

God Is a Holy God

by Brian Long

The sermon emphasizes the importance of remembering God's holiness and sovereignty, and preparing the way for Him by understanding His true nature and seeking a deeper relationship with Him.

Duration: 44:39

Scripture: Psalm 50:16

Topics: "Holiness Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for believers to regain a proper understanding of the glory, majesty, and holiness of God. They highlight the severity of sin in the presence of a holy God and the importance of recognizing Jesus as the Lamb of God and our only hope for salvation. The speaker urges the congregation to prepare themselves to meet Jesus and to respond to God's call. They also read a poem called 'Eternal Light' and lead the congregation in prayer, asking God to reveal their standing with Him and to give them a fresh encounter with His holiness and glory. The sermon concludes with a sobering passage from Psalm 50, where God warns the wicked of the consequences of their actions and calls them to remember Him before it's too late.

Transcript

Such a joy to be back with you, brothers and sisters, and back to Wisconsin. This is way up north for us. And it doesn't seem like it's been a year already, but it's been about that long, and I think almost exactly that long since I was here.

But it's so good to see all of your faces again, and it is a joy to be with you. And I want to give God thanks and praise and glory. The night before I was to fly out to come here, I sent Matt a text because I was so sick.

I just began to shake and shiver and went on to bed. My throat was hurting so bad I couldn't even swallow. So I texted him.

I said, brother, please pray for me. And he asked if he could send it to your prayer chain, and evidently he did. Well, I don't even have a sore throat.

Yesterday I felt like a new man, and I know that was a touch from the Lord. So I give God thanks and praise for that. And I also want to thank you, brothers and sisters, because I know some of you, maybe

most of you, maybe all of you, I don't know, but I know for sure some of you prayed for my son.

We went into another major trial starting in January. We actually found out on his birthday that he relapsed, and that was so perplexing for me. And I know through Facebook, my wife has a Facebook, and I know Karen is on there.

Such a blessing to see on there. And you were really praying for my son. And I want to thank you, and I want to give God all the praise and glory that he is healthy, he is well, he is 100% engrafted, and he's riding colts, training horses, building fence.

And every time he goes back to St. Jude, St. Jude every other month, he shows up with calluses on his hands and scratches and cuts from the barbed wire, and it just about drives the doctors crazy. But he's healthy, so what do I say? I'm not going to hold him back. If he's going to work and he's healthy and well, we give all the praise to the Lord.

And the Lord has truly done this. He's brought him through again. We're so grateful.

We're just so grateful for the mercy of God. And I want to thank you, those of you who prayed for him. I'm so deeply grateful to you.

The theme that I believe the Spirit of God has really spoken to my heart for these meetings is prepare the way of the Lord. I didn't have everything all together, but that I believe I really heard from the Lord. And I think every message this week is going to have everything to do with that.

Tonight, I would like for you to turn to Isaiah 57, first of all, the 57th chapter of Isaiah, because we want to focus especially on the last part of that title, prepare the way of the Lord. Who is the Lord, really? Who is this One that we're preparing the way for? I have a great concern that much of Christendom today has forgotten God. They don't know the God of the Bible.

We've forgotten who He really is. And so tonight, we're going to begin to just seek God and from the Scriptures, who is this Lord we're seeking? Isaiah 57. I'll begin reading in verse 11.

The Lord is speaking and He says, Of whom have you been afraid or feared, that you have lied and not remembered Me, nor taken it to your heart? Is it not because I have held My peace from of old that you do not fear Me? I will declare your righteousness and your works, for they will not profit you. When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you. But the wind will carry them all away.

A breath will take them. But he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land and shall inherit My holy mountain. And one shall say, Heap it up, heap it up, prepare the way, take the stumbling block out of the way of My people.

For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is holy. I dwell in the high and holy place also with Him who has a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Now notice if you will in the 11th verse, God says, you have not remembered Me.

The end of that verse says, you do not fear Me. The reason they did not fear God is because they had forgotten who He was. And there's a tremendous lack of the fear of God in much of the church today.

