

Restoring the Reverence

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Date: 17 May 2009

[0:00] 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1. 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.

! It's telling us here, these promises are yours. Dearly beloved, cleanse yourselves. Purify yourselves from all filthiness, from all contamination, from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

I want to talk about reverence. Reverence, the fear of God. The fear of God. It's something that's missing at times. It's something that's lacking. We can all lack it. We can all lack that consecrating, that purifying, that perfecting of holiness in the fear of God.

There's a lot of talk today about the supernatural, about all kinds of things. Yet there's a lack of talking about that all-powerful one, the sovereign Lord, the God of the Bible, the one before whom we should tremble and be in awe and reverence and delight.

That reverence is gone and we need to regain it, to regain that reverence. To have that encounter afresh with the one, the one, the holy one before whom our knees knock and before whom our hearts are cut up and dealt with and surrendered.

[1:32] And in the word of God, we've got this awe-inspiring sense of the soul-transforming power of the presence of the holy God. Whenever God was on the scene, whenever people had an encounter with the holy one, there was a reverence, there was a beautiful sense of who he is and how we are significant in relation to that.

And there's many things in the word of God that God speaks of as reverent, as holy, as something that should be revered. And we know that in some church circles, they call the pastor reverend so-and-so, reverend so-and-so.

But really, Psalm 111 verse 9, it says, holy and reverent is his name. Holy and reverent is his name. It's not for any one of us to claim a reverence or to be a reverend. Holy and reverent is his name. The holy name, as we know in the Lord's Prayer.

Hallowed be thy name. It's something beautiful. It's something sacred. Something we should revere and regard as holy. There should be a reverence in the sanctuary, in the gathering of God's people.

[2:45] There should be a reverence in the home where there's an obedience of child to parent, of a godly home structure. There should be a reverence of the Sabbath, of the keeping of the day that we worship.

And honor his name and gather as his people. There should be a reverence of the word. A reverence of the word of God. This is called the Holy Bible.

The word of God. It says in Deuteronomy 11, when the Old Testament saints talked about the scriptures. Therefore shall you lay upon these words in your heart and in your soul.

This is Deuteronomy 11, verses 18. Verse 18 to 22. These my words. He says, bind them. Lay them up in your heart.

Bind them for a sign upon your hand. That they may be as frontlets before your eyes. And you shall teach them. Your children, speaking of them. When they sit in thine house.

[3:46] When they walkest by the way. When they liest down. And when they risest up. And thou shalt write them. Upon the doorposts of thine house. And upon thy gates.

The word of God is something we should apply. We should write. We should record. We should live. You know, the Old Testament people. They had the scriptures written out.

And they used to carry it on their person. And something that we can likewise do. We can take the scriptures and have it in our pocket. And refer to it. We should revere the word of God.

And we should revere the aged as well. The aged should be people we should honour. And respect. I know there's many saints here older than me. And I look up to you in the faith. Because I know you've been there and done that. Although I was talking with a man just earlier. He was saying he came to the Lord when he was 57. So sometimes we're running still a baby in the faith at an old age.

[4:44] But it says in Leviticus 19.32, Now we should revere and respect the older saints.

The older folk. The hoary head or the grey head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness. Proverbs 16.31.

There's a few crowned people here today. They're crowned. Not just with the grey hairs. But with the walking in the way of righteousness. That's what counts, isn't it? And we can do that young and old.

We can walk in the way of righteousness. There should be a reverence there. There should be a reverence in our serving of God. In our service. It says in Hebrews 12.28, Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

It's a kingdom that cannot be moved. A kingdom that cannot be shaken. And it's by means of this grace that we have. He's saying here in Hebrews 12.28, We may serve God acceptably.

[6:00] We may be well pleasing to God in how we serve with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire. Shouldn't it make you want to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear when we think of who he is?

And it's been said the appropriate response to the holiness of God is fear or reverence. And the outworking of fear is obedience. We want to serve him.

