

Holiness

“We Shall Be Like Him”

Volume 1

By

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Table of Contents

1.	He Is Not Common.....	2
2.	No Other Being Like Him.....	4
3.	Not A Standard, But Who He Is.....	6
4.	Glorious In Holiness.....	8
5.	Letting Him Be Limitless.....	9
6.	Transcending Our Comprehension.....	10
7.	Eternally Unchangeable.....	12
8.	Everywhere At All Times In Totality.....	13
9.	Reveal Yourself To Us.....	14
10.	Stricken With Awe.....	16
11.	Absolutely, Totally Separate.....	18
12.	A Loss Of His Awesomeness.....	20
13.	Changed By A Glimpse.....	22
14.	Now My Eyes Have Seen Him.....	24
15.	Denying His Holiness.....	26
16.	Holy Appetite, Holy Pursuit.....	28
17.	Unable To Stand In His Presence.....	30
18.	The Living Coal Upon Our Lips.....	32
19.	Struck Dumb By His Presence.....	34
20.	Divine Expectations.....	36
21.	Unfathomable Majesty.....	38
22.	Undone At The Lord's Feet.....	40
23.	Eternally Taken Up With His Majesty.....	42
24.	I Stand In Awe Of You.....	44
25.	Jealous For His Presence.....	46
26.	The Holiness Of Fellowship.....	48
27.	Loved Beyond Comprehension.....	49
28.	We Stand Before You Dumb.....	50

THE
OUTSHINING
OF GOD



He Is Not Common

“Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.” (1 Timothy 6:16)

One thing we need to understand about our God is that He is not common. Nothing in the natural can relate to Him. Everything that would approach Him in the natural will be consumed by His majesty and glory. The God that we serve is a holy God. As we come to understand Him in all of His attributes, the first thing we need to understand is His holiness. Holiness doesn't speak toward His moral makeup or that He is not a sinner. The word “holiness” literally means “to be separate.” God is separate from all other beings, from all that exists. God is separate from matter. God is separate from every creature of which He is the Creator. Nothing can be compared to Him. He is beyond natural comprehension. Our God is absolutely, totally separate to Himself. Think about that! He's the Uncaused Cause of all that is. *“IAM Pt. 1 (Greatness of God)” June 23, 2002 Sunday AM*

Holiness speaks of the uniqueness of God. There's no other God like Him. He's a being that is totally separate. Everything else that exists was created by Him. Some people seem to think there's that great conflict between good and evil. Is evil going to win out? There's no contest! It has already been determined. The Scripture tells us that as He spoke and the oceans were formed, He drew a line. He said, “You can't come past this.” The tides obey His will. There's a limitation to sin and to death also.

“All things were made by Him and for Him,” the Scripture says (Col. 1:16). He was before all things! By Him, Colossians tells us, every-

thing consists (1:17). The pieces are held together by the very presence of God. He's holding the program together to affect His eternal purposes. Everything that happens, happens by the eternal purpose, the determinate counsel, of God. "*The Knowledge of God, Pt. 2,*" April 16, 2003, Wednesday PM

Everything that does exist exists for the purpose of God. God had a reason for all that is. Everything that was created was created uniquely for a specific purpose.

Sin has distorted much of that. We still try to find out today why there are mosquitoes. I've not yet found a good reason for gnats. Somewhere in the infinite mind of God, all that is was created by Him and for Him. His ways are not our ways; His ways are far above our ways (Isa. 55:9). The natural mind cannot comprehend the things of this eternal, infinite, holy God that we call Father. As we begin to approach Him, the one thing we need to understand is that He's not common. You can't just roll in to God's presence on your terms! God is not interested in your crumbs of worship. He's not interested in a segment or a part of your life! God will not fit into your schedule. His presence is holy ground. "*I AM Pt. 1 (Greatness of God)*" June 23, 2002 Sunday AM

No Other Being Like Him

“There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.” (1 Samuel 2:2)

God revealed Himself to Moses as the great I AM. “Who shall I say sent me?” “You say, ‘I AM has sent you.’” The phrase “I AM” is really an expression of the Uncaused Cause of all that is. I AM, and therefore what exists is. He declared His eternal infinite being in that phrase. “I AM everything you need Me to be. I AM the creator of the heavens and the earth. All things were created by Me and for Me. By Me, all things consist.”

In revealing His majesty, we see the great “I AM” expressed by one of the attributes called the holiness of God. Holiness is not just the moral character of God; holiness is really an expression referring to much more than just His moral state. “Holiness” literally means “to be separate,” or “distinct.” In the holiness of God, there is no other being like Him. He is totally distinct, totally separate from all else that exists. He, being infinitely self-sufficient, chose to speak into being the heavens and the universes. He declared, and it was. He said, “Light be,” and light was. Taking the earth, He formed a man and breathed into him, so that he became a living soul that could have communion and fellowship with Him. Everything created was created from the holiness of God by His ability, His goodness, and His purpose. *“I AM, Pt. 3 (The Goodness of God),” June 30, 2002, Sunday AM*

Holiness is the consequence of all of the combined attributes of God. Holiness is not only what God is, but who He is. Holiness is comprised not only of God’s abilities, but of His intents and purposes. He thinks

distinctly, separately. *“IAM Pt. 2 (The Greatness of God)” June 23, 2002 Sunday PM*

God is totally distinct. God is not the first of many beings like Himself, but being transcendent, He is beyond all others. There are none like Him. In His majesty, in His authority, in all of these attributes, we need to remember that they are transcending, they are perfect, they are infinite. Though we look at God through different metaphors, we can never bring God down to the natural level or fully understand His revelation of Himself. In other words, He far surpasses all that we understand Him to be in His eternal, infinite state. *“IAM, Pt. 5 (The Faithfulness of God),” July 3, 2002, Wednesday PM*

Not A Standard, But Who He Is

“Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.” (Psalm 89:14)

Father is loving; He is merciful; He is kind; He is good; and He is just. As we study the attributes of God, we see that no single attribute is preeminent over another. No single attribute is independent. Every attribute works in absolute, perfect harmony with every other attribute. God’s mercy is just, and His justice is merciful. *“Cleansed to Serve, Pt. 10,” November 10, 2002, Sunday AM*

Remember, it’s important for us to always perceive God from His unitary essence. Everything works equally within Himself, and nothing is ever in opposition within Him. Because He’s unitary, His mercy never opposes His justice, and His justice never opposes His mercy. All of His mercy is just, and all of His justice is merciful. We have trouble with this in our minds because we are not unitary; we’re segmented. We try to be amalgamated and think in the wisdom of God, the justice of God, and the mercy of God, but we have a tendency to go one way or the other to an extreme in a given situation. Sometimes we go a little overboard in what’s just, or we find ourselves sometimes going a little bit overboard in being too merciful, at the cost of justice. We have this conflict because we’re human, but these attributes never conflict in our Father. He never has to try to balance things out, because everything that is good and just and right comes from God! It’s not a standard He’s trying to meet; it’s who He is.

Take, for example, some type of individual like one who commits these mass murders or a heinous crime in which he mutilates or

destroys. We'll hear people say, "Justice demands this person be treated thus and so!" It can never be stated that way about Father. Justice is not something separate from God, not a standard that He has to meet. Everything God does is just. There's not a separate standard. The will of God is just, whatever God wills!

