

# The Holy One of Israel

by Bryan Anthony

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's holiness and the need for repentance and humility in the face of His greatness and majesty.*

**Duration:** 1:10:47

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:5, Psalm 99:5, Isaiah 6:1-8, Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, Romans 3:23-24

**Topics:** "Israel"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for the church to rediscover the holiness of God. He describes a vision of Isaiah in which he sees the Lord seated on a throne, surrounded by seraphim proclaiming his holiness. The preacher highlights the impact of encountering God's holiness, leading to a recognition of one's own sinfulness and a desire for forgiveness. He also emphasizes the importance of allowing the truth of God's holiness to transform our hearts and increase our reverence for Him. The sermon encourages believers to seek a deeper understanding of God's holiness and to allow it to shape their lives.

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## Transcript

Give us grace to peer into this experience that the prophet had in Isaiah 6 and give us all something of the sense of God's holiness that touched this man these hundreds and hundreds of years ago.

So let's pray.

Father we come before your throne of grace this evening feeling so poignantly that none of us are sufficient for these things yet you've graced us with the Holy Spirit you've graced us with the scriptures you've graced us with this foundational description of your holiness that was given by a prophet of age old and we ask this evening Lord that you would help us along with the spirit of wisdom and revelation that you would move upon our hearts and minds that from the fatigue of the day you would quicken us by supernatural grace to peer into these awesome passages of scripture and to attain from you a greater glimpse of your holiness Lord we recognize that this is not a shallow subject this is not an attribute that we list off with the others and then check off as if we've got everything

down pat but that it's meant to shock our system and to shock us out of our human reasoning and to catapult us into heights of worship and obedience and awe so we do ask for that by the help of your spirit as we look at Isaiah 6 that you would with the spirit that you've given each of us quicken us to probe this

text and to draw out from it life and revelation and understanding that would be helpful in Jesus name amen I do want to draw some from just in case you want to get these books if you don't have them Walter Kaiser jr. on the majesty of God in the old testament and the attributes of God by aw pink I know one of these is going to be available in the APS library soon so you can during prayer meetings if you want to glean from it you can in the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the

Lord sitting on a throne lofty and exalted with the train of his robe filling the temple the seraphim stood above him each having six wings with two he covered his face and with two he covered his feet and with two he flew and one called out to another and said holy holy holy is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory and the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out while the temple was filling with smoke then I said woe is me for I am ruined because I'm a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the king the Lord of hosts then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs he touched my mouth with it and said behold this has touched your

lips and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven or atoned for then I heard the voice of the Lord saying whom shall I send and who will go for us then I said here am I send me he said go and tell this people keep on listening but do not perceive keep on looking but do not understand render the hearts of this people insensitive their ears dull and their eyes dim otherwise they might see with their eyes hear with their ears understand with their hearts and return and be healed then I said Lord how long and he answered until cities are devastated and without inhabitant houses are without people and the land is utterly desolate the Lord has removed men far away and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land yet there will be a tenth portion in it and it will again be

subject to burning like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains when it is felled the holy seed is its stump I just wanted to get through that whole chapter and just see what the Lord would draw out on the holiness of God the holiness of God we're going to spend these next weeks on the knowledge and attributes of God as has been recently said that probably one of the greatest weaknesses of the church or maybe we should say what's the word I'm looking for one of the greatest things missing in the church shortcomings or holes in the picture voids that's a good word thank you brother one of greatest voids in the church is a an adequate understanding of the attributes of God as set forth in the scriptures which is one of the reasons why some of the things we were discussing in the in the

interview today even have a place to make their headway in the church because the saints are not acquainted with the God of the scriptures if we were acquainted with the God of the scriptures even on a cerebral mental level when we began to see these kinds of things an alarm would go off and yet the cerebral mental understanding is insufficient a revelation is necessary as was given to the prophets and apostles by the Holy Spirit Isaiah had this kind of remarkable encounter with God perhaps unparalleled in the whole Bible even and therefore unparalleled in history but we need to take it up as a pattern not that every man or woman in the church will have a similar experience in terms of the visit visible vision of God that was given but that inwardly the same reality would be formed in the

hearts of all the saints by the help and work of the Holy Spirit and by what God has given us in the scriptures as we turn to him continually day by day taking up our cross and following him wheresoever he goes the holiness of God who knows of the holiness of God in modern times what movements in present times are carrying the sense of God's holiness to such a degree that when the church visits their conferences and convocations reads their books and drinks in their teachings we are being built up

inwardly with an increasing revelation of his holiness where a sense of the fear of the Lord is increasing where sin is becoming increasingly sinful in our hearts and where God's majesty is becoming increasingly majestic where his glory is not a catchphrase that has to do something with a lively

meeting but it has to do with an awe that has overtaken us because we've seen him high and lifted up the train of his robe filling the temple and though we've been seasoned in prophetic understanding and even engaged in ministry as was Isaiah we cry out woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips Stephen Sharnock who wrote the great magnum opus on the existence and attributes of God which will be gleaned from I didn't bring it today but you can order it at a pretty affordable price and it's highly recommended it's probably I don't know a thousand pages but it's been considered one of the great works on the attributes of God where the brother takes up from some hundreds some hundreds of years ago he takes up you know the knowledge of God the righteousness of God the love of God the mercy of

