in the beginning, before you begin.

So here it is, God, as He's going to impress His student and the whole of the human race, He comes to him in the early stages with this word, holy. After having in the flood, exhibit His righteous judgment against sin, He calls Abraham to be the father of a chosen people. And as a foundation of all His dealing with that people, He teaches him, and they see, first of all, the lesson of childlike trust.

This is the lesson that He's instilling into all of God's people from Abraham onward. He is the father of the faithful. And God, through Abraham, is teaching His people the lesson of a childlike trust.

That is, to just put our trust in God, just like that baby of the parents believes and trusts that parent for everything. It just rests its case with that parent. I mean, everything is just cast upon that parent to provide a home, food.

It doesn't worry about those things. It just implicitly trusts that when time comes to eat something, when it gets hungry, there's going to be something to eat. And through Abraham, God has given us trust in Him as the Almighty, with whom nothing is too wonderful.

And trust in Him as a faithful one whose oath could never be broken. This He's teaching. He laid that word, holy, right in the door of the Bible.

And after the flood, when He showed His judgment, He called Abraham, and He teaches through Abraham this lesson of trust in God, of a God who was faithful, that loved us, that would keep His promise, that His promises could not be broken. But with the growth of Israel to a people, we see the revelation advancing now to a new stage. What is happening? The simplicity of childhood gives way to the waywardness of youth, and God must now interfere with the discipline and the restriction of law.

We're coming from that childlike trust to Israel as she develops into the wayward youth that usually works out. Then God interferes into that life with the strictness and the interference of law into that downward trend God is dealing with. Having gained a right to a place in their confidence as a God to their fathers, He prepares them then for the further revelation of the God of Abraham.

The chief attribute was that He was the Almighty One. He appeared to Abraham as El Shaddai, the Provider, the Almighty One of the God of Israel, of Jehovah, that He is the Holy One. Hallelujah! He is the Holy One.

And more than anything else, He must be recognized as this. It isn't difficult to recognize Him as the Almighty One. I think sometimes that Faber was right when he said that science perhaps has a more awesome God than the Christian church.

Now, and he further qualified that statement by saying that science of his day and some of ours recognize that there is above all this a supreme being. And they recognize, they have tracked Him in the millenniums of the life of that God into the fathers reaching stars, talking about thousands of light years. They've tracked Him, they've saw Him, they've been awed by the infinite eternity of God.

While the average theologian, when he studies eternal and eternity, never links it with the object of his worship. Isn't that true? So in reality, they do worship a more awesome God than the average Christian. But they recognize, I just said that to say that men recognize Him as the Almighty.

But He developed to be Jehovah, the Holy One. And what is to be the special mark of the new period that is now about to be inaugurated? What is the special mark of that, which is to be introduced by this word, holy, holy, holy in Christ, holy? God tells Moses that He is now about to reveal Himself in a new character. He's known to Abraham as God Almighty, the God of promise.

He would now manifest Himself as Jehovah, the God of fulfillment, especially in the redemption and deliverance of His people from the oppression He had foretold to Abraham. He will be that. God Almighty is a God of creation.

Abraham believed in God, the God who quickeneth the dead, amen, and calleth the things that are not as though they already were. Abraham believed in that God. He knew that God.

And the lesson that Abraham taught us is that if we will in childlike simplicity trust that God, then all will work out. You know, if we just trust Him as we should, one great preacher said, if I ask God for something and I seek Him earnestly and I don't get it, it must mean that I didn't need it. It must mean that I didn't need it.

That's a trust, amen. Jehovah is a God of redemption and holiness. Now with Abraham, there was not one word of sin or guilt and therefore not of redemption or of holiness.

Not one word to Abraham. Do you have anything brought about of sin or guilt? Therefore, if these are not a part of the vocabulary, then there is no need for the other words, redemption or holiness. Is that right? You know, there'll be no need for the words redemption.

And with Abraham, during the entire time, there is no word of sin or guilt. Now to Israel, the law is to be given to convince of sin and prepare the way for holiness. Paul said, before the law, there was no knowledge of sin.