We want to obey him because we respect and honour him and esteem him. And holiness and reverence are something we can personally know. Reverence. It's a setting apart for God's purposes.

True biblical holiness is not a narrow-minded kind of hardness or a condemnatory kind of legalism. Biblical holiness is that beautiful relationship that we have with our living saviour.

The one to whom we belong. The one we adore. The one to whom we love to be obedient to his will. That quality of life that he gives to us as we live in the light of the gospel.

[7:09] That sense of belonging to him. To Christ our saviour. That's what holiness is. It's the working of God on the inside of you. As you're saved. As you're walking.

In his spirit. Touching every area of your life. As he transforms you from the inside out. And Philippians 2 verse 13. In the context there it's talking about fear and trembling.

And Philippians 2 verse 13. Paul writes. For it is God which worketh in you. Both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

There's a two-fold sense there. There's not just a willingness. A desiring. A wanting to. But a doing of his good pleasure. Not just a desire.

But a doing. Of what is going to delight him. What's going to please him. And God is at work in you. Isn't that wonderful to know? Believers this morning. That God is working in you.

[8:06] It's like. I've seen a little sticker that said. That God's not finished with me yet. I'm a Christian under construction. And that's true of all of us. Isn't that?

If you're a young Christian. An older Christian. God's not finished with you yet. He's not finished with me yet. You know. I'm still getting closer. I'm getting closer. As the perfect day comes.

Day by day. Getting closer to what he wants for my life. And what's going to please him. And God's at work in you. Isn't that great to know? That he is working in you.

Both to will and to do. Of his good pleasure. As you work out. Your own salvation. In pleasing him. And it's the Holy Spirit's work. It's by the word. It's by the blood. That spirit of God.

The spirit of holiness is one of the names of the Holy Spirit. That spirit of holiness is working in you. Making you more like Christ every day. Putting more of that hunger and thirst after righteousness in your soul.

[9:03] That hunger to be more like him. And holiness. It's really lifting us into the image of God. It's restoring that original picture of Eden again.

Where we're close with him. We're in communion with him. We're walking with him. He wants us to be restored to that. To be restored to that place where everything was good. Before sin came. And we can become more like him. And more filled with him. God working in you. Isn't that good to know that? Day by day.

There's that closeness. That closeness. That he's working within us. In our will. In our actions. In all areas of life. And from that first verse we started with.

There's a perfecting of holiness in the fear of God. It's a growing thing. It's a building thing. It's a completing. A gradual thing. A growing. Ongoing work.

[10:00] That is working in us. Perfecting. That holiness in the fear of God. And what does it mean? In our desiring. In our will. And in our doing. Of his good pleasure.

It impacts your speech. How you speak. Your pleasures. What you find pleasure in. What really is going to give you satisfaction. Soul satisfaction.

What really is going to please that inner man. That is wanting to be in his will. It impacts your attitudes. What you think about. What you're about. What matters to you.

It impacts where you go. Who you spend time with. And where you spend money. What you wear. All of these things. Every aspect really. Of our life is impacted.

And 2 Peter 3. The context there. Talks of the end of the world. And of the elements being dissolved. In this great fireball. Of the end times. And it says. Seeing then. That all these things shall be dissolved.

[10:59] What manner of persons. Ought you to be. In all holiness. In all holy conversation. And godliness. It's all going to go.

What manner of persons. Ought you to be. You need to be looking to that place to come. That home awaiting. This world is not my home. I'm just a passing through. And Isaiah describes.

A highway of holiness. A roadway. A highway. He says. A highway shall be there. And a way. And it shall be called. The way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it.

Isaiah 35 verse 8. There's a sense where. There's a special. Pathway. That he's. Designated for us to walk in. To walk in his way. To walk in his will.

And it's going to be for God's people. Have you found it? Have you found that way of holiness? You know that for every one of us. There's always a questioning. Am I as close to him. As I need to be.

