

Rediscovering The Majesty of God

By Paris Reidhead*

This evening hour's message is Rediscovering the Majesty of God. Our Scripture reading will be found in Exodus 19 chapter. Our text will be found in Matthew the 5th chapter. I would like to read in your hearing the largest portion of this chapter. I believe that it is fitting that you should hear God's Word rather than by people attempt to describe it. (Reading Exodus 19:1-25)

Will you turn, please, to Matthew, chapter 5:1,2; 7:28.

5 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:² And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

²⁸ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:²⁹ For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Two scenes have been described for you in these few brief words, two mountains. There have been those that have issued great accusations against the God of the Old Testament; those that have decried the tribal deity of Israel that was raged against sin; those that have sought to make the Old Testament of no meaning or value to our day and generation. But I submit to you that the One who spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai is the same one that spoke to the multitude on the Mount of the Sermon. There has been no change in his character; there has been no alteration in Him at all, but there are two phases of His ministry. The second was implicit in the first, and the first is foundational to the second. You will never understand what He is saying in the 5th and 6th and 7th chapters of Matthew unless you rightly understand that which He said in the 19th and 20th chapters of Exodus. You never can understand what He said in Exodus unless you have some understanding of what He intended to do and set forth as His purpose in the portion in Matthew. It behooves us, therefore, to consider this quest for the rediscovery of the Majesty of God by coming to these mountains and several others that we'll be suggesting to you.

But first I think it's only fair that I should establish with you the necessity of rediscovering the majesty of God. Is it true that we live in a generation that has lost sight of His majesty. Certainly, He has not lost His majesty. Let us establish that point at the moment. There has been no alteration or change in His character. He is not less God than He was at any other time. But, it is true that our generation, somehow, has been deprived of a proper setting forth of the nature of God.

I suppose that there are always actions and inter-actions, reactions that have to be accounted for. We know that following the Reformation there was the discovery of the majesty of God, the sovereignty of God as over against the sovereignty of the Church. During the Dark Ages from the time of Augustine on, with ever-increasing intensity, the philosophy was that wherever the church is, there truth is, there God is revealed. With Martin Luther¹ you have the inauguration of an entirely antithetical proposition, namely this, that the church is where Truth is. God is unveiled, not by the church but by Truth. And of course this meant that the reformers were going to go to the Scriptures in an attempt to understand the nature of God. And I am quite prepared to agree with you that possibly the Puritans in England and the Reformers on the Continent may have placed somewhat an unbalanced emphasis upon the sovereignty of God and the majesty of God. But I am also going to declare there was no necessity for the radical departure, the extreme swaying of the pendulum that we have seen in the last 100 years in Church History. I think that you can trace the roots of this dethroning of God, this minimizing of God, this obscuring of His character; you can trace the roots of this to the rise of Deism in France. You know, of course, that the church, so-called church, the church that was established and was known, became the handmaid of hypocrisy and despotism. You know, of course, that it had somehow so lost its vision, its function and its ministry that the kings could be the supporters of it and actually the head of it, though all manner of brutality was practiced by the kings and essentially their being the head of the church made the brutality from the church itself. We recognize this; we realize it, that it had lost its function, lost its purpose, lost its way into

¹ Martin Luther (1483-1546) German monk, former Catholic priest, who wrote the Ninety-Five Theses.

the dark of the Dark Ages. You know also, that with the rise of the Deists in France, there then was one (I personally do not believe he understood what he was doing, but did it nonetheless.) You know it was Victor Hugo, I believe, that said, 'nothing is as an army, except an ideal when its time has come'. He then went on to say there are 3 phases to every great idea. The first is that hearsay; the second is him, there may be something to it'; and the third is 'I believed that all the time'.

Well, we find during the Dark Ages some of it began to see the significance of man, the nature of man, the importance of him, but it waited until the enemies of Christianity actually expressed the dignity of man. Unfortunately, this has to be recognized. The church had so lost its way, the church, the established church, had so lost itself in its own myriad maze of windings in theology and speculation and philosophy so-called, that it didn't have any answer for its day and generation. Then you find men, like Voltaire and Tom Paine, who announced the principle basically a Biblical principle, which had been abandoned by the church, that there is dignity in human personality that man is not just a little checker on the board, that is to be moved around at the whim of some king or ruler, but that he has plays and validity and importance and relevance to himself and to others. They announced it. Then Jean Jacques Rousseau comes along with the idea of social contract - no one has a right to be governed without his consent; then the French revolution - and humanism finds its fullest expression about this time and the emphasis is on man, democracy, the rule of the common people. We are reaping the benefits of it.

