

Se Pt4 - the Holiness of God

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer's sermon emphasizes the profound holiness of God and the necessity of recognizing our unworthiness in His presence.

Duration: 54:48

Scripture: Malachi 3:6, Matthew 4:18

Topics: "Gods Holiness", "Repentance Needed"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing the privilege and honor it is to be in the presence of God. He uses the example of Moses encountering God in the burning bush and how Moses humbled himself and took off his shoes because he was standing on holy ground. The preacher laments that in today's society, God is often portrayed as gentle and peaceful, but we fail to acknowledge His holiness and the need for repentance. He calls for the church in America to repent and stop playing church, emphasizing the need for genuine worship and confession of sin in the presence of God.

Transcript

The Holiness of God. Isaiah chapter 6, beginning in verse 1. Let's stand as we read God's word. In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Above him were seraphs, each with six wings. With two wings, they covered their faces. With two, they covered their feet.

With two, they were flying. And they were calling to one another, holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty. The whole earth is full of his glory.

At the sound of their voices, the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the temple was filled with smoke. Woe to me, I cried. I am ruined, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.

Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it, he touched my mouth and said, see, this has touched your lips. Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Great and mighty God, we come before you in the name of your Son, and acknowledge that we desire to learn about something that we know almost nothing about, your holiness. And Father, as a sinful man, as a sinful preacher, who knows so very little about you, God, I pray for grace and mercy to be able to speak about things that are too high for me.

I pray that by your grace and for your glory, you would reveal yourself to your people, that they might know to honor you as you are Lord, God, Creator of all that is and was and ever will be. Father, help us to understand tonight that you are holy, that you are holy, holy, holy. Have mercy on us, God, in Jesus' name, amen.

Have a seat, thank you very much. Tonight we're going to do a study, a biblical study on the holiness of God. In what I can see in Scripture, and what I can see in church history, the holiness of God has always been held up, not as a attribute of God, but as possibly, if one could say such a thing, the attribute of God.

In that when you begin to talk about God, or you desire to know God, or you would like to draw near to God, the first thing that you must come face to face with is something that is utterly foreign to sinful man, that God is holy. What does that mean? Well, I'd like to read for you for a moment just a definition. The word holy comes from a Hebrew term which means separated, put apart, distinct from the common or ordinary.

Holiness refers basically to two things when we talk about God. One, it refers to moral purity. God is pure, pure, pure, pure, without stain, without blemish, without wrinkle, without spot.

He is holy, and holy not like we understand holy. We're not talking here about good. We're talking about perfect.

We're talking about moral perfection. God is morally perfect. When we talk about holiness, we also need to understand that God is not only morally perfect.

God is separated from all things and all creatures that are not morally perfect. That is to say, God can't tolerate sins. He can't even tolerate a sin.

As I said last night, how many times did Adam and Eve sin before they were cast out of the presence of God? Once. God has no, no, no tolerance to anything or anyone that contradicts or opposes His nature. He's holy.

But also holiness refers to something else, something that we need to understand in America today since we have made God so common. Holiness not only means that God is morally pure. Holiness means that God is not common.

He is not ordinary. He is not casual. He's distinct.

He is not like us. And no matter what term we can use to call Him forth, it doesn't matter if we can call Him Abba Father, a word that actually means Daddy. That doesn't matter.

He's still not ordinary. He's still not casual. And He's still not common.

And He is never to be taken lightly. He's God. And God is holy.

And I want to read for you just a few texts. You won't be able to turn there right now, but I just want to scan a few texts before we get to our major text, which is Isaiah 6. In Psalms 119 it says this about God. Holy and awesome is His name.

The name of God. When you hear about the name of God, or you hear in Hebrew it says the name, it's referring to the person of God. Everything that He is.

All of His attributes. All of His works. The name of God is holy.

It's not common. You talk to an Orthodox Jew. You ask him about the name of God.

You try to get him to roll the name Yahweh off his lips. He won't do it. Why? He's so afraid of offending the glory of God.

The glory of God that is found in His name. Now you say, they take that to an extreme. Well, maybe so, but I'd rather be at that extreme than at the extreme we are at as a people.

