

“HALLOWED BE THY NAME”

Pastor Mike Corwin

TEXT: EXODUS 3:1-6, 13-15

SCRIPTURE: REVELATION 4:1-11

I – RESPECT:

You know that we had a third service here at the church, which was held each Sunday afternoon. A couple of you stopped in and checked it out. The message each week followed the same theme as the earlier services but that’s pretty much where the comparison ended. The music was different, the prayer time was different, and those who attend were different in their appearance and style of worship. The biggest thing I wrestled with personally was feeling comfortable preaching in jeans and an untucked church instead of dress clothes and a tie.

For 29 years I wore a uniform to work. I took good care of that uniform because I believed that people should respect police officers and a neat and orderly uniform could command that kind of respect in people who didn’t know me. My uniform was always clean and pressed. The badge and buttons were shined, as were the shoes which were buffed to a polished shine at the beginning of every shift and kept shined by rubbing the toes against the back of the pant leg every so often to bring out the shine. My wife never touched my uniform because she couldn’t put it together to suit me, or sew on the patch so it was exactly 2” below the shoulder seam and perfectly straight. As a matter of fact Julie would tell you that for 29 years, whenever I was in uniform, she wasn’t allowed to hold my hand or kiss me good bye or show affection in any way in public that could bring disrespect to that uniform.

People looked at that uniform and respected it as an authority, as a source of information, as a symbol of order in the midst of chaos. It brought respect for me, them, and the department I represented. It was sacred.

II – DO WE RESPECT GOD?:

As I think back about those days I have to ask myself the question, do I always show God as much respect, hold him as sacred as I did that uniform? All of you have something in your lives that you respect like a parent or a spouse, or a job, or teacher, or whatever it may be. Ask yourselves the same question, do you respect God as much as you do that person? Do you respect God as much as you do your family, your grandparents, your car, your alma mater, or your sports team? Sadly most of us come to the realization we do not respect God as much as we should.

The second line of the Lord's Prayer says "HALLOWED BE THY NAME." To Hallow means to hold something as sacred. When you hallow something you regard and hold that thing as holy and sacred. The second line of the prayer Jesus taught us to pray to our heavenly Father, says that his very name is to be respected, revered, held sacred by his children.

God not only demands this but he deserves it! In the reading from Revelation this morning you hear the words of the angels and the elders, who fall down before God's throne in heaven and sing,

¹¹ "You are worthy, O Lord our God,
to receive glory and honor and power.
For you created everything,
and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created."

This is the God who gave you your very life and insured there is a way to keep it for all of eternity. What else does he have to do to deserve your respect? But he demands it too. Of the 10 commandments, the first 4 are all about respecting God and keeping his name Holy. Thou shalt not take the Lord thy God's name in vain – you shall hallow it. Hold it in reverence. Yet, how do we measure up to this task of hallowing the name of our God?

III – SCRIPTURE – EXODUS 3:1-6, 13-15:

I think that the story in the Bible, which most vividly lays out this reverence and awe we are supposed to hold God in is found in the third chapter of Exodus. Throughout the Old Testament we see the people being continually reminded that one of the reasons the Israelites should respect God and see him as Holy is because of the mighty deeds he's done for them. The one you see used, even by the Apostles in the New Testament is the fact this is the God of their ancestors, the God who delivered them all from slavery in Egypt and took them to the promised land. The story, which models the reverence we should have for God, is the story where Moses is called by God to lead the people out of Egypt...

Exodus 3:1 - 6 (NLT)

¹One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up. ³"This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it." ⁴When the LORD saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied. ⁵"Do not come any closer," the LORD warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. ⁶I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

Moses is engaged in tending the sheep of his father-in-law. As he approaches the mountain of God, Mt. Sinai where God would appear to him and give him the commandments later, he sees a miracle. A bush that is on fire, but doesn't burn up. He moves closer for an inspection of this phenomenon and as he does God speaks. It is through this interaction between God and Moses we find the demand and acts of respect God demands and receives from Moses.

First God tells him not to come any closer. God is separate from us. He is the creator we are the creation. He is above all and overall and isn't our buddy, our pal, he's our God! Nothing is on the same level with God; he is different from everything else. God tells Moses to take off his sandals, because he's standing on Holy Ground. To take your sandals off in the home of someone else was a show of respect. God demands respect from Moses. Moses also showed respect and reverence by hiding his eyes in his hands so as to not even look at God. Here's a great insight...what is it that makes this ground Holy...THE PRESENCE OF GOD! This church isn't holy because it's a church or it's got a bell, or it has an organ, a choir, a preacher, or an altar. This place is holy because God is here. His Holy Spirit abides here. When you come here you should show God respect and reverence.

Then after Moses tries to get out of working for God he asks God, who he should say he's working for...

Exodus 3:13 – 15 (NLT)

¹³ But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" ¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations.

God's very name is Holy and above all else. The literal translation of this passage is "I AM WHO I AM." I am God, you don't need a bunch of titles, just respect and obey me. This name is so powerful, remember in the garden when Jesus is arrested he says "I AM he" and the power of that name knocked down all the soldiers! This isn't a Mike or and Andy or a Chris, this is God! This is the God we are called to respect and the name we are called to Hallow, to hold sacred.

IV – HOW TO HALLOW:

So the big question in my mind isn't whether or not God's name should be hallowed. The big question is how. It would be easy to say that all we ever have to do is remember the second commandment and never take God's name in vain. Hopefully you all know God doesn't have a last name, let alone one that resembles something that holds back water. But that's just one small part of this hallowing of God.

I knew that people respected the police uniform when it changed their behavior. When they listened to and obeyed what I told them, I knew I had their respect. You hallow God's name by the way you live, the way you listen and obey his commands and the teachings of his Son Jesus.

- When you fail to help those in need, such as the victims of hurricanes, floods, poverty...you dishonor the name of God.
- When you speak words of hate and sarcasm instead of words of love and compassion...you dishonor God.
- When you let anger rule your life...you dishonor God.
- When you are self-centered, worship your possessions and assets, disrespect others, cheat on your taxes, put anything before your duty to God...you have dishonored God.

The Apostle Paul put it this way:

1 Corinthians 6:19 – 20 (NLT)

¹⁹Or don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

In other words...God's name is hallowed by the way we live. Does your life with all of your habits, actions and words hallow the name of your God? I should represent God better than I did that uniform and the police department.

V – LOOKING UP TO GOD:

There is a statue in the Cathedral in Copenhagen, Denmark which drives home this point of how we are to respect our God and Hallow him.

In the late 1700's the Pope commissioned Danish Sculptor Albert Bertel Thorvaldsen to sculpt a series of large statues for the Cathedral. If you visit the church today you will see a statue of the resurrected Jesus above the high Altar. As you approach the statue you discover that you cannot see the face of your Savior. It is hidden from your view as you stand at the altar...but if you fall to your knees and look up you can see his face. It is when you kneel at the feet of Jesus, in a position of reverence and respect, you see the holiness of God reflected in the face of Jesus, his Son.

I pray you now understand what it means to hallow the name of God and will endeavor to change your life to reflect this verse of the prayer you say.

AMEN....