We can really get ourselves in trouble if we don't understand the unitary aspect of God. We can have an extreme view of God, like the Calvinists have, in which justice and sovereignty seem to be the primary attributes of God. They almost equate sovereignty and justice as being synonymous, saying that God can do whatever He wants. But the fact is, God cannot do anything He wants to do. God can only do what He is. Our little brains, you know, are going to struggle a little bit. I understand that, but can God lie? No, because God is truth. He can't lie (Titus 1:2). The Bible says, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13). It's impossible for God to be tempted with evil because He is absolutely righteous and pure and holy! He can't move in that direction! When we understand the attributes of God, we need to realize, then, that we can never see the justice of God apart from the mercy of God, the love of God, and all of the other attributes that are working in perfect union with this unitary being. *"I AM, Pt. 6 (Justice of God)," July 14, 2002, Sunday AM*

Glorious In Holiness

“Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Exodus 15:11)

“Glorious in holiness” refers to His outshining. Though He is distinct and separate, He is not isolated. It’s a glorious holiness. It’s an expressed holiness. It’s something that invades the darkness! God is not silent. He’s constantly invading humanity and revealing Himself, whether in the limited revelation of the heavens that declare the glory of God, or in the power of His Holy Spirit in bringing conviction as the gospel is being preached. It’s a glorious and expressed holiness. God is separate, holy, distinct, but not isolated. He comes and ministers to us, and He’s glorious in the outshining of His majesty—fearful in praises, doing wonders! The signs and the wonders transcend anything that man can imagine.

Moses makes clear in his praise that God is fearful in praises and is the One that does wonders. The world may be able to demonically cast down their staffs and turn them into serpents, but the end of the matter is that God swallows theirs up. Do you understand that God is going to swallow up everything that’s opposing you right now? The enemy that’s opposing you, trying to bring fear and doubt will be destroyed, because greater is He that’s in you than he that’s in the world (1 John 4:4), praise God! That’s the holiness of the One that’s called us and separated us unto Himself. *“I AM, Pt. 2 (Greatness of God),” June 23, 2002, Sunday PM*

Letting Him Be Limitless

“And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.” (Exodus 3:20)

Have you begun to put limitations on God by what you’ve experienced or by what you understand? Then you need to realize again that your God is holy and there’s none like Him. He is immutable; He doesn’t change, and what He’s declared is still manifesting. He’s encouraging you to become an agent. He’s encouraging you to become part of His process. Have you made God common by limiting Him to your experience and understanding? Isn’t it time to let Him become limitless again? There’s none that can be likened to Him. His will and His purposes are irresistible. We choose to serve in obedience, knowing there’ll be opposition, knowing the hand of the enemy is strongly against us! Father, at Your time, You’ll stretch forth Your hand. We long for that visitation, Lord, of showing Yourself mighty in our midst to deliver, to heal, to preserve us, that we might glorify You.

All that our God is, He is infinitely. There’s no limit to His power. There’s no limit to His love, to His goodness, to His kindness toward us. He is infinite in His immutability, as these attributes work in harmony. He doesn’t change, so every time you approach Him, He’s the same. He has no bad days. He’s never short-tempered, but is always longsuffering, gentle, merciful, kind, just, righteous, and true. Run unto Him now and be safe. Keep His commandments and know His presence. That is our victory. Father, make it real, we ask in Jesus’ name. *“I AM, Pt. 1 (Greatness of God),” June 23, 2002, Sunday AM*

Transcending Our Comprehension

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?” (Romans 11:33-34)

The Spirit tells us not to limit God to our understanding and our comprehension of Him. He’s greater than your intellect. He’s greater than your ability to comprehend Him. Faith is the ability to act beyond your understanding because you know who God is. You know that He’s not only what He’s revealed Himself to be, but is beyond that. If He’s revealed Himself to be your Provider through the natural rain that falls and through the laws of sowing and reaping, then He’s also beyond that. He’s the God that can feed you with angel’s food. And if He’s the God that can feed you with manna (that which you don’t know), then I want you to know He’s greater than that. He can feed you with His presence, and, like Moses, you can live forty days and forty nights without food or water. He can feed you and sustain you beyond all that’s known to natural man. He’s there when you don’t feel Him. He transcends all that you can comprehend of Him into the realm of the infinite. God is multiple times greater, infinitely greater than your understanding, because He’s only been able to reveal Himself to the capacity of the finite mind. He’s way beyond what the finite mind can imagine Him to be. *“Holy Ground, Pt. 7,” May 12, 2002, Sunday PM*

We talk about the greatness of God, His omnipotence, His great majesty, His transcendence, His eminence. He is so immense, so vast, that He’s beyond our comprehension. He far exceeds all that is revealed to us. God is bigger than the revelation of Himself.

The revelation of Himself is limited by our finite understanding, so as big as God can be in our imagination—as big as God can be as He’s been revealed in His Word, and as we have embraced Him in our hearts—He transcends that! Amen? We serve a big God, bigger than everything that we know about Him.

He is more powerful than you can imagine Him to be. He’s more just than man could ever comprehend. When you approach God, there aren’t any of the loopholes that men are used to living with. He’s absolutely, perfectly just. He’s immutable; He doesn’t change in any way. God is not only self-existent, but He’s self-sufficient. He doesn’t need anything. He doesn’t need us; He doesn’t need our love. The vanity, the audacity of man to think that somehow God was out there in eternity and was lonely. You’ve heard people say, “God was lonely, so He made man.” God was not lonely. He is absolutely self-sufficient. The three Persons got along real well. He doesn’t need us; we need Him. Amen? We stand in need of His presence; we stand in need of His visitation in our lives on a daily basis. We stand in need of the provision of the great free gift of the redemptive work of Jesus, the efficacious work of that blood that is manifesting His righteousness in each of us individually. We serve a big God who is bigger than we can imagine. *“IAM, Pt. 8 (The Love Of God),” July 24, 2002, Wednesday PM*

God cannot be rationalized. He's beyond man's ability to comprehend. He's beyond natural reason in the scope of His majesty. His attributes cannot be comprehended, only believed in and embraced. *“Knowing Why and What I Believe, Pt. 1 (Salvation),” October 21, 2001, Sunday AM*

Eternally Unchangeable

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (James 1:17)

The God we serve is immutable. He does not change! The one God that we serve is eternally the same. Now, when we talk about eternal, that's important because the eternal God that we serve is a triune God. The Scripture reveals Him as eternally immutable, eternally the same.

Eternity is an interesting thing. So many of us seem to think that eternity (infinity) continues to loop and goes on, and on, and on. Eternity is beyond this understanding of infinity, even if I can't explain it and don't understand it. Didn't it start somewhere? Eternity has no beginning. We can't identify with that. We're time-and-space creatures. “Yep! God has always been.” “Yeah, but something can't always be. There has to be a cause.” How many of you really, intellectually believe that? I do. I can't comprehend existence without a cause. You might be smarter than I am, and I'd be prone to agree with you, but because of my natural mind and limited resources, that's all I can identify with. Because I'm indwelt by the eternal God, He has given me understanding of His being by faith. I don't have to deal with a cause or a source, because He has revealed His eternal state. He has always been. I believe that. If anybody else can think beyond that and explain it, I'd be interested in knowing. *“Myth of Mormonism, Pt. 1,” July 8, 2001, Sunday AM*

Everywhere At All Times In Totality

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.” (Psalm 139:7-8)