Why? Because we've forgotten who this is. Who is this that we're preparing the way for? He says of Himself in the 15th verse, He is the high and lofty One. The One who inhabits eternity.

The One whose name is holy. The One who dwells in the high and holy place. Who is this that the prophet is speaking about? He's the very One that He saw in Isaiah chapter 6. I want you to turn there with me if you would.

6th chapter of Isaiah. This is the Lord. This is the One we are preparing the way for.

He is a holy God. He is the One Isaiah saw. Verse 1, chapter 6. In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Above it stood seraphim, each one had six wings. With two He covered His face. With two He covered His feet.

And with two He flew. And one cried to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory.

And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of Him who cried out. And the house was filled with smoke. So I said, 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. Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar.

And he touched my mouth with it. And he said, Behold, this has touched your lips. Your iniquity is taken away and your sin purged.

The prophet Isaiah begins by saying in the year that King Uzziah died. Now why did he die? It was because he had forgotten God. And I want to tell you, dear friends, that it's a very dangerous and tragic day when a man or a church or a nation forgets God.

It's a tragic day when a man forgets God, even if he is a king like Uzziah. King Uzziah began his reign well. He became king of Judah when he was only 16 years old.

And he reigned 52 years. He was a good king. He did what was right in the sight of the Lord.

He did according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He sought God. And as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper.

Uzziah led his people in many victories, conquering nations. He was a strong king and a good leader. But, as so often happens, as a man grows older, he gets prouder.

And Uzziah, in his strength, in his strong days, he became proud. And the Bible says in 2 Chronicles 26, verse 16, that when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God by entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. Now, that was a duty that was given only to the priest.

And King Uzziah had 80 priests stand before him and say, Uzziah, don't come into this temple. Don't come and burn incense. The Lord has not given this for you to do.

He's given this only for the priest to do. But Uzziah had forgotten God. And when you forget God, you become proud in your hearts.

He became proud to his own destruction. He gets angry at those priests that are rebuking him. He doesn't want to be rebuked or reprovved.

So he goes on to do the duty of only given to a priest. And immediately, God strikes him with leprosy across the forehead, and Uzziah died a lonely leper. Again, I ask you why.

It was because he forgot God. He had forgotten God. He had forgotten the One that we say we're preparing the way for.

Who is this? He is a holy God. And you cannot trifle with sin before a holy God. Psalm chapter 50.

I want you to notice some Scriptures here before we go any further. The 50th Psalm. Again, this is God speaking, and He says, beginning in verse 16, But to the wicked, God says, What right have you to declare My statutes, or take My covenant in your mouth, seeing you hate instruction, and cast My words behind you? When you saw a thief, you consented with him, and have been a partaker with adulterers.

You give your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against your brother. You slander your own mother's son.

Now watch this. These things you have done, and I kept silent. You thought that I was altogether like you.

You thought that I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes. Now consider this, you who forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

Now that's a pretty serious, sober word from the Lord, wouldn't you say? Is that in your Bible? God saying, I will tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Why? Because you forgot Me. You forgot God.

You thought that I was altogether such a one as yourself. And I want to say to you, brothers and sisters, and friends, if who we believe God to be doesn't match up to who He says He is in this holy book, then we are as guilty of idolatry as a man or a woman who bows their knee to a statue of wood or stone. I want to know the true and living God, don't you? I want to know the true and living God as He reveals Himself to me through the Holy Scriptures, by His Spirit, and I don't want Him to change.

I choose to bow my knee before Him, not to change Him, try and change Him, and make Him palatable for people to tickle itching ears. No. This is God, and there is no other.

And the only true God is a holy God, and it is vital that you and I remember who He is. We're preparing the way for the Lord. What if He comes? Are you ready for this one to come? A holy God? The one that Isaiah saw? Who did he see? We go back to Isaiah chapter 6. Who did he see? He said, in the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne.

