

January 26th, 2025

## **Malachi 1:6-2:9 - How Great is the Holiness of God! (Sermon Transcript)**

All right, turn to Malachi chapter 1, Malachi chapter 1. You guys know that I'm a big sports fan. Okay, if you did, y'all shouldn't be surprised by that. And so one of my favorite things about sports is the, the work of a front office and trying to find players that fit their organization, especially coming from an amateur team, like college or some of the minor leagues and trying to move them up into professional status.

And so these front offices have these scouting departments where they go around and they look to find athletes that are worth signing and bringing on to their team. Now here's the thing about the scouting department. It's a little bit of a guess. You're trying, you're like, I hope this kid that's 20 turns out to be the player we think he'll be.

And so they put, run all these tests and, and ask a bunch of questions, and then they, they take a leap of faith and just say alright, well, we'll draft this player. Now one of my favorite scouting reports comes from the NBA. I'm not, I'm not a big basketball fan, but this story has always fascinated me.

There was one general manager who, they were getting ready for the draft, and he could not decide where he would, who he would draft. They had the third pick in the draft, and so they were working through, like, all the different variables, and they had their eye on this kid, but they had some concerns. He was only 195 pounds, which is scrawny for a six foot six basketball player.

They were concerned that he wasn't really a great dribbler, which is kind of important in basketball. And they weren't sure if his shooting would actually hold up at the professional level. And so they decided, alright, if we can't get these two guys, then we'll draft this player. And so the night of the draft, the first pick went, and it was the one that they really wanted.

The second pick went, and they were like, ah, that's the guy. So we'll just take a chance on this player. And the Chicago Bulls drafted Michael Jordan. And I love this story because, one, the general manager now, or what, the scout now, says we, we didn't really like scout them then like we do now. We, we ask him all sorts of play, he's like, I never saw Michael Jordan play in person.



But the first time I saw him at practice, I knew, this kid's going to be great. And I think of the people of Israel in our own lives, that how often that we think that, or we miss the greatness of God just because we're not looking in the right areas. We, we want God to be what we want Him to be, instead of looking to who God is and seeing His greatness.

And that He stands apart when you put Him in when you put Him in amongst other gods or even ourselves. The general manager said, if I would have seen Michael Jordan in person amongst all the other draft, it wouldn't have been a question we were going to take him. I want us this morning to see and behold God for how awesome and great and holy He is.

It's His holiness that sets Him apart from all the other gods. It's His holiness that sets Him apart from us. Because He is holy, He demands that we be holy as well. And the only way we can be holy is through His Son, and the perfect holiness of Jesus. So as we read Malachi chapter 1, verses 6, and we're gonna go to chapter 2, verse 9, so a bigger chunk of scripture today, we're going to see What sets God apart from all, all others.

Because there is no one like our God. Let's read Malachi 6, chapter 1, verse 6. And we'll read through chapter 2, verse 9. And then we will respond to the reading of God's word. A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear?

Says the Lord of hosts to you. O priest who despise my name. But you say, how have we despised your name? By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, how have we polluted you? By saying that the Lord's table may not be, may be despised. When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil?

And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor. Will he accept you? Or show you favor? Says the Lord of hosts. And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hands. Will he show favor to any of you says the lord of hosts?

Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain I have no pleasure in you says the lord of hosts and I will not accept an offering from your hands for from the Rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations And in every place incense will be offered to my name And a pure offering for my name will be great among the nations says the lord of hosts, but you profane it When you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food, may be despised.



But you say, what a weariness this is. And you snort at it, says the Lord of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering. Shall I accept that from your hand, says the Lord? Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock. And vows it. And yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished.

For I am great, I am a great king, says the Lord of Hosts. And my name will be feared among the nations. And now, O priest, this command is for you. If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart, to give honor to my name, says the Lord of Hosts, then I will send the curse upon you. And I will curse your blessings.

Indeed, I have already cursed them because you do not lay it to heart. Behold, I will rebuke your offspring. And spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it. So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that my covenant with Levi may stand, says the Lord of Hosts.

My covenant with him was one of life and peace. I gave them to him. It was a covenant of fear, and he feared me. He stood in awe of my name. True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth.