We're all aware of God's omnipresence. The psalmist said, “Where can I go from Thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art there.” We know that God is omnipresent; He's everywhere at all times in His totality. That doesn't mean that God is this really big God who takes up all of the space, and that's why He's everywhere. These guys over here are messing around with His left hand, and these guys over here are watched by His right hand, and the Australians are on His big toe! God is not omnipresent because He's big; God is totally in all places at all times, transcending time and space. In that attribute of omnipresence, we need to realize that not only is He everywhere, but He's personally involved everywhere. He not only occupies this space, but He, in His omnipresence, also manifests His lordship everywhere at all times. The thing that we lack is the awareness of His presence. Jacob said, “The Lord was here, and I knew it not” (Gen. 28:16). How many of you have gone through the day (even today), and the Lord was there, but there were hours when you didn't know it? Even in times of need, we're not aware that God is present. *“The Face of God, Pt.1,” August 11, 1999, Wednesday PM*

Reveal Yourself To Us

“Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight...” (Exodus 33:13)

We have a loving heavenly Father, a divine Lord and Savior, an eternal, omnipotent advocate in the Spirit of God that fellowships with us and lives in us. We know You now, not as three gods, but one God manifested in three Persons for the expressed purpose of ministering and redeeming man to Yourself. So, Father, we ask now that we would be more familiar with who You are: loving, merciful, longsuffering, faithful, gentle, full of tender mercies, just, awesome, a consuming fire, a great warrior, almighty God, holy, separate to Yourself and to Your purpose, sovereign, above all, answering to no one. None is like unto You, and so we worship You because of who You are. We love You because of who You are. We choose to know You, and ask You to reveal Yourself to us, that we could come to a greater understanding and knowledge of our God—not learning about You, but knowing You, fellowshiping with You, and having You live Your life through us by the Spirit of God that lives in us.

Father, we just ask now that You would bring us, a people, to the knowledge of Yourself, and that we would boldly go out and declare there is one God and one God alone. The gods that we're serving are lies. They are weak; they are defeated; they will bow at the name of Jesus. Father, You will confirm the Word that's spoken with signs following. We ask, Father, that this would be done in our lives in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. *“The Person of God,” Basic Bible Doctrine, 1502*

ENCOUNTERING
THE
AWESOME GOD



Stricken With Awe

“And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

(Genesis 28:16-17)

As we look at the majesty and awesomeness of God, we’re going to look at God’s wrath and His judgment. This should cause us to fear. Men don’t fear His judgment because they don’t fear His presence. They don’t believe in the Unseen One. The thing that each of us needs to experience, first of all, is a revelation of God’s promises concerning our regeneration and sonship. He says, “Here is what I will do in your life: I’m going to make you righteous with My righteousness. I’m going to give you My name. I’m going to cause you to be raised up and seated with Me in the heavens. You’re going to become an heir and joint heir with Christ Jesus. I was made sin with your sin, and you’ll be made righteous with My righteousness.” Beloved, if after a revelation of the promises of God you are not smitten—if you are not stricken with awe, if you are not undone—then, very likely, you’ve not encountered God; you’ve only had religion.

When Jacob had the real visitation of God there was no threat of judgment. There was no declaration, “Thou supplanter; you evil, deceitful man, I’m going to bring wrath and destruction upon you. You’re going to reap what you’ve sown. You’ve sown to the wind, but you’re going to reap the whirlwind. My hand is going to be against you; I’m going to bring you down!” None of that struck fear into the heart of Jacob. None of that was even addressed. God revealed His love for him, His unfailing love.

Jacob said, “How dreadful is this place!” He was afraid. Who is this guy we’re talking about? This was a man who had just been blessed, who had the birthright conferred upon him—the patriarch of the lineage of Messiah, God’s number one man on the planet—and he was afraid. An irrevocable covenant was given to this man, and he was afraid of the presence of God. How much do you take for granted? How do you see prayer? How do you see the privilege of coming into the presence of God? How do you view this Book? Do you see this Book as an opportunity to experience the visitation of God? Do you understand that perusing these pages will transform you into the very image of Jesus Christ? Yet, how much time is spent opening *Good Housekeeping*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Hot Rod*, *Golf Digest*, *Build Your Own Spaceship*, *Better Homes and Husbands* (there’s a magazine for everything) when there’s an opportunity to visit with the Creator of heaven and earth? Thirty seconds in His presence will change you for a lifetime.

Where is the fear of God? Where is the recognition of His majesty? Take off your shoes; you’re on holy ground. “God was here, and I didn’t even know it! I was so caught up in my own endeavors, my own dreams, and my own pursuits.” Jacob had just finished wheeling and dealing into a position he had wanted and had everything he thought he needed in life, but he wasn’t aware of the presence of God. Where are we today in this fear? “*Godly Fear, Pt. 2,*” February 14, 1999, Sunday AM

Absolutely, Totally Separate

“And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” (Exodus 3:5)

Holiness belongs to the Lord, and He said that without holiness no one would see the Lord (Heb. 12:14). When we compare ourselves to those in the world’s system, are we unique? Are we separate? Can we say that we function completely outside all that’s in the natural from our hearts’ desire and perspective? There’s an involvement, there’s an expectation, but the glory is His. We ask, Father, that we would not be limited in the scope of so many today who have been vexed by the spirit of Sodom and the cares of the world, but that we would be a people who have a fresh encounter at the burning bush and put no limitations on our God. All of our past efforts that appeared to be failures are, in fact, only a process to bring us to humility so He could show His greatness in us. We didn’t fail; we were just being prepared. We are finally able to say, “Who am I?” so that we can also say, “I AM has sent me.” Let us go in the understanding of His majesty, exclusively for His glory. *“I AM, Pt. 1 (Greatness of God),” June 23, 2002, Sunday AM*

We need to understand that the same God that called Moses, the same God that called Paul, called you. He’s working in you right now. You may not have had the spectacular visitation, but the same supernatural power is at work in you right now. The same assurance that you’re about Father’s business, that your steps are being ordered of the Lord, that you are a kingdom representative (an ambassador of Christ) is confirmed in your heart because of the promises of God’s Word. You can learn from these spectacular visitations what God is doing in your

not-so-spectacular life, because the purpose of God hasn't changed. The work of God continues. His promises are still being fulfilled. They're "yea and amen to the glory of God" (2 Cor. 1:20). They're working in each one of our lives.

Moses encountered this great phenomenon as God called to him out of the midst of the bush (Exod. 3:4), saying, "Moses, Moses." Moses responded, "Here I am. I've been emptied. I've tried in my own strength. Now here I am. What do You have to say?" Have you been worn down yet? Have you been brought to that place of being emptied of all of your own natural abilities so that now you have ears to hear what the Lord would say to you? *"I AM, Pt. 1 (Greatness of God)," June 23, 2002, Sunday AM*

A Loss Of His Awesomeness

“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.” (Exodus 3:6)

“Don’t come near Me with your shoes on, for the place whereon you stand is holy ground” (Exod. 3:5). We sing about that, and yet how capable are we of just by rote going through our prayers? Where are our minds in worship? What in the secular, in the natural, occupies your time, your energy, and your thoughts as you stand on holy ground? To allow the cares of this world, the natural treasures to come in and somehow find themselves on an equal plane with the worship of Almighty God is a loss of His awesomeness. You are saying the words, but you aren’t connected with the presence of God! Don’t you come in here with shoes on! How often do you “wear your shoes” during worship?