We market the name of Jesus as though it was Tommy Hilfiger. We wear it on our clothing. We buy cups and saucers with Jesus' name.

A name that is above every name. And we market it. I can hardly walk into a Christian bookstore.

They repulse me. One time Keith Green, a man, I can't believe there's actually a generation of Christians that know not Keith Green, but he was a musician. Maybe one of the last.

One time he was doing a, he didn't do concerts. He preached when he sang. And he was coming down out of the podium and he saw someone with a hat on it that said Jesus.

And he said, where did you get that? And they said, well over there where they're selling Jesus junk. I want you to know that's an oxymoron. You never put the name of God or Jesus in a conjunctive relationship with junk.

As a matter of fact, you never put God in a conjunctive relationship with anyone. His name is not what you use it for. It's not a cult symbol.

It's not a marketing device to sell clothing. It's a name that rolls off our lips with our head bowed in honor. It's a thing we hold precious.

Because it's a name that is above every name. Look what we've done. You play marbles with the diamonds of God and that's a very dangerous thing.

We're a generation that knows not God and therefore we stand in danger. Because His name is not only holy, it's awesome. Do you want to know what awesome means? Abject terror.

Yes. Abject terror. I heard Leonard Ravenhill preach a few times before he died.

And I'll never forget he was reading through a text and it came to the fear of the Lord. And he said, now this word fear in Hebrew means fear. If it meant anything else, they would have translated another word.

It doesn't mean reverence. It means the kind of things that make your knees knock together and your teeth chatter. His name is awesome.

It strikes terror into the heart of man. And don't you ever forget it. This comfortable God of yours is no God at all.

He can do nothing for you. But you like Him because He can also do nothing to you. But that's not the God of the Bible.

Awesome is His name. Isaiah 57, 15 says, He is the high and the lofty one, the one who lives forever, whose name is holy, who lives in a high and holy place. As I've said before, I was taught to teach men to be careful.

Now don't you make God too glorious because He'll seem too far away from all of us. Bring Him down on our level. You bring God down on any level you've created an idol.

I want you to know God is in a high and lofty place. And I want you to know something. Yes, you can call Him Father.

What is the best way, the only way, the correct emotional and psychological and spiritual way to approach God? Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer, Our Father who art in heaven. You see, you can call Him Father, but never forget your Father's in heaven. And He's God.

In Old Testament Scripture tells you to mark your words before they come out of your mouth. And don't say too many things in the presence of Yahweh because He's God. Let me put it to you this way.

God is not your good buddy. He's not your friend or the man upstairs. And you and Jesus ain't got your own thing going.

Isaiah 6, verse 3. Look what it says in verse 3. And they were calling to one another, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty. The whole earth is full of His glory. Holy, holy, holy.

When you and I want to emphasize something when we're speaking, we raise our voice to say God is great and holy. Emphasizing holy. When you and I write something in English to emphasize it, we put it in bold letters, run a yellow marker through it, or underline it.

When a Jew wants to emphasize something, he repeats it. He repeats it. And you can find this in the parallelisms in the book of Proverbs.

In the book of Proverbs, have you ever read where it says something like this? The wicked shall not live in the land. The wicked shall be destroyed. It's saying the same thing twice, isn't it? It repeats it for emphasis to indicate that the wicked will be destroyed by the wrath of God.

That's the way the Jew emphasizes something in Scripture. Do you realize that there's no other attribute of God repeated in Scripture except His holiness? It never says that God is love, love, love. Did you know that? It never says God is merciful, merciful, merciful.

And it never says that God is nice, nice, nice. What it does say is God is holy, the declaration. God is holy, the repetition.

And then even further, God is holy. Isn't it funny that the church emphasizes now the same attributes of God that a pagan ungodly world does? You ought to be touched by an angel or another one of those silly shows about God. And they'll always tell you that God is love, won't they? They'll never tell you that God is

judgment and holy and brings wrath upon the wicked, will they? You go to a Baptist church, you feel like you've been in touch by an angel because you'll hear the same thing.

God is love. Oh, God would never do a thing like that, don't you bet on it. You say, is this all you talk about, Paul? No, I've got quite a few sermons on love, but we'd have to get through about three months of preaching before we'd get there.

