

Sing thanks unto the Lord

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[0 : 00] Would you come with me this evening to look at Psalms on Psalm 30 in which we read earlier.

Psalm 30, you will find a text for our sermon this evening in verse 4. Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

Sing thanks unto the Lord. Sing praise unto the Lord and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

That sinful teachers should ever be able to give thanks for the holiness of God is almost a contradiction.

It is a contradiction in every sphere of thought except in the sphere of the thought of grace. Of God's power coming into the life of sinful, lost, God-hating men.

[1 : 21] And so transforming them from the inside out, that one of the things which fills their minds and their hearts and their days with gladness, is the thought that God is our holy God.

Part from grace, that could stir no sense of gratitude in our hearts at all. Yes, we might be very thankful in the view of our sin and our sinnership and our ungodliness.

We would be very thankful at the thought of mercy and God. We can understand that, and even the darkness of us in here tonight can understand why a sinner should even occasionally be thankful that there is mercy in God.

We might even on occasions when we feel dumbed down by life be thankful that there is ultimate justice with God.

But isn't it strange that creatures like us should ever be so thrilled with the thought of the holiness of God that spontaneously we say, Oh, praise God!

[2 : 54] God! And be grateful that he is holy. That was the spirit that moved and filled the heart of this man of God long ago.

And you know, this is not the only place in Scripture where God by his spirit, through the experience of his servant, calls upon his people to thank God for his holiness.

I wonder if you can sympathize with that spirit tonight. It's a very good test, I think, of where you stand, where I stand before God.

Are you thankful tonight? That above all things, the God of eternity is our holy God. Does the very thought of his holiness seem so awe-inspiring to you?

This is awe-inspiring. It seems so awe-ful to you. So you wonder how anyone could ever stand God for you.

[4 : 08] Yes, that's where you really stand. Because only if you are at peace with this holy God, and only if you see that his holiness is really on the side of your salvation, only when and if you see that, can you truly say, praise his name that he is the holy one of Israel.

And he's that in every age. Now let's look at this a little bit more closely. Let me say, first of all, that we owe the very word and the idea of holiness to special revelation.

The idea, the thought, the fact of God as a holy God, we owe only to the Bible. Only the Bible, and all the literature of the world, sets out God as he really is.

Therefore only the Bible sets out God as holy. And the Bible speaks of God as the only holy one. Listen to it. There is none holy but thee, O Lord. That's the message of the Bible to the children of men.

[5 : 38] There is none who is glorious in holiness as God is. Now the root idea of the Bible meaning of holiness seems to be something like this.

That is a quality, a spiritual, moral quality of character that belongs to a being who is separate, different, who is other than everything which is not himself.

and the way the holiness of God is spoken of. It constitutes the distinctiveness of God over against everything else and everyone else.

He is the one and the only one who is separate from everything else because of his holiness. The root meaning of the Hebrew word is to cut and to separate so that you get distinction and division and difference.

the holiness of God is that attribute of his nature and being which permeates all the other attributes and characteristics that make up his Godhead and his deity and it is that which sets them off supreme.

[7 : 14] The other things set them off from men. He is not a creature for example. He is the creator. In his being there has been no beginning and there shall be no there shall be no end.

He is God from everlasting to everlasting. That sets them off. But his eternity is characterized the eternity of his being is characterized by holiness.

And that sets him off in a very distinctive way. He is merciful. His mercy is a holy mercy. He is loved.

This is one of the ways the Bible defines God for us in a positive sense. He is often defined negatively. We are told what God is not. But we are also sometimes told what God is.

And dear me isn't it terrible that as Christians we often forget that God is love. And we live as if we were living under the axe of a terrorist.

[8 : 25] My friend, God is not that kind of God. He is just and holy and terrible yes. But he is God who is love. but he is the God whose love is our holy love.

And perhaps that makes his love terrible to us because of us even his love has an awesome aspect to it.

Now the text calls us not just to recognize the holiness of God. I hope we do recognize that and we don't be touching and not affect on it.

There are many texts that you call men to recognize the holiness of God. But that's not what no text is doing. No text is calling us not to recognize it nor even to acknowledge it.