Here’s the great man, Moses. We find this man who’s a warrior, this man who fears no man! But look at his response to the presence of God. As the Lord set the standard for approaching Him in holiness, the Scripture says very clearly that Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God (Exod. 3:6). The Scripture says that just one look at Him will kill you (Exod. 33:20). Catching a glimpse of God will completely undo you! That’s the awesomeness of our God! He’s worthy of praise, and He’s worthy of our obedience. The thing that we want to talk about is fearing Him to obedience! We need to move out of the deception of thinking that we can fear God yet not obey Him. We can’t fear God and disobey His commandments! “Don’t say you love Me and not keep My commandments,” Jesus said. Then He takes

it further and says if there's a true love of God, not only will we keep the commandments, but they won't be grievous to us! It's not going to be difficult. Through the transformation of our hearts, we understand the loveliness of God, His love for us, and His worthiness of our love; and that causes us to obey. We don't fear the consequence, but are thankful for the grace that enables us to see Him as He is.

It's a gift to be able to see God. It's a gift to be able to get a glimpse of Him through the Word of God and to sense His visitation in our spirit—whether it's in times of prayer or worship or times in the Word of God. The world doesn't have access to Him. We're the only people who can touch Him. It's a holy place. That access is by the blood of Jesus alone. The only way we can approach Him is through death to self and recognition of the lordship of Jesus.

Moses was afraid to look upon Him. Many times we feel that we're His equal. We'll go to God for counsel, for suggestion, to look at the Word, to see what He says, and then we'll consider it. We'll hold it up against what medical science says, against what philosophers say, against what our own traditions have said, against what our family values might be, and then we'll choose our will. You see, there's no fear of God until we can say, "Not my will, but Your will be done." Are you afraid to be out of the will of God? Do you understand the consequences of being out of the will of God? It ought to terrify you! Yet how many of us are comfortable to be about our own business, walking in disobedience, willfully walking contrary to His commandments, and then expect Him to come in and bail us out in the time of our peril? What's our concept of God? "*The Whole Duty of Man, Pt. 1,*" September 18, 2002, Wednesday PM

Changed By A Glimpse

“And it shall come to pass, while my glory passed by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by.”

(Exodus 33:22)

Do you know what it means to know Him, to come and willingly take that cross? How jealous are you today to come into that new revelation of Him? Just a glimpse of Him will cause you to have to put a veil on your face like Moses. Other people around a man who has been in the presence of God know it. He is different. “This is a man that talks with God!” Are you hungry for that today? What’s your reason for living? It’s that I might know Him! What is the whole duty of man? To fear God, to keep His commandments (Eccles. 12:13).

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6). How did Jesus walk? He walked in total obedience to the Father. He came not to do His will, but the will of the Father who sent Him. You see, when you know God, you understand that the first responsibility you have is to love Him. You love Him more than you love Mom and Dad, husband, wife, children; and if you don’t, you’re not worthy of Him (Matt. 10:37). Search your own heart, look around you and answer the question for me. How can a professed Christian love a husband or a wife or a child or a mother or a father more than God? He has never met God. He’s heard about Him, like Job, with the hearing of the ear, but he has never seen Him. God is more beautiful than this life. His holiness, His uniqueness, transcends all of your knowledge and all of your senses! When you know Him, everything else makes sense! If you can see an infinite God yet worship a finite being, you don’t know Him.

You get just a glimpse of His hind parts as you're in the cleft of the rock, as Moses was, and God puts forth His hand and walks by, and then removes it. To catch just a glimpse of His hind parts will change your life, but there has to be a hunger, a thirst, a jealousy, a willingness to be separated from the masses and to become as holy and unique as He is. In other words, people are going to think you're weird. You're going to be considered a fanatic. Even the committed people are going to begin to wonder about you, because you've been with God! I'm not talking about something mystical or squirrely. I'm talking about Bible-based Christianity. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil. 1:21). To be crucified with Him is that I might be raised with Him in the likeness of His resurrection (Rom. 6:5). I count all else loss that I might gain the knowledge of God! (Phil. 3:8) For this one treasure I live: to know Him."

The eyes of the Lord are searching for somebody that's willing to make that a life's pursuit. We're not all going to do it. It doesn't mean we're not all going to heaven. There's thirty, there's sixty, and there's one hundredfold. Anybody want to volunteer for one hundredfold? "Well, hasn't God predestined that before the foundations of the world?" No. What He predestined before the foundations of the world were the effects of sanctification so that you could be everything for whom He provided—by His blood, by choosing each day whom you're going to serve—as you work out your salvation every day, for today is the day of your salvation. Do you want to be just one of the group, or do you want to know the excellency of the knowledge of God? *"The Knowledge of God, Pt. 2," April 16, 2003, Wednesday PM*

Now My Eyes Have Seen Him

“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42:5-6)

Do you know Him today? Job said, “I’ve heard about Him, but now my eyes have seen Him.” Oh, we hear about Him doctrinally, with a hearing of our ear; we hear about the great testimonies of God. “But now,” Job said, “my eyes have been opened. I’ve seen Him!” What he saw was not very enjoyable at the moment, as everything that was precious to him in the natural was stripped from him. He stood before God naked and was able to draw this conclusion: “The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord! Though He slay me, He deserves my worship and my praise, for God is good. He is great and greatly to be praised!” Have you seen Him yet? *“Turned Into Another Man, Pt. 4,” January 12, 2003, Sunday AM*

Job said, “I had a theology, but now mine eyes have seen Him.” He was then able to relate to God’s mercy and understood His presence in the midst of adversity. He came to the conclusion, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him; but I will maintain my own ways before Him. He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before Him.” Job realized that he didn’t have to try to pretend to be something that he was not. Hypocrisy is for men, not for God. Be honest. Come to grips with who you are and what you are. God loves you where you are and how you are, and He’ll make you what He wants you to be if you’ll stop lying to yourself and others, and just share your heart and come before Him. Come before the family of God, let whatever needs there are be known, and let God heal you, praise God. *“Striving, Pt. 3” May 5, 1996, Sunday PM*

What kind of a heart do you have? Do you really want a glimpse of yourself? Do you want to see as God sees you? Our doctrine is correct: "I've heard with the hearing of the ear." It's only after Gethsemane, and it's only after what Job went through that you can say, "But now I've seen Him with my eyes." Listen to the declaration of Job: "Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Here's why the whole book of Job exists right here: "Wilt thou condemn me, that [you might] be righteous?" (Job 40:8) Will you indict God to justify your own behavior, your children's behavior, your pet doctrine? "I've heard of Him. I said earlier, 'The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'" He was able to stand up to the loss, but he wasn't able to stand up to being the cause. "This did not come because of my unrighteousness. What I am experiencing is not just." Beloved, Genesis 18 says, "The Judge of all the earth does right." A man after God's own heart, a man that's jealous for God's truth is a man who abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes. *"Turned Into Another Man, Pt. 7," January 19, 2003, Sunday P.M.*

Denying His Holiness

“Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.”

(1 Samuel 4:8)

“Who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods?” (1 Sam. 4:8) Did you notice the Philistines’ reference is still plural? They don’t know Jehovah. They don’t know “the Lord our God is one.” (Deut. 6:4) They’re pantheistic. They understand the working of demonic powers, but they don’t understand the holiness of God: that He is a distinct being who’s the author of all and who reigns supreme. When man understands that revelation, one of two things happens: he bows his knee, or he bows his neck. When confronted with the reality of the holiness of God, that He is the author of all that is, we either humble ourselves, or we rebel and defy. Whether we’d like to believe it or not, that’s exactly what happens in every decision we make—when we decide to go and pray, to seek God, to study, to obey our parents, to submit to our husbands, to lay our lives down for our families, or whatever it is. Every time we make a decision along those lines, that’s the very thing behind it.

