SERMON TRANSCRIPT

The Holiness Of God

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Holy Fire | November 15, 2026 | Joshua 1; 1 Peter 2; Exodus 3:12; Deuteronomy 4; Hebrews 7; Romans 8; Hebrews 12:18-24; Exodus 19

Prepared from the spoken message and lightly edited for readability. Scripture quotations and spoken phrasing are preserved as delivered.

So, what did you hear from God this week? I mean, in the course of this past week, what did you hear from the Lord?

Because last week we were in Exodus chapter 3, and one of the main things that we saw in God's Word last Sunday morning was that God speaks, right? God speaks to His people. And not only did we see that God speaks, we saw that God cares, God calls us, and God sends us. And when God sends us, He goes with us, right?

These realities that we see in Scripture aren't unique to Moses alone. God speaks to His people. And so this week, man, I've been praying for our church family, specifically for you, if you're a part of this church family, that you slowed down this week and listened to the voice of God, that you noticed in your day how God was speaking to you. I prayed that you would open your Bible and hear the voice of God. This absolutely matters in our lives every single day.

In fact, after the service last Sunday, I was talking to one of our members right down here, and she shared this burden on her heart. She shared the reality - you know it, and I know it - that there are so many believers, even those who are in church on a weekly basis, who aren't reading their Bibles. And she was right to ask, with care and concern in her heart, "How are they hearing from God if they're not opening His Word?"

Then the next morning, Monday morning, I'm doing my daily Bible reading. I get to the book of Joshua. I'm in Joshua chapter 1, and listen to what God says to Joshua:

> *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.*
>
> — Joshua 1:8

Listen, Joshua isn't going to be able to do what God has told him if he doesn't know what God has told him. And in the same way, you and me, man, there are so many things going on in our lives every single day. We're not going to know how to respond or how to do what God has called us to do if we don't know what He has said.

Last week, we saw that God does indeed continue to speak to us. That's Exodus 3. And there's a detail in Exodus 3 that I ran out of time for last week, and I was a little bummed. But as I was looking at the text this week, I was like, "Oh, that's perfect," because it fits into this Sunday so well.

If you've got a Bible, open to Exodus 19. That's where we're going to be for the majority of our time this morning. But I want to start in Exodus chapter 3 with the detail that I ran out of time for last week.

In Exodus 3:12, God says to Moses:

> *But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.*
>
> — Exodus 3:12

So, recap. At the burning bush last week, God said, "Moses, go to Egypt. Get My people. Bring them out, and you're going to be right back here at this mountain."

What does Moses say? "Are You serious? God, I'm not the guy. I've got a lot of insecurities here. I've got a lot of weaknesses here. You surely have picked the wrong person."

And God reassures Moses. You remember how? Not by being Moses's hype guy. He doesn't say, "Moses, you're so great. You can do it. You're equipped. You're qualified." He doesn't do any of that. God just says, "Hey, you know what? I'm going to be with you." And that's it. God promises to be with him.

At the end of that sentence, we have the detail that opens our time this morning. God said, "You go. I'm going with you." Then He says, "I'm going to give you a sign to let you know that this is what we really want to be happening."

How great is that? Have there been times in your life when you're like, "I'm not sure what to do. I've got these different options, different choices. If God would just give me a sign, that would make it so much easier"?

You've been there, right? This career or that career. This school or that school. This business or that business. This person or that person. This choice with my kids or that choice with my kids. "God, there are so many options in my life. If You would just give me a sign, You could make it incredibly clear. And once I have that sign, man, I could take that next step."

We would all love that, right? We love that kind of confirmation in our lives.

So He's talking to Moses here at the burning bush in Exodus 3. He says, "I'm going to give you a sign." But look at when the sign comes. In verse 12, the sign comes after Moses obeys God. This was not a sign to get him moving. This was a sign to confirm his obedience.

After he steps out in faith, God says, "When you step out in faith and do what I have called you to do, I'm going to give you a sign to let you know that you got this right."