God and then he spends a good 50 to 100 pages on each attribute that he's focusing on you know you bring this need for the knowledge and of the attributes of God up in the church and the majority of the saints would yawn and ho hum because we haven't seen his beauty and his majesty as Isaiah had for the prophets of old and for the apostles there was nothing more desirable than to gaze upon him for the psalmists the cry of David became to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life that he might gaze on the beauty of the Lord and behold his majesty we've been so congested with lesser things that we've I think one brother said we've been nibbling at the table of the world so long that we've not realized there's a feast of the knowledge of God available to us that would taste so

much better and would fulfill so much deeper but Sharnock writes God is oftener styled holy than almighty forgive his somewhat archaic language now what is he saying he's saying in the scriptures God is actually called holy more than he's called almighty more often and set forth by this part of his dignity more than by any other this is more fixed on as an epithet to his name than any other I'll give interpretation as best as I can but we need to get a hold of this and extract the life out of what these men have said and written you never find it expressed his mighty name or his wise name but his great name and most of all his holy name this is the greatest title of honor in this ladder doth the majesty and venerableness of his name appear what is he saying what is venerableness worthy of

honor worthy of utmost investment that's what his venerableness represents in his greatness that's the that's the simplified term of majesty we hear of the majesty of the lord also could be translated sometimes the beauty of the lord but most simply the greatness of the lord the otherness that he's not like man that you can't take the most holy man that you've known and exaggerate his personality and his attributes and say that must be what god is like the holiest of men that you've seen are as filthy rags in comparison he is totally other than holy that's what it means his greatness the greatest of men the cloud of witnesses that hangs on on my wall in my study they call mcshane holy mcshane robert murray mcshane they talked of wc burns the native chinese saints he was the holiest man in

china yet the greatest of these men pale in comparison to the one who sits on the throne any piece of holiness that they had that impressed other men was simply the piece of holiness that they had the capacity to receive of the heavenly one who was seen by the prophet in this remarkable passage of scripture holy holy holy is the lord god almighty he says once in psalm 89 i have sworn by my holiness god swears by his holiness because that is a fuller expression of himself than anything else never does he say i swear by my love never does he say i swear by my compassions all of these are are remarkable attributes of god but he swears by his holiness because summed up in his holiness are his judgments are

his compassions are his purity are his kindness everything that god is is summed up in

what the seraphim cried out in this awesome passage holy holy holy and the scholars teach us that in the hebraic framework when you reiterate or repeat something it actually is bringing an extra exclamation mark on it so that when jesus says truly truly i say unto you he's not just being redundant or or trying to get their attention by saying it twice he's saying truly with one exclamation mark truly with multiple exclamation marks you better hear what i'm about to say and from the angelic uh uh expression given here is a holy with one exclamation mark a holy with two exclamation marks and a holy with unlimited exclamation marks following this is the great hebraic expression given to the prophet who would understand that these seraphim are saying we cannot even give definition to his

holiness all we can do is gasp and cry out that he's holy holy holy beyond measure all of the elders they're saying isaiah though you would esteem moose though you would esteem david though you would esteem others from age old though you would esteem abraham they only had a piece of his holiness and what they had was only what they had received no flesh and blood can glory in his presence holy holy holy the seraphim are crying out the 24 elders are crying out angelic creatures and beings that the prophets and apostles tried to describe but couldn't even put human terminology on so that it sounds almost as foolishness to human wisdom and that as the theologians have said if they would swoop down and bring one of their wings into one of our gatherings we would worship them they are the ones

crying out covering their faces holy holy holy john howey a great puritan preacher in the 17th century said after quoting psalm 30 sing unto the lord oh you saints of his and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness he says this may be said to be a transcendental attribute you guys know the word transcendent it's almost synonymous with holy transcendent means beyond us it means undefinable it means uh impossible to categorize it means uncontainable it means no human language in any of the languages of the earth even in hebrew can adequately describe this one it's a transcendental attribute his holiness is that as it were runs through the rest and casts luster upon them luster is a wonderful old anglican word that really means splendor and filled with light and glory and beauty the