If we believe that God is who He is, nothing but obedience will follow. The times we disobey are the times we deny His holiness. If we were aware of His majesty, His omnipresence, His power, His justice, His imminence, His immutability—if every decision was made in light of His absolute, holy presence at that moment—we, as believers, would choose right. The degree that we’re being overcome and our flesh is ruling is the degree to which we’re moving away from the holiness of God and from the light into darkness. We’re either coming into the

light and are more aware of the glory and holiness of God, or we're departing. There is no static relationship.

Even though the Philistines didn't understand the theology perfectly, they understood, "These gods are bad. These are the guys that brought Egypt down. We're no match for Egypt. What in the world is going to happen to us?" But then they encouraged themselves, as the pride of man always does. "Be strong and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews..." (1 Sam. 4:9). "Suck it up! Act like men! Let's go defy God!" They went forth in the arm of the flesh. It would have been no contest had God shown up. The ark was in the camp, the religion was intact, and the doctrine was all neatly classified, categorized, and filed; but God wasn't present. You see, the testimony that you have of what God did in your life isn't the issue. Is He present today to fight for you? How can He be if you've stolen His glory, His offerings, and polluted His presence with your own flesh and fornication?

The Philistines went in their power, and Israel had nothing but the arm of the flesh. You see, a lot of us are under the misunderstanding that God will always deliver His people to protect His name because God doesn't want people to think that He is not the Almighty. God does not have an inferiority complex. God is not concerned about what any man or any devil thinks about Him. God lives totally separate from all public opinion polls. He sees the beginning to the end. It's already under the consequence of His determinate counsel! "Surely God will not allow the desecration of the ark!" Yet these Philistines came in, destroyed thirty thousand children of Israel, and the ark of God was taken. There is nothing that we can do presumptuously to make God operate on our behalf. We have to understand the holiness of God. It is beyond any of that. *"I AM, Pt. 2 (Greatness of God)," June 23, 2002, Sunday PM*

Holy Appetite, Holy Pursuit

“And the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD. (1 Samuel 7:1)

The people of God came to fetch the ark and brought it into the house of Abinadab (1 Sam. 7:1). The name “Abinadab” really means the “father of generosity, the benevolent one.” Do we want the presence of God for what we can get, or do we long for the presence of God because of what we can give as He works in us? The ark came to the house of Abinadab, and they sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord. Eleazar means “God our helper,” not God our enemy, not a God that’s to be dreaded, but a God that’s to be revered and feared. For twenty years the ark abode at the house of Abinadab, and for twenty years God blessed and preserved those people.

Samuel spoke unto the house of Israel and said, “It’s time to return the presence of God. It’s time to seek Him with all of your hearts and put away the strange gods of Ashtoreth from among you. Prepare your hearts unto the Lord and serve Him only, the holiness of God” (1 Sam. 7:3). You see, when we long for the presence of God, we can give because of His working in us. Freely we have received; freely we give. When our priesthood is one of helpers—Eleazar, God’s helpers, God’s ambassadors, God’s representatives—then we dwell in peace and confidence.

What occupies the throne of our hearts? Baal, Ashtaroth, self-will? Or does God in all of His majesty reign supreme? He is holy; therefore, the first of the commandments is, “You’ll have no other gods” (Exod. 20:3). There will be no worship, pursuit, or gratification in any other.

“For I am holy and I am jealous, and My people will glorify My name.” Holiness is the consequence of all of the combined attributes of God. Holiness is not only what God is, but who He is. Holiness is comprised not only of God’s abilities, but of His intents and His purposes. He thinks distinctly, separately. We need to battle for the mind of Christ and think like God thinks. Holiness is not just a change in behavior, but a change in attitude, purpose, and desire. It’s not just being compelled to righteousness, but having an appetite for being righteous.

“Be holy, for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:16). He’s not just talking about your moral behavior. He’s saying that unless you become holy, you can’t fellowship with Him. You won’t be where He is. Holiness is your pursuit, your appetite. “Come out from among them, and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:17). Holiness is not just the expression of the power of God to cast out devils and heal the sick, but its motive is love and compassion. Holiness is not the study of eschatology and the awareness that “He may come at this moment, so we need to prepare ourselves.” Holiness is the familiarity, the relationship, and a longing for His return. It’s a confidence in His love and a love for the light. Because of that we rest, and that day does not take us unaware.

“Be holy, for I am holy.” “You have to leave everything that is not of Me to commune with Me, because I am separate.” Because of His omnipresence, He occupies all that’s within the world physically, but it has no place in Him. God was present, but Jacob, “knew it not.” Holy people know His very breath and His whisper. We know His presence when He moves into a room. No one else knows He’s there, but we do. “Be holy, for I am holy.” *“IAM, Pt. 2 (Greatness of God),” June 23, 2002, Sunday PM*

Unable To Stand In His Presence

“...Then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.” (2 Chronicles 5:13-14)

We trivialize God. The things that we fear, we shouldn't be fearing; the One that we should fear, we ignore. I'm not talking about ignoring Him during our religious time. “Oh, I don't ignore God during my devotions or during church.” We're talking about the fear of God in keeping all of His commandments. Have you ever experienced the visitation of the Holy Spirit like the priests did, when His presence was so profound they couldn't even stand to minister? Have you ever been in the presence of God to where you couldn't even stand up? That's neat. Twice in my life I've been in the presence of God where it was overwhelming. Our term is to be “slain in the Spirit.” We've seen it mocked and mimicked in our generation. Very few people have ever experienced the real thing, but it's real. Wouldn't it be great to have the Spirit of God come in here, and we couldn't even stand? Wouldn't it be great to know the visitation of the Holy Spirit in our midst in which every one of us was just thrown to the ground, losing all idea of time; and into the wee hours of the morning we would lie down and worship God? You say, “Man, that sounds freaky! That sounds weird!” That used to be something that happened in Pentecostal churches. A lot of it was flesh, but some of it was a real encounter with God. *“The Whole Duty of Man, Pt.1,” September 18, 2002, Wednesday PM*

I'd rather have one genuine visitation of God than a thousand counterfeits. I've seen the real power of God, and have known it in my own life. I've been so overwhelmed by that power that I couldn't stand in

His presence. Time is lost in His presence. I mean, you absolutely don't have any understanding of whether a minute or a day went by. *"Preferring His Presence, Pt. 2," June 25, 2000, Sunday AM*

You can't come in with your shoes on. You cannot come into the presence of God and determine when you're going to get up and leave. "Okay, I'm through praying now." When you've encountered God, you don't leave until you've been released, dismissed. Does God dismiss you from prayer, or do you leave? Do you come into His presence any way you feel like, anytime you feel like, or do you come when you're called? I'm talking about fearing God. I'm talking about an awareness of God's presence twenty-four hours a day. We're talking about lives that are now walking in the supernatural (the spiritual), not in the natural. We're talking about no longer being in control of our lives. We're talking about no longer being governed by society or nature. *"The Whole Duty of Man, Pt.1," September 18, 2002, Wednesday PM*

The Living Coal Upon Our Lips

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.” (Isaiah 6:5)

Here’s what every one of us needs to experience in his prayer time. Oh, it’s not as spectacular as this every time you pray, but beloved, somewhere you’re going have to experience this in your life if you’re going to be able to pray effectively. “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw . . . the LORD . . . lifted up, and his train [His glory] filled the temple. [And I saw] the seraphims [crying], Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa. 6:1-3). Do you see the glory of God when you’re praying? Is it about the glory? Is it about the eternal rather than all these temporal things that you’re warring with?