So Moses steps out in obedience. After Exodus 3, he does what God says. He goes to Egypt. There's a song about it. There are movies about it. "Pharaoh, Pharaoh, let My people go." God works in a powerful way. Moses leads the people of Israel out of Egypt through all of these miracles, through the Red Sea. And do you know where they end up? Right back at the mountain where Moses started, the mountain at the burning bush.

That's the sign. God's able to say, "Moses, you did it."

Exodus 19 is where we're going to be today. Moses and the people of Israel are out of Egypt. They're back at the mountain. And just like we saw in Exodus 3, there's holy fire on this mountain again. Only this time, it's not contained in a bush. This time, it is much, much bigger. The entire mountain is about to be engulfed in this massive display of the holiness of God.

In fact, if you're taking notes this morning, that's our title: The Holiness of God. We're going to see it fall down on this mountain in this incredible move of God.

I want you to be thinking about something. We're going to look at this moment in Exodus 19, and we're going to constantly be looking forward at how this ties Scripture together. What God does here points forward to what God is ultimately going to do through Christ.

We're going to see that the intensity, the power, and the holiness of God at Mount Sinai tell us that we can't go up the mountain on our own. And as we look forward to the New Testament, we see that the cross of Jesus tells us that we don't have to.

God Invites His People

Look at verse 1:

> *On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.*
>
> *They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain,*
>
> *while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel:*
>
> *'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.*
>
> *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;*
>
> *and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."*
>
> — Exodus 19:1-6

This chapter is starting about two months after the people leave Egypt. They get to the wilderness of Sinai. They get to the mountain where the burning bush experience with Moses happened.

If you underline in your Bibles, underline that phrase in verse 4: brought you to Myself. What a powerful phrase. God says, "You saw what I did. You saw everything that happened in Egypt. I brought you to Myself, and I did it majestically."

God says, "I did this on eagles' wings." God is painting a picture. He is drawing their minds back to His massive movements in their lives to bring them to this point. He's telling them that the exodus from Egypt isn't

just about escaping slavery. It's about getting to God.

If you think about this, God doesn't just rescue them from something. God rescues them for something - for a relationship with Him.

Now, in the text, what comes after verse 4? Verse 5, right? Not a trick question there. Four and five. The text has an order to it, and it's written that way for a reason. The order here really, really matters.

I want you to see how this goes in order. God rescues them in verse 4: I have brought you to Myself. And it's not until we get to verse 5 that we see God talking about obedience and a covenant.

Are you following what I'm trying to say here? God rescues first. He rescues first in this text, and then He begins to give the law. He begins to introduce the covenant. He doesn't say, "Hey, listen. If you'll obey Me, I'll rescue you." That's not the order we've got.

He says, "I rescued you. I have brought you here to Myself as My treasured possession, for a relationship with Me, to be My people. I want you now to begin to live like you've been rescued."

You don't have to live like you're in Egypt anymore. You don't have to live like an Egyptian anymore. Now you get to live like something completely different. You get to live like you are God's people.

I want you to see this pattern that we can trace all through Scripture: the grace of God goes first. God goes first. That's how it's always worked.

Think about the people God has just rescued here. Did they deserve to have this moment with God in Exodus 19? If you back up a few chapters, God has miraculously saved them from Egypt, through the miracles, the plagues, the sea, the waters, and all of these things that have happened.

Then they're thirsty. God miraculously provides them with water. What do they say? "God, it doesn't taste good." They're complaining about God's miraculous provision. "God, this isn't like my water that's filtered at home. This isn't what I want."

Well, not too long after that, they're hungry. God provides again. "God, this doesn't taste good. Is there anything else on the menu?"

Not too long after that, they encounter some hardships along the way to this moment with the Lord, and they get mad at Moses. "Moses, why did you even bring us out here?"

They get so mad at Moses, and they're arguing with him so much that Moses goes to God and says, "God, I think they're going to kill me. I think they're going to stone me and leave me to die out here."

Listen, all of that - these people are wildly imperfect. Wildly imperfect. They're selfish, and they're sinful, just like you and me. And still God brings them to Himself. He says, "I'm pulling you out of that into something new."