old poet wrote before thine ever blazing throne we have no luster of our own and john this old puritan writer is saying that god's holiness is a transcendental attribute that as it were runs through the rest of his attributes and casts luster upon them it is an attribute of attributes so when you think of his of the love of god and you immediately think oh i know my dad was a loving dad that must be how god is no you might have gotten a glimmer of god's love through a believing father who was expressing kindness or through a neighbor or through a fellow brother or sister in the body but he is so holy and so transcendent that his kindness and his compassion and his love and every other attribute has upon it glimmering light that has been cast on the basis of his holiness before thine ever

blazing throne we have no luster of our own that no flesh would glory in his presence i think i read today from an old preacher that a good sermon will cause people to regard the preacher but a message from the lord will cause people to revere the king of heaven it's those who have been apprehended by this kind of picture isaiah had already been prophesying for five chapters and the lord did not appear to him and say your ministry is presumptuous and false now here's what you need to see the lord simply appeared it didn't even require a great message from the one on the throne picking apart the uncleanness of isaiah's lips simply to see him high and lifted up brought isaiah low enough to realize that though he had been giving foundational words of woe and of repentance to judah his own

lips were unclean and the people around him their lips were unclean it wasn't only that isaiah was going around using it wasn't at all i would assume that isaiah was going around using the ancient equivalent of profanity and using curse words and speaking curses against his neighbors it was that the high and lifted up one appeared to him and his truth transcendental holiness which is so other than anything isaiah had ever seen caused him even to realize that though i am prophesying on the basis of the law of mooses though i am speaking a word of rightness and righteousness my own proclamation of him is as a weak interpretation of the glory of the one that i'm seeing on the throne i'm calling my own nation to holiness and repentance but i know barely anything of his holiness now that i've

seen him mine eyes have seen the king and i abhor myself in dust and ashes it wasn't a politically religiously correct response that isaiah was giving because okay here he is and he's holy and so i better say that my lips are unclean the light of god had flashed through the man's soul he beheld the heavenly temple he saw its posts shaking at the sound of the voices of those who were crying out and at the emanation and of the expression of god's glory in that holy temple isaiah was beholding it with human eyes and it required him to cry out oh my lips my lips who is sufficient to speak of this one and though i felt a burden to speak and to call my own people away from their sin and though the word that i'm giving them is a thus saith the lord and i've been giving it for five chapters now

that i see him i wonder if i am even adequate to be giving these words i wonder with the modern age of preachers who are self-confident if they've ever once been touched with this sense and i'm eager to see a new uh what is spurgeon saying a golden age of preachers who come to the pulpit or to the corner or to uh another a small group of saints even like this with a feeling of total inadequacy that though i put in eight hours of study in preparation and prayer i still am gripped with a sense of inadequacy nothing i can proclaim would rightly set him forth in his splendor i am but a weak vessel seeking to proclaim an infinite god's glory and if only i could get a little bit of that sprinkling of his luster upon his attributes and we could taste something of the age which is to come and see

a glimpse of something of what isaiah saw then that would be sufficient for the night to carry us on in pursuit of the knowledge of god and utterly worth it worth 10 hours of preparation worth suffering if persecution should come upon the church to get one more glimpse of his precious face one more uh uh what does paul say that you might grasp the love of god one more grasp a little bit tighter of a grasp on a true knowledge of god well pink goes on to write the god which the vast majority of professing christians love is looked upon very much like an indulgent old man who himself has no relish for folly but leniently winks at the indiscretions of youth but the word says thou hatest all workers of iniquity and again god is angry with the wicked every day in psalm 7 but men refuse to

believe in this god and gnash their teeth when his hatred of sin is faithfully pressed upon their attention no sinful man was no more likely to devise a holy god than to create the lake of fire in which he will be tormented forever and ever what is he saying he's saying that in his day which was many many many decades ago the common understanding of god in the church lacked a sense of his holiness and that the majority of those even who were professing the name of christ had fashioned for themselves a god to their own liking who did not have himself a hatred of sin or a holiness that separates him from the depravity of mankind and that requires mercy or more specifically requires a bloody cross on calvary and we so made god to be common to our ministry and christian experience that a

sense of his holiness has dissipated and left and i would say that these decades and centuries after some of these men wrote we are now feeling the negative reverberations of that when all kinds of expressions of

ministry a so-called ministry could be carried out with no priestly distinctive with no sense of the fear of the lord where whole ministries can go decades long in preaching and teaching and doing good works with no mention of sin being made and maybe we might say no proclamation of the high and lifted upness of god sufficient that would draw men to their knees again to say oh what about my lips he says because god is holy the utmost reverence becomes uh becomes our approaches unto him god is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and to be had in reverence of all