For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But you have turned aside from the way, you have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts. And so I make you despised and abased before all the people. And as much as you do not keep my ways, but show partiality in your instruction.

This is the word of the Lord. Father, open our eyes to behold the wonderful truth. Of your word. Father, help us this morning to see the greatness of your holiness,

that while we were yet sinners, you desire to make us holy. As you are holy.

Will you convict our hearts where we are not living like you?

I pray that you will help our ears to be attentive to what you have to say from your word, and it's your name we pray. Amen. There's a lot of references in these verses to the Old Testament law. A lot of references. We've seen that in Malachi. We've talked about how this is a bridge to the New Testament.

Last week we were introduced to Jacob and Esau. Now we're talking about priests and sacrifices. And if you're in a reading plan that's reading the Bible through the year, you might be around the end of Exodus or the beginning, middle of Exodus



getting into Leviticus where you're seeing the sacrifices and the priest in the Levitical system.

Maybe you're getting bogged down by it a little bit. But here in chapter 1 and 2, we're gonna see that God had a purpose for all of it. God's issue in this text is with the priest. They are not doing what they should be doing. They are not doing what He wants them to do. And you see throughout it, He's got a problem with a lot of what they're doing.

And it's strong language. He is not pleased with them. He finds no pleasure in them. He wants to throw dung on their faces. Which is very, like, okay, we, have we gone too far here? But God is wanting us to see how seriously he takes his name and his holiness. That we cannot fling filthy stuff at him and his character.

God's issue with the priest is that they are not taking him seriously. God rightfully deserves all honor and reverence because he is holy. And there is no one like him. Right out of the gate in verse 6, God gives us a, I think an illustration that helps us understand where he's coming from. He says, a son honors his father, and a servant his master.

Like there is a relationship here that we as humans understand. Our children are to show honor to the parents. Growing up, I knew when I crossed that line, and I saw the stare of my mom, or I heard the words of my dad, I'm like, I have, I have gone too far here, okay? In that role, there is honor and reverence that are, is to be shown by the children to the parents.

And then you have the servant and his master. Like, you just can't go in and bad mouth your boss, right? You just walk into your office, his office, her office, and like, man, you're the worst. Why are you always doing this? What's gonna happen to you? You're gonna be finding a new boss soon, right? So we understand from human terms that there is a, there are positions in life that are deserving, rightfully deserving, of honor and praise.

And now here's the reality. And God is saying, I'm a father. God says, I'm a father to you. You are my people. I am a master. You are a servant. Where is my honor? Where is my reverence and fear? And if we show honor and reverence to our earthly fathers who are not perfect, and our earthly bosses who are not perfect, God's saying, should we not show honor and praise to, to Him who is perfect?

He rightfully deserves all honor and praise. There's a clear difference between the two. We know it, God knows it, we understand the distinction. And God, and the relationship between God and man is, is similar. God created mankind. There is a



distinction between us. Even though Genesis 1 and 2 tells us that we are made in his image.

In Genesis 1 and 2, God made us just like him. This was before sin. So Adam and Eve walked freely with God. They had no sin. They were perfect. They reflected his holy character. They were not God, but they reflected his image. There were still distinctions. Adam didn't know everything. He was bound by humanity.

And then sin enters in the world. And then mankind shifts and says, I don't want anything to do with God.

And now our sin is a distinguishing factor between us and God.

And throughout this passage in Malachi chapter 1 and 2, God brings up His name quite a bit. He talks about the greatness of His name. His name has been despised.

It's been defiled. The priests are guilty of this. Why is God taking His name so seriously? Why is He, why is He so up in arms, so to say, About this. Why is his name so important that it comes in at number three on the Ten Commandments list? Exodus 20 verse 7 says you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Now let's, in order to understand what the importance of God's name we have to understand something about the Jewish culture. How they viewed a person's name is different than how we view our name. My name, given to me by my mom, is Matthew. She is the only one that's allowed to call me Matthew. Alright?

That's the rules. Alright? If you want to see how I work how the Lord's working in my holiness, and growing me in Christ likeness, call me Matthew, and you can see that at work, right in front of you, as I navigate, like, I can't believe you just said that to me, okay? I've now given you permission to do it.

