

(Divine Attributes) 02 a High and Lofty View of God

by Denny Kenaston

A high and lofty view of God is essential for a life of worship, awe, and reverence.

Duration: 51:35

Scripture: Genesis 1:3, Matthew 5:8, 2 Corinthians 4:6

Topics: "Character Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a high and lofty view of God. He mentions that he has been influenced by A.W. Tozer's book, 'The Knowledge of the Holy,' and sermons on the attributes of God. The preacher highlights the consequences of losing a lofty view of God, using the example of people in the Bible who rejected God's truth and lived in wickedness. He warns that America is also surrendering its view of God and predicts a future of debauchery if the nation continues on this path. The sermon concludes with an invitation to seek God's will and make copies of the message to share with others.

Transcript

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. O God, what wilt thou have me to do, Lord? What wilt thou have me to do? Lord, God, eternal God, open our eyes, Lord.

Take us beyond our heads to our hearts, Father, please, God. Don't let us waste these three weeks floating around with theology without any reality. O God, please, Lord, use this message, God, to stir a hunger in our heart.

Lord, please anoint me. Please help me, Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The title of our second message is, A High and Lofty View of God. A High and Lofty View of God. I want to give some due credit to others who have helped me to prepare.

Besides God and His grace, I have had some help preparing for these sessions. A.W. Tozer's book, The Knowledge of the Holy, I've read it twice in preparation for these sessions. Also, I got my hands on an old set of 22 sermons that Tozer preached in the 1950s and the 1960s on the attributes of God.

I've been listening to those also in preparation for these sessions. And then, lastly, the Lord led me and put my hands on a book, an old book by a 17th century Puritan, Stephen Carnock, called The Existence and Attributes of God. It's a big book, 1,200 pages.

It took me two weeks before I could even understand him. He was speaking way above me, way above me. But after about two weeks, the foreign language started coming together and I was able to read.

There are a few of those books downstairs, but I'm just warning you, it's meat, not milk. You want to be careful you don't buy something that just sits on your shelf the rest of your life. We begin with a definition here.

The attributes of God. That divine, holy character attributed to the Supreme Being. Whatever God has in any way revealed as being true of Himself.

The attributes of God are that holy character, or characters, attributed to the Supreme Being. It is whatever God has in any way revealed to man as being true of Himself. Brethren, what we think of God affects every area of our life.

I agree with Tozer. The church has surrendered, not lost, surrendered. There's a difference, by the way, between losing something and surrendering something.

The church has surrendered her lofty view of Almighty God and a thousand woes are hers because of it. If we're ever going to correct the woes, we have to correct the lofty view of God. It won't come any other way.

You can't just sit all the church down and say, Okay, fellas, don't do this, don't do this, do this, do this, don't do that. Now, it's right to preach the principles, the holy principles of the Word of God. But if there is no foundation of a lofty view of God underneath that, it won't mean much at all and most won't ever even do it.

A thousand woes are hers because of it. Worship has changed. Our songs have changed.

Sadly, our songs have changed. Morality has changed. Salvation has changed.

And for many, even hell has changed. It's not very hot anymore. And for some, it is not anymore.

But it all goes back to the fact that we lost our view, our vision of a high and a holy God. That's where it all goes back to. Every bit of it.

Long before they started examining whether hell was real, they lost their view of that God we looked at yesterday. That's what happened first. Today, God can be a basketball star.

Imagine that. God can be a basketball star today. We have so humanized God that He can be a basketball star.

He can spend His whole life bouncing a rubber ball around on the floor and throwing the ball into a hoop and stand and say, I'm totally, unreservedly dedicated to God. And God has called me to bounce this rubber ball around on the court for the rest of my life, throwing it into the hoop. That's God's call on my life.

I'm telling you what, He lost His view of God a long time ago. One second glimpse of that God that Ezekiel saw, He'll never touch that rubber ball again. Unless He picks it up to play with His little boy.

Amen? So God can be a basketball star. He can sing in a nightclub on Saturday night and sing gospel songs on Sunday morning. God help us.

He can be a movie star and tempt men and women to lust and still be a good church member and go to church on Sunday morning. And the problem is our view of God. We don't see Him.

We don't see Him for who He is. Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place with Him also, that is of a contrite and a humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. And brethren, if this be true, and it is true, it also is true that He does not dwell with those that are not broken.

