

Be Ye Holy : For I Am Holy

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

- [0 : 00] We do sing to God's praise now from Psalm 51, Psalm 51, and we're singing from verse 8. Psalm 51 from verse 8, Of gladness and of joyfulness make me to hear the voice that saw these very bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.
- With all mine iniquities blot out, thy face hide from my sin. Create a clean heart. Lord, renew a right spirit me within.
- Cast me not from thy sight, nor take thy Holy Spirit away. Restore me thy salvation's joy. With thy free spirit me stay.
- Then will I teach thy ways unto those that transgressors be. And those that sinners are shall then be turned unto thee. O God of my salvation, guard me from blood guiltiness set free.
- [1 : 06] Then shall my tongue aloud sing of thy righteousness. My closed lips, O Lord, by thee let them be opened. Then shall thy praises by my mouth abroad be published.
- These verses 8 to 15, Psalm 51, Of gladness and of joyfulness make me to hear the voice. Of gladness and of joyfulness make me to hear the voice.
- WeAojica 788 Jesus, Lord, I pray this time for my sin.
- He is a king, our Lord, with you, our life will be with him.
- As we have not gone, I sighed your pain.
- [3 : 06] Thy glory is filled with me. And restore me, I shall enjoy.
- When thy grace let me stay. And when I teach thy wisdom, I will be with you, our Lord, with you, our Lord, with you.
- O God, O my salvation, Lord, in me, our blood-fueling the rest.
- And we can die by and ye death. My thunder of light, save all thy righteousness.
- My close lips, O Lord, by thee, and let me open it.
- [5 : 15] Men shall thy graces, my life, and let me open it.
- Amen. Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance. But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.
- Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. We can see that the author of this epistle is given to us at the outset of the epistle.
- And the purpose for which he wrote the epistle is given to us at the very start of the letter.
- [7 : 04] He is writing an epistle to encourage believers who have been scattered throughout the various regions of the area.

And he describes them to us as those who have known God's favor, even though to all intents and purposes it might appear otherwise.

It is often the case that when we interpret the providence of God as it impacts upon our own life, we are often guilty of putting an unfavorable construction on the dealings of God with us.

But the apostle speaks of God's people as being a favored people. And throughout the epistle he majors on the doctrines and the teachings that they are instructed in, that they have been instructed in, and he continues to bring these doctrines to their attention again.

And he does so with a view to instruct, inform, and encourage them. And essentially what we are to believe by what he has to say to them is that he wishes them to believe not just in a cerebral way, that is, have an intellectual understanding of Christian doctrine, but to have that with a view to applying it to their lives.

[9 : 19] And that's always something that we ought to remind ourselves of. It's good to be taught from the scripture.

It's good to have the explanation given to us of the various doctrines and theologies that the word of God contains.

But we ask always to be confident in understanding that they have a purpose. They have an end product.

And that is to allow us to live for God and before God. As you know we had the late principal Don Clough teaching a systematic theology in college.

And as a theologian he often referred to the tensions that existed within the Christian world.

[10 : 32] Where theology was to a degree despised. Despised in the sense that many Christians were of the opinion that what mattered was not what they knew.

Or the doctrines that the church were of the church were of the church. Or the doctrines that the church were presenting to them. But that they should live lives that reflected the relationship that they enjoyed with the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in one of the most recent books he wrote to, Before he died he returns to that theme.

As an appropriate title, Faith Undaunted. And he explains to us why the church, many in the church, would occupy such a position.

Because in your experience and in my experience there are many in this world, Even within the Christian world, Who are, because of the threat that exists in the world, Manifested in the opposition that is shown to Christian thinking.

[12 : 01] As if those who are Christian thinkers of any description, That it is already a proved fact, That what is believed by the majority in the world, Disproves what the Christian minority believe.

And because they are in the majority, Then the threat seems greater, That those who are unbelievers, Occupy a position of strength.

And that tempts even those who are believers, To dismiss the need that there is to know, What they believe, And why they believe it.

Rather to occupy what they believe to be a safer position, Which is the position of simple faith, As they would call it.

And Donald MacLeod in this book describes the position, In this way, He says, Christianity is not about historical facts, And theological doctrines, But about a way of life, Forget the dogmas, People say, Let's just live the ethic of Jesus, What matters is not Christian beliefs, But Christian values.