I'm in a terrible bind here. But she named me Matthew just because she liked the name. It has no family ties. It has no meaning, though the name Matthew means a gift of God, which you take that for how the, for what you want, okay? But there's no family ties to it. There's no meaning. It's just the name that she liked and gave it to me.

For the Jewish people, it defined a person's character and identity. It was a serious thing. Malachi, we saw a couple weeks ago, his name means my messenger. And we see throughout this book, God's messenger to the people of Israel. Adam's



name. It was not, God was like, you know what, I like this name Adam. The name Adam in Hebrew literally means man.

That's it. I would think that's a good start here. I'm gonna name you man because you're the first one. It's your identity. It's who you are. Moses, as he's given this name, his name means drawn up out of water. And so as he was floating along the Nile River and he's pulled out of the water, he's given the name Moses.

So to defame someone's name is to defame someone's character. So why is God taking his name so seriously? It's because he takes his character seriously. And if they're questioning God's name, if they're questioning his greatness, then they're questioning his character. It's why God takes such offense to what the priests are doing in Malachi chapter 1 and 2.

They aren't just calling him names. They aren't just like, God, you're mean. And we're giving him a bad nickname. They're running his name through the mud. They're running his character down. And God is not pleased. The first time we learn about God's name is in Exodus chapter 3. In Exodus chapter 3, Moses, who we just talked about just a little bit ago, he has left Egypt because of some unfortunate events on his behalf and he ran away because he thought he was going to die.

He runs away, and then he finds a place to settle in, gets married, and he is a shepherd for his father in law for 40 years. While he's out in the desert, just minding the sheep, he sees a bush on fire. Now, I don't, I've never been in a desert, I don't think. For a long, I have been, but not for a long enough time to see if this is a natural occurrence.

But I think if it's hot, and there's plants, that occasionally one's going to catch on fire. Well, this Particular bush catches on fire and it gets Moses's attention because it is not burning up It's just burning. So Moses investigates and he walks over and the bush Speaks to him and says don't come any further take off your shoes You're standing on a holy ground and this is the voice of God speaking through the bush I imagine Moses probably did a double take and make sure he was like, well I don't know what was in that pizza I had for lunch, but I'm hearing things And God speaks to him out of this bush, and he calls Moses, you're going to go back to Egypt, and you're going to set my people free.

And I'm going to deliver them, and take them to a land that I've promised to them, and you're going to leave them there. Moses has a bunch of questions. In fact, at some point in this encounter, it's almost like God has just had enough with the questions. But one of the questions I think that Moses asked is actually a good question.



He said, I'm going to go back to these people. I'm going to come out of the desert. It's been 40 years since I've interacted with anybody. And I'm going to tell them, God has told me to come and get you out of Egypt. They're going to ask, Okay, what is this God's name? So Moses asked God, God, what do I tell them?

And God gives us, for the first time, his name. I am who I am. Is the personal name of God. In Exodus 3, 13 15,

It says, Then Moses said to God, If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you. And they ask me, What is his name? What shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I am who I am. And he said, Say this to the people of Israel. I am has sent me to you. God also said to Moses, Say this to the people of Israel.

The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever. And thus, I am to be remembered throughout all generations. I am who I am is the English for what we know God's name to be, Yahweh. It's kind of a peculiar name, I would think.

I am who I am. But how do you describe the God of the universe? How do you describe the one who breathed life into How do you describe the one who just hung the stars in the sky? How do you describe the one that's always existed, who knows everything? Well, God describes Himself for us. I am who I am.

There is no one like Him. What you see is what you get with God. God's existence is not contingent upon anyone else. His plans are not contingent upon any circumstances. He promises that He will be what He will be. That is, He will be eternal. The eternally constant God. He stands ever present. Unchangeable.

Completely sufficient in Himself. God does not rely on anyone else. God does not need anything. God knows everything. He's unchangeable. He's all powerful. I am who I am, God says. What sets God's name apart from all other names?