Can I say that? He who has a low view of God also often has a high and a self-centered view of himself. They think life revolves around me. But when you begin to see God and you see who God is, you realize life doesn't revolve around me at all.

I'm very insignificant. God is everything. I am nothing.

I'm only here this very moment because that God who Ezekiel saw, who is the God of glory, sitting on His throne this very day, is letting me breathe while I stand up here. One moment, and I'm gone. That's just it.

The problem is our view of God. Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place. Taken as an example, the Hindus.

The Hindu people in India. To them, everything is God. Their view of God is very different than the view that we find in the Bible as we will be searching these three weeks.

A Hindu's view of God is very different. They say everything is God. This pulpit is God.

The carpet is God. The tree is God. The grass is God.

The sun is God. I'm God. And the rat is God.

And the cow is God. That's a very different view of God, isn't it? I wonder how it works out in their everyday life. Please consider that for a moment.

Because our view of God does work out in our everyday life. Not every one of us. You cannot get away from it.

Because of their view of God and their view of reincarnation, that rat there could be my great uncle from two generations ago. Nobody will eat the cow. And nobody will kill a rat.

So there are hundreds of millions of cows in India and billions of rats. They eat half the grain produced by the whole nation of India, yet many, many people starve to death in India. While those people walk around worshipping that cow and that rat thinking that it's God, they die of starvation because their view of God is wrong.

We must change their view of God through the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is their only hope. Nothing else will work.

You can't just teach them a few good things, a few new ways to live. You've got to change their view of God. There are highly educated and very wealthy Hindus in India today.

And it doesn't matter how good their life is, they still have this perverse view of God. I mean, I've been to India. My personal opinion is the cows in India are proud.

Can a cow be proud? I don't know. It seemed to me like they were proud. They walk around like they own the place.

I mean, no, they don't get out of your way. I mean, there could be five cars behind them and that cow is just standing there, you know, and the cars are all honking and he just looks around at them and just goes a-sondering down his way. The cows get more respect than man gets because of their wrong view of God.

An idolater is the same. What a different view of God's! The idolater sees God as this image and they make themselves an image and they cover it with gold or they cover it with silver and they bow down to it and they talk to it and they offer sacrifices to it and they give food to it and they give money to it and it's just a piece of wood covered with metal. But that's their view of God.

And it orders their life. Very much so. Turn with me to Romans 1. Paul brings this out so beautifully.

Romans 1. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. And he defines what that means. Those men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

They know the truth. They hold the truth. They have the truth.

Yet they live in unrighteousness because that which may be known of God is manifest in them. For God has showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen.

Look at that. They are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. Or may I just interject here, by the things that He made.

Even His eternal power and Godhead. His eternal power and His eternal Godhead is clearly seen in the creation that God made. It's clearly seen.

So that they are without excuse. Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations. And their foolish heart was darkened.

They became fools. They put themselves up there. I'm somebody.

Life centers around me. They became fools. And changed the glory.

There's that word again. They changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image they made like to corruptible man and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Wow! Wherefore, God was

watching.

God was sitting there on that blue throne watching. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lust of their own hearts to dishonor their own bodies between themselves who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen.

Far enough to read. There it is. We can see it right there.

They lost their lofty view of God. And what view of God they had, they lost it because they chose to know it, but yet to live in unrighteousness. You know, we can do the same thing.

You can lose whatever view of God you have if you choose to hold on to that view, but yet live in sin, you will soon lose that view. It's that way. They lost their lofty view.

And look at the list of debauchery at the end of the chapter which comes out of that. What we believe about God will affect every area of our life. It did for them.

All this evil. Why? Because they had knowledge of God's holy character and they lived in wickedness. Verse 18b.

Why? Because that which can be known of God was rejected. Verse 19 and 20. Why? Because what they knew of God they did not acknowledge.

Verse 21. And lastly, because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, that's what happened to them. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

They surrendered their high view of God and became vain in their imaginations. That is a commentary of America. That's it.

I mean, right now, America is high and mighty and they think they're so smart and they think they know what they're doing, but they're departing and rejecting and surrendering their view of God every day. You wait and see. If God spares this land, you wait and see what a debauchery this place will be in 50 more years.