No text is calling us to gratitude for it. How can we ever be brought to the place where where our hearts are warmed in surreal gratitude to God Father Son and Holy Spirit because he is the Holy God.

[9 : 54] I think that for all who know him our Savior in Christ that gratitude is always there.

Perhaps not always recognized but always there. And can I say that even those of us if even those of us amongst us tonight who are unconfessed if you could understand your need as a sinner you would be grateful for rather than afraid of the holiness of God.

And that's the point I just want to try and bring out in a simple kind of way. Let us illustrate and we use three ways of illustrating how man can praise God and have gratitude to him because he is holy.

And first of all when we say this I believe that the holiness of God is the very is to be is to be thankful for it because it gives us our basic world for the worship of God.

Let us want to try and bring out in a simple kind of way. Let us in a second we use three ways of illustrating how man can praise God and have gratitude to him because he is holy.

[11 : 28] And first of all when we say this I believe that the holiness of God is the very is to be is to be we are to be thankful for it because it gives us our basic world for the worship of God.

Let me say that again. Gratitude for the holiness of God because it gives us our basic warrant for worshipping God.

What kind of God do you worship? Then we put another question. What kind of God do you think you should worship?

Then we put the question just a little bit differently. Yes. What kind of God do you think is worthy of your worship? The worship of a rational intelligent mind.

The worship of someone whose thinking has been informed by the creation of God and by the light of his words. What kind of God is worthy of the worship of the hearts that have been redeemed and washed and crammed in the blood of God's own son?

[12 : 49] What kind of God is worthy of the worship of sinless teachers in heaven? God? I think of the God who is worthy of the worship of angels and archangels and seraphim the burning bright sinless ones I think the God who is worthy of their worship must be a great God high and lifted up.

And I believe that the God who is worthy of the worship of the soul even that's defiled in sin and that lives in the gutters of this world I believe that the God who is worthy of their worship is also a God who has to be high and lifted up.

If God were not glory man would deny their basic spirituality in giving him worship at all.

One of the startings in society today one of the things that leaves a sore heart is to see man given their other mission and worship to things that are so unworthy of rational reasonable moral spiritual pictures bowing down to people that they call stars pop singers football fans and they'll give their money and their time and their talents to praise them and to get near them and touch them who are none better than themselves and you know holiness is something that only the hell God has the whole pantheon of gods of the ancient nations the gods of the

Greeks and of the Romans the gods of the pagans and you know one of the things one thing that's few about them all is the heaven the grand some of the fathers have ever known came in among men because of the worship of pagan values even the sacrifice of children and power the worship of mother things like that and they were the worship of gods who were unclean and unforgive even in the eyes of those who worship them and in doing that man degraded himself and I tell you the God who calls for the worship of your mind and your heart the

[15 : 56] God of whom I wrote Jesus was speaking when he said thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all the heart and all the mind and all the soul but God is totally absolutely essentially worthy of that love and he is worthy of far more adoration and far more worship and far more love than any one creature could ever give him because he is God everlasting God in whom there is no tinge or taint of imperfection are you not glad and thankful that in control of all things is an eternal spirit in whom there is no imperfection at all where we brought before a

God in whom there was only mercy for example we might be able to rejoice in that mercy but our rejoicing would be tempered we might be afraid that it was not a holy mercy an unselfish mercy a mercy that would last forever and forever more could we trust a mercy which itself might be sinful and biased and imperfect we know what it is to get mercy from our fellow teachers I would get that most of us do we have sometimes to apologize and climb down from the little pedestals we put ourselves on and we have to say I want your forgiveness and the passion that our brother in Christ and our sister in Christ has given us their mercy and we have been glad to get it and yet we have been afraid that it might not be full hearted mercy we are afraid that it might not be totally pure mercy we are afraid that it might not be disinterested mercy we are afraid that the mercy the givers might be tainted with their own faults and their feelings and so it could be with a

God who was not not only merciful but holy in his mercy and he dispenses his mercy as a holy mercy and yet he was not holy but could we ever love him could we ever really watch him could we ever trust him with all what we see God for time and for eternity your good thanks do you begin to see and we can only open up just a little way do you begin to see what worldly calls forth the washer of the believer child the holy God who is holy in all his ways and remember how he's manifested to it he's manifested supremely in the passion of our