By the law. That's the reason the law has to be preached. No man can keep the law and be saved.

You're not saved by keeping the law. But you're never going to have any real conversions until the law is preached. A man must be made to know he's a sinner.

It's parasitism for a person just to come and somebody tell him, now you just repeat after me a little prayer. And they just say, I accept Jesus as my Savior. And have never come to realize that they are a sinner.

And that's what happens to most folks. That's the reason you don't find them. Or if you do keep them, you keep them just by a lot of religious hot water.

Person born again, you know, a person born again, there's a struggle to be kept. Not somebody struggling to keep him. Is that right? You know, a baby is born and that baby is born with a will to live.

Listen, a little old baby has within it the struggle to live. You let sickness take hold of a baby just born. And there is in that baby, amen, an innate desire to live, to battle for life.

And a person really born again, there is that desire. You know, I was thinking along this line and this lesson. And the thought came to me, you know.

When I first, my soul was first awakened to its need of a Savior. When my spirit was first aroused to the need, then my anxiety was born out of knowing how, how am I going to get in to that new environment? How am I going to get into it? That become the anxiety, wasn't it? If you had any interim between the time you were saved and on the time that God stirred you up, you were saved, if it is just a matter of hours, then there was this anxiety. How am I going to get there? But then the moment you get there, the anxiety is reversed.

The Bible tells us that the way in is we pass from death unto life. That's the way in, isn't it? But the moment you get in there, then the whole system is reversed. Now that I'm here, how am I going to break with the old environment? And the whole thing is reversed.

From there you pass from life unto death, you know, from life unto death. Without the law, there is no knowledge of sin. A man doesn't know that he's dead and has to be made alive.

So all he does is just through somebody's little conversation says, I take Jesus to be my personal Savior. But being born again is a sight more than that. I'm not saying that some folks haven't been born again.

At that point, I'm saying for the most part, it's not because that's the reason you never see them again. They weren't born again. So to Israel, the law is given to convince of sin.

It is Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, the Redeemer, who now appears, and it is the presence of this Holy One that makes that ground holy. God does that. Roland Buck said that as his cryonion, that bush.

But this book said it was God. No angel ever made ground holy. Only God makes ground holy.

Amen. God makes it. But the second thing, how does this presence reveal itself? In the burning bush, God makes Himself known as dwelling in the midst of what? The fire.

Dwelling in the midst of the fire. Elsewhere in the Scripture, the connection between fire and the holiness of God is clearly expressed. The light of Israel shall be for a fire and the Holy One for a flame.

For a flame. The nature of fire may be either beneficial or destructive. It can be either way.

My, there's times you'd be dead without fire. Isn't that right? Amen. I thought it was going to freeze to death anyway.

Amen. Fire can be very beneficial or very destructive. I drove over yesterday by that red carpet, and I could not believe what happened to that magnificent structure as it burnt the entire thing out before they

could curb it.

Just something, isn't it? Oh, my. The sun, the central fire, may give life and fruitfulness, or it can scorch to death. It can burn up.

All depends upon occupying the right position, upon the relation in which we stand to it. Every bit of it. If that sun was out, the earth would be a frigid zone.

If it was any closer, they say it would burn up. It's beneficial. I saw folks that blistered by it.

You know, just cooked by it. It'll cause skin cancers on some folks. But you couldn't make it without it.

It's all in the position that you stand in relationship to it as to whether that sun is beneficial to you or destructive to you. Isn't that right? It's always that way with fire. And so wherever God, the Holy One, reveals Himself, we'll find the two sides.

God's holiness, number one, is judgment against sin. When the church really stands in the right place, it reproves the world. Today there's such a compromise with the world that we don't reprove the world.

That's the reason the world don't hate us. He said, they hate me, they'll hate you. But they're not too much hatred at us like there was at Him.