about him then psalm 99 exalt the lord our god and worship at his footstool he is holy yes at his footstool in the lowest posture of humility prostrate before him think of that is this some kind of old teaching that is irrelevant in modern times and that the modern man cannot adapt to because he has come above this kind of self-effacing uh humiliation of the flesh and so we've got to communicate god in a different way than isaiah did we've got to come into some kind of a definition of god that is more palatable and easier to stomach than what isaiah is seeing here and what the psalmists were communicating here that does not bring the requirement of repentance it does not reveal to us the depth and darkness of sin and how deeply offended god is at sin and so then to call people to repent

before him in dust and ashes is some kind of old testament phenomenon and to to command the saints to worship at his footstool in the lowest posture of humility prostrate before him is some kind of a works mentality that is deathly and is not life-giving like the new expressions of faith that we've been able to develop where as dr brown was saying today phrases are made like god is always in a good mood and we can and we can always feel light about about him that he's always in a good mood and there is no need to recognize what it was that was evoked in isaiah's heart when he saw the lord high and lifted up when moses would approach unto the burning bush god said put off thy shoes from off thy feet he is to be served with fear in psalm 2 of israel his demand was i will be sanctified in

them that come nigh me and before all the people i will be glorified and then aw pink writes the more our hearts are awed by his ineffable holiness the more acceptable will be our approaches unto him ineffable does anyone have a definition ineffable is indescribable so pink writes the more our hearts are awed by his ineffable holiness indescribable holiness the more acceptable will be our approaches unto him that we don't have a slapdash casual mentality when coming before the throne of grace that we don't have a deathly fatalistic uh legalistic approach either that we realize according to hebrews 12 that we have not come to a mountain that cannot be touched that we've not come to sinai but we've come to mount zion but remarkable enough to that expression of grace in hebrews 12 he ends

the chapter by writing for our god is a consuming fire that it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living god in sin and in resistance toward his mercy so i was asked today in the interview is it contradictory then the sense of the fear of the lord and the sense of the joy that he brings and i said yes to the natural man it's contradictory this is not pragmatism or reason or let's figure out how to explain god as best as we can this is as tozer said that the the reality of god's nature is holy ground reason must kneel reverently outside the door there's a measure of reason and logic to the revelation of god given in the scriptures but it only goes so far there comes a point where you've got to be put out at sea and say god is holy holy holy i have not a full understanding of

his mercy i have not a full understanding of his judgments i have not a understanding of why he does what he does i am dust and he is the one who forms the dust and breathes life into it holy holy holy i think something of that was jolted in isaiah's system when he saw the lord high and lifted up for he'd been prophesying for some time to his people and good prophecies in total conjunction with the earlier prophets

in conjunction with the the revelation of god that had been given through moses they weren't prophecies that were off base but he realized that even those words were inadequate when he saw the lord high and lifted up but the more our hearts are awed by his ineffable holiness the more we're willing to say with ezekiel before the valley of dry bones lord you know the more we'll

see the resurrection life of god the more acceptable will our approaches unto him be according to aw pink because god is holy we should desire to be conformed to him his command is behold be holy for i am holy is it remarkable 1 peter 1 16 that god who reveals himself as holy and totally other than man on all counts would then turn the table and call those who have been redeemed and called by his name to be holy as he is holy the utter impossibility and almost foolishness of that it smacks of paul's statements regarding the foolishness of the cross this is foolishness lord look at us look at our inadequacies i could name off a dozen things i committed against you yesterday lord and there were probably 500 things i was not even conscious of and you've called me to be holy as you are holy

so what is the ground upon which that holiness is attained what is the ground upon which the saints come into the reality of that if god is a just god and a kind god and he's not a trickster telling us to come into things that we have no access to putting a dropping us in a maze that has no exit and saying find your way out if god is just and true and faithful then what is the ground upon which that holiness is attained aw pink would say to be holy as we are holy has everything to do with receiving the increasing understanding of his ineffable holiness and the more and more we rub shoulders with his throne the more and more like him becomes the expression of our lives he goes on to write we are not bidden to be omnipotent or omniscient as god is but we are to be holy and that in all

manner of deportment that's the verse before i forget what the modern versions say there but in every area there is to be a mark of his holiness like he said we are not to become gods we are not to become omnipotent omnipotent and omniscient there there never will be a time when in and of ourselves there's the ability to save ourselves or others we never will gain a salvific authority always it will be something that we're receiving from his hand recognizing him to be the fountain of life and turning away from broken cisterns that we've been sipping from all too long though they hold no water sharnak goes on to write this is the prime way of honoring god if i could say that there is a weakness in the church and particularly the charismatic church in our age it is the failure to honor god

