

## The Lord is a Holy God

Holiness means to be distinct or separate. Anyone who is following the World Cup football will know that the two teams wear completely different colours from each other. They are distinct and separate from each other to avoid confusion of who's on who's team. We watched the match between Switzerland and Canada. The Swiss team wore red jerseys and the Canadian team wore white jerseys. The confusion was that the Canadian supporters all wore red jerseys and we wondered why they weren't excited when the Swiss team scored a goal only to realise later that they weren't Swiss, but Canadian, supporters. If we live like the world and don't live separate from it, it will cause confusion whether we belong to God or to the world.

Psalms 99:9 Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.

### 1) The Lord is holy

- 1 Samuel 2:2 There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.
- God's absolute holiness sets Him apart from everyone and everything else.
  - He is distinct and set apart from everything and is completely unique in every way.
  - He is set apart from creation, from sin in all its forms, from everything that's unworthy.
- The holiness of God is seen in His sovereignty – Him being above all things and powers and His sovereign rule over everything and everyone.
- Holiness isn't merely a trait of God; it's who He is in His entirety. It encompasses every other trait of His being.
  - His love and His holiness are inseparable as He loves with an untainted pure love.
  - His justice and His holiness are inseparable and He metes out justice with absolute fairness
  - This is applicable to every other trait of God
- Although God is omnipotent, meaning that He is all powerful, there are things that God cannot do; things that are contrary to His own nature and character
  - God cannot be tempted
    - James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.
  - God cannot sin
    - 1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.
  - God cannot lie
    - Hebrews 6:17-18 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.
- When it comes to God's grace and mercy, they are not without limit, but God will always be eternally holy.
  - If God were not gracious, He would have already cast us into eternal damnation because of His holy nature. His grace is what keeps His holiness from doing that, but the time of grace will eventually come to an end and we'll face His judgment where His holiness will prevail over grace.
  - 2 Peter 3:8-9 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.
  - Hebrews 3:7-11 So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'
- God's holiness causes Him to be angry at sin
  - Genesis 6:5-7 The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.

## 2) Temptation is a call to move away from holiness

- While temptation is an enticement to sin, holiness is a pursuit of the character of God
- As sin and holiness are diametrically opposed to each other, temptation to sin is a luring of us away from holiness towards sin.
  - It's an attempt to break relationship with a holy God as God does not and will not permit sin into His presence.
  - Sin separates us from God
  - Isaiah 59:2 Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.
- A true love for God includes a love of His holiness and thus a resistance to all temptation to sin knowing that sin in all its forms is hated by the holy God
- God gives us the grace to resist temptation that His holiness can be upheld
  - 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.
  - Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.
- God gives us grace to resist the temptation to sin as He expects us to be holy and doesn't leave us with any excuse not to be holy.

## 3) Be Holy for I am Holy

- Leviticus 19:1-2 The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.'
- 1 Peter 1:14-16 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."
- Holiness for the believer isn't an optional extra, but the fruit of a transformed life into the image of God who is holy.
- Hebrews 12:14-15 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.
  - Without holiness no one will see the Lord because He is holy and only that which is holy will be allowed to draw close to Him
  - Not being holy i.e., not living lives separate from sin, the world, or anything else that's not worthy of the holiness of God, means that we fall short of the grace of God that's given us all the ability we need to be holy
- We are constantly instructed to separate ourselves from the world and worldly lifestyles
  - 2 Corinthians 6:16-18 For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." And, "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."
  - God commands us to separate ourselves from the world and not to touch anything unclean – sin – and He will receive us.
- Salvation isn't about praying a sinner's prayer and saying that you believe. It includes repentance from all sin and a commitment to being holy as God is holy.
- What it comes down to is that if we love God we will want to be holy and the only way to be close to the one we love is by being holy
  - Loving God is also about loving what He loves and hating what He hates
  - 1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.