[13 : 28] That's their perceived safe option, Not to take those who are atheistic, In their beliefs, And who are militant in their opposition, To Christian doctrine, Not to take them on, On a basis, Where you feel confident, To be able to do that, On the basis of, What the Bible teaches, And what the doctrines of the Bible are, But rather to, To retreat, As it were, To something that is true, Yes, We do believe in Jesus, And what Jesus taught, And what Jesus, Made his people to be, But the sight is lost, Of the fact that God's word, Is Christ's word, Is his word to us,

To inform, To instruct, To encourage, To build up, And to, To enable us to, To dismiss the dogmas, Of the unbeliever, And, Don't MacLeod, Is not the only person, To have taught that, If you go back to, The writings of Rabbi Duncan, He himself, Understood exactly the same, Perhaps stating it in a different way, He says, There is no true knowledge of, And faith in, That truth, And in him, Who has revealed it, That does not, Lead us to, Corresponding practice, Different, Facet to the same truth, The doctrines, And the dogmas, And the, Theologies, Of the Christian church, Are contained,

Within God's word, And they lead, Us into a practical, Demonstration, Of it, And this is what, The apostle Peter is saying, He, He begins, With theology, He begins, With the, The undeniable facts, Concerning, The truth, Concerning, Jesus Christ, Why he came, What he did, When he came, The relationship, That exists, Which is a relationship, Of faith, With that Christ, And, The fact that, Not only did he come, But he's going to come again, And so on, And so forth, But, What is then, A follow on to that, Is, The important, Emphasis, That, Knowing that, We live, In the light of it, Believing that, Our life, Should reflect it,

Having such a relationship, With such a Christ, Should, Be revealed, In the way, That we behave, And how we conduct ourselves, In the world, So, When we get to verse 13, The wherefore, Is indicative, Of the fact that, All these things that he said, All of these, Theologies, That he has referred to, All of these truths, That are, So relevant, To the experience, Of the child of God, Because, They are true, And because, They are clear, And because, They are, The word of God, To them, As Christ, Has made it known, Because, That is so, Therefore, Or wherefore, As he puts it here, He is saying to them, This is how we behave, So there are, Three or four things, That we can, See,

From what, The apostle is saying, First of all, He says, Because, This is true, Because, These things, Are what you believe, There is, Effectively, A call to action, That is, What these words, Of verse 13, Mean, Gird up the loins, Of your mind, Be sober, And talk to the end, For the grace, That is to be brought, Unto you, The revelation, Of Jesus Christ, There is, The activity, That belongs, To the life of faith, That is essential, For it, That is, Clearly, Necessary, As something, That the believer, Engages in, Then he states, States, Negatively, As obedient children, Not fashioning yourselves, According, To the former lusts, In your ignorance, You are active,

[18 : 38] In this way, Because, Your life, Is no longer, The way it was, Before you came, To faith, That it was, A life, That you lived, That was consistent, With, The lack of knowledge, That marked you out, Because, You were, Christless, Because, You were, Without faith, You, Lived in a particular way, But you are, No longer like that, And because, You are no longer like that, It stands to reason, That you behave, Differently, And, Then he, He puts a positive slant, On it, He says, As obedient children, Not fashioning yourselves, According to the former lusts, And your ignorance, But as he, Which has called you, Is holy, So be ye holy, In all manner, Of conversation, And he, He, He, He, He, He,

Uses scripture, To tell them, Why that, Is so, Because, He says, It is written, Be ye holy, For I am holy, So let's, Think about, These verses, And see what, Peter means us to understand, By them, As you, Probably know, And understand, From the various, Parts of scripture, That remind us of this, The image, That the apostle uses, Is, An image, That is based upon, The, The clothing, Of the, Middle Eastern, Male, They would wear, Long robes, And, You see them, To this day, So that, If they were going to, Be active, In any meaningful way, If they were going to run,

For example, Or they were going to, To do some activity, That required, Some, Energy, What they would do, Would be just to, Gather up, The pleats, Of their robe, And, Make them, So as to, Give them, Liberty, In movement, And, He takes this idea, And he, Uses it, To say, This is how, You are to behave, With regard, To, To, To, To, To, The doctrines, And, The teachings, Of God's word, But he, He uses it, Geared up the loins, Of your mind, He speaks of, The mind, As if, It is something, That needs to be, Tidied up, And, Any hindrances, Or, Obstacles, To the way, That your mind, Works,

That they are to be, Gathered together, So as not to intrude, Into the way, The mind, Of the believer, Works, If you remember, The same image, Is found in, The book of Exodus, When the Lord's people, When Israel, Were preparing, To leave Egypt, God, Gave them the instruction, That they were to be ready, And to have their, Loins, Girt about, So that, At a moment's notice, They could, Take flight, And, Usually, I suppose, When we think of, The mind, And usually, When the Bible, Refers to the mind, It speaks of, The emotional, Life of, Of the believer, But, It is, Not just, Ever, That, There is more, To it than that, It is not just,