You know, the knife is still there, just hid in the world's skirts. And if you and I ever really live in such a way, so much of Christ in us, that we'll reprove Him, we'll find, we'll find their hatred is there. And His holiness, wherever it is, is always as judgment against sin, destroying the sinner who remains in it, and as mercy, His holiness always appears as mercy, freeing His people from sin.

Glory to God. I'm glad He didn't save us in our sins. He saved us from our sins.

Amen. Isn't that wonderful? Thank God saved us from our sins. Now, of the elements of nature, there's none of such spiritual and mighty energy as fire.

Nothing. You know, to drive them automobiles, you have to ignite and burn that fuel. Amen.

That fuel has no energy until it's set afire, until it's exploded, compressed. Then it drives that car. Nothing like fire.

What it consumes, it takes and changes into its own spiritual nature. Whatever fire takes a hold of and consumes, that fire changes it into its own spiritual nature. You know, nothing's ever done.

It's rejecting a smoke and ashes, what cannot be assimilated. Isn't that something? You know what a revelation that is, isn't it? Whatever fire burns, it takes and consumes and changes it into its own nature. And whatever it cannot assimilate, it sends off in smoke and ashes.

Fire does that. Fire does that. And so the holiness of God is that infinite perfection by which He keeps Himself free from all that is not divine, and yet His fellowship with the creature and takes it up into union with Himself, destroying and casting out all that will not give itself to Himself.

The Holy Ghost will burn up everything that doesn't have the possibility in it to be conformed to Christ, but yet takes all that will conform and makes it into His own likeness. That's the fire of God's holiness burning within us. Amen.

All the rest is ashes. It is thus as one who dwells in fire, who is a fire, that God reveals Himself at the opening of this new redemption period. Amen.

With Abraham, the patriarchs, as we said, there's been little teaching about sin or redemption, very little. Amen. But you know, the nearness and the friendship of God has been revealed.

It's a marvelous thing. Said Abraham was a friend of God. You know, friend, that's a very wonderful term.

Someone said if you find one real true friend in a lifetime, you know, that you've just done good. Well, that's folks out there in the world and sin. That may be true.

But the word friend is a marvelous word. God was a friend and called Abraham His friend. So through Abraham and the patriarchs, we have this wonderful teaching of the friendship of God and the nearness of God.

You know, God wanting to be a friend with man, amen, wanting to be the nearness. Now the law will be given and sin will be made manifest. The distance from God will be felt that man in learning to know himself and his sinfulness may learn to know and long for God to make him holy.

Nobody ever longs for that till he knows that he's not that. Nobody ever longs to be changed. You know, alcoholics never are delivered until they're willing to admit that they're alcoholics and a sinner never longs for holiness until the law makes him know that he's unholy.

And then there comes this desire, the revelation of the nearness and the friendship of God and Abraham, nothing, nothing about the sin. But then the law comes and sin is revealed and a distance from God is revealed to man by the law and immediately there's born in that man's heart a desire for that holiness of God, amen. That has to be and with it comes the law.

Now in all God's revelation of himself, we'll find the combination of the two elements, the one repelling and the other attracting, the one repelling. Now in his house, he will dwell in the midst of Israel, yet it will be in the awful, unapproachable solitude and darkness of the holiest of all within the veil. It'll be that way.

He'll come near to them, yet keep them at a distance. He come near, but yet keep them at a distance. In all of God's dealing with man, you find that to be so, amen.

He comes near until that object is brought to himself. Now you know both of these elements and as we study, as we study the holiness of God, this remarkable character that occupies so much of this book, as we study the holiness of God, we'll see in increasing clearness how like fire it repels and attracts, how it combines into one his infinite distance and his infinite nearness. You know, we sing that chorus, how big is God? And we say he's big enough to fill this universe, small enough to live within us.

You see, even in that song it comes out. But as we study the holiness of God, we discover that, that in this attribute, how like fire, how much like fire, it repels, it attracts, it shows the nearness, yet it shows the distance, both of it. Third, but the distance will be that which comes out first and most strongly.