God is holy. He's holy. Now, I want to teach you something about theology.

Regardless of what is taught today in the church, theology is not for theologians. It's for you. You should be able to use the terminology if you're going to be Christians.

Some of you are studying engineering, others mathematics, others every other type or form of profession, and you have your own terminology. If God's terminology cannot be learned, then we are a pitiful sort. And there's one word you need to learn that's always associated with the holiness of God, and the word is transcendence.

The holiness of God transcends any idea that we have of holiness, and it transcends any aspect of holiness that anyone might reflect. What does transcend mean? It simply flies higher. It has no mate, no running partner.

It goes far beyond all others. It's the Himalayas. There's nothing that goes higher than the holiness of God, and there's no one holy like the Lord.

It says in the book of 1 Samuel 2, there is none holy like the Lord. And then Job says this in Job 15, 14, and 16, what is man that he could be pure? Are one born of woman that he could be righteous? If God places no trust in His holy ones, if even the heavens are not pure in His eyes, how much less man who is vile and corrupt and who drinks up evil like water. So much for I'm okay, you're okay.

God is holy, and the church needs to rediscover His holiness. You know, there's two ways to discover the holiness of God. One is through renewing your mind in Scripture.

The other is the discipline that comes upon the house of God, your generation. It will require a lot of prayer in order for you to escape the coming judgment of God on the church in America. You ought to tremble.

Because if we won't learn holiness, He'll come and teach us. God is holy, and His holiness transcends all other aspects of holiness. Now, today, in Christianity, we hear a great deal about the presence of God.

Oh, the presence of God was here this evening. Oh, it was a wonderful time in the presence of Almighty God. Oh, didn't God move in a powerful way tonight? It was such wonderful time in the presence of God.

Well, I want us to look tonight at men who came into the presence of God, and then I want us to compare our experiences in the presence of God with their experiences in the presence of God. Start with Moses. He's out there shepherding some goats.

He sees a bush that's burning, but will not be consumed. And he's drawn to it by God Himself. He draws near to that bush, and the first thing he comes to understand is that he has to change.

That he has to humble himself. That God has appeared, and he has to take off his shoes because he's standing on holy ground. And he falls before that tree that will not be consumed.

And it's a wonderful thing you need to understand that God appeared to Moses in a burning bush. It's amazing to me today that God never appears to anyone in a burning bush. And we never sing about burning bushes.

We never sing at all about fire. God always appears to us in a cool breeze and in a flowing stream. That's the way we always present Him, and you want to know why? Because flowing streams never hurt anyone.

We've got a tame God, we do. But I want you to know when God comes and visits a man, He doesn't always visit him as a cool wind or a cool stream. He comes as a fire.

A fire that cannot be handled. A fire that has no end. And a fire that does not consume itself, but can consume all that is unholy before it.

A dangerous thing to be in the presence of God. Look at these seraphs. Look at them in Isaiah.

Let's read verse 2. Above them were seraphs, each with six wings. With two, they covered their faces. With two, they covered their feet.

And with two, they were flying, and they were calling to one another, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord Almighty. The whole earth is full of His glory. What are seraphs? We really don't know, to be honest with you.

You can read something about something that looks sort of like a seraph in Ezekiel, and you can go to the book of Revelation and find something that might be a cousin to a seraph. We don't know. It's difficult to nail these creatures down, but there are some things we can say about seraphs.

That is, they are the most majestic, the most powerful, and the most holy of all creatures God has ever made. You say, well, how on earth can you know that? Their proximity to the throne of God. They are closer to the throne of God and the presence of God than any other creature recorded in Scripture.

And from what we understand about other created beings like seraphs, these are powerful things that with the breath of their nostrils could wipe out our universe. With regard to holiness, well, look at these. They are standing and flying even in the very presence of Almighty God.

And if we were even to draw near to a fraction of that glory, we would be destroyed. And yet they live in that glory. And yet even though they are so majestic and so holy, how are they in the presence of God? I'll tell you how they are.

They bow their heads and cry out, I am not holy. They cover their faces. They cover their feet.