As I read this, and I see these people and their imperfections, it makes me incredibly glad that God doesn't just call perfect people to Himself. God doesn't just invite the people who have it all together, the people who have gotten everything cleaned up.

No, God brings them to Himself. He rescues first. Grace goes first. He invites them into that relationship with Him, and that relationship begins to change everything.

In verses 5 and 6, look at what God calls His people. He calls them His treasured possession. Think about that: treasured possession. This is incredible. This is amazing. God literally says that people are His treasure.

In the same text, as He's talking to Moses, He says, "I own it all. I own everything in this world. But do you know what My treasure is? It's people. It's people who are made in My image to be in a relationship with Me. They are the treasure."

That is a perfect description of how God looks at His people, because what do you do with your treasure? You hold on tight, and you draw it close. That's what God does. He holds tight. He keeps it close.

Then He goes on to say, "Not only are you My treasure, you are a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

These aren't just words. God's doing something with His people right here in this moment. He is setting them up and setting them out, setting them apart from the rest of the world so that the rest of the world can see God through them. That's a big deal.

It goes right along with God's first promise to Abraham. We hit that last week. We looked at the history of this and how it flows through Scripture. In Genesis 12 and Genesis 15, God tells Abraham, "The people of the earth, the families of the earth, are going to be blessed through your family."

That's what's going on right here. And here's where it gets even better. That promise to Abraham that we talked about last week flows from Abraham through his family, through these people, this holy nation right here. Ultimately, Jesus comes from that line. It's fulfilled in Jesus.

So here's what that means for you and how you tie into this. If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, what are you? You are a treasured possession of God. You are set apart as a part of this holy nation, this royal priesthood, held tight by God as His very own.

That's what the Bible teaches in the New Testament. After the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, 1 Peter 2 is essentially quoting what God is saying to the people in Exodus 19:

> *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,*
>
> *that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*
>
> — 1 Peter 2:9

Do you see how Scripture is tying together here?

God sent Moses into Egypt to rescue Israel from slavery and set them apart as holy so that the world could know Him. In the same way, we look later in Scripture to see that God sent Jesus to rescue you and me from our sins, from the slavery of sin.

That means if you've trusted Him, you're treasured. You're set apart. You're holy. You're a part of this kingdom of priests with the same mandate. You're set apart to make sure the world knows the excellencies of Him who

called you out of darkness, out of the slavery of sin, and into life, into marvelous light.

It's incredible how God looks at us and what God has done for us.

So what's happened in these first verses of Exodus 19? God has invited them near. He has called them to Himself. He has extended this invitation. He says, "Listen, I've rescued you. You're out. If you will walk into this covenant with Me, you will be My people."

How do the people respond in verse 8? The only way they could in that moment:

> *All the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."*
>
> — Exodus 19:8

They say, "Of course."

So God says, "I'm going to come down. I'm going to settle on this mountain on the third day." Then it takes a little bit of a turn that we might not expect if we're reading this for the first time.

God says, "I'm coming down." But in verse 12, He says, "Listen, when I come down, don't get too close. Don't get too close to My presence."

> *And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, "Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death."*
>
> — Exodus 19:12

In my mind, I'm imagining this fence around the base of the mountain so the people don't get too close to the holiness and the presence of God as it comes down on the mountain. They've got that set. The people know.

Now look at verse 16:

> *On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.*
>
> *Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.*
>
> *Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. And the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.*
>
> *And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.*
>
> *The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.*
>
> *And the Lord said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the Lord to look and many of them perish.*
>
> *Also let the priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves, lest the Lord break out against them."*

> *And Moses said to the Lord, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.'"*
>
> *And the Lord said to him, "Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the Lord, lest he break out against them."*
>
> *So Moses went down to the people and told them.*
>
> — Exodus 19:16-25

There's an interesting note there. Why does it matter that the trumpet keeps getting louder and louder? Well, when a human would play a trumpet back there in these big moments of celebration, eventually the sound of the trumpet would get softer and softer and softer because they'd get tired. They'd begin to run out of breath.

Scripture is saying something different is happening here. It's getting louder and louder and louder. This is the Lord coming down into their presence.

