

**THE HOLINESS OF GOD BY R C SPROUL**  
**CHAPTER 4: THE TRAUMA OF HOLINESS**

References (Black book, White book, Kindle)

**I. The Sea Calmer (59, 47, 472)**

A. Jesus' sea-calming miracle

1. "Jesus controlled the fierce forces of nature by the sound of His voice. He didn't say a prayer. He didn't ask the Father to deliver them from the tempest. He dealt with the situation directly."
2. "We see a strange pattern unfolding here... Now that the sea was calm, the fear of the disciples *increased*."

B. Freud's theory of God

1. Freud once theorized that people invent religion out of a fear of nature so that they have a god who is more powerful than natural disasters, a God to help us deal with scary things
2. "Why would the disciples invent a God whose holiness was more terrifying than the forces of nature that provoked them to invent a god in the first place?"

C. What manner of man is this? ( a question of *kind*)

1. "If we can classify people into certain types, we know immediately how to deal with them... The disciples could find no category adequate to capture the person of Jesus."
2. "Jesus was different. He possessed an awesome otherness. He was the supreme mysterious stranger. He made people uncomfortable."

**II. The Fish Catcher (65, 53, 534)**

A. Jesus' strange instructions

1. "It was as if the fish were having a contest to see who could jump in first."

B. Peter's uncomfortable reaction (Luke 5:8)

1. "At that moment Peter realized that he was in the presence of the Holy Incarnate. He was desperately uncomfortable. His initial response was one of worship."
2. His second response was 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'
3. Misery loves company and "thieves do not seek the consoling presence of the fellowship of police officers. Sinful misery does not love the company of purity."

C. Human response to Jesus

1. Jesus has a good reputation, even with unbelievers – no one can speak negatively about Him
  - a. Friedrich Nietzsche – spoke of Jesus as a model of the heroic
  - b. George Bernard Shaw – could think of no higher standard than Christ
  - c. Pontius Pilate – could find no fault in Jesus
2. "With all the applause Jesus gets, it seems difficult to understand why His contemporaries killed Him."

3. "People have an appreciation for moral excellence, as long as it is removed a safe distance from them. The Jews honored the prophets, from a distance. The world honors Christ, from a distance." Other examples:
  - a. The Old Testament prophets were venerated in Jesus' day but persecuted when they were alive
  - b. Stephen reminded his killers of the blood on their hands and they stoned him for it
  - c. Peter wanted to be with Jesus until He got too close.

### **III. The Curve Breaker (71, 58, 589)**

#### A. The Peter Principle

1. Definition: "people tend to rise to their level of incompetence in the corporate structures"
2. Two types of people do not get trapped by this principle – the super-incompetent and the super-competent
3. Super-competent people don't succeed by moving up the ladder because their bosses are feel frightened and threatened by their competency

#### B. The grading curve

1. Nobody likes curve-breakers - they make us all look bad.
2. Jesus was the supreme curve buster, the ultimate super-competent
3. Pharisees – hated Jesus because He was authentically holy and they were counterfeiters
4. Sadducees – majored in righteousness but when Jesus came, they looked unrighteous next to Him
5. "Had Jesus said nothing to them, they still would have despised Him, his mere presence was enough to cause them to recoil from them."
6. Every counterfeiter fears that someone will examine his bogus bill while holding a genuine one next to it.
7. "The super-competent had to be destroyed."

### **IV. The Trouble Maker (79, 64, 653)**

#### A. A minister walked by

1. Is a Dutch expression used to break an awkward silence by offering a joking explanation for a sudden break in a lively conversation
2. "The pagan trembles at the rustling of a leaf." – Martin Luther

#### B. *Of Mice and Men*

#### C. Tolerating Jesus

1. "The world could tolerate Jesus; they could love Him, but only at a distance. Christ is safe for us if securely bound by space and time. But a present Christ could not survive in a world of hostile men. It was the judgment of Caiaphas that, for the good of the nation, Jesus must die."