[11:58] Are there things I need to. Address. That he needs to. Help me. Rid myself of. That I can be found more. In his way. In his will. In his walk.

And 1 Peter 2. Encourages us to think that. We're a chosen people. This is 1 Peter 2. And verse 9. That we are a chosen people. We belong to him.

We've been made for his purposes. In 1 Peter 2. It says. But ye are. A chosen generation. A royal priesthood. A holy nation. A peculiar people.

That you should show forth. The praises of him. Who have called you. Out of darkness. Into. His marvellous light. You're. Chosen. You're called. You're special.

You belong to him. You're meant to be. A holy nation. A peculiar. A purchased people. He's called you. Out of darkness. And into. His marvellous light. There's many.

[12:53] Many scriptures. We could refer to. About this. Reverence. This holiness. This. Fear of God. That should mark out. The people of God. And holiness. As I say.

It's not an irksome. Heavy thing. It's a beautiful. Freeing. Wonderful thing. It's a. Wholeness.

Really. Holiness. Is really a wholeness. Because it's finding. What God wants for us. And doing that. It means actively doing. What's right. And our holiness.

Is about. Who we belong to. It's about. What we made for. It's about. Finding that purpose. That he has. For everybody. That set apart life.

Not trying to blend in. With the world. But seeking to live. According to God's word. That's where true fulfillment. And true freedom. Freedom is found. And the world is.

[13:47] Really. It's a temporary place. That we're in. You know. Some people say. Oh. I'm not moving anymore. But. Yeah. You will be. You will be. I know my.

My. Mom and dad. I don't know. How many times have you moved? 30 odd times. And they keep saying. Oh. We're not going to move again. You know. And they do.

The place up. And they think. Oh. There's another place. That's nicer down there. So they. They go. And they move. They pull up stakes. And they say. Look. I'll put the stakes in now. I'm not moving. But really.

We've got a home to come. Haven't we? A tabernacle. That he's going to give to us. As the Lord Jesus said. I go to prepare a place for you. I'm going to build it for you. You know.

I'm sure he's got better home builders than Fairmont's or Wix Building Group or whatever kind of companies down here. There won't be any cracking in that home to come.

[14:41] Amen. It's going to be everlasting. It's going to be perfect. Made by his design. And he wants you there. He wants to prepare a place for you. But you've got to find the way.

And he says. I am the way. I am the way. The truth. The life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. And for you that believe.

And if you're not a believer. You can be one right now. In this instant. As you trust him. He says that he's prepared a place for us. And he's gone to get it ready.

And he's coming back to take us to that home. That home awaiting. And it says in Ephesians 1 verse 4. He's chosen us. Chosen us. Even before the foundation of the world.

Before the universe was founded. He's chosen you. And he's made you his. He wants you to belong to him. Not to belong to the world. But to belong to him. And the idea of holiness is.

[15:39] Yes. That's who I want to belong to. That's where I want to belong. Not to this. Decaying. Polluted planet. Polluted in more ways than one. But. To belong to him.

The one who is perfection. His purity itself. Embodied. The idea of holiness. It can seem intimidating or fearful. But really it's. His working in you.

Both to will and to do. It's his design. It's a privilege really. To think of. How we can enjoy that. Delight. Of delighting his heart. That one who's called us to be holy.

To enjoy that blessing. That freedom. That fulfilment. That joy. And he's called us to holy associations. Holy conduct. So we can find like minded believers.

Who love the saviour. Younger people. Older people. Find Christian friends. Christian folk. That you can come alongside of. You can be mentored by. Discipled by. And that you can encourage others too.

[16:37] And help them to grow. And to find that fulfilment in Christ. And each one of us can stir one another on. Provoke unto love. And to good works.

And to be that gathering of God's people. Holy people. Not by virtue of our own doing. But by everything that he is doing. He's working in you.