God Is Holy

The second observation as we navigate this is that God is holy. Write it down: holy, holy, holy. God is holy.

God shows up here, and His holiness is completely overwhelming. His presence is completely overwhelming. We've got thunder. We've got lightning. We've got this thick cloud that descends on the mountain. We've got the trumpet that gets louder and louder and louder. We've got smoke like a kiln. We've got the fire.

There is no mistaking that God is with them in this moment.

That's the sign from Exodus 3. God told Moses, "You're going to bring the people out. We're going to worship together, and I'm going to make it clear that you're in the right place."

Well, now it is incredibly clear. The people of the camp trembled. And not just them. Look at verse 18. It says the entire mountain begins to tremble. The rocks are shaking at the overwhelming presence of a holy God in their midst.

And listen, the same Hebrew word for tremble is used for people and rocks. It's not like we have one word for people and one word for rocks, like an earthquake or a natural phenomenon. No, it is tremble for both, which means that solid rock is responding to the presence of a holy God like a frightened person.

It's a reminder for us that God's creation is aware of the holiness of the Creator, even when you and me forget.

I believe there are moments when you and I forget about this - the overwhelming glory and awe and force and power and holiness of our God. We worship Him. We sang about holiness earlier. We'll open Scripture. We'll have a good lesson. We'll pray before our meals. But I fear that all too often our minds don't quite make it to this kind of Exodus 19 moment where we truly envision and remember the force, the power, and the overwhelming majesty and glory of who our God really is.

It's a little colder today, isn't it? The rain's coming. I think there's a clock on the back wall. We'll be out before you get wet on the way home. Don't worry, I've got my eye on it.

It wasn't this cold earlier in the week, though. At the beginning of the week, it was maybe 70 degrees or so. I came into the house one afternoon, and my kids were sitting there. I noticed that the fireplace was on.

I said, "We're a little premature here, guys. Maybe get up and turn that off."

So one of them got up, walked over to the fireplace, put their hand on the light switch, and flipped it down. The fire turned off.

It's so convenient, isn't it, to have a fire like that in your house? It goes on when you want and off when you want. It gives just the right amount of heat when you want it. It's accessible. It stays behind the glass. Nobody's going to get hurt. We can control it.

And I worry that too many of us approach God that same way.

This morning, as we look at this passage, I'm praying that we are awoken to the reality of who God is, the God we see here on Mount Sinai. God is not a fireplace God. He's more like a wildfire that no one can control.

That fireplace in your house exists for your comfort and for your convenience. But a wildfire reshapes everything in its path. God's not a cozy feature you get to add to your life when you want. Our God is a holy fire who really does change everything He touches in our lives.

So I'm praying that this season, every time you flip that fireplace on in your house, you'd remember, "This is not my God. My God is a consuming fire."

This moment in Exodus 19 at Mount Sinai is seared into the minds of Moses and the people who are there in that moment. Forty years later, all the adults who were there at that moment in Exodus are gone. They've all perished. They've all died in the wilderness.

Now their kids and grandkids are standing on the edge of the Promised Land, and they're about to go in. Moses is giving them his final words, his final message, in the book of Deuteronomy.

One of the main things Moses says in Deuteronomy chapter 4 is this reminder: "Guys, our God is a consuming fire. He's powerful. He's bigger. He's stronger. He's holier than we allow our minds to think."

That's why there's that fence there. Back in verse 12, God says, "You've got to set some limits. Don't go to the edge. Don't even touch it." In verses 21-24, He says it again: "Listen, warn the people. Don't let them break through into the holiness of My presence, or they're going to perish in this moment."

Look at what's happening. Access to God's holy presence was limited. Only Moses was able to approach God, and he was approaching God for the people.

Now, that might seem unusual to us. We might think about that differently. It might seem harsh. It might seem unfair. Whatever word you want to use, you might be thinking, "Why would God tell them in verse 4, 'I brought you out on eagles' wings, majestically, to be My treasured possession,' and then say, 'But don't get too close'?"

Remember that L train story from last week? The guy's leg got stuck, and then it got ripped off and was there in his hands.

