

## THE HOLINESS OF GOD

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Victory Baptist Church, Coden, AL

In the book of Exodus and chapter 15, notice with me as we come to verse 11. I want to read this verse to begin our message this morning. We're going to read just a few other verses in the chapter. As you see on the board, I'm going to preach a message this morning entitled "The Holiness of God." It's not the first time we've addressed this subject. The last time on this particular title was in 1996, but we did preach a message in the church here within the last few years on the beauty of holiness from this Psalm we just sang, and also we preached one just on holiness. So we've got a couple of other sermons along this line. But holiness is one of the attributes of God. There are many attributes. Over the years I've probably preached 40 or 50 times on the different attributes of God. In the past, we've talked about the faithfulness of God, the providence of God, and in the last few weeks, the sovereignty of God and the justice of God. But to begin our message, I want to read verse 11, and verse 11 says:

*"Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"*

*Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this day. We thank you, Lord, for the privilege that you've given us again for another week and another opportunity to come together into Thy house and, Lord, to worship together. And, Father, we pray this morning that You meet with us, that You be with us in our singing, Lord, in our preaching and our fellowship together. We pray, God, for Your anointing and Your blessing to be upon the reading of Holy Scripture, for it's in Jesus Christ's name we pray, Amen.*

You may be seated. As I've mentioned in the last few weeks, God's attributes speak of those qualities and those perfections that belong to God and Him alone, which distinguishes Him from all others. To know God is the foundation of all blessings, truth, and life. An unknown God cannot really be worshiped, served, or trusted. The book of Acts in chapter 17 and verse 23 says, "I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." That was the apostle Paul in Athens, Greece, on Mars' Hill with many idols and many idolaters, and the apostle Paul says your worship is in ignorance because you do not know the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And then the Lord Jesus said in John 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is important that we know the God that we claim to believe in and that we follow and that we tell others about, so any time we can consider any truth, any attribute of God is just going to bring us into a better understanding, because our knowledge of God affects the way we live our lives — It

really does. No one ever rises above their thoughts of God, and the God of Scriptures is quite unknown today, not only in Athens, Greece, in the first century, but quite unknown today. You get out and start talking to people: "Do you know the Lord? What is God like?" Well, where are we going to find the truth about God? It's going to be in the Holy Scriptures; it's going to be in the Bible. Most men will let God be everything but God.

So we find out about God in the Scriptures. On my outline this morning, the first thing I said is that "The holiness of God is revealed to us in Scripture"; No. 2, "The holiness of God is demonstrated in His works" — actually His works, His will, and His way; and No. 3, "The holiness of God is seen in His people." It's hard to speak on holiness and the holiness of God without bringing it down to our level and what God has commanded us in the Scripture. So, first of all, I want you to notice as we come here to our text, verse 11, "[Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?](#)" Throughout the Bible, throughout the Holy Scriptures, we get a clear definition of God. For many people, the definition of God is what they have conjured up in their own minds, their own concept of God apart from what the Holy Scriptures have to say.

Now, when we speak of holiness and the holiness of God, holiness actually includes all of God's attributes. There are many attributes. For instance, love. When we talk about holiness, we could talk about God's holy love. We could talk about His holy name. Anger and wrath are a part of His attributes. But we could talk about His holy anger and His holy wrath, His holy love. His mercy is holy. We're going to talk about His mercy next week. So when we come to this subject of holiness, holiness is connected with all of God's attributes, and this is very important when we think about this subject of holiness.

Now, verse 11 of chapter 15 speaks of the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt and their victorious song as they come through the Red Sea onto the other side. This whole chapter is dealing with celebration. I'll read just a few verses in this chapter. But what does the word "holiness" mean? Well, it has the idea that God is pure and He's free from all defilement and sin, but it goes beyond that. It's more than God just being sinless. It has to do with God's very essence. His very essence is holy. Holiness is what sets God apart from all others, His creation and all others. It sets Him apart. He is separate and distinct from every creature. His nature and character is absolutely pure and absolutely holy. So, again, holiness is much more than just being sinless. This is who our God is, the one who we serve, the one we follow, the one we believe in. He is holy. From Genesis through Revelation we see the holiness of God. That's the reason the first point here is that the holiness of God is revealed to us in the Scripture. This is where we get the definition of God. This is where we find out what God is like.