as god in fact there is that portion in malachi that's been really striking my spirit lately where the lord speaks if i am a father where is my honor and on the heels now of decades of teaching regarding the father's heart so much of which has been helpful to the body of christ especially those who had seen the lord as some kind of tyrant who is always cracking the whip and wanting to catch his kids in some kind of sin so that he can exercise more discipline and those who've had a view of god like that that is some kind of a sadistic disciplinarian the message of the father's heart has been helpful on many counts but one of the weaknesses of it has been to emphasize a view of the warmth and tenderness of the father heart of god without emphasizing what the whole that the whole of

scripture emphasizes that he's not a father meaning only a nice guy who parents us that he's a father who disciplines those he loves that he's a father that requires honor and that if he's not adequately honored by those who are his children then there are consequences for that and we see it in profound and painful examples with adab and nadab and abihu erin's sons with uh oza who touched the ark who was of the levitical order and should have known better that though the philistines who were ignorant of god had handled the ark before they did not suffer the same consequence but when usa reached out to study the

ark he perished and david was disillusioned and angry with the lord and afraid the holiness of god is outside of our categories of comfort on every level that those who would have

a religious uh uh legalistic view of god his compassions and his mercies would bust out the sides of every wall that they have placed up and vice versa those who have some kind of a view of god that is not rightly honoring him in his holiness will one day be rudely awakened i believe when uh the great shakings of the last days come upon us and they've not rightly pursued a knowledge of god in the scriptures that would prepare them for that time well listen to what he goes on saying think upon that if you would though when thinking of god as father there is no one more warm or more kind than god his fatherhood is perfect as a matter of fact one scholar said i don't have it with me but i was reading about the wrath of god early this morning and one scholar made a statement that i thought

was so precious he said the wrath of god is not the opposite or the antithesis of his goodness we often think of goodness and wrath or kindness and anger of god he said the wrath of god is actually not the antithesis or the opposite of his goodness it's the antithesis of neutrality towards sin in other words if god were to be neutral towards sin and not address it with judgment then he would not be god so the opposite of god being neutral and numb toward the presence of sin in his people or in the world is his wrath so it's not that sometimes god is jolly and and kind and then other times he flies off the handle and gives judgment his judgment is actually the issue that is necessary for the expression of himself in the earth or he would not be god this is why israel will come to the end

of its own self-sufficiency during the time of jacob's trouble in the last days because if god did not bring about that eschatological judgment and purge all the sinners from his people as it says in amos 9 he would no longer be god if there were no hell he would no longer be god it's not because he flies off the handle like an abusive father it's because every judgment of god is perfectly required and perfectly necessary or he would no longer be god he goes on to write steve charnock we do not we do not so glorify god by elevated admirations or eloquent expressions or pompous services of him all of those attempts will fall short he said we primarily honor god when we aspire to a conversing with him with unstained spirits and live to him in living like him isn't that awesome he says the

greatest way that we honor god as believers is when we aspire to a conversing with him with unstained spirits and live to him in living like him this is what happened with isaiah at the great revelation of god isaiah dared not even converse with him woe is me here he was one who was hearing the voice of god and delivering the foundational message to judah now his own inadequacy is brought before the light of god's throne and he moves into an organic kind of repentance that was the natural response to viewing a god of that great glory so he closes by saying then as god alone is the source and fount of holiness let us earnestly seek holiness from him let our daily prayer be that he may sanctify us wholly and our whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our

lord jesus christ walter kaiser makes note regarding isaiah 6 that when god is present the ground becomes holy ground when god indwells the inner sanctum of the tabernacle it becomes the holy of holies even the people of god were a holy people not by moral accomplishments of their own but simply because god had chosen them and set them apart for himself they were holy in status but rarely if ever in character and life now listen to this statement holiness signals a line of separation and a mark of ownership a mark of ownership that little portion of the sentence stuck out at me this afternoon when i when i read it holiness holiness is not a certain hairstyle or a certain dress or a uh an unwillingness to ever set foot in a movie theater or some other external thing holiness is first

separation from the spirit of this age in all of its expressions and a coming into the warmth and glow of the righteousness purity and separateness of god as god so holiness is the brother writes later in here the differentness of god it affects issues pertaining to sin but it goes deeper than issues pertaining to sin or or issues of sin let me say this say it this way it addresses the issue of sin not just the issue of sins if i can put it that way it hones in on the sinfulness of mankind not just the issue of certain sins committed that he's conscious of and therefore it becomes as profane for nadab and abihu to perform a ceremonial sacrifice outside of the way of the lord as if they were dancing before a golden calf you see what i'm saying the distinctness of god as he is touches every

