

- I. Session 41: Holiness of God Part 2: God's Infinite Moral Purity
- a. Purpose: Define and demonstrate that God's infinite moral purity is a Biblical teaching followed by its inter-relationship with other doctrines and implications for our lives.
  - b. Remember the definition of holiness
    - i. From last week note how Jerry Bridges' definition acknowledges the two aspect of God's holiness ("transcendent majesty and infinite moral purity").
    - ii. We have already discussed God's transcendent majesty in the last session, in this session we will discuss God's infinite moral purity.
    - iii. Definition of God's infinite moral purity: God is ethically good and His moral purity separates Himself from others in that He is morally greater than any of His creation and creatures.
  - c. Proof from Scripture
    - i. "*But the Lord of hosts will be exalted in judgment, And the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.*" (Isaiah 5:16)
      1. Note that God "*will show Himself holy in righteousness*" which demonstrate that holiness has a moral dimension.
      2. His holiness here indicates He will be exalted even in God's righteous judgment.
    - ii. God is called "*the Holy One of Israel*" often in contrast to people's sinfulness in the Old Testament: **Isaiah 1:4, 5:24, 30:11, Jeremiah 51:5.**<sup>1</sup>
    - iii. "*Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully.*" (Psalm 24:3-4)
      1. **Verse 3** ask a rhetorical question about approaching God's presence.
      2. **Verse 4** refers to moral purity as necessary to approach God.
      3. Thus we see that God is Holy in the sense that even approaching God requires one who is separated from sin.
      4. Now that we know a creature must also be holy to approach God, the next question is what does it look like when people approach God?
    - iv. "*Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.*" (Isaiah 6:5)
      1. Note earlier **Isaiah 6:3** mentioned God's holiness.
      2. Here the prophet Isaiah's responds to God's holiness after seeing His vision of God on His throne.
      3. Isaiah's response was to confess even the fact that he is a man of unclean lips and being among a people of unclean lips is something dangerous to be around God.

---

<sup>1</sup> John Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 344.

4. Thus we see Isaiah's understanding of a moral qualitative differences between God and sinful man.
- v. *"The men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? And to whom shall He go up from us?" (1 Samuel 6:20)*
  1. In the context the people "of Beth-shemesh" looked into God's holy ark in disobedience to God, and God struck down "50,070 men, and the people mourned because the Lord had struck the people with a great slaughter." (1 Samuel 6:19).
  2. In light of God's moral character that responded to the people's sin they cried out in this verse the truth that no one approach God in light of his moral holiness.
- d. God's infinite moral purity in relations to other doctrines
  - i. Since God is morally pure, God's Word is also pure and true (Psalm 12:6, Psalm 119:140).
  - ii. God's wrath and anger should be understood as flowing from God's Holiness.
  - iii. The Gospel message must be understood in light of God's Holiness.
  - iv. Finally God's holiness must also be the foundation for understanding the doctrine of hell.
  - v. Illustration: Spilling ink on a rug, the seriousness of the offense depends on how valuable that rug is, even though it's the same action to another rug.<sup>2</sup>
- e. Implications
  - i. Christians are to be Holy because God is Holy: *"but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16)*
    1. This is a citation of **Leviticus 19:2**.
    2. While God's holiness is greater than ours, we are yet compelled to be godly in that we too must be holy in our lives.
  - ii. We often dismiss our sins in speech as a "respectable" sin, as a small matter. However Isaiah's response to his ungodly speech was to treat it as a small thing but a serious offense; **how about you, do you have the same attitude?**
  - iii. **Do we carelessly approach the things of God?**
  - iv. **When you share the Gospel is there any discussion about the dimension of God's holiness?**
  - v. **Given our discussion about God's wrath is there any fear of God in you?**
  - vi. Do you realize that God's holiness is also driving our sanctification as God's goal for the believers: *"For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness" (Hebrews 12:10)*

---

<sup>2</sup> Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), 359 of 2821.