He is distinct. And there is no one that can say, Well, I am who I am. Because when I look at my own life, I There's a lot that changes about me. There's a lot where I fall short. There's a lot of people very similar to me. There's no one like our God. What sets his name apart is that he is holy. The word holy literally means to set apart.

Different, distinct, it stands out. Isaiah 57 15 that we read earlier. For thus says the one who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is, what? Whose name is what? All right, if y'all, we're gonna have to start talking or we'll just, I'll keep preaching, okay? I dwell in the high and holy place and also with him who is of a



contrite and lowly spirit to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

His name is holy. Luke 1 49 as Mary is singing this song of praise that she will give birth to the Savior. It says, For he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. He is distinct. There is no one like him. He is holy. What sets God apart from everything, including us, is that he is perfect.

There are no blemishes. There is no sin. There is no wickedness. There is no evil. He is always holy, always righteous. There's no wrong in him. He is holy. In Isaiah 6 3, We see this incredible picture. Isaiah is, is seen, he gets to see the throne room of God. And he, and it says in one call to another, everybody's around.

They say, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory. I love this little antidote that many people have brought to the attention. It's not new with me. But holy, holy, holy is, and God's holiness is the only time throughout all of Scripture that we see. A, a characteristic that describes God mentioned three times in a row.

Never do you see God as love, love, love. Or God as gracious, gracious, gracious. He is love, yes. He is gracious. He is those things. But only about His holiness do we see God is holy, holy, holy. And this is not the only time this phrase is used in the Bible. It's used in Revelation. One day we're going to be around the throne of God and we're going to be singing those same words.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. In my notes that I put together for my sermon, there are, it's color coded, it helps me stay focused, okay? But there are some bold lines throughout my notes. And those bold lines are the main points that you see on the, the TV. And that are in your program. I bold them because this is what I want to draw attention to.

For the, in the Hebrew language, to use something three times is like bolding it, underlining, italicizing, and drawing attention to it. Holy, holy, holy is God Almighty. There's no one like Him. He deserves all honor and praise. There is no one like our God. And that's why God says in Malachi 1. 11, I'm going to make my name great among all the nations.

The whole world is going to know my name. Going back to the sports illustration I had at the beginning, I'm always fascinated when you see a high profile athlete or celebrity that we think everybody knows. But then when you travel to a place like Ethiopia, And you're playing basketball on the court and you say in their, in their broken English, I'm not Michael Jordan, alright, and they respond with, who is that?





For me, I'm like, how do you not know who Michael Jordan is?

One of the greatest, if not the greatest basketball player ever. There are people that do not know his name. But God is saying, there is coming a point where everybody is going to know my name. Because it is great and holy and deserving of all honor and praise.

And when we look at this text and we see the greatness of God, we don't always show the honor and reverence that God deserves, do we? And I'm trying, in my prayer for this series, is I want to, I want to elevate God to see his greatness. So often we want to bring God down to our level. And thankfully he did that through Jesus.

But he does not just come and hang out and, and mingle with us. He wants us to see his greatness and behold his greatness. Jesus was great. You know, we try to bring him down into something that he's not. We bring him down, it's a way, our way of defaming his name and his character. You know, there's a reason we have this giant gap between mankind and God.

It's because sin has separated us from a holy God. The priests say, how have we defamed your name? How have we defiled it?

God has worked up here, if you could read through this text. Like a parent, when the kid's like, you didn't tell me to do this, and you're like, oh boy, yes I did. Right? You know what I'm talking about here? How have we defiled your name? And God's like, let me tell you how this has happened. You didn't do what I told you to do.

Let's go back to the book of Exodus. When God reveals his name to Moses, he will soon reveal his desires for his, how his people are to live in relationship to him. Moses will be on the top of a mountain when he receives the law. God gives the law and says the people are to meet this law. They are supposed to obey this law because I'm holy and I want them to be holy.

God wants us to be like him. He cannot allow unholiness. So the law was God's way of showing us his holiness and our sinfulness. He is perfect. We are not. He is always keeping the law. We break the law. And even when we say, well, I'm not a bad person, Book of James tells us if we break the law once we're guilty of all of it.