aspect of human expression that issues forth to human glory and therefore the overt and obvious sins are purged in the presence of that holiness but so is even a seasoned prophet like isaiah who was not even setting his hand to strange fire like nadab and abihu but who still saw in the light of that glory the inadequacy of what he was setting his hands to oh that preachers would tremble again oh that we would come before the scriptures with this sense not of a spiritual kind of cloggage that we could never gain and obtain increase from the lord or that his holiness is not accessible to us in his grace but that it's not something that can be articulated on the basis of our wisdom and that if anything is issuing forth to our glory we have already missed it we've already lost the match we've

already slipped outside of that glorious revelation that isaiah is seeking to articulate to us so holiness signals a line of separation and a mark of ownership it was a mark of ownership on isaiah's tongue we need desperately the church in these days to be marked with this ownership of god i think when i was asked today what is the great missing part of the proclamation of the gospel one of the things that spontaneously came out of my mouth is that we've failed to proclaim him as lord we have failed to proclaim him as lord and we've exalted his saviorhood though the scriptures speak multiplied times more about his lordship than about his saviorship so it needs to be considered that holiness is the sep the setting apart of god's vessels for god's eternal purposes and that it's possible

even to be engaged in things that we consider to be the work of god but if these vessels that we are are not adequately set apart so that what we are engaged in is issuing forth in a vital way to his glorification we've already lost the game we're already functioning as the priests of old and the false prophets of jeremiah's day appoint self-appointed rather than appointed on the basis of the life that god is giving and the wisdom that god is giving so we need to be jealous for that and it's not that we grit our teeth hard enough and we attain enough time in fasting and prayer and we memorize enough theological phrases that now we've come into it it actually is the reverse of human attainment it's a radical kind of surrender unto the lord on the basis of our weakness that his holiness

might be manifested in mortal flesh much like what i'm feeling even this evening when i told audrey after the two hours today i don't know if i could i don't know if i can give 10 minutes of anything i'm exhausted and audrey said something like in his weakness you're made strong and uh yeah sorry i messed that up in my weakness she said in your weakness he is made strong and so to be set apart in our weakness and conscious of our weakness not in some kind of false humility that itself brings glory to us not in some kind of putting on an air of of humility so that others will say that brother sure is humble it's it's in it's an inward reality where what we are in god and what we are expressing in the church is in a vital way actually issuing forth to his honor to his glorification whatever

the outward appearance might be there's a radical separation from the spirit of this world which is the spirit of self-glorification the narcissistic society that we live in where with social networking and all of us wanting

to be seen a certain way which is almost always devoid of the reality of who we are and where every detail of our lives we feel needs to be known because there's something so remarkable about us in all of our flesh and blood splendor we've forgotten that before his ever-blazing throne we have no luster of our own but this revelation of holiness brings us back onto that healthy ground where sanity is attained where we realize that it's not about our own performance or our own appearance it's about a vital union with the one who is holy and the one who gives grace out

of his holiness i don't think i've ever said anything quite like that before but his grace issues out of his holiness his distinctness i remember one day years ago when the lord quickened my heart to say son my holiness is not the opposite of my kindness my kindness actually flows out of my holiness my humility is not the opposite of my holiness it flows out of my holiness i'm separate i'm not like you the only reason i'm jealous for my own glory is because my glory is right and true i'm the one who's faithful and true i'm god man desires his glory for his own self-gratification god desires it because his glorification is the good and health of the whole created order and the defeat of darkness and wickedness well he goes on to write while the word transcendent is not a biblical word the

nearest equivalent for the concept of transcendence is holy as such it is one of the most significant words in the old testament so much does it sum up the whole nature of god that it can stand alone as his name in isaiah 40 25 to whom will you compare me or who is my equal says the holy one god is frequently designated in the old testament as the holy one or as the holy one of israel in isaiah 57 15 god is described as the high and lofty one who lives forever whose name is holy aw tozer in his classic book the knowledge of the holy this is another one we're recommending over these weeks of poring over the attributes of god the knowledge of the holy by tozer and also a two-volume uh paperback series that is a collection of his sermons on the attributes of i think it's called the

attributes of god by aw tozer you get that if you can get stephen sharnock's the existence and attributes of god if you're able to aw pinks is good as well as j.i packer's book called knowing god which i've been gleaning from fresh lately and it is magnificent we'll have them here so that prayer meetings or any other time if you come down and are able to work it out you can glean from them so tozer writes in his book the knowledge of the holy until we have seen ourselves as god sees us we are not likely to be much disturbed over conditions around us as long as they do not get out of hand as to threaten our comfortable way of life we have learned to live with unholiness and have come to look upon it as the natural and expected thing you know thinking the other day uh went to the football

