

A Revival of Reverence

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[0:00] Psalm 128 it says, verse 1, Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways.

! I'll say it again. Psalm 128, verse 1, Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh! in his ways. I'd like to talk about reverence. Reverence. A common saying is, there's nothing sacred anymore. Who's heard people say that? There's nothing sacred anymore. You know, this world, and Aussies are a bit inclined to this, I think a lot, speaking as a kind of an Aussie, I'm a naturalised Aussie. Aussies can be irreverent people. But the world at large can be increasingly irreverent. Irreverent and disrespectful. It's a lacking thing, isn't it? It's lacking, it's disgraceful. Where there's a lack of reverence, there's a disrespect and a disregard for the things of God. And this is quite far-reaching in our world today. And we see as we tune in to the airwaves, this disregard, this disrespect, this irreverence, where there's an indifference and a carelessness, an inattention and a heedless regard to the things of God, the things of the

Bible, a carelessness, a lack of reverence is very evident. We see this lack of reverence, for example, even in respect to life. A lack of reverence, a lack of respect of life itself.

Where we see euthanasia as something the world is talking a lot about. Abortion, where life is treated so lightly and carelessly and so trivially that people will think nothing of taking a life.

And we see how older people are treated in our culture. Not with reverence or respect, but with irreverence and disrespect. It's evident in how people treat the government and whoever is in the political party in power. You know, it's the Aussie thing, isn't it? To attack them, the tall poppy syndrome. It's have a go at whoever is in charge of the country. And sometimes there's fair criticism. But how we treat our government, we see, is quite irreverent. It's quite disrespectful.

[2:38] And what goes on in people's homes across the nation, there's an irreverence there that is against God's order of things. In relationships with others there should be a reverence, a respectfulness. So where has the reverence gone? Is there nothing sacred anymore?

People seem to give little thought for such things. It's overlooked evil laughter. People scorn and mock at such things. It's a trend to dishonour God and to bring the sacred and the heavenly down to the level of the common and the crass. It's sadly the trend. I guess it's been a trend, a long-standing trend. We see places once considered sacred defaced and destroyed. I know I just saw a YouTube video of someone destroying some important landmark at a national park in the USA and having a laugh about it and thinking it was just some big joke. And people treat graveyards like that and defaced gravestones and such things. People don't consider things sacred anymore.

Older people are ignored and derided. People won't stand up and let an older person take a seat on the bus. Whereas that would have been something that would have been a standard thing to do, a decent thing to do. Children do as they please. A disrespect prevails in our nation. We see cursed words and foul talk dominate the airways in the TV and radio. We see women disrespecting their own bodies as someone putting their goods on public display. And immodesty. Women disrespecting their own bodies. And irreverence and disrespectfulness. Reverence is lacking in how people talk in the text messages we see or the Facebook messages. OMG. We know what it means. Oh my God. Is he even their God? They say oh my God. They don't even know him. Or maybe their God is the God of this world. Small g. Oh my God. He's so blatantly sad. And look, Christians can follow suit because it's the trend, isn't it? It's the culture. It's embedded. It's ingrained in your psyche. When you see that's just the common phrase people use to express some wow. They just say oh my God. You know, other such things. Friends, take heed. Take heed of what you speak and what you write and what you say.

Reverence. Reverence. Reverence is something that's very precious. It's something yet scorned. As something from the past. Something that's from an irrelevant era of far away.

It's like it's like it's not cool anymore. Let's not reverence God. It's not cool or trendy to be reverent about God and the things of God. About Jesus Christ. He's just a swear word.

[5:41] You know, Julie, some while ago, sang a song. He's more than just a swear word. He's more than just an I don't care word. He's the precious son of God.

It's a very telling song. He's more than just a swear word. A beautiful song. Modern man has taken the biblical God and redesigned him to fit today's culture. It's idolatry really.

God is holy. Holy. His name is holy. We see in some church circles they call the preacher Reverend Smith or Reverend Jones or whatever it might be.

But the Bible says there's only one whose name is reverent. Psalm 111 verse 9. Psalm 111 verse 9 it says, Holy and reverent is his name. His name.

He's the reverent. The reverent. Our God. And reverent is his name. You know, people would know we were in Israel of late.

[6:50] And in talking with some of the folk, I was talking with a tour guide here who was of Jewish persuasion asking how you would say the name of God.

And of course they would say Adonai. And what's the other? Adonai and Elohim. Elohim.