I've always asked myself, why on earth did they cover their feet? I mean, what does feet have to do with holiness? What does it mean? I never could figure that out honestly until one day I was listening to R.C. Sproul and I think he hit upon the thing. He said, feet are always associated with clay and clay with the creature, the dust of the earth. And these majestic beings, even in the presence of God, were bowing their heads and covering their feet, acknowledging that they were a creature and they were not God.

And the place that they held was a place not of rights. It was not their right to be there, but their privilege, graciously given to them by God Himself. Look at the way they act in the presence of God and then look at you.

Have you ever heard the saying, fools rush in where angels fear to tread? Physician, heal thyself. This is talking about us and the church in America today. There's a piano, a very important piano over in London actually, in the museum.

And I forget for the life of me what the man's name was who owned it, but he was probably the most famous composer in the world. I don't know who it was, but he was important. You can tell he's important because if you go by there, they've got the piano all roped off and there's a Brit standing by it, a captain of the guard.

He won't let you get near that piano. But they tell me that one day a young girl walked up there who had been learning how to play the piano. She could knock out some chopsticks and some other things.

And she came up and she looked at the captain of the guard and she said, could I jump over the rope and play a little? And amazingly, the dry Brit said, well, yes, you can. So she jumped over the rope and she sat down on the piano and she began to knock out a few songs and then satisfied with herself and so happy, she jumped off the piano, jumped across the rope and she said to the captain, she said, well, I guess a lot of people have wanted to do that. And he said, well, actually, the two most famous concert pianists alive today were here last week.

And we asked them if they would like to sit down on the stool and play. And they both bowed their heads and said they were not worthy. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

My friend, let me preach to you the book of Romans. I can talk to you about access into the presence of God and dance in joy before you. Yes, we have access to God.

I know I'm sounding very unbalanced here, but I want you to know something. Until you know who God is and the privilege it is to be in His presence, you probably don't have any right to be there. You've got to know this God of yours before you start doing foolish things before Him and shame His glory.

One time I was in a meeting. I get to preach in a lot of places. Presbyterian, charismatic, Baptist, the whole gamut.

One time I was in a church and they said, oh, the presence of God is here, isn't it? And I knew the church well. I said, no, it's not. And they said, why? I said, because half of you would be dead.

You have to be very careful. We've made God too common. And it's not a wise thing that we've done.

Now, look at Isaiah. Who was Isaiah? Was he a great man of God? No, we've already settled that. There's no such thing as a great man of God.

But he was something in his day. He preached more about Christ than any man in the entire Old Testament. He knew more about the revelation of God than anyone.

And as far as dedication, Jewish tradition tells us he was sawed in two with a wooden saw because he would not denounce the word of Jehovah that came through his lips. So I'd say he was pretty much a saint of God. He comes into the presence of God.

And what does he do? Verse 5. Woe to me, I cried, I'm ruined, for I'm a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips. And mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty. The NIV that I'm using here does not translate this strong enough.

What is Isaiah doing? He's pronouncing a curse of death upon himself. Woe is a curse. And then he's saying, I am cut off or let me be cut off.

Isn't it amazing? We think we come into the presence of God and we get all jittery and some people break out in hysterics and fall on the ground and others of us jump around even though we know we're walking in sin. But when this man of God comes into the presence of God, the only thing he can think about doing is pronouncing a curse of death upon himself and confessing his sin before Almighty God. Now that ought to tell you that there's something terribly wrong with our Christianity today.

Dr. Leif Blair at Southwestern Theological Seminary is a very worthy man. I've learned a great deal from him. And he speaks about a balance in the worship of God and what he says is true.

He talks about the throne room experience and the banquet room experience, the wedding experience, the cana experience with Christ. And we need to hold on to those two things. What I'm talking about is here we have the throne room experience.

When God manifests His glory and men are struck down before Him because of His great holiness. That should occur in your life. There should be times when God manifests Himself to you that you are thrown down and you tremble before Him because of His greatness and His holiness.

That's true. But there are also other times when you come before God and it's like that wedding day that Jesus had in John chapter 2 with His disciples. When you can worship God with joy and even laughter and raising your hands and even being childish before Him.