game and i know the guy uh at the beginning who threw out the that was not i was going to say throughout the first pitch that's baseball uh the first catch is that what they call it through the first catch or pass and and was a guy who's on a modern sitcom who i know about because i've i've heard others speak of i've never seen it before it's called modern family and one of the families on the show is a a gay couple two men that are raising children and of course i'm sure they're mingling humor in with the with the whole thing but the real agenda behind all of that is to make a homosexual couple two men appear normative and common and okay to the american psyche and the way that we view families modern family it sounds so innocent it sounds so american it sounds like apple pie and walmart

and popcorn and disney modern family and yet the portrayal of two men being together as something that i was studying this morning in romans 1 and romans 2 the the phenomenon of homosexuality in ancient times paul interpreted it this way and we need to see it this way as well is itself a judgment upon mankind because the hardness of their hearts paul said because of the hardness of their hearts toward the lord he

gave them over to unnatural lusts and desires so that men desired men and women desired women it's it itself is a judgment and the fact that in our nation on primetime tv there are multiple sitcoms none of which i've seen but which i've heard of where there are gay couples is itself a judgment upon our land the fact that many in the church drink in these sitcoms and that who

knows how many of those at the game who are applauding about the show and saying oh did you see it the other night did you see last week's episode oh yeah that was so hilarious how many of them will be at church the next sunday singing songs to the lord totally numb in their heart to the fact that they're drinking in of that kind of thing is a statement of the presence of the judgment of god in our land already here even if the full and greater shakings that we anticipate have not yet come and the fact that we're numbed into the fact to the reality of that presence of judgment is a greater hardening on the corporate body who is radically in need of seeing the same god who isaiah saw high and lifted up that we might too cry out woe is me for my lips are unclean and i live amongst the

people of unclean lips tozer goes on to write and that was all sparked in my heart by this statement from tozer that we have learned to live with unholiness think of it in our depravity it's our norm it's our it's what we breathe you know in our lostness and depravity with no knowledge of god we gossip we hate if someone attacks us we rise up against them in revenge if it's someone attractive to us we lust if someone is violent against us we're violent in response someone hates us we say then i'll give him a piece of my mind that's our depravity we're totally dominated by the wisdom of this world but what becomes of a nation when the vast majority of those who claim to have come into a knowledge of god have learned to live with unholiness and have come to look upon it as the natural and

expected thing he goes on to write we are not disappointed that we do not find all truth in our teachers or faithfulness in our politicians or complete honesty in our merchants or full trustworthiness in our friends quite literally a new channel must be cut through the desert of our to allow the sweet water of truth that will heal our great sickness to flow in we need the sweet water of god's holiness again to flow in the church we've we've learned to live with unholiness and we've forgotten how distasteful sin is and how savoring and uh glorious the holiness of god is how life-giving how fulfilling is this glorious one who's on the throne we need a whole new pavement to be laid tozer says in this desert so that we can begin to again see who he is and that these sweet waters of god's

holiness would have opportunity to flow in the church again we cannot grasp hey let me ask you this wouldn't you say that it's the common opinion of believers if you were to just go up in the common meeting particularly the charismatic church and say righteousness or say holiness that the common response in the mind of a believer would be one of disdain or a cringing or a hey talk about mercy talk about grace but we fail to realize his mercy flows out of his holiness his grace is the expression of his holiness jesus went to the cross because he desired to extend grace out of his holiness it was necessary for him to go to the cross on behalf of a mankind that had not deserved that extension of grace one iota that's his holiness we don't realize that it's sweet waters we're drinking out of

broken cisterns that men keep filling with filthy waters and the water drains out as we're trying to lap it up for fulfillment in this life eating at the table of this world while neglecting the feast of the knowledge of god that has been opened up to us through the cross he concludes his statement by saying we cannot grasp the true meaning of divine holiness by thinking of someone or something very pure and then raising the concept to the highest degree we are capable of god's holiness is not simply the best we know infinitely bettered we know nothing like divine holiness it stands apart unique unapproachable incomprehensible

and unattainable unattainable on the basis of human wisdom unattainable on the basis of human performance but through the cross the apostles would give words like

be holy as i am holy the apostle in all of his maturity and depth of wisdom like paul would say follow me as i follow the messiah but can we come into that place without seeing the lord high and lifted up can we come to the place even of being able to acknowledge the uncleanness of our lips unless we see his glory this was the natural byproduct of isaiah's encounter with the one on the throne the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out while the temple was filling with smoke then i said woe is me for i am ruined because i'm a man of unclean lips and i live among a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the king the lord of hosts it's remarkable the brother points out maybe we'll get into it next week more i don't think we're done on the holiness of

god and my schedule that i put forth was my launching out to be sure that i myself was faithful to be consistent in proclaiming but i think the lord is wanting us to hone probably longer than we've anticipated on the attributes of his nature of his character and we may be on the holiness of god for some time but the brother one of the brothers i was reading today pointed out that isaiah did nothing to initiate the seraphim bringing the coal from the altar it was all the initiation of god on the throne instructing those who are under his rulership the seraphim to get the coal to take it and to touch this man's lips when god saw that isaiah had seen his glory when the one on the throne witnessed that isaiah for all of his prophetic understanding himself was seeing his unworthiness and god's

