

Attributes of God

Week 5 – Holiness and Justice

“Holiness is the most sparkling jewel of His crown.” – Thomas Watson

“If every attribute of the Deity were a distinct member, holiness would be the soul to animate them. Without holiness His patience would be an indulgence to sin, His mercy a fondness, His wrath a madness, His power a tyranny, His wisdom an unworthy subtlety. Holiness gives decorum to them all.” – Stephen Charnock

Holiness: God’s moral **purity**, absolute **perfection**, and complete **separateness** from sin and evil.

“Holy, Holy, Holy” – Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8

“The Bible says that God is holy, holy, holy. Not that He is merely holy, or even holy, holy. He is holy, holy, holy. The Bible never says that God is love, love, love; or mercy, mercy, mercy; or wrath, wrath, wrath; or justice, justice, justice. It does say that He is holy, holy, holy, that the whole earth is full of His glory.” – R.C. Sproul

“Everything about God is marked by His absolute holiness. This one characteristic is the sum and substance of His entire being.” – Steve Lawson

1. God is set **apart** (Exodus 8:10, 15:11)
2. God is **transcendent** (Isaiah 6:1; Psalm 22:3, 99:1-3)
3. God is **majestic** (Exodus 15:11, Psalm 8:1)
4. God is **awesome** (Deuteronomy 7:21; Nehemiah 1:5, 4:14, 9:32; Daniel 9:4; Isaiah 6:4-5)

“Man is never sufficiently touched and affected by the awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God’s majesty.” – John Calvin

5. God is **flawless** (Habakkuk 1:13, Matthew 5:48)

“[For] saints, holiness is like gold in the ore, imperfect; their humility is stained with pride; he that has most faith needs pray, ‘Lord, help my unbelief:’ but the holiness of God is pure, like wine from the grape; it has not the least dash or tincture of impurity mixed with it.” – Thomas Watson

6. God is **convicting** (1 John 1:5, Luke 5:8, Revelation 1:17)
7. God is **unapproachable** (Psalm 34:16, 1 Timothy 6:16)

You may be asking:

- If God is holy and transcendent, how can we approach Him and have a relationship with Him as sinful humans?

“Do you want to be holy? Do you want to become a new creation? Then you must begin with Christ. You will do nothing at all, and make no progress until you feel your sin and weakness, and run to Him. He is the root and beginning of all holiness, and the way to be holy is to come to Him by faith and be joined to Him. Christ is not only wisdom and righteousness to His people, but sanctification also.” – J.C. Ryle

Take aways – Holiness

1. Let the understanding of God’s holiness drive us to a humble and reverent awe of Him.
2. God has called us to be holy, just as He is holy. (Prov. 8:13, Romans 6:11, Eph. 4:22-24, Romans 12:1-2,9, John 15:5)

Additional resources – Holiness

The Holiness of God by R.C. Sproul

Video series (free): <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/holiness-of-god>

Book: <https://a.co/d/6sR3aCd>

Holiness by J.C. Ryle: <https://a.co/d/guUynEl>

Justice: God's impartial **judgment** and vindication of His **righteousness**.

"God is at once righteous and just. The two concepts are so closely connected that, though they can be distinguished, they may not be separated. In biblical terms, true justice is always 'according to righteousness.' Justice is not determined merely by an abstract legal code or even by the collective decisions of the law courts. Justice is weighed by the standard of righteousness, which in turn is measured by the standard of God's character." – R.C. Sproul

1. God is **judge** (1 Samuel 2:10, Psalm 50:6, John 5:22, Matthew 25:31-32)

2. God is **just** (Genesis 18:25, Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalm 33:5, Psalm 89:14)

"In all His deliberations, He always does what is right. He never rewards sinful behavior. He never punishes obedience. God renders righteous justice because He loves what is right." – Steve Lawson

3. God is **impartial** (Deuteronomy 10:17, 2 Chronicles 19:7, Job 34:12, Acts 10:34, Romans 2:11, Colossians 3:25)

4. God is **rewarding** (Isaiah 40:10, Matthew 5:12, Matthew 10:41-42)

5. God is **avenging** (Deuteronomy 32:35; Revelation 6:9-11, 19:1-2)

6. God is **punishing** (Genesis 2:16-17, Proverbs 11:21, Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23, James 1:15)

"The primary purpose of the punishment of sin is the maintenance of right and justice." – Louis Berkhof

7. God is **justifier** (Romans 3:23, 3:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:26, 3:21-22)

"God is perfectly 'just' in that He administers perfect justice for sin in the death of His Son. If He is to receive His elect, they must be declared righteous. Thus, God is the 'justifier' of the unrighteous when He imputes the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ to the one who believes in Him." – Steve Lawson

You may be asking:

- How can God be both just and loving without compromising one or the other?

Take aways – Justice

1. Be thankful that God is not only just, He is loving, gracious, and merciful to forgive and provide righteousness to those who trust in Christ.

"If thy heart has been broken for and from sin, thou mayest not only plead God's mercy, but His justice for the pardoning of thy sin." – Thomas Watson

2. Trust that God, in His perfect wisdom and sovereignty, will make all things right. (Romans 12:19)

3. The justice and righteousness of God calls us to live holy and obedient lives, pleasing to Him. (Micah 6:8)