The Lord sitting on a throne. In other words, He is supreme and sovereign. God never scratches His head.

He never says, oops. He never wonders, what am I going to do next, or how am I going to figure that out? He is at rest. He is sitting upon the throne, supreme and sovereign.

No one can thwart His purposes or stop His plans. He is the supreme, sovereign, almighty God. He is sitting upon a throne, even though the earthly leader has been removed.

He died. And I want to say to you, regardless who is president, regardless of what's going on in the nation, there is a King of kings, the King of kings, sitting upon a throne. He is not moved.

He is not worried with forward brow. He is God. He's sitting upon a throne.

Isaiah said, high and lifted up. In other words, there are no other thrones around Him. He is above all.

He is over all. He is King of kings. He is Lord of lords.

And he says, the train of His robe filled the temple. That is the splendor we just sang about. The splendor and the glory of the Lord that covers the earth.

The presence of the Lord. Who is this that Isaiah saw? John, the apostle, tells us in the Gospel of John chapter 12, after he quotes from the very same chapter in Isaiah that we just read from, he says in the 41st verse, these things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. And who is John talking about? But Jesus.

That's who Isaiah saw. He saw the second person of the Godhead, the Trinity. He saw the Son of God.

He saw the Lord Jesus Christ. Only in this vision of the Lord, Jesus is not a baby in a manger. He did come that way.

He's not hanging on a cross. He's not the humble king coming riding in on a donkey. He is high and lifted up.

He is sitting upon a throne and the train of His robe fills the temple. This is the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the one you and I must all appear before at the judgment seat of Christ.

He is a holy God. May we never forget it. Isaiah saw the Lord.

He saw the Lord Jesus Christ. What else did he see? He saw the seraphim. Notice, if you will, in the second verse.

He says, above it stood seraphim. Each one had six wings. With two, he covered his face.

With two, he covered his feet. And with two, he flew. One cried to another and said, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of His glory. The seraphim, somebody says these are angels. They're not angels.

They are created beings. The word literally means burning ones, fiery ones. These are created beings, seraphim, full of majesty, majestic beings.

And I think probably some of the holiest beings that God ever created. Why? Because of their proximity to the throne. They are right there at the throne of God.

And notice what they cry out day and night. Revelation chapter 4 tells us they cry out day and night. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and who is and who is to come.

They never get bored saying that. Because it's almost as if every time they come around the throne, they see another dimension of this infinite holiness of God, the glory of God, the majesty of God. And all they can do day and night is worship the holiness of God.

And the majesty of God, seraphim. And I want to remind you, brothers and sisters, these are created beings who had never sinned. They are sinless.

And yet they in the presence of the Lord cannot look upon the face of God, but have to cover their faces with two wings. They cover their feet with the other two, showing modesty and reverence before the Lord. And then with the other two wings, they fly.

How holy is this God of ours? How holy is the Lord? His holiness is beyond our understanding. They cry out three times, holy, holy, holy. And any time you see this three-time repetition in the Bible, in the Hebrew, this is a way of denoting intensity, underscoring God's extreme unsurpassed level of holiness in infinite degree.

What does it mean that God is holy? I feel such a need tonight for the Holy Spirit to even preach on the holiness of God, because how do you describe the indescribable? How do you explain the unexplainable? I remember reading in one of my favorite authors, Dr. A.W. Tozer, his book, Knowledge of the Holy. He talked about in that book how when Leonardo da Vinci painted his famous painting of the Last Supper, he had little difficulty painting the painting except for when it came to the faces. And he said then he painted all of the faces without too much trouble except for one.

And he struggled day after day after day. And finally, he just he said, I can't paint him. He painted it.

Let it go. I can't paint him. And I feel in a sense tonight, how do you preach him? How do you convey the indescribable holiness of God? What does it mean? I pray the Holy Spirit help me tonight.

One thing it does mean, brothers and sisters, that God is holy means that he's set apart. He is altogether other than we are. Remember in Psalm 50, he said, you thought that I was altogether such a one as yourself.