But they won't say Yahweh. It's such a precious name. But they will not speak it. And so, of course, we need to consider that reverent is his name.

We need to treat it with regard. There should be a holy hush as we think of the name of our God.

Holy and reverent is his name. How we need a revival. A revival of reverence.

A revival of reverence. How we need a reviving of a respect of the things of God, of the sacred and holy things. It's wholesome and good for us to consider such things. For a reverence for that which is right and true.

[7:49] A reverence for God-given authority. The Bible speaks of the powers that they are ordained in God. It tells us we shouldn't be speaking carelessly of dignitaries.

You know, there's various such things. As much as we might think whoever the, whether it's a mister or a missus, is the prime minister, and we think, oh, they're a waste of space, we should nevertheless show due regard for the office of the prime minister, or, you know, the king, as it were, of our nation.

The Bible tells us to have due regard. In 1 Peter 2 verse 17, there's a fourfold instruction of how we should regard others.

It says, in 1 Peter 2 verse 17, it says, Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. We should honour the king.

You know, that must have been hard in the dark ages, wasn't it, when you had a king or queen who was cutting people's heads off who believed the Bible. But nevertheless, God says, Honour the king.

[8:52] You know, when I attend council meetings and the mayor walks in the room, they say, All rise. When the Governor General walks in the room and, you know, the national anthem is played, please stand.

There's an honour, there's a respect, there's a reverence for human government because the powers that be, Romans 13 verse 1, are ordained to God. There's a rightful respect.

And yet the media just slams them all the time, doesn't it? We know that. And we can just follow suit too. It's so easy to. As much as there's just criticism of government, they're not beyond criticism.

And in Romans 13, it goes on of how judges also should be respected. They should be a terror to the evil. They bear a sword for God, as the minister of God.

That's Romans 13, 3 to 4. To execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. The justice system has been designed as part of God's order for the nation's righteousness and protection of law-abiding citizens.

[10:01] Yet we're seeing a loss of reverence, a rise of lawlessness, of spiralling crime. Because God's order of reverence has been abandoned. Reverence should even climb in the workplace.

In that employee relationship, you can't picture it there in how masters and servants relate. In 1 Peter 2, verse 18, it says, Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear or respect, not only to

the good and the gentle, but also to the froward or the unjust.

Even when you've got a boss who's harsh and hard, and I imagine there's some like that, some pretty mean bosses who crack the whip and call the shots and are just pretty tough to work for, the Bible says to respect them.

Respect them, to be subject to them. So there's a necessary reverence even in workplaces that there's an order there that God's put in place. And even in the home place too, in marriages.

God's designed the marriage. God's designed families that there be a godly order, that there be a structure, a rightful reverence structure, a pattern that is placed in families so there be a due order, so that there be men and women devoted to one another in holy wedlock.

[11:24] There's something precious there. But God has designed homes that way, that there be a mother and father, that he entrusts children to, his design is one of godly order, where children will grow up in that place of harmony and respect.

God's established a pattern of reverence there. It says in Ephesians 5.33, how God's design is that there be a loving husband and a wife showing due reverence to her husband.

In Ephesians 5.33 it says, Nevertheless, let every one of you, in particular, so love his wife, even as himself. And the wife see that she reverence her husband.

That's strong words, isn't it? Challenging words that, men, I don't know how much you love yourself, but you should love your wife just so much.

You know, when you keep looking in that mirror and examining how handsome you are, that you think how wonderful your wife is and admire her just so much. And wives, reverence your husband, show that regard to him.

[12:32] It doesn't mean that you're under his thumb and that you cater to his every whim and fancy, although that would be nice. But you would be that one who would show respectfulness to your husband that God has given you.

And God's will is that children should show a reverence to their fathers. In Hebrews 12.9, it says, Furthermore, we've had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, we gave them reverence.

And how much more shall we be in subjection unto the father of spirits and live? So, children should show respect to their fathers and no doubt to their mothers too.

There should be a reverence there that is a good and godly thing. That God has designed the home that way for it to function well. So, you know what you have to do now, do you mean?

You have to show that reverence to your father. Okay? Now, there has been a shift taking place where the modern thinking is that marriage is just some human institution.

[13:32] but no, it's not a human institution, it's God designed, God defined. Amen. It's a divine institution. And where we see that the world of today degrading it and downgrading it in people's eyes where it's just another form of cohabitation, marriage has a sanctity about it.