You do not realize, that the principles by which our very nation is founded affords you the freedom and the privilege that you have; these are principles that the church fought for with all of its might and strength. Such is the case, because "when salt hath lost its savour it's good for nothing but to be cast out and be trodden under foot of men." (Matt. 5:13) And that's what happened in certain countries. The only trouble is they have those that have rebelled against the brutality and the misunderstanding and the misrepresentation of God and His Word and have made the mistake of throwing out the source of all ultimate freedom and dignity; they made the mistake of throwing the baby out with the bath water, if I could use the illustration which you will instantly grasp. They throw away everything of value.

We see that happening in Russia. The same practically happened in France, though it didn't reach the extreme. Now what is the result?

Ever since the beginning of the 19th century, you have this emphasis on man. Fundamentalism, evangelical Christianity became homocentric, it became man-centered. What man was going to get out of it? Of course you had a division in the church about 100 years ago, when the Deists have been out-moded, have been replaced by others that came along inside the church and became enemies. You have the biologists and philosophers and theologians that attacked revealed religion with Christianity as it is set forth in the Word of God, and actually they were fighting abuses, but they were groping in the dark and they didn't know where to get, so they struck at inspiration, they struck at revelation, and in so doing again they cut the nerve of all real vitality.

But the effect of it was that the church was split into two sections. There was the one group that was called the Liberals and the other group that was called the Orthodox and the Fundamentalists. Later they changed that term, but not until about 1900. Now the Liberals became avowed humanists. Essentially humanism is a philosophical concept is that the chief end of being is the happiness of man. And the whole of liberal Christianity, so-called, was designed to make man happy while he is alive, because they had no answer for the enigma of death, the mystery of the grace. They said, we don't know about a heaven, we don't know about a hell; but we do know you have to journey through life for 60 or 70 years. You come to us and we'll give you the ability to make your trip a little more comfortable; we'll put springs on your wagon; we don't know where you are going, we don't know the road to give you, but we know that while you are journeying, whichever way it is, the trip will be more comfortable if you will associate with us.

Well, the end of it, you can see, is pure humanism. The chief end of religion is to make man happy while he is alive. They had no answer for death. But on the other side of this chasm that divided the two segments of the church, that came between churches and denominations and families. On the other side, the orthodox, the evangelical the fundamental group reacted to the same impact of this ascendancy of man this thinking regarding man, this reaction to the abuses of the Dark Ages, and it became something like this. We believe in the inspired Book; we believe in Heaven, we believe there is a Hell; we believe Jesus

Christ is the Virgin born Son of God who lived a sinless life and died an atoning death and was raised from the dead that He might save men from Hell and make him happy when he dies. But can't you see the direction that it's taken. Again it's become homo-centric; it's become man-centered. What man is going to get out of it; what he is going to profit by it. And then we have seen it degenerate until in our day much of our preaching has been sort of a sales pitch, selling Jesus, trying to tell all of the good things a person is going to get by accepting Jesus; reducing down the stringent requirements, minimizing the obligations and responsibilities and finally bring it down that to become a Christian is to accept Jesus which is essentially just to agree to a theological plan. And the result of it has been that on both sides there's been a humanizing of Christianity, an obscuring of the nature of God and a denying of the point and the purpose of Christianity as its set forth in the Word of God.

Now, what are we saying? Is everyone here? No, of course not. Because, even if you go back into the darkest of the Dark Ages you discover there were individuals that knew the Law. If you have never read the writings of John of Rohrsbruch you've deprived yourself of some of the sweetest, most fragrant utterances that have ever come from redeemed man. If you are not familiar with Meister Eckhart and Toler and others, you have also deprived yourself. It was Dr. Tozer² who said one day to a friend of mine, Bob Battles, "I know now the secret springs from which Dr. Simpson³ drank, I have found the friends with whom he communed." Whom did he mean? He meant Julian of Norwich⁴; he meant Frederick Kramer, some of these men who lived during the dark ages, who pressed through all of these things which would hold them in darkness and obscure God to their needy, hungry hearts, and they broke through it and met Him and told what they had experienced and what they'd seen.