He said, “I encountered the presence of God until the place where the posts of the doors moved at the voice of Him that cried, and house was filled with his glory!” (Isa. 6:4) Oh, beloved, we need to pray until the foundations of our lives have been shaken, until we’ve encountered the presence of God! Until we’ve experienced that, we can’t pray effectually. Our prayer is not going to be sanctified. Our prayer is going to be tainted with our own ambitions and our own carnality!

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips” (Isa. 6:5). Have you gotten a glimpse of yourself? “Woe is me! I come to pray, but so often I’m swayed by my flesh! I ask to consume it upon my own lusts! I lie to God just like I lie to

myself! My lips aren't clean! They speak out of the abundance of a corrupt heart!" There's only one cure for that, beloved. We need a coal taken from the altar of God and placed upon our lips. We need to be cleansed with the fire of God's holiness! We need to have the Word of God placed into our hearts so that when we speak, we ask only according to His will and according to His Word! When we pray, we can say after everything that we declare, "It is written!" You'll notice the Scripture says it was a "live coal." This thing was a living entity. The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12). The Word of God, beloved, is what we have to have placed upon our lips so that we speak only the things that God speaks.

Do you want to be able to pray and have your words come forth like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? Do you want to be able to speak and witness on the streets so that your words consume like fire, and no one can stand before the excellence of His glory and the power of His might and the wisdom of His words? Then you're going to have to fill yourself up. You're going to have to go into this frightening place called the presence of God. When you encounter the presence of God, His glory will smite you as you fall at His feet as dead—totally undone! God needs to breathe the breath of life back into us again, just like He did to the first man. As the *ruach*, the Spirit of God, fills us, we become refilled with the presence and refreshing of the Holy Ghost!

Are our words tainted with our own will and slanted toward our own perspective, or can we just speak exactly what God speaks about any given situation, and say, "The will of the Lord be done"? Are our prayers stale, or are they fresh again with the wind of the Spirit of God? "*Living in the Supernatural, Pt. 9,*" December 8, 2002, Sunday AM

Struck Dumb By His Presence

“And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.” (Daniel 10:11)

“And in the four and twentieth day of the first month.... Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but [an awareness of the presence was there] a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves” (Dan. 10:4-7). When was the last time you encountered the presence of God that way? When was the last time you were struck dumb by the presence of God and His visitation? When was the last time you pulled off your shoes because you knew you were on holy ground? You make people take off their shoes before they come in on your new carpet.

We realize that as the Spirit of God is speaking here, Daniel says, “Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words... And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for

unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling” (Dan. 10:8-11). When was the last time you were moved by a word from God? Has His voice become so common that you don't even tremble at that voice anymore? That voice that shook Mount Sinai absolutely overwhelmed the people of Israel when they knew God was present. Has the presence of God been so common to us, or so foreign to us, that we don't even know it anymore? When God speaks, is it like any other counselor speaking to us, or do we tremble at His voice and know that this is a supernatural occurrence? This is a privilege bought by the blood of Jesus Christ. This is the fruit of sonship. What a privilege to be called the sons of God. Oh, there are times for commonness as children. Children don't always need to come before us with oblation, but there should be some in their hearts. There should be respect, honor, love, and reverence. If not, then everything they take is thievery. “*Wait On The Lord, Pt. 5,*” March 10, 2002, Sunday PM

Divine Expectations

“And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” (Deuteronomy 10:12)

We see the heart of God established. The Lord asks, “What do I require of you as a people?” Number one: “I require fear (reverence, honor, distinction) in My holiness.” The holiness of God speaks of His purity and His moral being, but the term “holy” also talks about being distinct or separate. When we say “holy,” we’re not just saying “pure.” We’re saying distinct or separate. “There’s no other one like You.” God says, “Because of that, I expect your fear. I expect you to recognize how distinct a people you are. You need to be holy because I’m holy! You have to come out from among them and be separate because I’m separate! You can’t do it the way the world does it and receive My glory, My honor, My provision, or My love to its fullest!”

So what does the Lord require of you? Number two: to walk in His ways, not only being hearers of the Word but doers, the Scripture says (James 1:22). How do I know whether I’m a child of God? “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matt. 7:20). God says, “There are people that draw nigh unto Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.” They draw nigh and flatter with their lips. “They give Me lip service. They talk about how they love Me, but they don’t keep My commandments. They talk about how they love Me, but they don’t honor Me with their increase. They talk about how they love Me, but they always prefer their own ease over the ability to serve and edify My body.”

What does the Lord require of you? Number three: to love Him. “If you love Me, you’ll keep My commandments, and they’ll not be grievous,” the apostle John says (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3). “It’s so hard!” That never comes out of the lips of a man who loves God! The commandments of God are not grievous to the person that loves Him. I didn’t say that they were easy to do! I didn’t say that we did them as habitually as we should, because we all sin. I said the man that loves God doesn’t say, “This is so hard! I just can’t do it.” God has given His grace that enables us to do it. He’s given us all things that pertain to life and godliness in Christ Jesus! It’s a rejoicing in His presence which enables us to keep the commandments of God. It’s a thankfulness for the grace and the mercy with which He responds to our repentance, for the things that we don’t do. We just say, “Lord, I blew it, but, praise God, I’m going after it full-time this time;” not, “It’s too hard; I’ll never be able to do it.”

You’re to serve the Lord with all of your heart, with all of your soul. The term “service” refers to the absence of personal lordship. Paul was referred to in the Scriptures by many different titles: apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. Paul’s favorite title was “servant of the Lord.” He was a slave who laid down his life because he realized the value of the life that was laid down for him. He saw this as the highest title because slaves had to be purchased. “God saw worth specifically in me, and I can be valuable to His kingdom. I rejoice in the fact that I can do something of value for the kingdom of God. He purchased me with His blood. He purchased me with His life. He redeemed me unto Himself.” Paul was motivated by that. “*Honor to Whom Honor, Pt. 2,*” December 30, 2001, Sunday AM

Unfathomable Majesty

“And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God.... To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” (Deuteronomy 10:12-13)

It never ceases to amaze me that everything Father does is for our good. He’s so content; He’s so self-sufficient. His ways are so far above our ways. There’s not anything that He does thinking of Himself, though everything that He does, of course, is for His own glory. It’s not a conscious thing of selfish behavior or having to improve His self-worth. It’s because He is all in all. Do we see Him that way? He sees Himself that way, and can therefore respond to you and me without any selfishness at all. He can respond by emptying Himself, for in His great holiness, He was made sin with our sin that He might reconcile us to Himself.

God requires something of us in order for us to be able to relate to Him. We hear of all the great New Covenant blessings and the works of grace that have affected each of our lives. We can access God through the precious blood of Jesus, but not without fear. We can’t come with an attitude of arrogance, self-sufficiency, or equality. Beloved, you must approach Him with humility, reverence, and appreciation, for He’s a being like no other. All that He claims and proclaims that we are does not make us one with Him in worth or ability. It only makes us one with Him in relationship, because our acceptance is in the Beloved. The moment we begin to think that we’re on some kind of equal plane with God because He’s embraced us, adopted us, and placed us, it causes us to lose sight of His majesty, and causes us to lose our fear.