Or you can leap with joy. You can have a good time in the presence of Almighty God. Yes, that's true.

But you need to see that there are two types of manifestations here. And in America today the only thing we've got are children dancing before God. And they remain children because they never draw close enough to God to know the other side.

When I'm in charismatic churches preaching I always tell them, I say, most of you shouldn't be jumping around. They say, why? I say, because you've never trembled. You see, you don't just take the part of God that is most comfortable.

Just like the Holy Spirit is not received in parts because He is a whole, a unity, a person. God is not received in parts. You don't take some attributes and reject others.

The glory and the beauty of God starts with His holiness. What makes God a wonder is that He is totally, like the old Jewish theologian said, He is totally other than us. Totally different.

Totally unsearchable. Totally holy. And that's what I want you to learn because you've grown up in a church, a generation of Christianity that knows not holiness.

And because of it, many of you walk in sin and don't even know it. Now, if you've noticed, I preach a great deal out of the Old Testament, don't I? Theology professors that teach out of the Old Testament just love me. They invite me all the time to come and preach because I'm always talking about the Old Testament.

But you know what Christians tell me? They say, Paul, you're always preaching out of the Old Testament because God isn't like that in the New Testament. Have you ever read Malachi? I do not change, therefore you're not destroyed. Yeah, but everything's different because of Jesus.

Jesus is different. You know, isn't it amazing that Christians, when they talk about the promises of God, they say Jesus. The same yesterday, today, and always.

But when they talk about the attributes of God, somehow He's changed. Do you know who Isaiah is looking at on this throne? The Son of God. Read John chapter 12, verses 41 and 42.

When Isaiah saw this vision of God, he was looking at the Son. There's a concept in theology that's not too far ahead of you that you can't reach out and grab it, and it's this. Everything God the Father has ever done in all of creation and in all of eternity has done through His Son.

How did God create the world? Through His Son. How has God always revealed Himself to the world? Because no one has ever seen the Father. How has the Father always revealed Himself to the world? Through the Son.

How has the Father redeemed? Through the Son. How does the Father reign? Through the Son. Who is sitting on this throne? The Son.

And I want you to know you can find Isaiah 6 in the Gospels. You say, what on earth are you talking about? Yes, you can find Isaiah 6 in the Gospels. An exact duplication of Isaiah 6. What on earth are you talking about? I've never found something like Isaiah 6 in the Gospels.

Well, you ought to go out on a boat with Jesus sometime. Do you remember when Jesus was preaching and teaching and Peter had been fishing all night? Jesus said, Peter, let's go out and cast some nets. Peter said, Lord, there's no use in doing this, but You're Lord and I'm not, so let's go.

He throws the net over. And what happens? It's filled up with fish, isn't it? Alright. We have Jesus.

We have the Son of God revealing Himself, His glory to Isaiah in this vision. We have the Son of God revealing His glory to Peter with a miracle, filling nets full of fish where no fish belonged. Isaiah takes one look at the glory of the Son of God on the throne and he falls down before Him and he says, Woe to me, I'm a sinful man.

I'm undone. Peter takes one look at the glory of Jesus when he reveals His glory on that boat and he falls down and says, Depart from me, Lord. I am a sinful man.

When Isaiah made that confession, the Son of God pardoned him and sent Him out as a missionary. Who will go for us? Isaiah said, I will. When Peter fell down at the feet of Christ on that boat and said, Depart from me, I'm a wicked man.

Jesus said, I'll make you a fisher of men. It's the very same thing because it's the very same God. And yes, God has not changed.

He's holy. And we need a knowledge of the holy. We most desperately do.

If we need anything in Christianity, we need knowledge of the holy. Now, have you ever read Revelation 1? We have John the aged. Tradition tells us they tried to kill him by boiling him in oil and it didn't work so they exiled him to an island.

John the beloved. John the aged. John who had laid his head on the chest of Christ.

John who saw himself having only one claim to fame. He was the disciple, not the one that loved Jesus, but the one that Jesus loved. Don't sing so much about your love for Him.