So I am not saying that this has been true universally at any time, nor am I saying that in this day there are not those who have discovered the majesty of God and are living in the light of what He is. But I am saying that the trend of our day the tendency of our day, the general atmosphere of our day is to make Jesus Christ a means to an end, a means to escape from Hell, a means to escape from punishment, a means to escape from fear and from defeat and from failure.

Now He is all of these things, but it is a prostituting of the truth of God when you take the glorified Son off of the Throne to which He has been exalted and reduce Him down to a kind of religious bellboy that answers the push of need to come and carry the bag that you may have some little distance, that you may choose to go. No. What am I saying? Essentially it is this, that we've got to come back to the fact that there is no contradiction between a Theo-centric Christianity and all of the true values that we have - the dignity of man, the importance of man, that which is a proper relationship of man to his fellows. These horrible monstrosities of teachings and doctrines which so paralyzed and polluted the church during the Dark Ages, are not scriptural in their origin. It is absolutely imperative that you should understand what God's word teaches; not what the church has taught, not even what this church has taught. It is imperative that you come back to the Word and let God speak for Himself and find out what He has to say about Himself. Therefore I extol Christo-centric, Christ-centered thinking through which you can only fulfill your reason for being and the potentialities of your personality. You can only be what you are intended to be and thus enjoy the happiness, enjoy blessedness that you were intended to experience when you are properly related to God. You are not to make God a tool for your happiness, but you are to see Him as He is, and in seeing Him as He is and in relating yourself to Him as He is, then you're going to have fulfilled in you the joy, the completeness, the happiness the satisfaction that you can have no other way in all the world. You've got to rediscover that God of the Bible, the majesty of this God.

Now I say that these mountains are important to us. First the mountain that we've considered is Mt. Sinai. In this mountain and on this mountain, you have the revelation of God in many of His unchangeable attributes. First, you see Him there in His eternity, by His very name - Jehovah, the self-existent One, that depends upon no other one for His being. It is Jehovah that comes down. It's Jehovah now that reveals Himself. You see Him in His infinity; you see Him in His eternity; you see Him in His immutability, that He's not changing, that is not altered; you see Him as He displays the fact that He is all-powerful, for He turns the mountain into smoke and fire. You see Him in His knowledge, his omniscience as He unveils the nature of man to man, for it is only in the light of God that any human being can ever see what he is, and that's the reason why so many creep like moles through the few brief days of their time, because never seeing God revealed to them, they have no comprehension

² Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) Pastor and Author. Christian and Missionary Alliance

³ Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919) founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance

⁴ Julian of Norwich (1342-1416)

of what they are. You have to have a frame of reference if you are to understand yourself, and you were made in the image and likeness of God, and the only way you will ever understand what you are is when you have some insight and understanding of what God is.

So consequently we find that here in Mt. Sinai you have the revelation of the Justice of God. You have the revelation of the holiness of God; you have revelation of the wrath of God. You say, well, is that all you see? His power, His omniscience, His majesty, His holiness, His justice. Oh no, that's not all you see. Because as Moses went up into this mountain and stayed with God 40 days and came down with the Ten Commandments, this ten-foot rule if you please, this yard stick by which man was to measure himself, this thing which was to be the - said to be just and holy and good - the Law, as he came down with this Law which is in itself enough to bring everyone to the sense of his own guilt and crime before God - I say when Moses came down from the mountain with the Law, he also had the pattern of the Tabernacle and the law of the offering. And whereas here on this mountain you have this display of the nature of God, in these things which are so clearly seen in this portion which I read for you, you read just a little further and you discover that Moses carried with him two tablets of stone, tablets upon which are written by the finger of God sufficient truth to bring anyone that is here in the presence of my voice to that place that the Publican found himself in the Temple in Jesus' day, when he stood with down-cast eyes and beat his breast and cried "God be merciful to me a sinner".(Luke 18:13) That Law, I say, is enough to bring anyone of us to the end of himself. That was the Law.