Listen, on every one of those subway platforms, there's a yellow line. There's a sign that says, "Don't step in front of this yellow line." It's not there to be unfair, harsh, or controlling. It's not there because the transit authority doesn't like the people who are riding on the train.

It's there because the train that comes into the station has enormous power, and if you get too close to it, you could be hurt. You could even be killed.

This fence, this limitation at Mount Sinai, worked the same way. It's not a sign of God's hostility. It's a sign of God's power and God's ultimate care for His people.

God is at work in salvation history right here. He is fulfilling the promise He made to Abraham. He has brought the people out. He is turning them into a great nation. They are His treasured possession. They are the people God is going to work through to ultimately bless the families of the earth through Jesus.

Even with all of that, we see that the holiness of God is too much for the people to approach God on their own. Moses had to go for them.

God Makes a Way

That brings us to our third point, which I pray is hammered home for me and you: God is going to make a way.

In the same way that someone had to go for the people of Israel, someone goes for you and for me. His name is Jesus.

Think about what Moses did here. He went up the mountain for the people. He met with God there. He came down with everything that the people needed to live as the people of God.

In the very next chapter - we're in Exodus 19, and then in Exodus 20 - what do we have? We have the Ten Commandments. God carves them right on the stone, and Moses is able to take them down to the people. The covenant and all of that come through one person down to the people of God.

Just like Moses went up on the mountain so the people could have access to God, for you and for me, Jesus went up onto a cross so that we could have access to God.

Moses carried the law down the mountain to the people. Jesus carried my sin and your sin up onto the cross so that we could have access to a holy God.

That's the thread of the story. There's this fence where we can't go up on our own, but the cross of Christ tells us that we don't have to. We go to God, and we go to God through Jesus.

One of my favorite details in all of Scripture is the moment Jesus is crucified. You've got the temple there, not too far from the place of the crucifixion. You've got the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God dwelt among the people of God.

Only one person could go in there before God. That was the high priest, and he could only go in there one day per year. Access to God and the holiness of God was limited to that one person. He would come out and

speak to the people.

Well, the moment Jesus dies on the cross, that curtain is ripped in two. And not from bottom to top, but from top to bottom. Nobody down here ripped it. God split it wide open, giving us access through Christ to Him.

The writer of Hebrews puts these two moments right next to each other in Hebrews 12. If your Bible is still open, flip over to Hebrews 12. We're going to end right here in this chapter.

In Hebrews 12:18 and 19, our writer describes the Exodus 19 moment. He describes this holy fire moment on Mount Sinai. This is what he says to the New Testament believer:

> *For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest*
>
> *and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them.*
>
> — Hebrews 12:18-19

That's Sinai, and that was then. He looks at us now and says, "But things are a little different."

> *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,*
>
> *and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all,*
>
> *and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,*
>
> *and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.*
>
> — Hebrews 12:22-24

Listen, because of Jesus and what Jesus did on the cross, we don't have to approach God afraid. Scripture says that we can approach Him with confidence.

Romans 8 says that we've received a spirit of adoption, so we can go before God as His children, calling Him, "Abba, Father." Right now, Scripture says in Hebrews 7 that Jesus is at the right hand of God, talking to God and speaking up for us, on our behalf to God.

Through Jesus, and Christ alone, we have access to God.

Here's what that means for you and me today. It's not about the family we're born into. That's not what gets us to God. It's not about our heritage or where we grew up. It's not about the good things we've done or the people we've helped along the way. It's not about how long you've been coming to church.

No, it's about knowing Jesus.

> *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*
>
> — John 1:12

Children have a different level of access than everybody else, don't they?

You've probably seen this picture before. It's a pretty famous picture from the Kennedy presidency. You've got JFK, the president, at the desk, and he's getting it done. His little boy, a little less than three years old at the time, is just peeking out from under the desk, doing his thing.

Think about everybody who would go into that office, the most powerful office in the country, and some would say in the world. We've got generals, congressmen, and senators. We've got the intelligence agencies in and out of there. You've got kings, queens, prime ministers, foreign dignitaries, and ambassadors.

All of them are going in there with an appointment and with an invitation. I'm never getting past the front gate of the White House, let alone into that room, without an appointment.