Fearing the Lord is being able to honor Him and to recognize His majesty and to realize how awesome the God that we serve is. What a privilege we have in worshipping and serving His majesty! Kings and queens of nations are addressed as “Your Majesty.” His majesty is this great, majestic beauty—the awesome power, the unfathomable justice and mercy of our loving, heavenly Father. How can we not fear Him in the sense of truly reverencing, obeying, and desiring to honor our God?

To fear Him is to recognize His worth, not an act of discipline to obey. If we’re having to say, “I’m going to bring this flesh under, even though I don’t want to,” then we don’t realize the majesty of our God. It’s a privilege to be able to serve, obey, and worship. It’s because He’s worthy, not because we have to. If we can’t serve Him in that way, then guess what? We haven’t really had a visitation with Him like Jacob had. In wrestling God, Jacob had an encounter that changed his name. We haven’t had a visitation like Paul had. When smitten from the beast, he lay under a brightness that was brighter than the noonday sun. We haven’t heard that voice that comes and cleaves the stones in two and sounds like thunder. We haven’t ever been looked upon by those eyes of fire that pierce into our souls! If you’ve never experienced a visitation of the majestic God, the almighty God, then I suggest you get on your face and stay there until you do. Our lives need to be changed if we’re going to have fellowship with our God. There must be an attitude change in our perception of who He is and why we come to Him. It’s because He’s worthy; that’s why. What a privilege to enter His presence! *“Faith to Fear,” October 18, 2000, Wednesday PM*

Undone At The Lord's Feet

"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." (Revelation 1:17)

In all of the attributes that make God who He is, He is these things infinitely. Each attribute has to be subordinate to God's combined attributes. We need to realize what God is in His totality. He is in balance, each attribute being equal to the other—none resisting, but working in perfect harmony. Each attribute expresses itself fully. His mercy never bows to His justice. His justice never overrides His mercy or His love. As we come to know Him, it's going to bring rest to our hearts and an assurance of the promises that are "yea and amen."

Knowing God will strike a fear in your heart. We've talked so many times about John the Beloved, the one who leaned upon the Lord's bosom. There was a communion there. There was an ability to embrace God in His incarnate state. We're going to talk about coming to know God beyond His incarnate state into His eternal, spiritual state, for the "God that we worship is a Spirit, and we worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

Many of us are confident, through the revelation of the Scriptures, in coming and laying our heads upon the bosom of the Son of God, the incarnate Saviour. But I want you to know that the Scripture says when he received revelation, that same John was undone and fell at His feet as dead. When was the last time you had an encounter like that? Are you in some kind of slap-Him-on-the-back relationship? Maybe it's not that common. Maybe it's just the commonness of questioning Him as Peter did, having said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living

God” (Matt. 16:16), then turning right back around and saying, “Not so, Lord,” in trying to bring counsel.

Do you have the relationship that allows you to fall on your face in His presence and understand how undone we are as a people, and how needy we are for Him to reveal Himself even more? “*I AM, Pt. 1 (The Greatness of God)*,” June 23, 2002, Sunday AM

You can't know Him and not fear Him. The reason there's not sufficient fear is because there is not sufficient knowledge; there is not sufficient relationship. You just don't know who He is. You can't be in His presence without taking off your shoes. You can't be in His presence without trembling as He begins to speak. If you've known Him in the natural, like John the Beloved, and are able to see Him in His glory, you will fall at His feet as dead, the Scriptures tell us. Do we tremble at His Word? Do we stand in awe of Him? If not, then I would suggest that we spend time in His Word. I'd suggest that we not allow our eyes to depart from this Word. I would suggest that we get on our faces before God, begin to receive His Word into our hearts, and ask Him to reveal what manner of man we really are. As we begin to see ourselves and are broken, we will be conformed to His image and will present ourselves as those living sacrifices. Then we'll begin to prove the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God; and there will be an honor. There will not be a “having to” obey, but a delight in doing things justly because “That's how my God does them! He does what's right and merciful and kind.” The fruit of the Spirit begins to emanate from our lives, and Father is glorified. “*Faith To Fear*,” October 18, 2000, Wednesday PM

Eternally Taken Up With His Majesty

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” (Revelation 4:8)

When we come to understand the holiness of God and how totally separate He is, and that when we approach Him, we approach a God of majesty, there ought to be fear and trembling in our hearts. Even as we approach boldly through the blood of Jesus, beloved, there can't be a commonness; there must be an overwhelming knowledge of the presence and the majesty of our God, for He is holy. We see this knowledge of His majesty in the creatures that were made specifically for the purpose of worship, as they come before the throne of God and into the presence of God.

There is so much spoken today about the love of God, and God does love us infinitely. God loves us perfectly. God loves us specifically, and God is love. The Scripture doesn't say that the creatures fly through the heavens and around the throne of God crying, “Love, love, love! All I need is love.” In fact, the Scriptures tell us that these creatures fly throughout the heavens and cry, “Holy, holy, holy!” (Rev. 4:8) They are eternally taken up with the majesty of their Creator, and realize every day He is infinitely beyond their ability to comprehend. These creatures are not just in a state of obedience, but have a conditioned heart of awe. See, they are not just robots that are wound up, and all they can say is “Holy, holy, holy.” “How is your day going?” “Holy.” They look on Him and all that can come out of their mouths is, “There is none like You. There is none like You. All that exists is because of You. All that is, is for You.” That's the God that we serve.

Have we made Him common? Is He the God of seven o'clock prayer? Is He the God that bows to the work schedule? How many idols have we erected in His presence? We have the specific command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Exod. 20:3). I'll not tolerate it." As God begins to reveal Himself to us, the more we come to know Him, the more we draw into His presence, and the more we are overwhelmed by who He really is. Those of us that boldly say, "We know the Lord, and we know what God would do in these circumstances," are like little adolescents that talk about things they don't understand. You see, adolescents think they know everything. But God wants to lead us into a relationship wherein, as He reveals Himself to us, we come as little children in a spirit of meekness and humility, awe and innocence. "*IAM, Pt. 1 (The Greatness of God)*," June 23, 2002, Sunday AM

I Stand In Awe Of You

“Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.” (Psalm 33:8)

Psalm 33 reveals the need for our awareness of the majesty of God. When we talk about majesty, we're talking about a spiritual force, a transcending majesty. We're not talking about the majesty of an earthly king, but about a transcendent majesty, or one that is over all. God is beyond our comprehension. As we come to know Him, we can catch glimpses of Him. But the greatest visitation we can have of God, without dying, is just to see His hinder parts as He passes by and puts us in the cleft of the rock and covers us with His hand, letting us catch just one glimpse of His glory. Just a glimpse of His glory, just catching the hinder parts of God for a moment, will cause us to be undone.

Can you say that you were undone in your devotions this week? Can you say, “I encountered God this week and was undone. I fell before Him as dead and was as a dog in my own eyes. I was smitten by His presence so that my self-righteousness was revealed for what it was—filthy rags. I cried for a coal to be taken from the altar and placed upon my lips, for I'm a man of unclean lips!”? Or did you go through your ho-hum devotions, walking out your religious relationship by squeezing God into your busy schedule, justifying your own carnal behavior, and comparing yourself by others, saying, “At least I'm better than those people attending Sandstone”? If this is true, you've not visited God, and the fear of God is lacking in your life. The psalmist makes it very clear that we must stand in awe of Him. *“Godly Fear, Pt. 2,” February 14, 1999, Sunday AM*

We sing, “I stand, I stand in awe of You.” We serve an “awesome” God, but that word is just tossed around. We must ask ourselves if we stand in awe of God in our daily decisions, and not just in the worship services. Does God awe us more than the latest gadget at Circuit City, the one with all the little knobs, bells, whistles, and lights? We see all the different things that are taking place. We can grab a *Popular Mechanics* magazine, check out the newest inventions in there, and stand in awe of the majesty of man and what he’s accomplished. All that is just the Tower of Babel, and I believe God is about to confound us in our generation.