Why did He give the Law? Why did He give this manifestation of Himself? It was the ministry of mercy. Why? He wanted man to see the nature of his crime. He wanted man; he wanted you to be able to discover what sin had done to you, that it had turned you into a traitor, into an enemy and a rebel, and an anarchist, a transgressor against God; that it had brought upon you the sentence of death. All that you have in the Old Testament of the revelation of God's hatred against sin, God's wrath upon sinners, is that you might see the enormity of your crime against Him. But I say that it wasn't just there. If it had been just this and nothing more, it would have proved the God of the Bible to be a monster of tremendous proportions. But the fact is, that the very day that Moses came down with the Law in his hand, he had the law of the offering in his heart, and the pattern of the Tabernacle in his mind. And what did he do. He gave instructions, he appointed men to work. They erected the Tabernacle in the wilderness, they put in the holy place and the Ark of the Covenant and the outstretched cherubims. They put into the holy place the table of shewbread, the candlesticks and the altar of incense. They put into the court the laver and the altar of burnt offerings, and they surrounded it all by a fence to obscure the view of the profane and the unbelieving.

What did he have here? He had the Gospel, he had Law and grace marvelously blended together, and in this mountain you have the revelation of what God is. Why? So that man can see what He is. Why? So that man will have a reason to avail himself of what God has provided. And here is one in the day of Moses that has heard the Law "Thou shalt not bear false witness" and he has forged false witness, and the Scripture says "the soul that sinneth it shall die", and he is under sentence of death. What does he do? lie down in despair, hopeless, helpless in the dilemma of his failure, his crime. No. He goes to the flock and he takes a lamb of the first year without spot, and he leads the lamb, he carries which is even better, carries the lamb down to the gate of the Tabernacle and he calls the priest, and when the priest comes to the curtain, the lamb stands there besides him, and with his hands upon the lamb's head, he confesses his sin, his crime. Then the lamb is slain, and the blood, the flesh is placed upon the altar of burnt offering. What is he doing? What's he doing? Pointing his finger down across the centuries to a day when there shall be one that shall stand and of Whom it will be said "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world". And there right back in Exodus, right here in this mountain you have the revelation of the holiness, the justice, the majesty of God, and the grace of God.

But what happens? Israel lost its way. It too went into darkness; went into captivity, went into blindness; scoffed at the offerings; the Temple was sacrificed an end in themselves; failed to realize that they were but the means of grace that God would use them to accomplish His purpose, and they lost their meaning and they became an end, and obviously the time came when God would say as He did in Isaiah the 1st chapter, "I despise your sacrifice, your holy days, I can't take them any longer. Your feasts, your Sabbaths, they're an abomination to me. Why? Because they had lost their meaning, lost their purpose. In the midst of the ceremony, the activity and the teaching and the practice they had lost sight of God. They had lost sight of Him.

And then in the fullness of time God became flesh by the miracle of the incarnation. I can't explain it. But I know that there came a moment when God the Holy Spirit overshadowed the person Mary, His chosen vessel, and one cell in the body of Mary was quickened by God, and that one that was born of her was Immanuel, God with us. My friends, the little babe that nestled in Mary's arm and drew his nourishment from her breasts was the very one that thundered from Sinai. And the little tot that ran beside her to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day was the one whose finger inscribed the tables of Stone; and the little lad that sat there and repeated after the rabbi the prophecies, was the One of whom the prophet said, "Thus saith the Lord". And the young man that stood in the carpenter's shop and listened while Joseph explained to him the use of the adze and the plans and the chisel and the hammer, was the One that had made the tree. And of this one it was finally said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased". (Matt. 17:5)