There's a holiness there, there's a solemnity, there's a wonderful reverence there that God has designed marriage to be. Weddings nowadays are just some expensive social event.

I know, our marriage, our wedding was pretty low budget affair. But it's lasted, thank God. You know, my, the marriage, the wedding ring I got for my wife was \$20, I think.

So, you know, I should be ashamed of myself, I know. But no, it wasn't so much the amount of money that we spent, it was that it was a God designed and God ordained them. That is what matters.

It's not about having some, you know, if the expense of a wedding is putting you off getting married, it's a very poor excuse. You know, it doesn't, it's not about the hoo-ha and the party, it's about a man and woman joined together in God's sight.

[14:50] Reverence is something precious and we should see it in all these dimensions as regards the treatment of older people. As I've said before, in Leviticus 19 it says, thou shalt rise up before the hoary head.

Now, I've got a hoary head. That's what it looks like. You should rise up before me and honour the face of the old man. Now, this is the face of an old man. It's getting old every day.

And fear thy God. Reverence, really, truly, friends, seriously now, there should be a rising up before the hoary head, the grey-headed man, honouring the hoary head, honouring the face of the old

man.

God has designed the world that way, that there should be a respectfulness, a reverence to those that are older than us. Maybe they're older and wiser. Not always so, but we might learn something from people who are older than us.

I know I have. We need a revival of reverence today. A revival of reverence. Reverence is important. It's important.

[15:54] True wisdom comes from reverence. We see in Proverbs 1, verse 7, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 9, verse 10, it says, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. It's where wisdom starts.

It's where knowledge begins. It's in that reverence, that fear of God, of the things of God, where holy things are treated as precious, not flippantly, not as commonplace.

When we recognise God's authority over us, that we're under his umbrella, as it were, that we should regard him with awe and wonder and fear. We need reverence today.

Reverence today. Let me have a go at defining the term. Here's a quote. Reverence means a respectful, submissive attitude of mind, resulting in an affection and esteem for the person to which it is directed.

[16:56] Hence, children, reverence their parents. Wives, reverence their husbands. Subjects, reverence their sovereign. And all must reverence God. Reverence, reverence, it speaks of worship, of adoration, of honour of our God and King.

As we stand in awe of him, of his greatness, we reverence the name of God. Matthew 6, verse 9, hallowed be thy name. Hallowed.

Treated as holy, as sanctified, as precious, as worthy. Hallowed be thy name. The name of God should be revered.

The assembly of God ought to be revered. 1 Timothy 3.15 As we should regard that gathering together as the household of God. That worship of God should be something that's reverent.

Worship God in spirit and in truth. It's something precious and holy. The reverent, we should revere the attributes of God, the commands of God, the Word of God.

[18:00] There's so much we could say of such things. John 17, 17 talks of the Word of God. I'll just look that one up. How we should reverence the things of God.

Sanctify them through thy truth thy word is truth. God wants us to be a sanctified people. A people who fear the Lord. Who fear God.

We don't hear messages like this in some places. Revering God. Reverencing God. God will bless us for reverencing Him.

He promises to. The one we started with, Psalm 128, verse 1, blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord that walketh in His ways.

We need a revival of reverence, of holiness, of sanctification, of reverence regarding our worship. Consider worship. God is to be revered in our worship.

[19:03] God is awesome. Son. Some people say, God's awesome. Jesus is awesome. But He is awesome. He is full of awe.

We should be in awe of Him. In awe of Him. He is awesome. We should truly be in awe of Him.

Worship begins with reverence. It begins with reverence. Psalm 89, verse 7, it says, 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. Greatly feared in reverence. It's right and proper that we have that reverence towards Him, that respectful heart in the holy time of worship.

And that's not to say we switch it on and switch it off and we've got to conjure it up with all the right kind of music and the music kind of gradually reaches the crescendo and everybody is kind of caught up in the manufactured worship.

[20:14] It's not about any of that. The worship begins with the reverence. It begins with that God is greatly to be praised in the assembly of the saints and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.

That we regard God as holy, the almighty. We regard Him as the absolute one to which we should give due regard and honour. You know, people will take efforts to go to certain productions, whether it be a symphony or a concert of some kind or some event and they'll close the doors and everyone will just be quiet.

