

God's Holiness

1 Peter 1:15, 16; Revelation 15:3, 4

“. . . ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory’” (Isaiah 6:3).

First Peter 1:15, 16 says, “But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’” In studying the cross, we face the transcendent holiness of God!

God is holy! We are not asked to be as holy as God is; this would be a burden no one could bear (Acts 15:10). God is thrice holy. He is “Holy, Holy, Holy” (Isaiah 6:3). He is not just “love, love, love” or “law, law, law.” God is God, and that means that He is holy! We must revere holiness in order to accept or allow for wrath. We cannot appreciate or accept grace until we understand wrath. The question is not “How can a loving God send a sinner to hell?” but “How can a holy God *not* send a sinner to hell?”

Our first problem comes when we do not see God as He really is. We must not bring God down to be like us. We must lift ourselves up to be like God. Sentimental ideas about God result in foolish talk about God. God,

today, is “in”; but the “in” God is not a holy God! People today seek to *feel* God while refusing to know God and obey God (John 17:3).

God, in one sense, does not have attributes. He cannot be sliced up like pie. He is “*holy*”! Idols are not holy and cannot be holy! God’s name is “Holy” (Isaiah 57:15). We need to recognize the “otherness” of God! He does not conform to a standard—He *is* the ultimate standard. He is an absolute, infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity who is incapable of being anyone other than who He is. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth.

We must live in awe, in wonder of God! His being is unitary. He is not parts working together, but simply *One*! God is never at cross-purposes with Himself. One attribute is not in conflict with another. He is not a “walking civil war.”

God is love (1 John 4:8, 16), but love is not God. God defines love; love does not define God. Love cannot make sense apart from holiness. What holiness demands, love provides. If God is only equal to love, then the personality of God is simply the attribute of love. If all other attributes are eliminated except this one (love), then this one attribute becomes a substitute for God. Love is something characteristic of God, but it is not God.

Holiness is the unique characteristic of God that separates Him from His created beings and any alleged gods. This allows God both to withhold His love and to give His love. No wonder the word “holy” is in the Bible over six hundred times! Only a superior power can compel obedience. In all eternity past, nothing has entered God’s Being, and nothing has been removed.

We are to be holy! Holiness must be the business of every human being! Why has holiness fallen upon hard

times? Tragically, the human race has orphaned it. Personal holiness has become obsolete. We do not even promote holiness enough in regard to Jesus. When was the last time you heard about “The Holiness of Jesus”? Holiness is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way to holiness. The Christian is not ruined by living in the world, but by allowing the world to live in him. Holiness is not only what God gives me, but also it is what I manifest in the life that God has given me. Holiness is a position, a practice, and a process.

Holiness cannot be exchanged for cheap, false spirituality. Spirituality can be faked or bragged about; holiness cannot. Can a person be proud of humility? Ironically, those who have great virtues are usually unaware of having them. Humble people deny their humility!

Without holiness, we cannot see God (Hebrews 12:14). Our hearts are to be blameless in holiness before God (1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13). We are to perfect holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1) and to be partakers of His holiness (Hebrews 12:10).

*The cross . . .
there is no other way!*