Wanting us to, To be, Emotionally, In control, But to ensure, That when it comes, To applying, God's word, In a, Meaningful way, That there are, No, Obstructions, To us, Doing that, When Jesus, Took, The doctrines, Of the old testament, And applied them, To, Context, Of his own day, He, Very often, Met those, Who were, Listening to him, He meant them, To understand, How they were, To be applied, I think, That, The image, That came to mind, Was when, Following the resurrection, When the Lord, Was walking, On the road, To Emmaus, With the two men, There, What did he do, He took, The words, Of the old testament, And he explained it,

[23 : 39] To them, And he expounded, The word, Now, We are told, That their heart, Was warmed, Which is an emotional, Response, To the word, But, It wasn't, Just simply, Meant, To give them, A good feeling, It was, A word, Designed, To, To open out, The word of God, To them, To help them, Understand, The significance, Of the cross, To help them, Understand, The reality, Of the resurrection, To help them, Understand, The significance, Of that, For the believer, As they lived, Their life, In the world, With a view, To the eternity, That beckoned, So, Those who were with him, When, He opened out, God's word, To them, He was doing, That very thing, Their hearts, Were warmed, But, They, Gleaned, A deeper knowledge,

Of, Christ, And of his word, That helped them, To, To go on, And, To go out, With the word, To others, Now, That's what, Peter means, The disciple, The readers, Of this epistle, To understand, Gird up, The, Lines, Of your mind, Be sober, And hope, To the end, For the grace, That is to be brought, Unto you, At the revolution, Revelation, Of Jesus Christ, The call, To sobriety, Is a call, To, Um, An understanding, Where, Self-control, Is involved, They are, To engage, Within, Their own, Sphere, Of influence, Exerting, Self-control, On, Their own, Behavior, The word,

Must, Be applied, To the way, That they, Behave, How they live, And how, They behave, Towards others, How they behave, Privately, And publicly, Be sober, He says, And hope, To the end, For the grace, That is to be brought, Unto you, At the revelation, Of Jesus Christ, I think that means, That, Their sobriety, In this sense, Means, That they, Are, Anticipating, That this is, Not, The end, This is, A temporal, Experience, But it is, With, Eternity, Before them, This is, How they, Conduct themselves, With the, Understanding, That, Christ, Has promised, To come again, And that he will, Come again, And, More than anything,

Because, Of the fact, That they are believers, More than anything, Because of the fact, That they are, Under the, Tutelage, Of God's spirit, Because they are instructed, Because they are informed, Because of who they are, They are willing, To apply the word, To their lives, Not just willing, But, It is almost, Something that is, Insisted upon, Just think of it, For yourself, What makes you, A Christian, Well you may answer that, For yourself, In different ways, But, One thing, That is true of you, As a Christian, You are a Christian, 24 hours a day, You are a Christian, All the time, And because, You are a Christian, All the time, You are capable, Of applying, God's word, To every context, In which you, Live your life,

Here in this world, You can't, Compare, Compartmentalize, Your life, So that, Part of it, Is a Christian, And part of it, Is Christian, Doesn't work like that, Because, You know, He begins, The, The epistle, Elect, According to the foreknowledge, Of God the Father, Through sanctification, Of the spirit, Unto obedience, And sprinkling, Of the blood, Of Jesus Christ, That's how he begins, The epistle, And, While he goes on, To explain, The various doctrines, That are of import to them, He, He expects them, To understand, That they are, The word, I suppose, Can be differently, Interpreted, Sanctified, Segregated, Consecrated, To God, To God, In his service, That's what God, Has made them to be, And as such,

[28 : 45] When we think, And if we do not think, Then, If we don't apply, Ourselves, We're letting ourselves, Down, And we're letting, Letting the Lord down, If we don't, First of all, Say, Well, What, What does this mean, For me, A Christian?