And you see Him now come to another mountain. The very One whose presence caused Mt. Sinai to smoke in flames, now has sat down upon a mountain - not the same mountain, but a mountain, and he gathers around him his disciples, and the people come and sit down on the side of the mountain. And now he is explaining something to them; he is unfolding something to them. And what He is explaining doesn't contradict what he said in Exodus. What is He saying? In Exodus He is saying, "This is what man ought to be, and if He isn't this is his proof that he is traitor and a rebel and an enemy". What is He saying in Matthew? "This is what I, by grace, am going to call him to be." There it is. That's what the Sermon of the Mount is. It is the revelation of what God in grace is going to do for the regenerate heart. Oh, I have heard it said that it is the constitution for the Kingdom. I've heard it said that this is going to be the government under which the earth will be ruled when the Lord Jesus comes. And that all may be so, and I am certainly not going to contradict it, but primarily I would emphasize this, that the Sermon of the Mount is the description of what God does in the heart of a regenerated person. The Lord is sitting there; the One who thundered on Sinai, that wrote on the tables of stone and gave the law of the offerings, and now he gathers them around Him and He said, You told me back there in Exodus that all that I said unto you you'd do. You haven't done it, and I knew you wouldn't do it because your hearts were far from me. But what you wouldn't do to earn life and to escape death, you are going to do, because I am going to take away the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh, and I am going to put my spirit within you and I am going to cause you to walk in my statutes, and this is what you're going to be. Isn't that wonderful! Isn't that marvelous! Once He said, Do and you live, and now He said, I must die. Now the Lord Jesus comes and says, this is what I am going to do to you if you'll but let Me. This is what I am going to do; this is the miracle I am going to perform. I'm going to make you a new creation, a new kind of being, and I am going to put you back in the same world where you were, and you're going to be a holy nation, a peculiar people and a royal priesthood. That's exactly what is said about Israel, and Israel forgot it, and Israel failed. Now Christ says, I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it, and I'm going to do a miracle. I am going to do something you couldn't do. You said, we'll keep your Law. You said, All you'll command us we'll do. You didn't. But now you wait. This is what I am going to do. The Israelites didn't understand it. What was He telling them? What was the Sermon of the Mount? He wanted them to discover their need. My friend, you are going to be interested in the gospel, you are going to be interested in the Plan of Salvation only when Mt. Sinai and the Mount of the Sermon have done their work. You're not going to be interested otherwise.

Everyone I meet has his own plan of salvation. Did you know that? Oh, he may not go to any church. Actually, did you know the most religious people are not church members anyway? I sit in a restaurant or on an airplane and listen to people talk, and they are talking about Hell and damnation and God and Jesus Christ all the time. Of course they are doing it irreverently. They're doing it blasphemously, but they are far more upon the lips of the irreligious than upon the lips of the religious. And every one I met has his own plan of salvation. Why, I don't beat my wife. I don't get drunk overly often. I pay my debts; I'm as good as most people in the church. That may be the plan of salvation someone has. Or, I am balancing off my good deeds with my bad deeds and some day when we get there, God's got a big scale and if my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds, He'll be obligated to take me into heaven. Oh, I go to church, I believe all right, but there are so many hypocrites in the church, you know. I think God is satisfied. He's got a plan of salvation. Oh, he says, I do this, and this, and this, but I wouldn't think of doing that, and he named same thing which to him, if he has help, if he abstains from this one thing, you know, gives up something else that he doesn't like or isn't interested in, - if he does something that he can more or less use for a penance, he's going to be all right. He has it worked out, has it established, and has some means by which he is going to satisfy his concept of God. A person is no candidate for the grace of God until he sees God. He must see Him.