Sing more about His love for you because that's what makes you outstanding. Well, he's on that island and he hears a noise behind him and he turns around and he wasn't slain in the Spirit. I've got news for you.

But he did see the glory of Almighty God revealed in the Son of God and he fell as a dead man. The exalted, resurrected, glorified Christ before whom the earth and heaven itself will flee away. The unapproachable One.

The holy, holy, holy One. And the One that we know so very little about. But the One that we need to know about.

Now, with regard to holiness, you need to understand something else. Holiness not only means that God is morally pure or that God is separate and distinct from all other things. Holiness also means that God has nothing to do with sin, that God is not neutral with regard to sin, but God comes in holy hatred against sin.

He hates it. You see, the Puritans... I'm giving myself away here. The Puritans, they divided the world up into two things.

Pleasures for God and abominations to God. They looked. They searched out.

They found in the Word what is a pleasure to God, what is an abomination to God. Let's cut ourselves away from all things that God hates and let's do only that which is holy and that which God loves. We're going to be talking about that tomorrow.

But tonight we need to learn about the holiness of God. God cannot tolerate sin. He simply cannot.

Go with me for a moment to Proverbs 15. Verse 8 and 9 and 26. The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked.

I can tell you how much you know about the holiness of God. How much did you prepare your heart before you started the first worship song? Do you see now how little you know about the holiness of God? You entered into worship without even thinking that there might be sin that would make your worship an abomination before Him. Did you think about that? Did you think about if you watched something this afternoon that you shouldn't have watched? That you said something that you shouldn't have said? Did you think about there might be ways in you that were not pleasing to God? No.

You rushed straight in to lifting up your hands and rejoicing and singing songs. You're not wise in doing things like that. If I regard iniquity in my heart, He will not hear me.

I hope you've seen yourself in a mirror. Can you dance before the Lord? Well, not this disco stuff they're doing nowadays, but you can have a lot of joy. Can you rejoice in God knowing that He loves you and that you're safe in His arms? You bet you can.

But that's not what we're talking about tonight. We're talking about the fact that the Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked. And we need to take that seriously.

You prepare your heart to meet the Lord. The Lord detests the way of the wicked. Verse 9. You see, let me tell you something.

And I say this because I love you. Unbelievers, thirty years ago, acted more like Christians and lived according to biblical principles more than Christians do today. As a matter of fact, if we could send the church back thirty years, it would be considered an abomination even to the unbelievers.

We do things, accept things, listen to things, watch things and everything else that make us detestable and make our worship detestable to God. If your ways are not the ways of Jehovah, if you're not seriously seeking the narrow path, did you forget about that thing? Did you forget about a narrow path? It seems to me no one preaches on it anymore. You've got to go back 250 years and find some Puritan running around England to even hear about it.

But there is one. And you're supposed to walk it. Verse 26.

The Lord detests even the thoughts of the wicked. We are self-absorbed today in our needs when we should be self-absorbed in the desire for holiness, personal, unique and real. Go to Leviticus 10.

Verse 1. Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense, and they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord contrary to His command. So fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. Moses then said to Aaron, this is what the Lord spoke of when He said, among those who approach Me, I will show Myself holy in the sight of all the people.

I will be honored. Aaron remained silent. Well, you know, it's just the thought of the heart, isn't it? I mean, God, after all, no one wants to serve Him today, so if I run by the church and give Him a little song, at least He ought to be pleased.

I mean, I'm doing more than everyone else. Here we go back to bad theology. See, you think God needs something.

He doesn't. He needs no acts of charity on His part. You see, God has prescribed ways in which men must come to Him.

You say, through Jesus. Yes. But you need to read the whole counsel of God, and not just little cliché parts.

You need to realize that here were two men that came to God to offer a sacrifice. And most of us would have said, well, those wonderful boys, I mean, after all, no one's really concerned about serving God anymore. At least they're doing something while God wasn't much pleased, was He? Fire came out from the presence of God and consumed both of them.

I find it interesting that I can't find God killing any bad preacher, but He kills two bad song leaders. There's one thing much more awesome than preaching God's Word, and I believe this with all my heart. I know I take it from the Levitical worship, but it's still there in the Bible.