What does the world, Mean, Mean, To be, As a Christian, And how, I should, Live my life, Here, In this world, The second part, Of the verse, I think, Is an action, Required, Of a sexual hope, Fully, On Christ, Who is going, To come again, And that's not, A vain hope, It's not, A false hope, It's not, A vague hope, We believe, In the doctrine, Of the second coming, And because, We do, Then surely, It impacts upon, What we are going to, How we are going to behave, I would think, That it would anyway, Unless, We live in the, In the shadow, And say, Well it's, Somewhere down the road, And, I can behave, The way I like, Just now, And maybe when, When, When Christ, Is drawing near, Or when I, I'm coming,

To the end, Of my Christian, Journey, Then I'll behave, Maybe more circumspectly, And I'll behave, Myself better, No, The Christian, Has, Has this, Grace, Has this, Earnest, Understanding, Of the implications, Of, Of who they are, And what they are, In this world, And, He intensifies, That thought, Does he not?

When he says to us, As obedient children, Not fashioning yourselves, According to the former lusts, In your ignorance, It's a difficult, Construction, I, Grant you, But, All he is saying is, You are, Now, Somebody, Who, Who is, Obedient, To your heavenly father, This is what you are, Now, But you were not that, At one point, You were quite different, You were a disobedient, Child, You were somebody, Who was not even, Well look at the way, Paul writes it, And you would think that, Peter and Paul, Attended the same college, In Ephesians 2, You have, Hath he quickened, Who were dead, In trespasses, And sins, Wherein in time past, You walked, According to the course, Of this world, According to the prince, Of the power, Of the air,

The spirit, That now worketh, In the children, Of disobedience, Among whom, Also we all, Had our conversation, In times past, In the lusts, Of our flesh, Fulfilling the desires, Of the flesh, And of the mind, And wed by nature, The children of wrath, Even as others, This is what you were, And it's past tense, This is, What you once, Where you once lived, This is the power, That was exerted, Upon your life, And you submitted, To it willingly, You were a stranger, To God, And to grace, And Paul, Peter is saying here, Look, You are not, Fashioning yourselves, According to the, Formalness, In your ignorance, You are no longer, Doing that, That's what you did, That's the way you were, That's how you behaved, You are no longer, Living a life like that,

[32 : 35] And, The faculties, Of mind, That he refers to, The way that we think, Cannot revert to, What, The way that you once thought, I've said it to you before, And I suppose, It must, Be true, Because, It's so difficult, For you to think, Like a non-Christian, You may, Understand, The way, Non-Christians, Are, Are, Considering, The events, Of this world, And the, The providences, Of God, You may, You may, Think you have, This insight, Into, What they, As, How their mind, Works, Because of your own, Past experience, But it is a past experience,

You can't, You know, The way that some people, See something, That they don't want to see, But having seen it, They can't not see it, It's as if it's burned, Into, Into their mind's eye, They can't, Forget it, It's there, Indelibly imprinted, Into, Their mind's eye, So what, Into their brain, And you're the same, When it comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, And the word that he has, Informed you with, By the hand of the Holy Spirit, You can't, Forget that, And Peter is saying, To the church, How can you revert, In your thinking, To the way, That you once thought, You can't, You shouldn't, And it's not, It's not, Suitable, And he adds to this, And he takes a positive, Slant to it, He says,

But as he, Which hath called you, Is holy, So be ye holy, In all manner, Of conversation, Now we tend, To draw back, From that, Because, The holy, Holiness of God, Is so awesome, And you, You'd think that the apostle, Is telling us, Be holy, Like God is holy, And you can't be holy, Like God is holy, Holiness, Is, What God is, And yet he tells you, That you are to, Aspire to live your life, In the light of that, Holiness, That is God's, You are, To incline yourself, To, Obedience, To his revealed will, And,

As the son, Pleases the father, So it pleases, The son to please, His heavenly father, You know, This is a quotation, You'll know that, From the way it's written, In your Bibles, A quotation, From Leviticus 19, Which simply says, Ye shall be holy, For I, The Lord, Your God, Am holy, You shall be holy, For I, The Lord, Your God, Am holy, But that is not, An invitation, To divinity, It's not an invitation, To deity, But it's an instruction, To aspire, To the holiness, That God has revealed you, Revealed to you, Through his word, That pleases him, The word, Obedience, Obedience, Is there for, A reason, You may say, To yourself, Well,

He's reacting, Back to law works, He's telling us here, That God is, Is wanting us, To live, A life of obedience, Fulfilling the ten commandments, And doing, Whatever it is, The bible tells us to do, In order to live by them, But this is, A new testament saint, This is an apostle, Who writes, This epistle, Commending to us, The life of obedience, Not just, Commending it, But it is, Taken in the context, Of God's commandment, And, We fail miserably, Do we not, When we understand, That this is what, God wants us to do, But because, We fail miserably, It's not license, For us not to apply ourselves, To what God commands, It does not, Invalidate the commandment, Just because I can't do it,