How is he going to see Him? He is going to see God in the Law; he is going to see Him from Mt. Sinai; he is going to see Him, “and thou shalt have no other gods before me” “thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain”, “thou shalt remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy”, “honor thy father and thy mother”, “thou shalt not bear false witness”, “thou shalt not commit adultery”, “thou shalt not steal”. What are these things? What are these laws? this Ten Commandments? What is this? It is a reflection of the nature of God. It reveals that God sits upon the throne and has the right to command creatures made in His image. It reveals that God retains sovereignty’ in His hand. The Law reveals that God is interested in the happiness of all people, for if you will analyze the laws of the Old Testament, you will discover that they are directed against the spiritual gangsters, thieves and robbers that would deprive others of their happiness. The essence of the Ten Commandments is this: God wants everybody else to leave you alone so that you can fulfill all that is intended for you. But He wants you to leave everybody else alone so that they can have equal privilege. In other words, the Law is God’s means of revealing His interest in the happiness of all creatures. But what is sin. Well, sin is the transgression of the Law. But essentially, what is sin. In its essence, sin is selfishness, sin is rebellion against God in government. It is becoming, as it were, a spiritual gangster, a hoodlum. And a sinner is a spiritual hoodlum in this sense, that he has gone into the underworld. He has joined the rebels against society - in this case it is divine society. The hoodlum lives to steal, to pillage, to rape, to destroy; to please himself at the expense of others, and every sinner has basically and essentially joined with the rebels against God. In his essence it is this. I’m going to be happy; I’m going to do what I want to do, I’m going to be what I want to be; I’m going to get what I want to get; I’m going to have what I want to have; and God nor man are going to get in my way. And the Law - thou shalt not, thou shalt not, brought over against the conscience - what does it do. Why it reveals to the individual that he is selfish, that he’s a traitor against God and a rebel against man, and is an enemy of both, and he is under the sentence of death. What’s the purpose - to strip you, to break you, to crush you to the place where you do not stand there as Israel did in its arrogance and its egotism, and say ‘all Thou commandest we will do.’ I hardly think there’s a sinner anywhere that doesn’t believe that he could perfectly satisfy God and keep the Law if he tried. And the reason he doesn’t is because he doesn’t want to. I submit to you that the best way for you to discover what you, if you are here without Christ, is just to make the purpose and assiduously respect it, to obey the Ten Commandments for one week as He intended them to be obeyed. By the end of that week you are going to know where you are; you are going to see. The reason most people are not aware of their need is because they refuse to have God in their thoughts and His word in their minds. Therefore, nobody is going to be prepared to go any further until he has come to Mt. Sinai.

But of course, there’s something else. We’ve got to come to this Mount of the Sermon, because there in that day you had religious people, and today you have religious people. Our churches are filled with them. But our churches are filled with the unconverted.

You see, the Pharisees were the theologically fundamental group of their day, and they believed in the authority of the Scriptures, they were orthodox in their theology, they were evangelistic in zeal, they were missionary in fervor, they were premillennial in hope, they were devoted in practice, they fasted, they tithed, they observed the Holy Days, and they were lost as could be. And the Lord Jesus Christ had to reveal to them that these superficial things of theology and doctrines and scriptures and practices were not the same as that of which He spoke. He was going to give a new heart.

Now anyone can learn the Shorter Catechism, and anyone can join the church, and anyone can observe certain things and anyone can tithe and fast. The only way you are going to have the kind of thing He is talking about is when God supernaturally gives it to you. So there is another purpose.

First, there’s Sinai to be brought to the irreligious to show them where they are, and the Mount of the Sermon to be brought to the religious so that they can tell whether or not what they have is real. And when we have done that, where do we go. There is another mountain. That’s the Mount of Transfiguration. No one is going to come to Jesus until he is convinced that Jesus Christ is God. That’s essential, and it was on the Mount of Transfiguration that Peter and James and John were taken up there and they saw Him with a bit, just a bit of His glory. They didn’t see His full glory, for if they did they couldn’t have lived. They saw Him. Oh, they fell on their faces, but they peeked out from under their arm as they lay there, and they saw the Lord Jesus talking with Elijah and Moses. They got a glimpse of His glory, a glimpse of His majesty, and my friends, I don’t believe that anyone here has savingly come to Christ until he has come somewhere near the Mount of Transfiguration. You had to be

convinced that Jesus Christ is God. Paul is the clearest example of it. Paul was convinced that he was an imposter and deceiver, and he went on his way, hunting all he could, putting them all in prison, testifying at their trials and standing by their executions, because he believed that Jesus Christ was not God, was not raised from the dead. But one day, on the road to Damascus, Paul saw Him, saw Him somewhat as he was seen by Peter and James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration. And beholding Him, transfigured, seeing His majesty, seeing His glory, seeing Him as He is, he did the only thing he could do - he fell on his face and cried out "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do".

And I submit to you, that if you just see the Lord Jesus as a kind of a bridge over Hell, a fire insurance policy, someone to carry the bags of your ambition, you have not savingly come to Him, but when you see Him as God; when you see Him exalted and magnified and glorified as God, then, my friend, you're prepared to come to Him on His terms, which are absolute abandonment to His Lordship and implicit confidence in His sacrifice.