The president's son is just there. He's a part of what's going on. Why? That's not a visitor. That's a family member. He's got a different level of access.

In the same way, you and me, through Jesus, don't approach God as strangers who have to make an appointment. The fence is gone. The curtain is torn. We have access to God through Christ. Now, because of Jesus, we get to come as His children.

What do we do? We live like His children. That's it.

Hebrews 12 ends in a really, really special way:

> *Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,*
>
> *for our God is a consuming fire.*
>
> — Hebrews 12:28-29

That's our lifestyle. Go back to Romans 12. Our lifestyle is acceptable worship. And we do it with reverence and with awe. Why? Because our God is a consuming fire.

Even here in the New Testament, Jesus and the access we have to God because of the cross don't make God any less holy. He's just made a way for us to draw near to a holy God.

So we draw near with confidence and with reverence. We don't have a fireplace God who exists for our comfort. We have a holy and powerful, consuming God who's willing to let His kids in.

Come Near With Awe

This week, I want to encourage you to do a couple of things.

Number one is come near. Come near to God.

If you've drifted in your relationship with God, I want to encourage you: Jesus has made a way for you, like a child, to sit at the feet of the Father.

If you've been keeping God at a distance, maybe stiff-arming Him a little bit because of what's been going on

in your life, either because your heart has been hardened or you're ashamed because of different sin, I want to encourage you: the fence is gone. The veil is torn. Come near to God as His child.

Second, when you come, come with awe. Come with reverence and awe. Don't be so casual. Don't think of God as the fireplace. Worship Him like the consuming fire that He is, and let Him change your life to be more like Him.

Finally, live like you're His.

A lot of times, we talk to ourselves throughout our day. We have these thoughts about ourselves. I want you to make sure your thoughts are in line with God's thoughts.

What does God say about you? You're the treasure. God values you. He created you in His image to know Him intimately and to be in a relationship with Him.

So when you have these thoughts about yourself and they're down, man, I want to encourage you to go back to His Word. You're the treasure. God holds tight. God holds you close, and He has set you apart for a purpose so the world would know who He is.

Listen, if you're here this morning and you've never experienced that kind of access to the Father, if you've never trusted Christ to gain that access to the Father, that's where it starts.

Moses went up into the presence of God for Israel. Jesus went to the cross for my sins and for your sins so that anyone who believes can have that access to the Father.

Would you pray with me this morning?

As we bow our heads, I just want you to take a moment and thank God for His holiness and His power. Ask Him, "God, don't let me forget."

Maybe even confess, "God, sometimes I think of You as that fireplace. God, I can turn You off. I can turn You on. You're for my comfort. You're for my convenience. And God, if I've felt that way, it's wrong. Forgive me.

"God, You are holy. You are powerful. You are all-consuming. Help me to approach You with the awe and reverence that You deserve. God, thank You that through Jesus, You made a way for me to draw near. Help me to remember who I am as Your child, treasured, set apart, with a purpose for my life. God, help me to live like it."

Finally, as you're praying this morning, if you're here and you've never trusted Christ, if you're sitting here thinking, "God has always felt distant to me. I've never felt like I've had a relationship with God. I've never heard the voice of God in my life," I want to encourage you. It's time for you to trust in Christ, to become His child, so you have access to a heavenly Father that is only available in Jesus.

If that's you, we're going to stand and sing one last song in just a moment. When we do, our pastors will be right down here at the front. We want to pray with you. We want to pray for you.

If you need to trust Christ this morning, just come down and say, "Tell me more about Jesus." Maybe you're

going through a different season in your life and you need prayer for something else. Whatever it is, just know our pastors will be here, and we'd love to pray with you about whatever God's doing in your heart this morning.

When I pray, we'll stand. Our pastors are here. That'll be your invitation.

Father, we love You. We trust You, and we thank You. We thank You for Your presence. God, we thank You for Your holiness, Your power, and Your majesty. And God, we thank You for Jesus because we know it's through Him alone that we get to draw near to a holy, powerful, and loving God.

It's in Your name we pray. Amen.