It will happen. It has to happen. The only thing that holds anything together is God.

That's it! They will not defy God. They will not say in their hearts, we will not retain God in our knowledge and get away with it. You can be sure of it.

Destruction will come. It has to. So now in this land of ours, multitudes now worship a God after their own imaginations.

I might say another Jesus. As Paul says there in 2 Corinthians. Thank you, Son.

Another Jesus. Psalm 50 verse 21 says, after several verses of rebuke for their wicked works, the Lord says in Psalm 50 verse 21, Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself. You thought I was just like you, but I'm not, says God.

I'm not. That is the problem in our land. And it's probably the problem in this room with us also.

That too many times we humanize God and we think that God is like us because our view of Him is very low. And so we just start thinking, well, this is the way God is. God help us.

God open our eyes. Like the hymn writer said, Lord, what shall earth and ashes do? We would adore our Maker too. From sin and dust to Thee we cry.

The great, the holy and the high. Open our eyes, Lord, to see who You are. Man fell in the garden when he lost his lofty concept of God.

Satan had something to do with this loss as he convinced Eve by casting reflection on the character of God. Isn't that exactly what he did? He casted reflection on the character of God. Yea, hath God said? For God doth know that when you eat this, you will become as God's.

God is holding something from you, Eve. God is not who He said He is. He cast reflection on the character of God.

And Eve believed Him. Then Adam believed it. There has been trouble ever since because they departed from their simple trust in God.

Think about America for a few moments again. This nation has been on a moral slide downward for the last 50 years. Why? Think about it.

We have more Bibles than ever, more Christian books than ever, more churches than ever, more radio programs than ever, more sermon tapes, more seminars, more born-againers, parentheses around it, more Christian movies and Christian music. So why all the problems if you've got all these Bibles and all these churches and all these books and all these things? We have surrendered, and some have rejected our lofty vision of God. That's what's wrong with America.

And they can keep cranking out Bibles by the millions and millions, and it won't do a thing. If we don't come to grips with our view of who God really is, the God revealed to man, graciously revealed to man in the Word of God, if we don't come to grips with who He is, it doesn't matter how many churches you have or how many Bibles you have or how many seminars or radio stations. It doesn't matter.

It won't change anything. We have a disease in the eyes of our hearts like the Laodiceans. We need to heed what the Spirit of God said to the church of Laodicea and buy some eye salve and anoint your eyes with the eye salve so that you may see again.

We have an eye disease. Today, God has become a pal. He's a pal.

Oh yeah, God, He's my pal. Some say He's their partner. God and me, we're partners.

It doesn't even seem right to say the words. And to some, He's the man upstairs. One man wrote a book.

Christ is my quarterback. And some movie star called him a living doll. Brethren, no Jew or no Muslim would ever talk about God.

None of them. In fact, to a Muslim, if you talked about God like that, they'd cut your head off! Just like that, they'd cut your head off. They would never think of speaking about God that way.

What a preposterous abomination. The Roman general who sacrificed a pig on the altar in Jerusalem did no worse than we. No worse than we when we drag the thrice holy God down from His lofty place and make Him a Santa Claus, a good fellow, a living doll.

That's as much of an abomination. Yet, it's done everywhere. And they do it in ignorance.

I know that. They do it in ignorance because they have totally lost that lofty view of who God is. Well, let me just turn a corner.

Can I do that? I know that's pretty heavy. That's pretty heavy. But let's look at the positive, inspirational side of this whole thing.

What about the powerful, life-changing potential of a high and lofty vision of God? What about that? Let's turn to Exodus 33 again. Or Exodus 34, actually. But remember, we read yesterday about Moses, dear Moses, and the cry of his heart.

He had an audience with God and he knew it. And he knew what to ask God for when he had an audience with God. Show me Thy glory.

God, if we're friends like You say we are, if You call me by my name, if You talk to me face to face, then show me Your glory. I want to see the outshining of Your holy character. It's what I want to see, Lord.

He wasn't asking for something beautiful. He wasn't looking for a good show. No way.

No way. It was way beyond that. He wanted to know God in a deeper way.

In Exodus 34, verse 4 and reading, we see this whole experience. You know, he asked God for this and God said, this is what I'm going to do. We see how all this worked out and just to give you another definition here, it will help you as we go through these verses.