That brings us to the last mountain; the Mountain of Sinai, the Mount of the Sermon, the Mount of Transfiguration, and now the Mount of Sacrifice.

You go back to Genesis and you discover that there was a day when God said, "Take your son Isaac to a mountain that I'll show you and sacrifice him." (Gen. 22:2) and Abraham went out with Isaac, Isaac carried the wood, and said, "Father I've got the wood, I got the fire, but where's the sacrifice?" (Gen. 22:7) And there was the day of the revelation of this name, Jehovah Jireh, The Lord our Provider. The altar was erected and the wood was laid upon it and the fire was nearby, and he said, now, Isaac, you're the one God told me to sacrifice. But that's all right, son. God told me that in you a nation would be called, and I've got to sacrifice you I've got to slay you, but God's going to raise you from the dead. Did you know that Abraham had a resurrection faith; did you know that the reason Abraham was willing to slay Isaac was that he fully expected Isaac to be raised from the dead and go back down the mountain with him. Absolutely! And he stands there over his son, and is about to plunge the dagger into his heart, when the hand is stayed and God says, 'It's enough, Isaac', it's enough, Abraham, and there in the bush is the ram caught by the horn.

And then, centuries later, centuries later, God's Son, not Abraham's son, Abraham's seed, but God's Son takes the cross upon His back and carries it until the weight is unbearable. And then at length He is nailed to that cross and lifted up and suspended between heaven and earth.

What mountain is it? History tells us, tradition tells us that it is Mount Moriah, the very mountain where Abraham took Isaac, and then the Providing One, the seed of the woman, the Lamb of God fulfills all the types of the Old Testament, is brought to this mountain of sacrifice and there - who is it? The One who thundered on Sinai, the Law giver, the One who said 'thou shalt surely die'. Who is it? It's the One who sat on the Mount of the Sermon and explained what is going to happen. Now what is it? The Law-giver has become a Law-keeper so that He can take the place of the Law-breakers. There He bears in His body God's wrath against sin. And there He dies, the Just for the Unjust that He might bring us to God. There He pours out His soul unto death for you, in your place, your stead, your representative died beneath the load of your guilt and your condemnation. Why? The Law said "The soul that sinneth it shall die". (Ezekiel 18:4b) You must die. You must either die yourself or die in the person of your substitute. So the infinitely holy God loves you and reaches across the ages and draws you unto Himself, and takes your sin upon Him, is made to be sin for you. He who knew no sin, that He might in your place satisfy the justice of God and vindicate the holiness of God and make clear the malignity of sin and the enormity of the crime of sin, and still be just and forgive you. He died for you. And you know, my friend, that God can't forgive sin. Do you know that it is impossible for God to be God and forgive sin? He can't forgive sin. Every sin must come into condemnation. Every sin must be punished. But you know why He could forgive you? Because your sin was punished in Jesus Christ. He can't forgive sin, but He can forgive a sinner of his sin, because the sin has been paid for by the sinner's substitute. It was on the mount of sacrifice, there your Substitute died your death in your place, satisfying the Law in your behalf. Why? So that your sin could be pardoned, yes - but more than that. He was made sin for you that you might be made the righteous of God in Him. Tonight renounce your sin, renounce yourself and confidence in the flesh, and come taking sides with God against you, consenting to the justice of His judgment and His condemnation. And you come for your sake, not just for you and what you'll get out of it - but to make Him Lord, give Him the throne you've defrauded Him of and denied Him; give Him the heart that He would rightly reign and rule. When you come

to Him tonight, renouncing yourself, denying yourself, renouncing your sin, give rightful place to God in your life, and you receive Jesus Christ as Lord, and you believe He died in your place and in your stead - two miracles happen. The first is, all of the record of your guilt is laid on Jesus Christ and the righteousness, the spotless perfection, the infinite holiness of Jesus Christ is credited to your account. That's in the legal department, but at the same moment that that happens, God, the Holy Ghost gives you a new heart, a new nature, and makes you a new creature, and thus, what we have on the Sermon on the Mount is fulfilled in you. This is the marvel of Grace; this is the great salvation. His arms are outstretched; that He might redeem you and draw you and bring you to Himself, that He might make you holy. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24,25)

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Evening, October 19, 1958 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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