Lord Jesus Christ and what his scripture saith him he too was holy and harmless and undefiled and separate from different from sinners know my friend because of that the Lord Jesus calls hope to worship and adoration and the blessing of our heart only in perpetrator in consider true men or anyone find that sick object for the worship of his mind and his heart and his soul heart and love and I want to pause here and just emphasize that all through the Bible wherever worship is mentioned the holiness of God is very closely related to it for for for example take the manifestations of

God to his people in the Old Testament take his directions and requirements for their worship of him and we have to worship God not according to our own thoughts and our own plans and our own feelings we have to worship God in the way that he dictates to us and steps out for us in his word and when you come to the worship of God in the Old Testament you get holiness attached to it when he reveals his name as Jehovah the covenant God of his people do you know how he reveals it he reveals his name as holy I he said I am the holy one of Israel oh how much that means my friendly I can't change when he demands your worship and he does demand it and when he presents himself for your worship he presents himself still and he says

[21 : 49] I am the holy one of Israel he is worthy of your worship his name is worthy of your worship worship in the name of the new aspect of Jehovah the name of Jesus in and through the name of Jesus is that name holy my friend where has God set it he has set it clearly in the heavens

he has exalted it far above every name the name of Jesus holy harnered undefiled worthy of worship only of your heart but of worlds we would give it to him tonight you beloved the worship and adoration of every man and woman and child who has ever lived is worthy of does he ever worship of your heart holy his name take his day when he reveals and sets apart a special day one in seven in which men will bow down and set themselves aside from other things for his worship of his name what does he call his day a holy day a day which is to be centred and set apart from others and there are areas of the evangelical church that are forgetting that is a prerequisite of the worshipping people of

God when he speaks of his house from the places that he gives men in which to worship in the man what does he call them he calls them holy holy the place of his habitation is holy when he gives them his word which will direct them tell them their duties spare out their privileges what does he call it himself he calls it his holy word no matter where you go in scripture and we listen to the worship of God by his people it is permeated with the thought and the word and the fact and the reality of holiness am I some of the old testament yeah I some of the old testament it's the new testament and there's the new covenant blood with which the new covenant is sealed the blood of God his holy blood sealed and redemption with blood that is holy for the emphasis in the new testament my friend is just as strong on holiness as the emphasis on the old testament there is the holiness of God and God there is no doubt but bringing through the gospels and I hope that as you get older in the Christian faith my brothers and sisters I hope that as you get older you will go more and more to the reading of the gospels that's what I find when I'm happy to the hundred throughout there used to be the Pauline epistles Ephesians and Galatians and now it's more and more the gospels fire because there in the gospels I meet my savior and I'm brought up fresh under the influence of his amazing character I hear his words and I see his deeds and wonderful although Paul is always leading us often to to balance where we lose our force isn't he the apostle Paul wonderful although Paul is my friends is not Jesus and I think that one of the most attractive things about the Jesus the character to us in the gospel is just his holiness that's his loveliness he comes so near to us and yet he's so different from us a calmness a peace raining through everything he is and everything he says and everything he does never flustered never at a loss never upset never frustrated a holy calmness in him all that

I warm up to passion out Lord Jesus Christ is and the thing that makes him most attractive of all is this woman come to this sacrifice of Calvary come to the place of the Lord and what we do supremely of that sacrifice and we tend to forget it for all the other aspects of the atonement its pain and its suffering its accomplishment its glory and safeguard in the throne of God all all these things must not take away from the fact that we sacrifice it is also a holy one he has separated himself fully unto God and unto due salvation and the perfection of the atonement is the perfection of the person who makes the atonement the perfect one coming under the sentence and judgment of death all through the bible worship related to holiness all through the bible

[28 : 16] God people praising God for his holiness the psalmist who's what we're thinking about for example he says this he says exalt thee the lord our god and worship of his soul for he is holy the book of revelation the song of Moses and the lamb the song of the king to all eternity what is it you remember how the soul by the sea of glass who shall not fear the Lord and glorify thy name for thou only art holy the living teachers that John saw around the throne the stutter of them what would he say holy holy holy the