That holiness will show the distance. You see, the law revealed how far away from God you really were. The heresy and the apostasy of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God that made every man on this earth a child of God, that apostasy blinded man.

But the holiness of God, first of all, reveals the distance between God and sinful man. Oh, the awful gulf fixed that man in himself cannot cross, that awful gulf. This we see in Moses.

He hid his face for he feared to look upon God, you see. He knew that distance. He was afraid, afraid to look upon God.

The first impression with God's holiness is that of fear and awe, said of the Romans. In the book of Romans, Paul writing said there was no fear of God before their eyes and he had listed all of the terrible things, destruction and misery were in their way. Their feet were swift to shed blood.

The poison of an ass was under their tongue. Why? There was no fear of God. You see, the holiness of God was a reveal.

It didn't reveal today. There's not any fear much in the church today of God I'm talking about. But the first, first touch of that holiness, the first realization of it, is accompanied by fear and awe of God.

Until man both as a creature and a sinner learns how high God is above him and how different in distance he is from God, the holiness of God will have very little real attraction to him. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, and he saw himself as a sinful man. He saw the distance between him and God.

Whenever he saw God, he saw this. It's always that way. Moses hiding his face shows the effect of the drawing nigh of God, of the Holy One, and the path of his further revelation.

He sees it immediately, the path of this revelation. Now how distinctly and wonderfully this comes out in God's own words. Listen, draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet.

Oh, God, you see, it comes out in his own language. Don't you come up close here, and you take the shoes off your feet. He is confronted with the holiness of God.

God has drawn nigh, but Moses cannot. God draws near, but Moses can't draw near in the condition of things at this point. In the same breath, God says, draw nigh, but don't draw nigh.

In the same breath, God says it to him. There can be no knowledge of God or nearness of God, where we have not first heard his draw not nigh. There is no way for that to happen.

I must be made to realize there's a distance between me and God before I can ever draw near to God. The sense of sin, of unfitness for God's presence, is the groundwork of true knowledge of God and worship of him as a holy one. Put off thy shoes from thy feet.

That's the message of God. Put off thy shoes from thy feet. They're never going to draw near to God, as long as you think it don't take much to save me.

You have that self-righteous attitude about yourself, there is no way. Put off thy shoes from thy feet. Now the shoes are the means of intercourse with the world.

The age through which the flesh or nature does its will, moves about, does its work. This is the shoes. And standing upon holy ground, all of this must be put away, all of it.

It is with naked feet, naked and stripped of every covering, that man must bow before a holy God. He must recognize that he has nothing within himself that renders him rightly, that gives him the right or the

privilege to be there. He must be stripped of everything.

He can only be invited there by God on God's condition. Therefore, he said, take your shoes off because there's nothing, you have nothing in you that gives you the right to draw nigh to me. Till man realizes that, then man, man, he moves where angels fear to trod.

Religion invites man into God before man ever recognizes his distance from God. That's the reason he comes and he just gives God permission to save him. There's no brokenness.

There's no brokenness. It's just a matter I take Jesus as my personal Savior. It is said of animals, any animal, if you change his environment and make his food easy to eat, easy to get and easy to find and all before him, immediately degeneration sets up in that animal.

So it is in the Christian church. You lower this thing down towards nothing but a little mouthing and degeneration sets up in the Christian church to where you wind up with something less than God wanted in new creatures. You wind up with something less than God wanted in the new creation.

That put off must exercise its condemning power through our entire being, all of us. Amen. Until we come to realize the full extent of its meaning in the great put off the old man and put on the Lord Jesus, until we come to realize and know what he's saying, put off the old man and put on the Lord Jesus.

And what the putting off of a body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ is, oh, what that is, all that is of nature and flesh, all that is of our own doing, our will and our working, our very life must be put off and given to death if God as the Holy One is going to make himself known to you and I. Yes, sir, that nature of that flesh is going to have to be put off and dealt with every bit of it, not just some of it. We have seen before that holiness is more than goodness or freedom from sin. Even unfallen nature is not holy.