Notice with me as we read in verses 1 and 2. It says, "[Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath](#)

triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. <sup>2</sup>The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." Throughout every verse in this chapter is a celebration of who God is and the victory that they had obtained through coming through the Red Sea. Then in verses 20 and 21 it says, "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. <sup>21</sup>And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." That's the destruction of Pharaoh and the Egyptian army that followed and pursued after them to destroy them.

And all in between we see statements like in verse 18: "The LORD shall reign for ever and ever." We see statements like in verses 6 and 7: "Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. <sup>7</sup>And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, *which* consumed them as stubble." We see these kinds of statements throughout this chapter. It's a song. It's the first song that we find recorded in the Scripture, and it's similar to the song that we find in Revelation 15, verses 1 through 4, that we'll read later when we get into the book of Revelation. But we see that this is a song of Moses. It's actually called that in the book of Revelation, and it's a victory song. Verse 2 again: "The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation . . ." Let's read verse 11 again one more time. We're talking about holiness this morning, the holiness of God, and we find here in verse 11, "Who *is* like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who *is* like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful *in* praises, doing wonders?" So God is glorious in holiness.

Now, I want you to turn with me to Genesis, chapter 1, and when we talk about the Lord's holiness revealed to us in Holy Scripture, we find that God is the source of all holiness. If we have any holiness, it's been given to us by God. Now, I'm going to read the last verse in Genesis 1, verse 31, and here we're going to see that the Sabbath, the seventh day, was holy. It was set apart. Why was it holy? Well, it was holy because God said it was holy. And these are the things that we see throughout the Scripture. The Scriptures are holy, by the way. They're called "the holy scriptures" in 2 Timothy. We find in Exodus 37, verse 28, that the people were holy. They were holy because God was in the midst of them. When God is involved in something, then that something can become holy or be counted as holy. We find in Leviticus 21, verses 7 and 8, that the priests were considered as holy because God had set them apart for His service.

In Exodus, chapter 30, verse 39, the Tabernacle and later the Temple was holy. Why? Because God's presence was there. God had set it apart. We find in 1 Corinthians 7 that even in a home, if one parent is saved and born again, the children are holy in the sense that they're

set apart and have a greater opportunity of coming to the Lord in salvation. And in Deuteronomy 14, verse 2, Israel was called a holy people. Why? Because they belonged to God; they were in His presence; He was in the midst of those people. And think about Moses when Moses went up on Mount Horeb in Exodus 3, verse 5. Do you remember what the Lord told Him? "Pull off your shoes. This is holy ground." Now, why was that mountain called holy ground? — because I would imagine that the normal, typical day, not the day that God met with Moses in the burning bush, but the typical day there, you probably had sheep and goats and all other critters running across that land and whatever, so why was it that on this day it's called holy? Because God's presence was there. God is called "the Holy One" about 55 times in the New Testament, and 29 of those times are in the book of Isaiah. So this is a very important subject.

Now, I'm going to read here about the Sabbath. The Sabbath was set apart. It was holy; it was sanctified. And it says in Genesis, chapter 1, verse 31, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*" Chapter 2, verses 1-4, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. <sup>2</sup>And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. <sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day, and" — Here's that word. Notice — "sanctified it" — made it holy, set it apart — "because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. <sup>4</sup>These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens." So God created seven days, and one of those days God called holy because that was the day that He rested, and throughout the children of Israel's history, they worshiped and they rested upon that day.

Notice with me as we come to the book of Isaiah and chapter 6. People today say, "Well, we don't have to worry about any of those things." Well, I think there ought to be a day completely and totally set aside unto the Lord, and I've made a point to not do business and things of that nature on Sunday. I see people out working in their yards and do business deals and all those kinds of things. That's their business. I'm not criticizing them, but I've made a point over the years that unless somebody is dying or somebody has had a wreck or somebody is sick or somebody needs some help and their ox is in a ditch, I've tried to make a point to not do anything but worship and rest on Sundays. Now, I work on Sundays and I work just about all day, but you know what I'm talking about. I mean, years ago we set that day aside, even before I started preaching, and that's going to be the Lord's Day. People say, "Well, I'm not under the law." Well, I'm under the royal law. I'm under a law to Christ, and I think that the very least I can do is give Him a tithe and give Him also a tithe of my time. I think that's the very least I can do. I could actually do more than that.