We ask ourselves if we really are awed by His presence. Am I aware that He’s gone before me to prepare a way, that His glory is my rear guard, that He’s ever present with me, and that He doesn’t leave me comfortless? To stand in awe of God means to always listen for His voice first. Are we listening for the voice of God and standing in awe of keeping His commandments? We can’t keep them without the Holy Spirit, so standing in awe of the commandments is standing in awe of the fact that we’re possessed by the Holy Ghost, that we’re indwelt, and that the power of God is manifesting itself in us. “I stand in awe of You.” We stand in awe of God when we make decisions that are totally contrary to our flesh, to our natural understanding. *“The Whole Duty Of Man, Pt. 2,” September 22, 2002, Sunday PM*

Jealous For His Presence

“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee?” (Psalm 89:7-8)

Who is like You? There is none that can be compared to You. Can I ask you something as a fellowship? Do we emphasize love and mercy, which are so vital to our children, yet not teach them to be aware of the awesomeness of God? Do we understand there is to be a fear of Him in our assembly? Is there a fear of being cast from His presence? Is there a fear of Him who can kill and cast into hell, or are our hearts and minds diluted by the treasures of this world such that we don't understand His value and His awesomeness?

The Scripture is very clear about His awesome presence and the mandate for us to emphasize that fear of Him in our assemblies. It's something that should be addressed when we see someone moving in a way that would defile the presence of the Holy Spirit, or grieve Him when we gather together. We should ask, “Where is your fear? How can you speak like that? How can you act like that? Where's the fear of God? How dare you gossip in my presence! What's all this murmuring? Where is the fear of God in this place?” All of this that goes on denies His presence. Most of us would not behave that way if we really knew God was there. We don't believe that God is ever present. We don't really believe that every thought and every word are going to be brought into judgment. We don't live with a carefulness of the fear of God in how we conduct our daily lives, and because of that, it's very easy to pollute His presence as we come in with our shoes on.

I want to encourage you to become jealous for His presence. Do you want a visitation of God? Do you want to know the sovereign move of the Holy Spirit? Do you want to know the power of God's presence to transform your life or to heal your body? It's in an environment where the Holy Spirit isn't grieved. It's in an environment where God is revered and the focus is on the eternal.

Where is the reverence for the Lord in our lives today? You see, if we feared God, we would obey Him. I'm not just talking about reverential fear, but about a literal fear of the awesomeness of God. The word "awesome" is so overused today. "Awesome, oh it's awesome." There is nothing awesome but God. Skateboard moves are not awesome. Cars are not awesome. The One that is awesome is trivialized in our society and in many of our own lives. We don't fear God if we don't obey Him. Our fear of God is in direct correlation to our obedience and our ability to subdue our own flesh. "Don't fear those that can kill your bodies," Jesus said, "but fear Him who can kill body and cast soul into hell" (Luke 12:4-5). *"The Whole Duty of Man, Pt. 1," September 18, 2002, Wednesday PM*

The Holiness Of Fellowship

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Men shall be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:4). Come out from among them. Don't embrace their idols. Cleanse yourself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in what? The fear of God. There is the key to this whole thing, beloved. How many people profess to be believers today who don't fear God, who don't reverence the majesty of our God? Our God is an awesome God! It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! (Heb. 10:31) If we've not come boldly into His hands through the free access of the blood of Jesus Christ, how are you and I then going to walk in true holiness?

“Well, how do I make myself fear God?” You don't have to make yourself fear God; just get an audience with Him. You may know Jesus, as John did, as a good friend, a personal friend. John walked with Him every day, ate with Him, supped with Him. He heard the words that Jesus spoke. But when John walked into the reality of the presence and majesty of God, he fell at his feet as dead. Do you want to fear God? Just have fellowship with Him. Just take a little time to get to know Him, and then your soul will be purified and the water of the Word will wash you. We are sanctified as the Word of God reveals Father to us. We see that without Him, we are undone. We begin to realize that we can do nothing without Him, but we can do all things through Christ which strengthens us. It is vitally important that an understanding of having an audience with God—being in the presence of God—begins to take place in our hearts. *“Without the Law Righteousness, Pt. 4,” April 23, 1995, Sunday PM*

Loved Beyond Comprehension

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

We fear Him because we stand in awe of His love that is beyond comprehension. We can't comprehend the love God has for us. We know who we are, we know what we are, but God loves us just like we are. That causes us to fear Him. The fact that He could love us while we were sinners (while we were His enemies!) and die for us creates fear in the heart of man. I don't understand that love in the natural, but it causes me to fear.

If God were to step into your presence on your best day—when you feel the most righteous, when you're holier than you've ever been—you would be totally undone. Amen? The Scripture says you would die to look upon Him. Your righteousness is as filthy rags. We're talking about who we are literally, not who we are legally (who we are going to be after we're changed, who we are after corruption takes on incorruption and mortality takes on immortality). We're talking about who we are now and who God is. You see, when speaking of standing in awe, I'm trying to get you to see that picture of how separate His holiness is from us as the creature. The Creator is so far beyond what we can comprehend—far more righteous and pure and holy—that at our best, we're as filthy rags. Yet He wants to fellowship with us. He loves us and continually draws us into communion by giving bold access through the blood of Jesus. I think He ought to be feared. I think we ought to reverence Him and love Him. *“Godly Fear, Pt. 4,” February 17, 1999, Wednesday PM*

We Stand Before You Dumb

“Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.” (Psalm 104:1)

Lord, Your mercies endure forever. You're great and greatly to be praised, Lord. There's none like You. Your name is above every name, and Your ways are past knowing. You're our God; You're our Father; You're our friend, and we delight in You. We just want to thank You for Your goodness, Lord, and for Your great presence that strengthens us. We stand before You as total debtors, Lord. We stand before You dumb, unable to even begin to speak of Your majesty and Your goodness. Our hearts are unable to express our thanksgiving, Lord. We stand in awe of that love. All we can say is thank You.

Thank You, Lord, for Your goodness. Thank You for Your promises. Thank You for Your presence. Lord, even though Your presence is sometimes indiscernible—we can't see the cloud or the pillar, or an angel closing lions' mouths, or a fourth Man—we have Your Word. We have the more sure word, and Your presence is here; we eat it and are glad. We can always open this Word and find You present, and Your promises are sure to a thousand generations. We eat it, and it becomes the joy and the rejoicing of our hearts. You're ever present. You stand by us, and the world has no knowledge of it because You live in us by Your Spirit and speak to us through Your Word. They can't understand this Word; it's foolishness to them, but life to us.

As You prepare us, Lord, to be that acceptable sanctuary, that place where You've chosen to put Your name, we run to it and are safe, the

Scripture says. Are you through with trusting in your own strength? Are you through with trying to be propped up by friends and the faith of others? Then let me encourage you to run into the temple of God today and to be strong and to know His presence. “*Preferring His Presence, Pt. 2,*” June 25, 2000, Sunday AM