No, he's not. There's a radical, a heretical teaching going around today saying that God is about six inches taller than you are. And he's just a little bit bigger of it.

That is heresy. Is that the one Isaiah saw? Is that the one that the seraphim cover their faces in his presence? No, this one is set apart from all that is not God. He is set apart from all of creation because he is not a created being.

He is creator. Before heaven and earth, there is God. He had no beginning.

He created all that ever has been created. And if in one moment, all of creation disappeared and God could make it happen if he wanted to, God would be God. He would still be there.

He is set apart from all that is created. He is set apart from all that is not God. He is indescribable.

He is incomparable. He is beyond words. He is so holy that it leaves us speechless.

It takes our breath away. How do you compare the incomparable? 1 Samuel 2, verse 2 says, No one is holy like the Lord. There is none beside you, nor is there any rock like our God.

There is none like our God. There is no one holy like Him. Isaiah 40, verse 18, The Lord says, To whom will you liken God? What likeness will you compare to Him? To whom then will you liken Me? Or to whom shall I be equal? Says the Holy One in verse 25.

God's saying, Find someone. Who will you compare Me to? He is God beyond compare because He is holy. He is not comparable.

He is not describable. And neither is He common. Sometimes the best way to study something like the holiness of God in the scripture is to note its opposites.

And in Ezekiel chapter 22, God makes a distinction between the holy and the profane. The holy and the profane. And then He rebukes His people for profaning His holy name.

What does it mean to profane the name of God? Profane simply means common, secular. It's to simply treat the name of God who is holy as if it is common. That's profanity.

God says, You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. And we think, Well, that means using God's name with a cuss word. Of course, that's blasphemy.

Of course, that's taking His name in vain. And that's unspeakable evil. But so is, brothers and sisters, treating His name as common.

Speaking His name is common. You try to get a Jew in those days to roll Jehovah off of their lips, they would not do it for fear of profaning the holy name of God. He is a holy God.

And yet I wonder how many professing Christians, maybe you're here tonight, are watching movies that profane the holy name of God. Can you justify that? Can you look upon the one that Isaiah the prophet saw and the one that the seraphim cover their faces in His presence and tell him that it's okay to watch a movie that blasphemes and profanes His holy name? I think not. I think not.

He is a holy God. He is a holy God. He is incomparable.

He is not common. He is indescribable. And I want to tell you that He has no tolerance for sin.

Why? The Bible says God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. The Bible says in Habakkuk 1.3 that His eyes are too pure to look on evil and He cannot tolerate wrong. He cannot look upon sin.

He hates sin. He is an infinite holy God who has an infinite hatred for sin. A holy God.

The seraphim, though they were sinless, hide their faces. No one can approach God in and of themselves because he cannot look upon sin. Imagine looking into the face of the one whose face shines brighter than the sun.

Imagine looking into the one who is pure, perfect, righteousness, holiness, purity, in whom there is nothing unclean, nothing impure, nothing imperfect, nothing dark at all. That's our God. That's the one we are preparing the way for.

A holy God. The one who wraps Himself in light. The one who no man can approach unto in the flesh.

Well, what happened? What happened when Isaiah the prophet saw the Lord this way? Verse 5, he says, he said, I believe he cried out, Woe is me, for I am undone. That means I'm finished. I'm finished.

I'm a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. I'm done. Woe is me.

Cursed is me. I'm done. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he knew what kind of man he was.

As poorly as he compared to the seraphim, that was nothing in relation to how he compared to the Lord. This encounter with holy God did not give him goosebumps. It did not make him feel good all over.

It absolutely devastated him. I wonder if that's the Lord, the God that's being preached today. The God who devastates.

The God who is so holy. One glimpse of his glory and it causes a man to fall on his face and say, Woe is me. Or like Paul, oh wretched man that I am.

Who will deliver me? Who will save me from this body of death? That's our God. He's a holy God. And mind you, this is Isaiah the prophet.