[37 : 44] Just because I can't live up to it, Just because I can't, My, The standard that God, God sets us so high, I'm not able to, Aspire to it, Therefore, I shouldn't, That's not, Permissible, It's interesting, Don, Don Carson, When he, When he, When he was preaching, A series of lectures, On teaching, A series of lectures, He, He took this, He, He wanted us to understand, Or wanted us hear us to understand, Something about, The holiness of God, And he set about, Trying to, To, To, Ensure that, The perception, That we have, Of God's holiness, Doesn't come between us,

And obedience to it, Because, Because he says, He is not telling us, To be God, But he is telling us, To be so, But much bound up, With God, So much reserved, For him, So much connected, With all things, That bring honor, And praise to him, So much in line, With all that he is, In his character, And being, That we are rightly said, To be holy, Is that not, Something, That is possible, For every one of us, He is not, Asking us, To do the impossible, He is, Asking us, To recognize, What holiness is, And the benefit, That holiness, Brings to us, We need, Rather than to, Set the bars, Alone and say, Well I can't reach it,

I can't, I can't really, I'm just a poor sinner, I'm so full of, Of, Of sin, You know, We sang Psalm 51, And, David there, Is confessing his sin, And, He is recognizing, The iniquity, That is in his heart, And yet, At the same time, He is acknowledging, His total dependence, Upon God, And his need of God, In all the things, While we do not, Always see, The holiness of God, Until God shows us, What holiness is, We believe, We understand, What it is, I'm sure, If you were to sit, An exam, And you were asked, The question, Make an, Give me an exposition, Of God's holiness, I mentioned, Don't my cloud, He had a, He had a way, Of setting exams, And, The exams, Were very, Very, Difficult to, In many respects, Because he would say,

The holiness of God, Discuss, Which, Not much ground to go on, But, It gave you all the flexibility, To answer the question, With all the knowledge, That he had given to you, As a theologian, The death of Christ, Discuss, Or, Whatever, So it just gave you, Didn't, Didn't fence you into, One way of, Of, Of answering the questions, But when it comes to, The holiness of God, What do you understand by it?

And you're saying to yourself, Well how would I answer this? And, Sometimes we have all, The words, And all the, The, The doctrine, At our fingertips, But it's quite another thing, For God himself, To teach us, You know the writer, Of this epistle, He knew Christ, Did he not?

[41 : 45] He had a personal, Acquaintanceship with Christ, He walked with Christ, He was taught by Christ, And yet there came a point, In the life of the apostle, When, He saw Jesus do something, And, The eyes of his, The eyes of his, Soul were opened, And he said, To the Lord, Depart from me, From, For, I am a, A wicked man, I am a, I am somebody, Who is, Sinful, In the same moment, The same Christ, He was, Walking with, And content to talk with, And, Comfortably in his company, Because his eyes, His eyes were opened, Through, The performance, Of a miracle, And it wasn't just once, That many people, Were made aware, Of, The fact, There is, A holy, Otherness, About this, Person, And, Sometimes,

Sometimes, That's your experience, That's my experience, We may have, The doctrines, We may have, The theologies, We know God is holy, And we know ourselves, To be unholy, But we also, With God's help, Are brought to the place, Where, We know, What it is, To, Fear, Being without it, To fear being without it, Because, Without holiness, You are told, No man can see God, And, It is your, Inspiration, Your desire, To be where God is, And where his people are, And God has taken you, On this journey, And he is, Informing you, And instructing you, And encouraging you, On that journey,

When we, God help us to understand something, You know this text, Is just, Beyond, You probably, Draw back from it, When you read it, Be ye holy, For I am holy, There is so much, That is said, Within these few words, That, That we, Understand, So little love, And yet, We shouldn't, Turn away from it, Because of that, So may God, Encourage us to do that, Let us pray, Oh Lord, Oh God, We, We know that, We are unholy, We know that, The thing, Is always with us, From, The crown of our head, To the sole of our feet, We are just, We are just, A morass, Of, Putrefaction, And we don't understand that, Except you teach us, Even that truth, But we give thanks,

That you have, Made a people, For yourself, And, Your end, For them, Is that they be holy, For you are holy, Hear our prayers, And grant mercy for, Every shortcoming, In Jesus name, Amen, Amen, Going to conclude singing, Two verses in Gaelic, From Psalm 22, Psalm 22, And verse 3, And verse 4, Thank you.

Thank you.

[46 : 44] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[49 : 14] Amen.