greatness and beauty he could not resist sending the coal from the altar to cleanse the lips of this man and bring him to a greater place of preparation to set forth the majesty of god in his generation so of us then what is it it's not in a self mortification in a religious striving kind of sense it comes in seeing him high and lifted up and as we're seeing him we come into the revelation of our inadequacy and the result of that is that the lord purges and cleanses our lips and gives the call who shall go for us and out of that cleansing we're able to respond not in presumption not in an emotional altar call with the music playing in the background and everything is is the atmosphere has been perfectly postured for an emotional response here i am lord send me and then the next day

there's no consciousness of god there's no uh devotion to the lord there's no moral grit there's no loyal loyalty to the heart of the lord it's not about hyping up ourselves for an emotional response it's about seeing the lord high and lifted up in all of his majesty which brings us to a place where we are able to cry out from the deeps and where god responds to that deep with cleansing and produces in us a cry that is the same cry of jesus for going into the wilderness of the nations to set forth the knowledge of god and to set up camp so that these life-giving and sweet waters of god's holiness will have new paths in the earth in uncharted territories neighborhoods and in the hearts of men so we're jealous for a true sending we're jealous for a true sending not self-initiated ministry

but it starts right here and seeing him high and lifted up might this be the reason why when jesus is asked by the disciples teach us to pray how do we pray instead of first saying line up your sins from the last week and repent of those he says our father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name he puts them all before the throne of the one who is high and lifted up and says gaze upon him first when at once you see him as he is those things that he most desires to deal with in your heart will come up to the surface for the dross that they are and he will be able to skim them off purge your lips and give you the grace to become the man of prayer obedience love humility all that you've desired will come as the natural outflow of the union with him that's produced when your lips are purged

and when you are sent into your generation or your nation or your people group so lord we ask that this feeble description of your holiness by your grace would be for us at least a glimpse of the luster and glory of your transcendent holiness and we ask that you would give us a desire for holiness that the that our mouths would salivate that our hearts would bleed a little harder when thinking upon your holiness that there would be a new found freshness and anticipation and considering your holy throne and your glorious person that we would not see you as a small god who is bound in categories of attributes but that we would again encounter day by day the god of isaiah who saw you high and lifted up oh that holy beings who have never known sin seraphim and creatures that we can get barely

give description to would cry out holy exclamation mark holy two exclamation marks holy unlimited exclamation marks is the lord god of israel i ask that you would give us a desire for your holiness i ask lord that you would cause the church again to savor the holiness of god i ask for a newfound reverence to come upon the church lord that there would be more tiptoeing going on than we had been giving in times past lord that we would look at the vessels that we are as necessarily becoming living sacrifices which is our spiritual act of worship lord those areas even of our lives that are unholy and profane we ask lord that you would permit us to gaze upon your beauty and majesty sufficient enough that they would come to the surface and be touched by your refining grace so lord make us a

holy people make us a people cognizant and aware of your great holiness let the church again have that mark of ownership upon it as the apostle was able to say i bear in my body the brand marks of the lord jesus which of course meant the stripes that he bore for suffering but that suffering was nothing less than the result of his proclamation of isaiah's god his proclamation of the one who's high and lifted up both on the throne and upon the cross mark us as paul was marked inwardly lord and should the outward marks come or should they not we would carry the same distinctive reality we'd have a hold on the thread of the knowledge of god that these precious apostles and prophets had that a note of brokenness would be upon us that we would realize that our boasting is not good but that

brokenness meekness trembling and rejoicing before the great and glorious one upon the throne is the only life and the only view and the only expression which befits the children of god so do we ask for that lord something that only you can perform in us by your spirit we ask that you would give it to us in measure to our faith and in measure to our hunger and desire this evening and let it increase from faith to faith and from glory to glory that the church again might have and bear the note of your holiness that israel may again see you and that the nations may feel and recognize the resonance of one who is holy in the midst of a people who have become holy so we bless you for that we bless you for the access to the holy place that has been given to us by the blood of the cross and we

ask lord that she would make us a people tender enough to access that place that christ might be formed in us and that we might then transmit that life and that wisdom and that holiness to our children and to our children's children unto israel and unto the nations that the powers of darkness might see a demonstration of the holiness of god expressed through clay vessels on the earth that would bring remembrance to them of your own earthly sojourn when they felt the blow of the holiness of god being expressed through a 30-something year old jewish man and through those who followed after him in the days to come let it again be expressed in the church in these last days lord holy holy holy is the lord

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