God's name. God's name in Scripture. In Scripture, God's name represents all that He is.

Not just a name so you can reference. God's name represents all that He is. His attributes, His glory, His purposes, His authority and everything else that I'm not going to say.

And that is not hard for Him because He is so far above and so far different than anyone else. He is the transcendent One. That His name can represent all that He is.

You know, our names, they don't vary much. But let's look at this text here and see that God is revealing some of His holy character to Moses. Some of the truth about Himself.

And He, Moses, hewed two tables of stone, like unto the first. And Moses rose up about 10 o'clock in the morning. He rose up early in the morning.

I mean, you think about that. I wonder how he slept the night before. But he rose up early in the morning.

And he went up into Mount Sinai as the Lord had commanded him and took in His hands the two tables of stone. And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name of the Lord. Look at those words.

Look at that. The Lord proclaimed, preached, revealed the name of the Lord. And if you leave that verse all by itself, you might think, okay, Moses was there and the cloud came down on the mountain and God said, Moses, My name is Jehovah.

But see, in the Scripture, God's name and God's attributes are the same thing. So when God proclaimed His name to Moses, He didn't just tell him what His titles were. And the Lord passed before him.

Remember? He said, I'm going to come. You can't see My glory. You can't see My face.

You'll die. Too much glory. So I'm going to put My hand out there, hide you in the cleft, and I'm going to go by you.

And when I get past you, I'll pull My hand away and you can see the glorious outshinings of My holy character on My hindquarters. Just a little here and a little glimpse there and a little glimpse here, Moses. And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed.

This is what He proclaimed. The Lord. The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children under the third and the fourth generation.

And Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped. Yes. He worshipped.

Now, we're not going to divide this text out here this morning because there are several attributes right there. But what I want you to see today is what God did for Moses. He also wants to do for us.

God pulled back the veil of Moses' heart and let him see His holy character. And he saw the glory of God. He saw, wow, this awesome God who was shaking that mountain back there in Exodus 19 and 20.

He's merciful. Gracious. He's kind.

He's forgiving. And Moses saw that. He saw God.

Eyes, Lord, open our eyes. Take us from our heads to our hearts this morning. He saw God.

And we're not going to read it because of time, but I want you to notice what He did. Once He got that revelation, the next thing He did, He said, well, Lord, since You're gracious and You're merciful and You're this and You're that, would You go with us and take us into the land of Canaan? He knew. He was an intercessor.

He knew how to talk to God. He knew God face to face. He knew, oh, since God is this way, I can plead with God for the sake of His people.

And so can we, brethren. So can we. May God make us like Moses, sighing and crying for a fresh revelation of the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth.

A.W. Choser said, Christianity rises like an eagle and flies over top all the mountain peaks of all the religions of the world. Why? Chiefly because of her lofty concept of God. Let us seek the Lord for a fresh revelation of the character of God.

Amen? So how do we do that? What posture should our hearts have if we're going to seek God for a fresh revelation of His holy character? Well, this verse came to my mind. Listen to this one. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

How do you like that promise? Wow! They shall see God. And that's not just talking about heaven. Matthew chapter 11.

Oh, Lord. God answered my prayer this morning. In Matthew chapter 11 and verse 25, we find these words, And at that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes.

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight. Did you get that secret? He has hid these things from the wise and the prudent, but He reveals them unto babes. All things are delivered unto Me of My Father, says Jesus, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father.

Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and He to whom the Son will reveal Him. Look at that. And that word reveal means to pull back the veil to see.

The Son promises to pull back the veil to see, that we might see who God is. He promises that. Look at that, brethren.

For who? The babes. The lowly. Turn to 2 Corinthians 4.6. I'm going to get done.

Praise God. 2 Corinthians 4.6. Remember our definition of the glory of God. The outshining of God's holy character.

Look at this verse in light of it. For God, God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, let there be light. And it was so that God has shined in our hearts.

Why, Paul? Oh, so you can go to heaven. I want you to have a nice place to live for eternity. Do you see how shallow that is, brethren? I mean, that is so shallow.

No. He has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I want to show you what I'm like.

I want to show you my glory. I want you to see that radiant outshining of my character. You will see it in the face of Jesus Christ.