That means if, if I've, if I have lied, let's pick the one where we're like, well, lying's not the worst. Okay. If I lied once, and God calls this a sin, I am now have this one, let's say one lie, alright? This one blemish on my record. Is my record perfect? No. God has a perfect record. So now we have this distinction.



So God gives the law and says, I want you to be holy. Later on in Romans chapter 7, the Apostle Paul will help us. Understand more about the law. What then shall we say that the law is sin? By no means. Yet if I had, if it had not been for the law I would not have known sin for I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said you shall not covet. But sin seizing an opportunity through the commandment produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law sin lies dead.

In other words, God knows that we are sinners. He's not surprised by this. The issue is oftentimes, we don't think we are like we're I'm fine. I'm a good person. So God gives the law to help us see our sin in comparison to his holiness. This past week Julie and I got away for our anniversary and we went to New Hampshire and Maine for the week.

I'm gonna be honest, when we left and we saw that there's gonna be potential of snow in Florida, we may have prayed for the snow to go away because we didn't want to miss out on that, all right? Just, we were coveting there a little bit, I guess. We get to our place in New Hampshire and we go to Walmart to grab snacks.

Now, as we are there, Julie makes the kind, people are looking at us. Right? Julie makes the comment, was like, I think they know we don't belong here, or something along those lines. Cause, I don't, I mean, I think we had tourists written all over us. Mainly because some of them were in short sleeves, it's like two degrees.

And I'm like, I will never be warm again. That's how I, how I felt. We stood out. And when we put ourselves in comparison to a holy God, we stand out because of our sin. And God says, you don't belong here. You have to be holy. If you want a relationship with me, Holiness is the standard.

But God did not leave us in our sin. This is the beautiful joy of the grace he has given us. God could have and rightfully said, I don't want anything to do with you. I am holy, you have missed the mark, you have sinned, you're on your own. But God says, no. I want you. I want you to belong to me. I want to restore this relationship with my prized creation.

And so God gives the law to help us see our sin and he provides for the people of Israel a system in which they can confess and repent and have their sins paid for. God established the sacrificial system. Now the sacrificial system didn't begin in Exodus and Leviticus. It actually, God did it when Adam and Eve sinned.

He put a perfect sacrifice and sets the tone there that something perfect must die for sins to be covered. God establishes the sacrificial system. And then he



establishes this priestly system, this role, that these people will go before God on behalf of the, the, the people and offer this sacrifice for the sins of the world.

And the people of Israel failed in all three. They didn't keep the law, they offered imperfect, imperfect, blemished sacrifices, we see in this text, and the priests weren't doing their job. They never lived holy as God commanded.

And they lived this way, they get their sacrifices. They even have goods. They even have the right ones. It says you have a great you have a great offering right there But you choose the one with the the maimed leg the one that you that's not even yours. It's ugly. It's Disgusting it's dirty and you bring it in and you offer it as a sacrifice and then in verse 9 of chapter 1 God says and now You entreat the favor of God that he may be gracious to us with such a gift from your hand Will he show favor to any of you?

The priests bring this ugly, imperfect offering before the Lord. And they say, it doesn't matter, God will be gracious. It's not how often we live our lives. That I can do whatever I want to. God will be gracious, because God's gracious. He has to love me and forgive me. That's who He is. But God is holy, holy, holy.

And we don't just get to walk up and make the demands. And tell Him how He is supposed to be gracious.

He shows us exactly what He requires. In the law, the sacrifices and the priests were all apart. of God's plan to redeem sinners. This is ultimately what God wants. He wants to save sinful mankind like me and you.

I think in Malachi we see this shift. The law is not going to save these people. These sacrifices aren't going to save them. And these priests are failing to do the job that they're supposed to do. And I love this, about this book. We are seeing God drop the curtain to reveal Jesus to us. Because Jesus, the perfect sacrifice and high priest, Reconcile sinners to a holy God.

God call, recalls his covenant that he made with Levi. There's a lot there and I've got like 10 minutes left in this sermon and about 30 minutes worth of things to get through, okay? So Levi was given the responsibility of being the priest of Israel. He didn't get a tribe, he was responsible for the temple work, for the tabernacle, for the sacrifices, all of it.