Notice with me in Isaiah, chapter 6. I'm going to read from verse 1 to verse 3. And, by the way, we're going to sing the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" to go along with this sermon, and that's why I chose Psalm 29 to sing this morning because it speaks of the beauty of holiness in one of the verses. But chapter 6 contains a vision of the heavenly God on the throne after King Uzziah had died. He had reigned for about 52 years. Most loved him. Most of his reign was good. The last ten years or so wasn't quite as good. But from chapter 1 to chapter 5, Isaiah is given quite a sobering message to give to the children of Israel, because in the latter part of chapter 6, they're going to go into captivity in Babylon, so he's given a sobering message to give to them in chapter 6.

But chapters 1 through 5 describe the sinfulness of the nation of Israel and why they're going into captivity. What we find here as we begin reading is that the earthly throne was vacated. The king had died, and God was showing Isaiah that the God of Heaven has never vacated His throne. That's what He's showing him here. Notice in verse 1, *"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train"* — that is, His glorious presence — *"his train filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly."* You ask, "What in the world is a seraphim?" Well, it's the high order of an angelic being. It's like a cherub in the book of Revelation. You'll find them again in Ezekiel, chapter 1. But what they do is they stand ready to serve God and show Him reverence, and it appears here that when they're in the presence of God, they're covering their faces and their feet in humility and worship. That's what that appears to be.

Now, notice with me as we come to verse 3. Isaiah says, *"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."* And when the Lord revealed this to Isaiah and when Isaiah saw the Lord's glory, as you read on in this chapter, Isaiah saw his own sinfulness and the sinfulness of his own nation. He says in verse 5, *"Woe is me! for I am undone,"* and he said he actually dwells in the midst of a people that are in the same condition. And then he's commissioned in this chapter to give a message to the nation of Israel.

Look again in the book of Revelation in chapter 4. We're just looking at thoughts and verses this morning about the holiness of God, and I hope that this would cause us to have a reverence for God as the angelic beings have. In Revelation, chapter 4, I'm going to be reading in verse 8. This entire chapter is dealing with the throne of God in Heaven. The word "throne" is mentioned at least eight or nine times in this one chapter, and it's mentioned about 30 times in the book of Revelation, which is showing us that God's throne dominates the book — and especially this chapter. But notice in verse 8 that it says, *"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes"* — like in Ezekiel 1:10 — *"full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is,*

and is to come.” So, again, we see this great reverence before the throne of God, and we see them worshipping the Lord. This ought to teach us something in our own lives. And notice that their worship never grows weary. And then it says in verses 10 and 11, “The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, <sup>11</sup>Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” So we see again the holiness of God; we see the expression “Holy, holy, holy.” I mean, that's something quite unique. You don't see in the Scripture “Love, love, love” or “Mercy, mercy, mercy,” but we do see “Holy, holy, holy” in the Holy Scriptures showing us the reverence that we are to have for the God of Heaven.

Turn with me to Revelation, chapter 15. Verse 4 is what I'm after, but let me begin reading in verse 1. And, by the way, in Psalm 22:3 we see that God's character is holy; in Isaiah 57, verse 15, His name is holy; and Psalm 60, verse 6, His words are holy; and Psalm 47, verse 8, His Kingdom is holy; and Psalm 89, verse 35, His promises are holy; and Amos, chapter 4, verse 2, even His judgments are holy. All of these are holy. The holiness of God is seen, by the way, in His delight in righteousness (Proverbs 15:9). God's holiness is seen in His hatred for sin (Habakkuk, chapter 1, verse 13). His holiness is seen in His punishment of sinners (Exodus 34, verses 6 and 7); His holiness is seen in His sacrifice of His Son for sinners. It's even seen in Romans 5, verse 8. So anywhere you look in this universe, not only in the Word, but anywhere you look you can see the holiness of God.