Everyone will make sure their mobile phones are turned off. They'll make sure they're on time. They'll make sure that everything is just so and that everyone is attentive and there's no distractions. They give such attention to musical creations of men, whether it's Mozart or whatever it is.

They think that that's so beautiful that they feel they should owe it this respect. But are we taking the worship of the almighty God less seriously? He is great and awesome yet we treat Him so carelessly.

If our worship is biblical, biblical, it must be reverent. It's not about a particular formula or a focus on external things but it's about that heart attitude as we come to Him.

[21:36] That reverent heart. In Hebrews 12, 28 it says, Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

God wants us to serve Him reverently and with godly fear. The God with whom we have to deal is the Creator, the One. By Him were all things created and in Him all things consist.

The Creator, the Sustainer of life, of creation, He is holy and He is set apart and He calls His people to Himself. As we embark on worship, let us have that sense of whom He is, of the very presence of God.

Not that we come necessarily into a building to come and enter it and then leave it but the presence of God should be with us 24-7. but more especially as we gather we are more mindful I suppose of that presence as it were.

The worship He wants from us should be reverent. There is a real danger nowadays where we can make the mistake of going to great lengths to focus on how we can make worship more interesting and enjoyable for men.

[22:59] More interesting and enjoyable for men rather than acceptable to God. Acceptable to God. Acceptable to Him.

Is our worship acceptable unto a holy God? Is it acceptable? We should serve God acceptably with reverence and holy fear.

And we are not talking about having some solemn and staid and restricted kind of gloomy dark dismal atmosphere.

You know Julie and I we've been on travels as I say sometimes we've been in some ornate buildings covered in icons and statues and artistic windows with all kinds of representations of biblical things and yet the simplicity of worship was lacking there.

And sometimes it's just about you and God getting together and having a real regard for who he is. It's not about all of that that can sometimes distract.

[24:19] And we were in one particular big cathedral and the lady was going on this tour guide was talking about all these particular saints and some bizarre things these supposed saints had done in times past and it was all about the past things that were really extra biblical in other words they weren't in the Bible and yet God wants us to be reverent and to know him in his word we see the truth.

Isn't that genuine reverence? The Bible speaks of holy convocations holy convocations where the holy people got together. A convocation means a calling of people which is done by the sound of trumpets.

My dad's got a trumpet now and I'm getting a bit worried that he's going to bring it along one day and he's going to blow that trumpet but sometimes we need a trumpet to blow to shake us to wake us to signal that we're advancing we're an army that is called together and people called together in a sacred assembly that was what they had as they gathered together these convocations holy convocations they're gathering together was a holy thing it was very precious as they came together to worship a holy God by his Holy Spirit in the presence of the holy angels a holy gathering together when Moses confronted God God said draw not nigh hither put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou stand is holy ground God it says Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look on God and then in Numbers 14 5 it says Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before

the assembly there must have been quite a lack of decorum in that meeting as Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly they must have forgot their speaking notes and all the order of service and everything the structure that they might have that day because they just wanted to fall on their faces and worship a holy God that's what we need brothers sisters in Genesis 17 Abraham fell on his face and God took with him in Revelation 7 11 it reverence helps us serve God acceptably in holy fear it's that high view of God it's about God it's not about you it's not about me making you feel good it's about him it's about what he wants it's about a high view of God and of our adoration of him of our reverent worship in prayer how do we pray as we talk to

God and the Bible doesn't require of us a particular posture as some would make a big thing of postures but what would the Lord Jesus do in Luke 22 41 he knelt down and prayed in Matthew 26 he fell on his face and prayed we see how the Israelites stood often and prayed to God it just shows that reverence that was the point I'm making in that it's when we pray let's have reverence let's have reverence we need a revival reverence as regards worship and secondly and lastly we need a reverence as regards the word God's word is holy mine says holy Bible it is the holy Bible we must not trifle with its contents in Psalm 138 David says thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name God's word so mighty and precious that it is so awesome that it is in comparative to the name of [28:22] God it's above his very name and we are called to tremble at his word in Isaiah 66 God says to this man will I look even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and tremble it at my word trembles at the word how we need a reverence for the word of God when it is preached when it is taught that we have a regard a reverence for it when Ezra opened the book in Nehemiah 8 verse 5 it says Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people and when he's opened it all the people stood up to we don't have to stand on ceremony or make some particular requirement as such but it's an evidence there that there was a cherishing of this book there was a cherishing of the holy scriptures the people respected and regarded it as it was delivered and they showed that reverence to it as they attended to it friends