We would consider him, that's a godly man. That's a man who's preaching the word of God. Yes, he's good in comparison to us, in comparison to man.

But the stars always vanish when the sun appears. And every speck of dust is exposed. And in the unapproachable light of God's holiness, every speck of impurity, every sin, every impure motive is illuminated and uncovered and exposed and laid bare.

Because the holiness of God always illuminates the sinfulness of man. And it leads a man, it leads a woman to this place of saying, Woe is me. I'm finished.

I'm undone. My eyes have seen the king. And I'm unclean.

With that in mind, brothers and sisters and my friends, those who don't know Christ. Somebody may say, Brother Brian, I hear what you're saying, but you're preaching from the Old Testament. It's different in the New Testament.

I've heard that from people. I've heard people say, The God of the New Testament is different than the Old. No, He's the same.

He's the same. He does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And can I say to you and remind you that from the New Testament, Hebrews chapter 12, verse 14, He says, Pursue peace with all men, and what? Holiness. Without which no one will see the Lord. Is holiness an option? Without holiness, no one will see the Lord.

Be not deceived. Be not deceived. Without holiness, no one will see the Lord.

Therefore, without holiness, no one will see heaven. Jesus said, Accept your righteousness. Exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.

You will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Be perfect, therefore, as your Father in heaven is perfect. Be not deceived, the Scripture says.

Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Fornicators, adulterers, thieves, homosexuals, sodomites. He makes a whole list. Extortioners, revilers, covetous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Do not be deceived. Why? Because without holiness, no one will see the Lord. Now, I want to say to you, I want to address the proud.

I want to address two groups of people. The proud, rebellious sinner who has forgotten God. And the broken, penitent sinner who knows their need for God right now.

First of all, the proud, rebellious sinner. Sinner man or sinner woman. Those who have forgotten God.

Who are you to think that you will bow your knee to God and worship whenever you're good and ready? Who are you to have the audacity to say, maybe I will serve Him and maybe I will not? You're going to decide if God fits into your schedule? Can I tell you, my friends, this God that Isaiah saw fits into nobody's schedule, and He doesn't fit into anybody's box. He is the Lord. You think the Sunday morning service needs to end at 12 o'clock sharp.

You're the one who thinks you can manage, maneuver, and manipulate this God. You're the one who thinks you can get away with sinning just by asking forgiveness later, as if it's not really any big deal. You're the one who thinks that your sins are not so big a deal because you and God have an understanding together.

You're the one who profanes the holy name of God, calling Him things like the man upstairs, which is blasphemy, by the way. That's not who Isaiah saw. You're the one who lets the holy name of the Lord flippantly roll off your tongue.

The one who thinks that He's just some big Santa Claus obligated to bless you and always ready to help you out of a tight spot. You're the one who calls God your co-pilot while you stay behind the wheel and take the reins of your life. You're the one who blames God and gets mad at Him for all your problems.

You're the one who sticks out your chest and holds up your nose and shakes your tiny fist at Almighty God. You are a proud rebel that has forgotten God or never known Him. And I want to say to you, if any of that describes you, dear friend, while there is breath in your body, you know who holds that breath in your body? While there is breath in your body, repent.

I plead with you to repent, but God Almighty commands it. He commands all men everywhere to repent. Have you forgotten God? A.W. Tozer said, The essence of idolatry is to have thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.

Is the one you worship and claim to serve and follow the one we're reading about here in Scripture? Is He a God that you've created to suit yourself? Without holiness, no one will see this God. That is, no one will be admitted into His presence and accepted. Every eye shall one day see Him.

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. That's the proud rebel. What about the broken, penitent sinner? The one that even as you're hearing this message, the Holy Spirit is speaking straight to

your heart.

Somebody is saying you've had unworthy thoughts about God. You've forgotten the glory and majesty and holiness of God. You've trifled with sin, but you're not sticking out your chest and you're not holding up your nose and you're not shaking your fist.