Notice with me in Revelation 15, beginning in verse 1. Now, this is a similar chapter as Exodus, chapter 15. They're coming out of the bondage of Egypt; they're coming through the Red Sea. There's a glorious victory there. And in chapter 15 there are those who have received the victory. So beginning in verse 1, John says, “And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. <sup>2</sup>And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and over the number of his name*, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.” We're talking about a similar victory here. And he says in verse 3, “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are thy works*, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are thy ways*, thou King of saints.” So we're talking about a very similar victory of the saints here in the New Testament as those coming out of Egypt in the Old Testament.

Now, notice with me as we come to verse 4. He said, “Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou only art holy*: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.” Again, we see here this reverence for God, and in verse 4, the apostle John said, “for *thou only art holy*.”

Turn with me to the book of Psalms. Let's read the one verse in chapter 29, and then we'll turn to Psalm 145. Psalm 29, where we just sang at a moment ago, I'll read verses 1 and 2. He says in verse 1 and in verse 2, "Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. <sup>2</sup>Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD" — Notice — "in the beauty of holiness." I've got a whole message on that. The beauty of holiness speaks of God's presence in His sanctuary. We're talking about a holy beauty in His glorious sanctuary. That's what he's talking about. This is in contrast to the ugliness of sin — the beauty of holiness. The priests and Levites wore their best garments when they went into the presence of God. They wore their very best. Do we do that? Worship is associated with the beauty of holiness.

As we turn to Psalm 145, notice with me as we come to verse 17. When I study the holiness of God, it causes me to have more of a reverence, an awe for God when I consider this subject. Now, coming to our second point — and I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this — but we see the holiness of God demonstrated in His works or I could add to that His ways and His will, and we'll read here in this passage one verse. Notice carefully. You see, every work that God has ever done, every work of God displays His glory and His holiness — everything that He's ever done, in creation, in salvation — everything that He's ever done. This is what we see. I want you to think about that. We just read in Genesis 1. If you back up to verses 26 and 27, you'll find that man was created upright; in other words, he was created holy. Ecclesiastes 7:29 actually uses the word "upright." So man was created upright. Not only that, all the angels were created holy. There are holy angels, the elect angels; then there are those angels that rebelled against God. So all of the angels were created holy. Not only that, but Satan himself, Lucifer, was originally created holy. He fell from that position. God's Word is holy (1 Timothy 3:15). The heavens declare the glory of God. All that God created is holy.

Now, not only do we find that His works are all holy, our salvation, everything that He's done is holy, but we also find that His ways are holy, and many times God does not do the reasonable thing, that we would think would be reasonable. I want you to think about that. In 2 Chronicles 20, verses 21 through 24 and the whole chapter is dealing with enemies coming against Jehoshaphat and the children of Israel. So Jehoshaphat was afraid, and he had a right to be. And he went before the Lord and they prayed and they cried out to God, repented and fasted and all those kinds of things, and then the Lord came and gave them an answer, and the Lord said, "This battle is mine. This does not belong to you." Twice He says that in the chapter, and then the unreasonable thing that God did is that Israel didn't even lift up a sword. They began marching out with the song leaders in front singing unto the Lord, and God caused an ambushment, and the enemies killed each other, and all Israel had to do is walk into the camps of these different nations and tribes and pick up the spoil of their enemies that was left there— a very unusual way to win a battle where you don't even lift up a sword to win that battle.

What about in the days of Noah? God had him build an ark, saved eight people, a flood upon the world that God started off. Kind of unusual. We probably wouldn't have done it that way, would we? The Red Sea crossing. The Lord actually carried them to a place where they were between a rock and a hard spot. I mean, He actually carried them. He could have carried them anywhere else. He could have carried them in a different direction, but he purposely carried them to the Red Sea whereby there was no way to get across. They didn't have any boats or pontoons or whatever, and the enemy is chasing behind them, so they were closed in, and God did the unusual. He could have led them all around in a different direction, but that's the way He led them, and the Lord freed them, brought them out of bondage.