I want to leave you with a challenge tonight to a revival of reverence a revival of reverence a reverence that should mark our homes as Bible believers a reverence that should mark our relationships as families as employers and employees a reverence that regards our worship a reverence that regards the word of God to commit to that in 1 Timothy 4 Paul writes to Timothy exercise thyself unto godliness and this exercising is alike to an exercise regime of a gymnasium it's as if you go into the gymnasium and have a workout now I've seen Brad lately I reckon he's doing some weight lifting the physique there is just even more outstanding than when I saw him before I went away and that exercise is doing Brad good he's got muscles on his muscles and because of the exercise regime that he is following and this is prophetic brother and so we see that there is an exercising that we need to have to grow physically and to get stronger what about spiritually what about spiritually exercise yourself rather unto godliness reverence I saw a slogan that someone had about going to the gym and I thought maybe this is a bit irreverent forgive me to say this but it's to make the point here tonight this is the slogan on the gym train insane or remain the same and this is what these bodybuilders do don't they train insane or remain the same they just go ballistic they go nuts down at the gym in their workout until they suffer the pain it's like Julie and I when we were on our travels we were walking many many long trips to look at different sites and I had to punish my wife's body as we walked to various different sites and she's got an even better physical physique now after all that hard walking that she's done it's made a difference and it's also you've got to go to the extreme train insane or remain the same and what about you spiritually do you take your spiritual workout as seriously as these crazy people down at the gym who just punish themselves no pain no gain what about your spiritual life doesn't that matter even more doesn't it really it does it does it matters so much it matters internally that we ought to train exercise ourselves unto godliness friends it says in proverbs 3 7 be not wise in thine own eyes fear the lord and depart from evil isn't it time tonight for a revival of reverence to consider how can I have that godliness that we've been hearing about tonight how can I have that reverence in my family in my home in my relationships in my worship as regards to the word do I really take things seriously enough or do I just treat it flippantly like it's just a social get together some people

treat church like that oh it's it's time for church let's go and meet our friends down at church it's just like oh we'll go and have a cuppa and blah blah it's just like a bit of a holy club a social club churches can get like that just come and have a natter have a yarn have a bit of play and fun a token bit of bible and then back to the yarning and just talk about everyday things and we can miss something there that's not to say we walk around like we're stuffed shirts and we you know not real people but there's a reverence that should be evident in our lives that we want to worship God we want to love him we want to know him and really I'm speaking to Christians here tonight this is a message for Christians because you know you can be very religious and go to hell again referring back to Israel we saw some very religious people you know there was a taxi driver there he had his prayer beads I think he was doing the prayer beads while he was trying to drive and he helped me to get more of a prayer life while he was driving there were some crazy taxi drivers over the dead if you want to get spiritual be a passenger in a taxi in Israel and he was this man with his prayer beads muttering to himself and I don't know who he was muttering to and I'm not saying maybe prayer beads help you to pray I'm not knocking that necessarily but there's lots of religion that doesn't lead to heaven and there's lots of religious people who will be in hell there's lots of church goers there's lots of baptists who are going to be in hell because they're not saved there's lots of pretend

Christians and I don't want to leave you tonight with the impression that you're going to heaven just because maybe I might be a bit more holy and sort of wise up my act and try to just put on a veneer of yeah I'll follow God when I feel like it and when it's convenient fear the Lord and depart from evil know the Lord know him how do I know him simple faith simple faith you don't have to go through some magical ritual I don't need to get some holy water and sprinkle it on your head and you know say some magical words over you or get some holy smoke and blow it over you or you know lay hands on you and deliver you from your unbelief all you need to do is come in simple faith to him simple faith to trust him to call on him call on him the Bible doesn't it puts it pretty simply hey call on the name of the

[36:12] Lord if you truly call on the name of the Lord you shall be saved now calling on the name of the Lord means the Lord means a change of ownership it means a new master it means a new life it means a transformation happens by his spirit and it's by the cross it's by his blood I urge you tonight if you're not sure that you're a Christian please seek counsel speak to someone you know is a Christian here tonight and say I want to be a Christian I want to I want to it's not so much I want to it's I must what must I do to be saved I know I've got to be saved tell me what to do I've had enough of life lived without Christ friends tonight I urge you if you've got that must on the inside of you what must God will meet you there tonight