No, sir, even unfallen nature is not holy. Holiness is that awful glory by which divinity is separated from all that is created. Thank God, all that is created.

Amen. Therefore, even the seraphs veil their faces with their wings when they sing, holy, holy, holy. Oh, God, impress upon us what it means to call to be holy.

Not call just to salvation, call to be holy. Not call just to be happy, call to be holy. Not call just to go to heaven, call to be saints, call to be holy.

Hallelujah, hallelujah. All that is of this nature, amen, must go, must go. But oh, when the distance and the difference is not that of the creatures only, but of the sinner who can express, who can realize the humiliation, the fear, the shame with which we are to bow, bow before the voice of the holiness of God, of the Holy One of God.

Amen, the Holy One. You know, this is one of the most terrible effects of sin that blinds us. We don't know how unholy, how abominable sin and the sinful nature are in the sight of God.

That's one of the most frightening things. Amen. I was preaching in Duncan, Oklahoma, and I was dealing with self and sin, and the church has had a history of problems and troubles and self and fire and creatures.

I didn't know that, but I was preaching with self and sin, and I made mention of this fact that we don't know the horrible nature of sin. That's the effects of it. It's so blinded us that we don't realize how abominable sin

and the sinful nature is to the holiness of God.

And I said, all you've got to do is just look at Calvary, and you'll know what God feels about sin and that awful nature. We had stern folks. Folks were upset.

Amen. Upset because they didn't consider themselves to be at a distance for God. Being religious don't make you close to God.

It's God in you that makes you close. Amen. God in you.

We've lost the power of recognizing the holiness of God. I said we've lost the power of recognizing the holiness of God. Amen.

We know not how unholy we are. Even philosophy is not even the idea of using the word as expressive of the moral character of its God, and losing sight of the glory of God. We've lost the power of knowing what sin is.

After reading, we can treat it so lightly. After reading, a preacher can preach all the way around it and not even deal with it. It's because we've lost the power of recognizing what sin is and the effect of sin upon life.

And so he can just dodge around it, dodge around it. Never, never really come to grips with it. Now, now God's first work in drawing nigh to us is to make us feel that we may not draw nigh to Him as we are.

That's the reason the Bible implicitly says, not only to the sinner don't draw nigh, but He says to you and I, confess your sin. And if you, when you come to this altar, have anything against your brother, He said, don't approach me with that in your heart. You leave your gift on that altar.

And you go get it right with your brother. And then you can come back with your shoes off and draw nigh to me. But don't draw nigh to me having robbed me of what's mine with harbored bitterness in your heart, all of this rottenness in your spirit.

You cannot. You may think you're holy, but you're not. You know, if God has a controversy with you on any one point, any one point, then you are unholy.

You are unholy. If God has a controversy with you, anywhere, amen, you can't draw nigh as a sinner is or a Christian with things. That there'll have to be a very real and solemn putting off and giving up to death of all that appears most lawful and needful.

Not only our shoes are soiled with contact with this unholy earth, even our faces must be covered and our eyes closed in the token eyes of our hearts. As we approach Him, all our human wisdom and understanding are incapable of beholding the holiness of God. Incapable of looking upon Him.

Amen. Absolutely. The first lesson in the school of personal holiness is the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord is what? The beginning of wisdom. The beginning of wisdom. Amen.

The first lesson. Thus saith the high and lofty one whose name is holy. I dwell in the high and holy place and with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

Contrition, brokenness of spirit, fear and trembling are God's demand of those who would see His holiness. Who would see His holiness? Moses was to be the first preacher of holiness, of the full

communication of God's holiness to us in Christ. And his first revelation to Moses was the type and the pledge.

From Moses' lips, the people of Israel, from his pen, the church of Christ, was to receive the message, be holy. I am holy and I make holy. That was to come from the pen of Moses and the lips of Moses, the first preacher of holiness.

His preparation for being the messenger of the Holy One was here, where he hid his face because he was afraid to look upon God. We failed, we failed to make men understand what it is

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