The walls of Jericho. We would have never done it that way. You see, God's ways are not always our ways. I think there's a verse that says that — right? — in Isaiah 55? His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways are not our ways. What about David and Goliath? I mean, why choose a 17-year-old boy to go out and fight a giant when you had Saul. King Saul was the tallest man among the nation of Israel, and he was shaking in his tent, and a 17-year-old went out and took care of the giant. And Gideon. Why in the world would God reduce his army from thousands down to 300 men to go and win the battle? That's very unusual, but it's the way that God does things, you see. Coming back to the walls of Jericho, how many of you would want to march around a fortified city? I'm talking about walls that they could shoot arrows down at you from, walls that you could run two or three chariots around. Houses were built on these walls and whatever. How many of you would march around that thing seven days blowing a trumpet? No. But that's the way God does things.

So God's works are holy, His ways are holy, but not only that, His will is holy. Because of His holiness, the Lord Jesus in Matthew 27:46 cried out from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Think about that. This is the way that God chose to deal with the issue of sin. We would not have done that. Who would be willing to give up their only begotten son for the sake of the human race? One sin put our parents out of the Garden of Eden. One sin caused Moses to not be able to go into the Promised Land. One sin caused Ananias and Sapphira to die. And you think about all the sins in the world, and the Lord chose His Son to come from Heaven's glory to this earth to die for the sins of humanity. Think that through, just really think that through. So God's works are holy; His ways are holy, and many times it's not our ways. We figure out what we want to do, and usually we find out later — not to our benefit — but we find out later many times that this is not the way God had this thing planned. We make our plans instead of seeking God's will and His holiness, and yet our plans are not God's plans many times. See, we think we're smarter than God and that we can figure all this out.

I was talking to Brother Ernie this morning, and he had put one of our articles on birth control that is very controversial on a group. I forget who they were. And he said it went over like a lead balloon. I said it usually does. It usually does. And we were talking about some other



things. We're going to work everything out ourselves. We know better than God. We know His works are holy, His ways are holy, His will is holy, and yet we, as puny human beings that are considered as worms, think we know what God ought to do. God is holy, so you don't have to worry about His works, His will, or His way. He knows what He's doing. And if we'll just get on board with Him, things will work out the way they should work out. But we're always trying to fix things, aren't we?

I heard a story. I probably shouldn't even repeat it because I'll never get all of it right. But a lady went to work in a knitting mill, and the foreman said, "Now, if anything gets tangled, anything happens, come to me immediately." Well, it happened. It always does. So the machine messed up, and they tried to fix it themselves, and it made the biggest mess out of it that you'd ever seen. So when the foreman came, he said, "I thought I told you to come and get me, because I can fix it." See, we make the biggest mess out of things because we don't trust in the holiness of God. Can you say Amen? I've done it. We all make the biggest mess out of things.

Notice in Psalm 145, verse 17, and this is the reason I wanted to read this one verse. He says here, "[The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.](#)" Everything He's ever done or will do is perfect; it is right; it is holy. We do not have to question God. What He has done is holy. Turn with me to 1 Peter now. Let's go to the New Testament and spend some time there. I love to give a balance between the Old and the New Testament, because I think the Old Testament is the foundation for the New.

The third and last thing I want you to notice that I've got written here is that the holiness of God is not only revealed in the Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, the holiness of God is not only demonstrated in His works, but the holiness of God is also seen in His people. Now, what do I mean by that? How many realize this morning that there is a positional and practical aspect of many doctrines in Scripture? How many of you believe that? We preached this week on justification and missions and some other things, and in this church, I've preached many sermons on different subjects. Sanctification. When you look at sanctification, there are three different aspects of sanctification. Sanctification and holiness are very closely associated as well as righteousness. There is a positional sanctification from the day we get saved, but there's also a practical sanctification. God says you are sanctified, but you're also to sanctify yourself. It's important that we get ahold of that and that we understand what we are and who we are and what we have in Christ, and then that can be practiced out in our life. What He has begun in you He also will perform it. So there is a positional holiness.