Lord God almighty holy the same sin that has been seen by Isaiah and recorded in Isaiah 6 long before last is Christ holy God holy the father holy the son holy the spirit of God holy so the holiness of God calls forth our worship I would suggest to you that the holiness of God not only the final one of our worship but it's the final purpose of Christian faith faith I say not I work not very much about this I said I spent far too long on the first setting I'm doing something tonight that I'm always telling our divinity students they mustn't do spend too long and get their sermon all out of shape and here I have done it far too long on one list to be just the first part of this thing but we'll try and cut this down a little bit the final focus of

Christian faith let me ask you you here tonight I'm unconvinced and you don't know God could you ever put your trust in a saviour who was not holy I detire you you couldn't do it you are afraid of the holiness of God and yet with it not the holiness of God you are not of hope of everything saved from our lost eternity don't want hope and earth because God is holy and Christians in here are telling us because God is holy and because our holy God has purpose to save a great multitude to

move and condemn it then if you are unbecoming you can be able to take hope and you can know this and show any reason or shall you this but if you have converted and sinned by a holy God then the conversion and the redemption and the salvation will be what are and it will be harmonious it will be consonant with the nature of the

God who saved you and of course that's the kind of gospel that's the kind of redemption that's the kind of salvation that's held out in that's why it's such a fortress of it why your disciples can call out all the forces and convictions in your mind the more you know it and the more you understand it and the clearer God makes it to you then you get great pins that hold your convictions nail the convictions into your soul and your mind forever and forever more because this God is worthy about us you see faith might just find reach out its hand to a God who was not holy but he would be trembling as it did it would never know what kind of reception it would give but if faith tonight reaches out of hand to the

God whose holiness has been revealed in the cross faith knows that when God lays hold of its hand he will never let it go he is a holy God because he's holy for example he can't lie therefore all his promises to you as a sinner are true and be sure and you can trust them to the utmost every word he says is true and he expects you to believe it and accept it us to it is our holy word mercy yes there's mercy and it's mercy which has respect to holy mercy is freely offered to you and to me in the gospel but let's remember this that mercy the mercy that is offered is consulate with holiness and righteousness and equity and my friend it was costly to

[33 : 56] God I think it was the man that was the minister of the minister of the last century he ministered in Greenock and Black Island and Lewis who was famous in his day for very graphic sayings and one of the beautiful sayings he had was that never forgotten since I read was this remember he said to the congregation in Jerusalem remember he said how the Messiah God of country it has swam who deceived of Christ suffering in order to rest in you my friend that is how the mercy of God came it was costly and it is costly still it is expensive and it is holy and the dazzlement of its holiness is this that before it could be exercised towards creatures like you and like me the son

God had to taste death and it is through his death that mercy flows out that's a mercy we can trust faith could never live at ease with a mercy which had not fulfilled the demands of holiness could it it couldn't but because mercy has met to be minds of holiness our faith and our trust can live our ease of it and again our faith rests here in this office because we know that ultimately holiness shall cry I believe that even the most ungodly people around us can weigh up two principles the principle of right of good and the principle of wrong of evil

I believe that even the most godless believer ultimately the principle of good should prevail the principle of right should prevail over that building of riches and my friend the one thing that guarantees for us that righteousness will prevail is the fact that god is a holy god tonight my total conviction is that one day sin will become confined the place that god is prepared for the devil and the angels and it will become confined there I believe because of what the bible says about god and the kind of god he is of pure and I and to be wrong in equity the ultimate guarantee that there shall be a new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness will live is his holiness so faith you see has many guarantees that truth and righteousness will come in the end and finally just this song not only is the holiness of god the ultimate warrant for our worship of him or the fortress of our christian faith in which we got us in our hope but the holiness of god i believe is also the final heritage of christian hope what is the ultimacy of the christian hope well it's just heaven isn't it but what is heaven it is where god is and it is where conflict has ceased and it is where there is no more curse but the throne is sovereignty of god and of the lamb are in it and where his servant shall serve and where there is peace and blessing and bliss for him who can be slain now here we do have conflict the moment a person comes into christ the moment he's renewed the moment he's converted the moment we trust there is conflict there is a tension set up within us and we begin to know the experience that paul had when he said oh wretched man that i am who shall deliver me from the body of this death there is a trinity of evil arranged against us the bible it is not easy it will be foolish it will be round it will be unscriptural for me to say it to you tonight if you dare see if i were to say to you come to christ tonight and accept christ and you say that but if i rented one and say come to christ and accept christ and then all the problems are over and your wife will become good natured and you sleep well at night and you will never have indigestion and there will be nothing in the world to worry anymore before you come to jesus you know that you smile i see you smiling at the triviality of it and you are suffering that is the kind of gospel that has been talked around the world today