He's working in you. Both to do. And to will. Of his good pleasure. And it's finding that place in Christ. That it says in 2 Corinthians 5.17. If any man be in Christ.

He's a new creature. He's a new creation. It's finding that place. Are you in Christ? Are you in him? Is he in you? That's what makes us brand new.

And makes us holy. And holiness for some. It sounds a little outdated. That's outdated. That's. We've grown out of that. That's. Victorian.

[17:34] That's a bit old fashioned. Outdated. But really it's what God wants for us. He wants that. And it's finding what that really means. And really.

It's not about. In our gathering too. That sometimes. We can make. The mistake. The preacher can make the mistake. Of wanting to pamper the carnal nature.

That's something that I must avoid. It's like Paul said. Have I become your enemy? Because I've told you the truth. I know I was talking to someone lately.

And how they were. Raving on about. Various things. And I was thinking. They've got it really quite wrong. And I need to correct that person. Lovingly. And kindly. They're in a church.

That's in the world council of churches. And. Friends. How can you be a part of that? How. I just scratch my head. And wonder how. A Christian.

[18:33] Can. Willfully. Be a part of such a thing. And. There's times when. I've got to say straight. And true. Look. People.

The Bible says not to. Mess around with. With false. Beliefs. And error. There's a need to be. Straight down the line. And. If I become your enemy.

Because I've told you the truth. Then. Then so be it. And there's people that. Regard me as their enemy now. Because I have been playing. And. As.

Lovingly. And as tactfully. As I could. I've sought to correct. And yet. They haven't. Wanted that. But. Well unto me. If I preach not the gospel. Well unto me. If I'm not.

Declaring soundly. And clearly. And loudly. The truth. Because I must. And there's an absence of awe. An absence of reverence. The God of the Bible.

[19:27] He's been revised. God now. Is welcomed as a friend. Gentle. A buddy. Really. My old mate.

Jesus. That's who they call him. But he's the sovereign. The sovereign. Omnipotent. Creator God. The almighty. Who inhabits.

The universe. He is the one. Before whom. We should be in absolute awe. And wonder. The question is. Who. Is in the centre.

Of our worship. Who is in the centre. Who is central to our worship. It's not about. Pleasing the crowd. Or the audience. It's the worship.

And praise. Of our holy. God. Holy. God. And gathering together. Is not meant. To be framed around. Us. Being made to feel comfortable.

[20:24] Or entertained. But that we enter into. True worship. True worship. Worship in spirit. And in truth. And there's a wonderment. There's an amazement.

There's an adoration. There's a beautiful. There's a beauty. Of holiness. As we gather. In that. All that wonder. That majesty. Of our God. And reverence.

In worship. Involves our humility. Before him. As the great. And awesome one. It's our response. To his glory. To his presence.

To his power. That's worship. That's what we need. To regain. That reverence. Of worship. To regain that. To restore that. That reverence. That sense of a holy God.

A holy God. A need to call back. God's people. To repentance. Repentance. There's a book that. I heard about.

[21:18] That talked about. Why I've left the. CCS. CCM. The contemporary Christian movement. It was by a worship leader. Who. Realised that.

It's going down the wrong track. And I heard a radio interview of him. And he was talking about. How in some churches. Really. It's kind of splitting the church. Where you've got. A traditional gathering.

And then a. A contemporary gathering. But really. We're meant to be one body. We're one body. In Christ. And we shouldn't be separated. By age groups. Or by. Preferences. We should be one.

United body. And that. We are. All wanting him. To be adored. And revered. And worshiped. And honoured. And Acts 3. 19. Tells us. How.

Of repentance. There's a need for repentance. Peter says. Repent ye therefore. And be converted. He says. Turn around. Do an about face. That your sins may be blotted out.

[22:14] When the times of refreshing. Shall come. From the presence of the Lord. When there's the repenting. That goes on. When there's that. Abandoning of our own way. And our own will. And a yielding to.