Hebrews 10:14 is a reference to Christ, and it's comparing the Old Covenant and the animal sacrifices with the sacrifice of Christ, and Hebrews 10:10 says, "[By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.](#)" Now, think about it.

That word “sanctified” means to be set apart. So we are sanctified in Christ through salvation, but then we're to sanctify ourselves. That's not confusing to me. People get confused with that all the time. We are holy in Christ positionally speaking, but we are to be holy in our practical walk. Verses 12 to 14 says, “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; <sup>13</sup>From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” — Now, listen to verse 14 — <sup>14</sup>“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” So I have a positional sanctification as I have a positional justification as I have a positional redemption and so forth, and still yet I am to practice this out in my life.

So positionally speaking, in Christ I am sanctified. And the same is true with holiness. There is a positional holiness that begins with God, and there is a practical holiness whereas we're to follow and pursue God. Holiness is both instant and progressive. It is instant in that it began the day that I trusted Christ as my Savior in my heart, and then it's worked out practically throughout my entire life. Does that make sense? It's just like justification. I'm justified by faith alone without works, and then James, chapter 2, says we're justified by faith and works. Those are not a contradiction.

Now, notice with me in 1 Peter, chapter 1. I'm reading from verses 14, 15, and 16: “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: <sup>15</sup>But as he which hath called you is holy” — so in the Old and New Testament, we see clearly that God is holy — “But as he which hath called you is holy so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; <sup>16</sup>Because it is written” — this is Leviticus 11 — “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” Now, let me ask you this: If this cannot be done, why did God say it? It's sort of like a passage in Matthew 5, verse 48. It says, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Now, we've got to get a definition of the word “perfect.” We say a lot of times, “Well, no man is perfect,” and we can use it that way. We're not perfect creatures in that sense, but the biblical definition of “perfect” has the idea of maturity, coming into the faith. So if God said it, then can it be done? Let me ask you that. Can it be done? You better not say no. God said it, so it can be done. So if God says that we're to be holy in our Christian walk, then it can be done. That's my point with reading this. So he says in verse 16, “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” This was written about 60, 65 AD, written to New Testament saints. You know, somebody would want to say we're not under law. This has nothing to do with the law of Moses. And then you'll notice with me that 2 Peter, chapter 3, basically says this again. And if you're taking notes, 1 John 3, verses 1 through 3, teach that holiness is a lifestyle that is different from the world, and 2 Corinthians 7:1 says, “. . . let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” So this is something that can be done on a daily basis.

In 1 Thessalonians 4, half of the chapter, verses 1 through 8, is dealing with holiness. Verse 7 says, “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.” He's dealing

with the sins of the flesh in that chapter. Titus 2:11 says, “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,” but as you read through that chapter and look at it closely through the next few verses, Paul clearly brings out the fact that we are to live a godly life. So these are some things that can be done. He tells us in Titus 2 that Christ redeemed us from all iniquity, purifying unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. So these are things that can be done.

Romans 8:13 tells us to mortify the flesh, but it has to be done by the Spirit and the Word. And you ask, “What does that mean?” To mortify means to kill sin. (Unclear) If you don't kill sin, it will kill you. Psalm 119:104 basically says to love the things God loves and hate the things that God hates. So this is what we see when we consider the holiness of God. By the way, when we consider the holiness of God, I can't think of another right off the top of my head, but this is one of God's attributes that He can share with you and me. Think about that — because no man shall see God without holiness (Hebrews 12:14).

So God does a work in our hearts like regeneration. God is able to make us holy through the Lord Jesus Christ initially by salvation but also in our practical walk. We are called unto holiness. In 1 Peter 2:9-12, we're called out of darkness into light. Second Peter 1, verses 3 through 7, we're to add things to our faith. Now, notice with me as we come here to 2 Peter 3:11. It says, “*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,* <sup>12</sup>Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? <sup>13</sup>Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. <sup>14</sup>Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” So these things can be done by the grace of God and His mercy and love to us. God is holy. This is an attribute that He shares with us, so He commands you and me throughout the Scriptures — especially in the New Testament — to be holy because He is holy.