You're crying out inside like Isaiah the prophet, Woe is me, I'm undone. You cry out like the Apostle Paul in Romans 7 and say, Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? If that's you, there's good news in Isaiah chapter 6, because the same God who the seraphim couldn't even look at, when Isaiah cried out, Woe is me, I'm undone, and he confessed his sin of unclean speech, immediately, verse 6, one of the seraphim flew to him, having in his hand a live coal, which he had taken with tongs from off the altar, and he touched my mouth with it and said, Behold, this has touched your lips, your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged. How do you think that man felt at that moment? You know, when Jesus Christ becomes precious to you, when you see how far away you are from God without Him, how deserving of hell you are, how far away you are from the glorious, majestic, holy King of Kings, and here the mercy of God comes in the person of Jesus Christ, and is offered as a perfect sacrifice for your sins, to all who will repent and believe, and you can be clean and forgiven and made holy in the sight of God, He becomes precious to you.

Amen. And He's the only way. He's the only way for a man, a sinner, to be made right with God, to be made holy.

Isaiah's encounter here with the mercy of God, it absolutely changed him, it transformed him. Imagine what he felt to know that his sins were forgiven, that they were cleansed. I'll tell you what it did for him.

At that point, he was so close to God that he overheard the Lord say, now whom shall I send, who will go for us? And immediately he says, here am I, send me. Something happens when you get a vision of the glory and majesty and holiness of God, and then you get a sight of your own wretchedness, and then you get a sight of the cross at Calvary, and then you receive the blood of Christ, the only way for you to have your sins washed away, and when you're forgiven, and when you're cleansed, you want to go and you want to tell. It changed him, it transformed him.

What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. God provided for Isaiah a live coal from the altar. God has provided for you and I His only Son, the living Christ, whose blood cleanses us from all sin to those who repent and believe.

Washes us, cleanses us, forgives us. What must we do? Run to the cross, cast yourself upon the mercy of God, repent and believe. J. Vernon McGee says this of Isaiah's encounter with God.

He said, if we would see Him today in that high and lifted up position, we would be delivered from low living. It would also deliver some folk from this easy familiarity that they seem to have with Jesus. They talk about Him as if He were a buddy, and as if they could speak to Him in any way they please.

My friend, you cannot rush into the presence of God. He does not permit it. You come to the Father through Christ.

This is the only way He can be approached. You can never come into the presence of the Father because of who you are in and of yourself. You come into His presence because you are in Christ.

The Lord Jesus made that very clear in John 14, 6, when He said, I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me. If you are His child, you can come with boldness to the throne of grace, but you cannot come to Him on any other basis.

And I say, Amen. A side of God and His glory and majesty will deliver us from low living. Brothers and sisters, we are here this week to seek the face of God and to prepare the way of the Lord.

Who is this that we are preparing the way for? He is a holy, holy God. And I simply want to ask you tonight, are you in right relationship with holy God? Have you been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ? Are you one tonight that has had unworthy thoughts about Him? Are you one tonight that has forgotten or lost sight of who God really is? And even the reading of Isaiah chapter 6 no longer gets a hold of your heart, grips you, brings you to your knees. Friends, something's wrong.

Something's wrong. When you and I can open the Word of God and read Isaiah chapter 6, or Revelation chapter 4, or Exodus chapter 19 when God reveals His glory on Mount Sinai, and that doesn't move you, that doesn't grip you, that doesn't get a hold of you, something's wrong. Your heart has grown hard because you've lost sight of who He really is.

One of the greatest needs in the church today is to have our eyes opened again to the glory and majesty and holiness of God. To see the severity of sin in the presence of a holy God. And when you do, the Lamb of God becomes so very precious to you.

You will run to Him. You will run to the cross. You will run to Jesus.

Our only hope is to see Him. That perfect sacrifice for our sins. Would you stand to your feet as we bow our heads before the Lord? I want to read to you a poem in closing, and then we're going to bow our heads before the Lord, and I pray, respond to the Lord as He's speaking to each one.