And God made a covenant with him and told him exactly what he wanted to do. This is what it looks like. You can read all of this through Leviticus and Exodus. Only the high priest can go into the presence of a, the, the Holy of Holies. No one else



goes in there. Sacrifices have to be done this way. And Levi's like, yes, I'm going to, we are gonna do this because you're awesome.

God. He had an all for God. The text says he saw how great God was and says, God, if you want me to do this, I'm going to do it for you. God is even telling these priest. When they say it's too difficult, God, this is the equivalent of a kid going through the grocery store and just giving up. Like, I can't go any further.

And you offer candy, and all of a sudden they can get up, right? I don't know how it works.

It's too difficult, God, to keep this law. It's too weighty. God says, Levi did it. He committed to it.

And Jesus points us to a different priest. One who is even better than Levi. One who will teach exactly what needs to be taught. One who will do exactly what God requires. One that will follow through perfectly. And his name is Jesus. In Hebrews chapter 9, if you're reading through Leviticus, I encourage you to also read Hebrews alongside of that.

In Hebrews chapter 9,

it says, I think we got it up here, on the screen,

let me flip to it, I don't have it ready.

Verse 11 it says, When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent, not made with hands, that is not of this creation, Jesus entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Jesus came and did what these priests could not do. He offered a perfect sacrifice on behalf of all people, all sinners, so that the sinners can be forgiven. And Jesus didn't just offer any sacrifice. It wasn't a bull. It wasn't a goat. It was himself. And that's why John the Baptist, when he first sees Jesus and introduces him, he says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.



If a goat and a lamb Can bring purification for people? How much more can the blood of Jesus do? Once and for all, there's no more need for a sacrificial system because Jesus finished it. There's no more need for new high priests frequently. Jesus is the high priest. Jesus, the perfect sacrifice and high priest, reconciles sinners to a holy God.

The word reconcile is bringing two parties together that were once enemies. And Jesus brings us into that friendship with God the Father. How often do we think about this? How often do we think about the significance of what Jesus has done for us? That we would have no desire for God if it were not for Jesus.

That we would have no desire to be holy if it were not for Jesus being holy. That even as we seek to be holy, we're looking to Jesus. Because God desires that we live holy because He is holy. The beginning of chapter two, God says, Now, priest, this command is for you. If you will not listen, listen up. If you will not take it to heart and to give honor to my name, says the Lord of hosts, then I will send a curse upon you and I will curse your blessings.

God is calling these priests to repent and return to Him. Better listen up. This is what I want for you. I want you to be holy because I am holy. Repent. Turn from your ways and turn to me.

But they didn't listen. They didn't take heart. And they didn't honor his name. In verse 8, God says, but you have turned aside from the way.

On our way to the airport, the Boston airport, which Julie and I have classified as the worst airport in the world, okay? I needed to fill up gas and I'm, the entrance was closed. It was weird. So Julie's navigating. I'm not a navigator at all. And so I see the next entrance. And so I'm gonna turn in.

All of a sudden, let me go back a little bit, okay? We're on our way to the rental car. And we're stuck behind this car that does not know what they're doing. I mean, there's, we're like, you gotta move over. They're stopped, they're getting over, then they're back over. It got to the point where I threw my hands up at one, one point, okay?

You've been there? You're like, alright, you've gotta make up your minds here, okay? You're just driving me nuts. Finally get to where we need to go, past the gas station because the entrance is closed, and I go to turn into this entrance, and all of a sudden, horns are honking, and there's a car in my way, because I am turning into A do not enter road.



The sign was facing the wrong way. Okay, we went back. Julie told me not to turn and I still didn't listen. I didn't take it to heart. Everybody's mad. I had become what I hated is the people start throwing their hands up at me. And I just as I stood there and I'm frustrated and I'm pumping gas. I just thought, man, how, how often do we look at a story like this in the priest who reject the greatness of God and we say, I don't want to be like that.

And then we become like them. When we think we can go our own way. A way that's against what God has said. And there's warnings around us. Don't go this way. You're going the wrong way. In our pursuit of holiness, we must look to Jesus. We must look to Jesus. There's two frustrations that happen. One, is we look and we say, man, I, I can't be perfect.