One of the main points of chapter 3, preceding chapter 4 in 2 Corinthians, is the veiling of the glory of God in the Old Testament. Even though we do get glimpses of God's glory in the Old Testament, and one man here and one man here got a glimpse of God's glory, and we bless God that it's written down that we can look at it, even though all those things were true, God veiled His glory in the Old Testament. He veiled it.

Moses gazed into a measure of God's glory as he received the law, and his face reflected a measure of that holy character. We spoke about that a little bit yesterday. His face shone because he had been in the presence of the holiness of God, and it infused his very being.

Kind of like when Christ was transfigured there on the Mount of Transfiguration. Do you think God just turned a light on inside of Christ? No way. That wasn't a light.

That was God manifesting His glory. How did Peter call it? When we saw the most excellent glory? I think that's how Peter said it. Giving testimony of seeing the transfiguration of Christ.

No, God didn't turn a light on in Christ. He pulled back the veil for a few minutes and let them see. So Moses saw some of that glory, but for the rest they could not see this glory.

It was a mystery to most of them. And it speaks about that here in 2 Corinthians 3. But now, praise God, the veil is taken away in Christ. No longer is the glory of God veiled like it was.

That veil is taken out of the way in Christ. Chapter 3, verse 15. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts.

But look at the next verse. Nevertheless, when it, it, their hearts, when their hearts shall turn to the Lord, hallelujah, the veil is taken out of the way. It's taken out of the way.

Now the Lord is that Spirit, that revealing Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Liberty like you heard about yesterday.

The Lord is that revealing Spirit. When our heart turns to the Lord, unreservedly, completely, continually, the veil is taken out of the way. Brethren, you want to see the glory of God? It is our inheritance in Christ.

You want to see? Verse 18, but we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord. There's the glory of the Lord again. We come with an open face to behold in a glass, the glorious, radiant, outshining of God's holy character.

In the glass, we behold the glory of the Lord. We are changed into the same image from glory to more glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. God has revealed these things unto us by His Spirit.

2 Corinthians chapter 2 says, the things which are freely given to us of God. You have been redeemed, brethren. Brethren, you have been redeemed, that you might behold God for who He is.

And the exciting thing is, God doesn't just let you sit there then and gaze on His glory, but that very glory is written on the table of your heart and becomes your character. Thus, you are transformed day by day into the image, the very image of Christ. That's what God has for you.

That's why Jesus came and died for you. That's why He saved you. It's the only reason why He saved you.

And as you are endued with that glory of God yourself, your life, your light, your life will shine. And men will see it. And guess what? They will glorify your Father which is in heaven.

You know that vision that Ezekiel saw? He didn't glorify those creatures when he saw those creatures. He looked way beyond those creatures when he saw them. He realized, whoa, this is the glory of God.

This is not the glory of a creature. It's the glory of God. The creature is the glory of God.

The wheels is the glory of God. The firmament is the glory of God. The throne is the glory of God.

It's all the glory of God. And that's exactly what God has for you and I, brethren. He wants us also to manifest His glory in our lives.

An open face. An open face? A heart that is turned to the Lord. An open face? A heart that has surrendered to the Lord.

An open face? A heart that is clear. Not guilty of anything. An open face? A heart that is justified and sanctified through the blood of the Lamb.

Through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Open face. So Brethren, let's get an open face.

That's the most important thing. As we go from here, in the days to come, let's come with an open face. And I trust that you are.

We're not talking a bunch of Bible school students here this morning who just dropped in here to see what Bible school is all about and came to see the girls and any of that nonsense. We're not talking about that here. We're a hundred and twenty young men who want to go on with God, amen? Let's come with an open face.

Bless God. God may stamp some of His image upon your heart these next three weeks. Wouldn't that be beautiful? And in closing, another definition.

Theology is the study of God. It is the study of God and divine things. Or, it is the knowledge which teaches the existence, the character, and the attributes of God, His laws, and His government.

The core and center and source of all theology, Brethren, is God. Do you see how futile it is to argue theologies when this is what God is after? I hope to make theologians out of you men these weeks, that is, students of the attributes of Almighty God. Let's pray.

O Lord, I have heard Thy voice, and I was afraid. I was afraid. I am afraid, Lord, in a good way.

Lord, we just commit our way to Thee in all the days to come, Lord. Please help us, God. Please help us.

I pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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