It's one thing to preach to men about God. It's quite another thing to lead men in worship before Him. That's the most frightening thing I could ever think of doing.

I'm glad God didn't call me to do that because in my present state I don't think I'm right enough. You say, what, you fear God? That just happens to be the beginning of wisdom. Did you forget? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Who is the one, God says in Isaiah 66, that I esteem? The one who's contrite at heart and trembles at My Word. When was the last time you trembled at God's Word? When? When was the last time you trembled in worship before Him? We do need prophets today, don't we? Because we are in the same state Israel was in many times, aren't we? We know not God. Do you remember Uzzah? Wonderful man.

David decided he was going to bring the Ark of the Lord, which represented the presence of the Lord, that he was going to bring it, the Ark, to Jerusalem. He brought it the wrong way. Levites were supposed to bring it, carrying it on poles, run through the rings of the Ark.

David brought it in an ox cart. So it's not just the intentions of the heart that matters, is it? It's obedient to the prescribed laws of God. Well, he brought the thing close to Jerusalem and the ox began to stumble.

The cart was going to tip. And a wonderful man by the name of Uzzah stretched out his hand and steadied the Ark. He threw his body between the Ark and the ground so that the Ark would not touch the ground and become defiled.

What a wonderful thing to do! I mean, what a sacrificial act! What an act of devotion! I mean, what a splendid thing! I'm sure God rewarded him highly. He killed him. Why? Again, I learned this from Dr. Sproul.

Uzzah presumed something. He presumed that his hand was holier than the ground and he was wrong. You see, the ground has never disobeyed God.

God sends rain. Ground turns into mud. God sends the sun.

The ground turns into hardened earth. God's never had a problem with the earth. It's this corrupt, depraved, reprobate man who hates God that God's been dealing with all these years.

Presumption is a terrible thing. Playing marbles with God's diamonds. I recommend you put them back in the bag and give them to somebody who knows how to handle them.

You say, but God's not that way anymore. Let's go to Hebrews chapter 10. I'm going to show you that Leviticus or Hebrews chapter 10, we're going to see that Leviticus chapter 10 is in the New Testament.

And it'll stay with me as long as I live. I was a 21 year old who knew really nothing about God. And I went to a meeting with a couple of hundred youth.

And they were so vile, these youth. They were so rebellious that the preacher preached 15 minutes. And he stepped down out of the pulpit and said, it's no use.

And no one wanted to preach. So one of the pastors came to me and said, young man, would you like to preach? No one else does. And I said, give me a day.

Give me one day. And I went out into a barn and I prayed and I prayed all day and I fasted and I prayed and I cried out to God because I had nothing to say. I knew nothing about God.

And I went up there that night and I got in the pulpit and I didn't know what to do. And God chose me. Do you want to know why He chose me and no one else? Not because I was the holiest, but because I was the unholyest.

Not because I was the wisest. No, there were men of God there. It was because I was nothing.

I didn't know how to preach. I didn't know how to pray. I knew nothing about God.

I had no degree. I had nothing. I was worthless.

And I stood up and I looked at everybody and they started laughing at me because I didn't know what to say. And then all of a sudden I said this, And I walked out of the pulpit and I went down into the basement of the facility and I just started to pray. I said, well, I made a fool out of myself on one of my first sermons.

And all of a sudden I heard things falling on the floor above me. People running and screaming and crying and falling down. I thought, what on earth is happening? And I prayed and all of a sudden it was like God said, pray for missionaries.

Pray for missionaries from this group. Boy, these are terrorists. They're not missionaries.

And I walked back up into that facility. I said, God, please, I've got to know what's going on up there. Can I go on up there? And I felt the freedom to walk back up.

And every person in that place was laying on the floor. They were covering their heads. Some were hiding behind pews.

Others were laying over the pews as though they'd been cut in two. The pastors were laying on the ground crying out in fear. Then all of a sudden, some of the youth had decided that they wouldn't be in the service.

But that halfway through the service, they would bust through the back doors and interrupt everything. They busted through. They made it about two yards.

And they fell down and they crawled to the altar. The next day, people followed me around all day saying, are you sure that the wrath of God will not come again? Are you sure that we're saved? And the comforting man that I am, I said, no, I'm not. I pray to Almighty God that that would happen here.