In Matthew 6:9, the Lord's Prayer, a part of that prayer says, “Hallowed be thy name.” In our worship we are to have reverence and an awe for God as we approach Him. Even when we pray, there ought to be a reverence: “Hallowed be thy name.” So when we study some of these attributes of God, they bring more of a reality to us even in our worship, when we come together to worship. There's so much casualness today, from casual wear to casual worship and everything else, and we should never let our worship of God just become casual. We should never let it be that. It should be something very important to us because it is important to God. I mean, God is the One who laid down the details of worship for the Tabernacle and the Temple, and even in His church we see that, not only by the Lord Jesus Christ but also the apostles who He had given truth to. As they write, we find plenty in the New Testament that deals with the subject of worship.

Notice with me as we come here to Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 3 and 4. Paul says, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: <sup>4</sup>According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Some will argue that this is that positional holiness. It may be, but it goes beyond that because we're going to see in a moment that there's the practical side of it as well. I think this is dealing with the practical also. But notice he said in this passage that we're chosen before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Yes, positionally that is true, but practically that's to be true as well. And I'm going to tell you that happiness is a by-product of holiness. It really is. That is what gives us peace and joy. We can pretend all we want. I see so much pretense in the world — people pretending to be something they're not. I heard a song one time, "Puttin' On A Style," people always putting on a style. I had an old tape several years ago that I used to play when people would be coming into the sanctuary, and I think the title of one of the songs was "Puttin' On A Style." It was a good old song. The preacher is dead now who wrote that and sang it, but people putting on a style, pretending to be something when we're not. True happiness is a by-product of holiness, of knowing our holy God and our position in Christ and our walk in holiness. You see, that's where true happiness comes. That's where we get peace and joy.

Notice with me as we come to chapter 4. Verses 17 through 19 are describing those who are lost and what we came out of, and in verses 22 through about verse 24, Paul says that, as Christians, not as a lost person but as a Christian, there are some things that we're to put on and there are some things that we're to put off, and one of the things that we're to put on is holiness. In verse 22 he said, “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; <sup>23</sup>And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; <sup>24</sup>And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” This is the practical aspect of things. He continues in verse 25: “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another”; verse 26, “Be ye angry, and sin not”; verse 27, “Neither give place to the devil.” And it just goes on with a list of things. In verse 29, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.” Anyway, we see the practical side of our walk with the Lord and what God has done for us.

So I want to leave this with you this morning. As we think about the holiness of God and we meditate upon that, let us remember that He is God and He is holy and we're to have reverence for Him, and even as we come to worship or even in private prayers, have some reverence for the Lord God as we think upon Him, because He is a holy God. This is revealed throughout the Scriptures. It's demonstrated in His works, His ways, His will, all that He's ever done, even in our salvation of Christ coming to the cross. I mean, we see God's holiness in all

this. And let me say this again: We see God's holiness in His people. Here's what Charles Spurgeon has said on the subject of holiness:

**“Christ will be master of the heart, and sin must be mortified. If your life is unholy, then your heart is unchanged, and you are an unsaved person. The Savior will sanctify His people, renew them, give them a hatred for sin and a love for holiness. The grace that does not make a man better than others is a worthless counterfeit. Christ saves His people, not in their sins but from their sins. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”**

How true this is. If we're going to imitate God as in Matthew 5:48; if we're going to come before Him in prayer — Hallowed be thy name —; if we are to be holy as God is holy, not only positionally but in our practical walk, then we must keep our eyes upon a holy and a righteous God that only Scripture really reveals to us. I mean, don't get out here and do a survey and get your concept of God from the man or woman on the street. I promise you you'll walk away not knowing the true and living God.

Would you stand with me this morning before we sing.

*Father, we thank Thee this morning for Thy love, mercy, kindness, and grace; but, Lord, we just thank Thee for Thy holiness, and we thank Thee that Thou has shared that holiness with us. Lord, help us to follow Thee, to keep our eyes upon Thee and, Lord, to have that reverence as we come before Thee, a holy awe. Lord, we just ask that you help us in these areas, for it's in Christ Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*