This is a poem called Eternal Light by Thomas Binney. Listen carefully. Eternal light, eternal light, how pure the soul must be when placed within thy searching sight.

It shrinks, but not with calm delight can live and look on thee. The spirits that surround thy throne may bear the burning bliss, but that is surely theirs alone, since they have never, never known a fallen world like this. Oh, how shall I, whose native sphere is dark, whose mind is dim, before the ineffable appear? Ineffable means too great or extreme to be expressed and described in words.

How can I, whose native sphere is dark, whose mind is dim, before the ineffable appear, and on my naked spirit bear that uncreated being? There is a way for man to rise to that sublime abode, an offering and sacrifice a Holy Spirit's energies and advocate with God. These, these prepare us for the sight of holiness above. The sons of ignorance and night may dwell in the eternal light through the eternal love.

There is a way to be brought into the holy presence of God, but there's only one way, and that is through the precious blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Are you right with God tonight? Are you right with this thrice holy God who is beyond compare? If you're not, I plead with you in Jesus' name to run to the cross, run to the blood of Christ, call upon God for mercy. Perhaps some of us tonight need to repent of having unworthy thoughts about God, having a low view of God, trying to bring Him down on our level.

Nobody brings God down on their level. God brings us up to where He is through Jesus. Is that you tonight? Maybe there's someone here tonight who wants to say to the Lord, because you see that

scripture that without holiness no one shall see God, is there someone here tonight who would come before the Lord and say, Lord, cleanse my heart, my hands, take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my heart, it is Thine own, it shall be Thy royal throne. The psalmist said in Psalm 24, Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy place? He that has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul into vanity nor sworn deceitfully, he shall receive the blessing from the Lord. Is there anyone here tonight with clean hands and a pure heart, who has never lifted his soul up to vanity nor sworn deceitfully? The truth is, every one of us is disqualified.

And every one of us hangs our head in shame, but then we hear the rest of the Psalm. Who is this King of glory? The Lord Jesus Christ. He has clean hands.

He has a pure heart. He is perfect righteousness. And He went to a cross for you.

And when He went to that cross for you, God took all of your sins, placed them upon His Son, and judged His Son for every sin that you ever committed, ever thought, ever did, so that in paying for your sins, Christ could place upon you His righteousness. When God looks upon His Son on the cross, He sees you and your sin. When God looks upon the repentant sinner who has come to Christ for salvation, He now sees His Son clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

I don't know where you are tonight, but I'm simply here tonight to tell you that God is a holy God. And apart from Christ, you can never be reconciled to Him. And one day, every knee will bow.

And every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. And we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Are you ready? Are you ready to meet the One we're saying we're going to prepare the way for? If you're not, my friends, please respond to God.

As you come, Johnny, and lead us in some more, we're going to enter into a time of worship. And would you bow your heads with me as He comes to pray together? Dear Heavenly Father, I pray, Lord God, that You would shine the searchlight, O God, of Your Spirit and of Your Word upon our hearts, and reveal to everyone here tonight where they are with You, Lord. Where is our standing with You? I pray, Lord God, that You would remove blinders from our eyes and give each one here tonight a special encounter, a fresh encounter.

With You, the Living God, all of Your holiness, all of Your glory and majesty. We confess tonight, Father, that You are the very One that the seraphim cover their faces and their feet and cry out day and night, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. Would You grip our hearts again, Lord, with the awareness of Your holiness? Would You get a hold of us again, Lord God, before it's too late and rekindle that fear of the Lord within our hearts? Is something wrong, Lord, when we no longer tremble in Your presence? Such a need for revival, such a desperate need for You, Lord, to open our eyes, because some of us have forgotten who You really are.

In all of Your glory and majesty, and I pray this night, Lord, You would open our eyes once again. You would give us an encounter with You. Please, Father, draw us near now as we enter into a time of worship.

Have Your way. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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