I get that. We're still fighting this sin. God looks at us and, because of Jesus, says, you're mine, you belong to me. You're positionally You are holy, but practically we don't live that out all the time, do we? You still fighting it? Your selfishness and pride and greed? Is it just me? So often, maybe it is just me, it feels like.

There's other times we think, I can do whatever I want to because God is gracious. When we look at 1 Peter 1, we're going to land this plane here.

Peter is looking forward for us. It says, therefore, preparing your minds for action and being sober minded. Set your hope fully. On the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance. But as he who called you as holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Since it is written, you shall be holy for I am holy. And if you call on him as father, who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear through the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. Not with perishable things, such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you, who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. I read those words from Peter, and I can't help but see the similarities of Malachi Being holy because God is holy.

First, setting your hope fully on the grace of Jesus. We cannot make ourselves holy. There is no good work or good thing that we can do that makes us holy. It is the



grace of Jesus who is the perfect sacrifice for our sins. If you want to be holy, first begins by setting your hope fully on Jesus and His grace for you.

Whether you're a Christian or not a Christian. If you're a Christian wanting to live holy for the Lord, it begins by setting your hope fully on the grace of Jesus. Meaning, you can't do this on your own. If you're not a Christian and you want to be holy and be like God and have a relationship with Him, it begins by setting your hope fully on the grace of Jesus, that He died for you and rose again for you.

Holiness begins with Jesus.

Oftentimes we think, if I, if I meet all these religious things, I'll be holy. Let me tell you, I've done this, I've tried this, going to church does not make you holy. There have been seasons in my life where I've faked it. And God looks right in the heart and sees us.

You can't fake being holy in front of God. So set your hope fully on the grace of Jesus. Peter continues on, as we see in Malachi, that being holy because God is holy is living in obedience to God's commands for me. Through the power of Jesus. Of Jesus.

God says, here is what I long for you. Live as obedient children. But I can't do it on my own. I need the power of Jesus. As a parent comes alongside a young child and helps them obey. Hey, let's pick up the toys. What do parents often do? Let's pick them up. This is what it looks like. As followers and sons and daughters of the Father, Jesus comes alongside and says, hey, this is what obedience looks like.

I've modeled this for you. I've done this for you. We live in obedience to God's commands through the power of Jesus.

Being holy because God is holy is rejecting the passions of my life before Jesus.

My life before Jesus is a life of death, Scripture says. My life with Jesus is a life of life and hope and grace. I don't want to return back to that former life. The life that Jesus saved me from. And often times we have to put to death the life we had before Jesus as we pursue holiness. And rejecting the passions of my life before Jesus.

Being holy because God is holy. As living a life in honor and reverence to the God who saved us. Through the spotless blood of Jesus.



When we behold the greatness of God. I think it just leaves you in, in awe. It's what the issue is with the priest. Took their eyes off God and lost their awe. Turned aside from the way, it says. When God referred to Levi,

He says to him, in verse 5, He stood in awe of my name.

There's this. When Julie and I were away, there's, we were staying close to Mount Washington. It's a crazy mountain. It's not, it's not high. It's not even 5,000, an elevation of 5,000 feet. The top of this mountain has the craziest wind records ever recorded, like close to 300 miles per hour. Like, negative 70.

People die up there all the time because they think they're adventurous and the weather can change like that.

And we We're able to go, we didn't go up there, all right? But we took a, a train up to the, the forest line. And got a little close. And we took some pictures, and the pictures just don't do it justice. So when we stood there just in awe of how great everything was around us.

Perfect white snow everywhere. I can't help but think maybe we need to lift our eyes up. And behold. The great purity of our God Who is holy and above all things and a few verses later in first Peter chapter 2 Peter says as you come to him a living stone rejected by men But in the sight of God chosen and precious You yourselves like living stones Are being built up as a spiritual house A holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Peter tells us,

your life is a living sacrifice to a holy God. You are a holy priesthood. So church, let's not act like these priests in Malachi 1 and 2, who just failed to see the greatness of God's holiness in his name. But let's stand in awe of all. That Christ has done for us and made that fuel our desire to be holy as He is holy.