His in surrender. And adoration. When there's a turning from sin. And a turning to him. Then we can see. A wonderful. Sense of. That refreshing.

That relationship. Restored. And repentance. Is something that we all need. To experience. And it's an ongoing thing. As there's a daily need. A constant battle.

With temptation. And we need. As Paul says. 2 Corinthians 10. To be casting down. Imaginations. And every high thing. That exalts itself. Against the knowledge of God. Bringing into captivity.

Every thought. To the obedience of Christ. It's. When we. Demolish our reasonings. When we cast down. Our imaginations. When we come. And humble ourselves. Before him.

[23:08] And come under his authority. That every thought. Is an obedience to Christ. That's what repentance means. And I think as. As a church. Worldwide. There's a need of repenting.

Of a restoring. Of a return to the first love. There's need of that. As we see. Where. The church has become. Consumed with.

Following the world's lead. We shouldn't be following the world's lead. We should be following the Holy Spirit's lead. And the word of God. And where our faith is.

In conformity. To the word of God. To the truth. And that we. Adding to our faith. Giving all diligence. Adding to our faith. As Peter says. In 2 Peter 1. People today.

I just want to encourage. Everybody here. This morning. To. Regain that sense. Of who he is. Of what he has made us to be. Of what he expects from us.

[24:07] Of how we are to approach him. In that wonderment. In that amazement. In that awe. That reverence. To be mindful. Of the greatness. Of the biblical God. The Bible God.

And. Here's a quote. We are in the presence. Of the Holy One. Who utterly transcends us. Who holds us together. All creation.

From the smallest molecule. To the largest galaxy. And all history. From the first place. To the last. Who is burning in wrath. Against sin.

With the flame. Of burning. Of urging love. Who has claimed us. In Jesus Christ. And will keep us. In the embrace of grace. For all eternity. That's the one.

That we want to get a sense of. The majesty of God. That's the one. That we want. To. Get a hold of today. In our worship. Another quote.

[25:01] Sometimes what passes for worship. Is more human centered. Than God centered. God almighty. Is the focus. Worship is. For God.

Not man. Worship is. For God. It's unto God. Not man. It seems many are confused. And think. The worshipers are the audience.

The preachers are the entertainers. And God is the prompter. Or the conductor. All he's arranged. And performed. For the audience. As applause.

As if we're. Some kind of TV show. Or something. And you're coming here. To be entertained. Just sit back. And. Plug in the. The DVD.

Just be entertained. So that at the end of it. You can applaud. And say. Oh it wasn't that great.

Didn't we get a good. Buzz. And excitement. And sure. There'll be a buzz. And an excitement too.

[25:59] I think as well. But. That's not the focus of it. Brother and sister. It's not for me to entertain you. It's not for you to applaud me. It's not for you to even like what I say.

Maybe best if you don't like what I say. Because maybe it's God. poking and prodding you. About something. And. If that be his will.

So be it. It's not that church should be geared. About entertaining you. And. You know. So we'd love to have more musical support.

We'd like to have more variety and more of a joining in in that regard and different instruments and talents of people.

We encourage that. We encourage that. But it's not about the focus being on the stage. It's about the focus being on Calvary, on the Holy One.

[26:55] That's what matters. That's what we're about. That there's a reverence that we're captured by that sense of who God is and that everything is done to His glory and to His praise that people can be drawn closer to Calvary, drawn closer to the Saviour.

And that's the wonderful joy of it, that we can experience that, that our focus can be upon the Holy One who's seated in heavenly splendour and ruling the universe, whose command deserves our attention.

And biblical reverence means that we honour God in that beautiful way. There's a beauty about it.

And an honouring of God in our speech, in our praying, in our singing, in our preaching, that it's done with awe, with reverence, that we're addressing the Almighty in the regard that is due unto His name.

Modern man has taken the biblical God and redesigned Him to fit today's culture, where self is in control.