christ is a sort of super psychedelic thing what a blasphemy that is not the scriptural gospel jesus said if many men will follow me and take up the cross daily i'll be my disciple jesus said a man must deny himself for he cannot be my disciple jesus says your mind and your talents and your time and your days and your money and your home and your life everything wants it all and your mother and your not easy to be a christian you're going to have to fight against the stream but my friend you're fighting and winning strength and you've got jesus with you i will uphold you that's one of your fears in trusting the lord for in committing yourself fully to you as that you couldn't keep it up ah but he'll keep you up his holiness is a guarantee his holiness is a guarantee that every promise he gives he will fulfill to the utmost to the utmost the rest of the world his requirements are ultimate they demand holiness holiness what we read in the new testament there sums it all up be ye holy for I am holy it's what the service is a holy walking a holy service as you begin to follow jesus and come into his service what he asked you to do you walk in for one his glory and all his reason you must be holy too his holiness is the standard by which you and I are to live and his holiness is the pledge that one day we shall be holy also we shall be like him we don't feel like that very often in this world we see such a gap between what we are Lord can it ever be the Lord answers back and he says yes it shall be and he says she left by the apostle John we know not yet what we shall be but we do know that when he shall appear we shall be likened follow that tonight jour game fun

[43 : 17] It is holy, and we are holy creatures to serve and worship in heaven.

And we are once holy creatures to serve and worship in heaven. They will not be perfectly holy, but the moment they are regenerated, converted, born again in the Holy Spirit, they are being separated unto God, and they begin to serve and out of a new heart and a new life.

And one of the things that happens to them is this, they are not made perfectly holy, but they begin to long to be holy. They begin to long to be rid of sin, of lies and untruths and of hypocrisy.

And that now then grows and grows and grows, until it becomes a reality in the heaven which is God's presence.

Give thanks unto the Lord. God is holy. Can you do that? I am asking, can you do that?

[44 : 49] I should be asking, can you do anything else? Surely not. Dear Father, what is the best way to give thanks to God for this whole life?

To obey Him. To obey Him in everything. And this is, oh, that kind of obedience must just begin here, when you stress that to all young people.

It must begin here, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. By resting your soul and your salvation for time and eternity upon Him. That's where the obedience of God begins. And that's where the coming like Him also begins.

And when you begin to do that by His grace. Then He will never let you go. A word of grace. that means. Amen. ... O'er gracious God, we bow before the majesty and the mystery of thy holiness. And we thank thee tonight that now art the Holy One of Israel. We bless thee for all righteousness and holiness and perfection in Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

[46 : 06] We found thee true for the creaturely holiness of the those who sing thy praise, creatures who sing thy praise and who never knew what sin was.

And we bless thee, O God, that even tonight around the throne of heaven there are those who once were sinners, but yet now in holiness perfect praise comes from them, and they adore thee and magnify thee for what thou art.

And we pray to you, Lord, that in our own measures our hearts can do that here this evening. We pray that we shall do it in very deep.

Bless each one of us, what's over us through the remaining hours of this Lord's day and through the week which falls. Bless us as we get up our work.

Bless those of us who return from holiday back to whatever their task is, and help us to fulfill our tasks and our works in the fear of the Lord.

[47 : 18] Go before us, hold up our goings and pardon and cleanse us from all sin for Jesus' sake. Amen. Our closing praise is Psalm 97.

Now may grace, mercy, and peace from Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, rest and abide upon you and upon the whole Israel of God, this night and forevermore. Amen.

Amen.