Because I'm afraid if it doesn't, then what else will save you from yourself? I have nothing to lose because I am nothing. And I want you to know that judgment comes upon America, and not because of our president, but because of the church. And if there is not a consuming fire that burns through the church and heals her of all her iniquity and idolatry, she's doomed in America.

You say, well, the gates of hell will never prevail against the church. He can destroy the church in this country and raise her up anywhere else. He doesn't need America and he doesn't need us.

And we need to realize this. And you need to realize this because to whom much is given, much is required. I fear for you.

I fear for me. I stay up at night crying out saying, God, what will it be like for me in 20 years in this place? When will it come, God? Because it is going to come. And only prayer can save your generation from it.

And I want you to know that even if you pray and pray, and this generation is saved from the discipline of God that is coming, it will fall sooner or later on this country and upon the church because we know not God. And even when I speak these words, you're more interested in the people behind me than you are the very Word of God. We need repentance in this land.

We need to fall on our faces before God. I wish I could stay here for three weeks and tell you about the joys of God and about the pleasures of God and about the security of God and about laughing and singing in the presence of God. But dear God, someone has to tell the church in America that it is in peril.

We've got administrators and bureaucracy and everything else and little boys running around. But somebody's got to be a trumpet and say, America, repent. Baptists, repent.

Southern Baptists, repent. Colleges, repent. Get on your face and stop playing church.

That's what we've got to know. And only then will God heal our land. Before I came here tonight, up there in the room with some of the other men of God, I had to confess my sin openly before them because I sinned against the Lord today.

Do you know how I sinned? I heard about Bill Clinton and all his trouble and a bit of joy jumped up in my heart because I thought, justice. And I broke a command of God not to rejoice over the failure and falling of my enemy. And I couldn't preach tonight until I repented, not only in His presence but in the presence of other men so I could be humbled.

You see, God takes sin that seriously. But then again, I'm just a raving fanatic, aren't I? Be careful. Be very careful.

I might be. But then again, I might not be. I love you because you are the people of God and God loves you.

But God will not tolerate. Don't you think He will? He will not tolerate idolatry or sin or worldliness. He wants to make your life a dance.

He wants to fill you with joy. But you can't play. You can't.

He's God. Tonight, think about that. Tonight in your dorms, think about it with other Christians.

Ask yourself, is this man mad? There's one way of knowing. Read the entire Bible and if I say something that no one else has said, then I'm mad. But if you can find the same thing I'm saying all the way out through the entire Bible, then maybe I ought to be listened to.

You see, authority does not come from special anointings and it does not come from calling. If I have incorrectly preached the Word of God tonight, then you are not bound by anything I say. But if what I say can be found in the Word of God, you're bound by every word and on the Day of Judgment you'll be held responsible for every word that is proceeded out of this mouth.

Now I'm going to leave you alone to God, knowing that you love Him, but you were born in a generation that did not know Moses, did not know Joshua, did not know the Puritans, did not know Spurgeon, did not know Godly. You grew up in a generation of church growth experts and CEOs and big churches that cost millions of dollars to build. But it's still your fault if you don't repent and seek out the ways of the Lord.

Let's pray. Father, there's so much more of You, Father, than all these hard things I'm saying. So many wonderful, tender things about You that I've not been able to say.

But, oh God, I know that the church needs to hear this word. And I pray, God, that Your people will hear it and evaluate what's been said tonight by comparing it to the written word of God. And that if it is a word from You and it is a correct interpretation of Scripture, that they will obey it.

Father, I don't want all joy to be taken out of this university. And I don't want people to be afraid to come to You, but, Father, I want them to know whom they're coming to. Father, reveal Yourself to me and to these that You might be glorified, that You might be glorified.

Now, Father, I pray one last thing, that this word not be snatched from their hearts, that there not be minute and superficial conversation, but that all things in this room be turned toward this great burden. Lord, we ask for spiritual revival, but we know not what we ask for. Help us understand.

In Jesus' holy name, amen. God bless you all. If you feel the leading of the Lord to go home, go home.

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