

## The Holy One

(Isaiah 6:1-5)

Intro: Last week we looked at the doctrine of the Trinity. The biblical teaching that there is one God, Yahweh, who is one in essence or substance, but three in personality: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This does not mean three independent Gods existing as One, but three Persons who are co-equal, co-eternal, inseparable, interdependent, and eternally united in one absolute divine Essence and Being. **Show Diagram of Trinity**

This morning we turn our attention to God's attribute of holiness. Many theologians regard holiness as the very core of God's being, and that which directs all that He does. To put it in another way, *God is inherently holy*. As A. W. Tozer explains, "He is the absolute quintessence of moral excellence, infinitely perfect in righteousness, purity, and incomprehensible holiness. (*The Knowledge of the Holy*, 105).

The scriptures place great emphasis on God's holiness. Believers in every generation have been commanded to be holy because God is holy. God declared to Moses and the congregation of Israel, "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Lev. 11:44). Peter quoting Leviticus 11:44, likewise commands believers to live holy lives. Listen to Peter's admonition in **1 Peter 1:14-16**:

14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts [which were yours] in your ignorance, 15 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."

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are commanded to pursue a holy life, which will yield an abundant life under God's blessings. God's perfection, as the Holy One, is the standard for our moral character and the motivation for our daily living. **What does it mean to be holy.** Look with me this morning at the revelation of God's holiness. Perhaps the best place to begin is with a definition of holiness.

### Definition of Holiness

The basic meaning of *holy* in both the Old and New Testament is “separation” or “setting apart.” **Holiness** is a general term used to indicate separation from all that is sinful or impure, or morally imperfect. Holiness is applied to God, objects and institutions, and to men.

## I. Holiness Of God

### A. God alone is holy

When the Bible calls God holy it means that God is inherently holy. Holiness is the essential characteristic of His nature. What is more, God is separated from His creatures and from all evil.

#### 1. God is inherently holy

The scriptures emphasize that Yahweh, Israel’s God is inherently holy. There is none like Him. Isaiah 40:25,

Isaiah 40:25—“To whom then will you liken Me That I should be *his* equal?” says the Holy One.

The Psalms are filled with declarations of God’s holiness:

Psalm 77:13—Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God?

Psalm 89:18—Indeed, our shield belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

#### 2. God is separated from His creatures

He is exalted high above His creatures in infinite glory and majesty. His holiness is associated with His elevated position. It sets Him apart, above all His creation.

Isaiah declares: “For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, “I dwell on a high and holy place” (Isaiah 57:15).

Psalm 99:1-5—“The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned *above* the cherubim, let the earth shake! 2 The LORD is great in Zion, And He is exalted above all the peoples. 3 Let them praise Thy great and awesome

name; **Holy is He**. . . . v. 5 Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His footstool; **Holy is He**.

Exodus 15:11—“Who is like Thee among the gods, O LORD? Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?”

2 Samuel 2:2—“There is no one holy like the LORD, Indeed, there is no one besides Thee, Nor is there any rock like our God.”

### 3. God is separated from all evil

Holiness also has an ethical connotation, God is declared to be separated from all evil. He can have no association with sin. Sin is repulsive to His holiness.

The prophet Habakkuk insisted that God is so pure, He will not even look at sin (Hab. 1:13). Psalm 5:4 assures us that no evil dwells with God. Proverbs 6:16 and Hebrews 1:9 affirm that God hates sin.

### B. The Holy One of Israel

The prophet Isaiah presents God as the “Holy One of Israel.” This title occurs twenty-six times in Isaiah and only six times in the rest of the Old Testament. Isaiah you recall experienced a vision of God in all of His holiness that shook him to the core of his being. He records his vision of the Holy God in chapter 6, verses 1-5:

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. 2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.” 4 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. 5 Then I said, “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’s overwhelming vision of God’s holiness caused him to repent of his sin, and to submit his life to God’s service. Isaiah needed a supernatural vision of God’s holiness because his message would be spurned by the priests and the people. Throughout the remainder of his book Isaiah refers to God as the Holy

One of Israel, the Living God, set apart from all other gods and worthy of all honor, glory, and praise.

If there is one thing God wants us to know about Himself, above all else, it is that **He is infinitely holy**. In fact, there are probably more references to God's holiness in Scripture than to any other attribute. We may find it to be one of the most difficult of all His attributes to accept, but for some reason He finds it one of the most important for us to comprehend. Again, He wants us to know Him as **the infinitely Holy One**.

## II. Holiness Applied To Objects And Institutions

Not only is God inherently holy, His sacredness or holiness is often conveyed to objects and places associated with Him.

### A. Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3)

When Moses turned aside to observe a burning bush that wasn't being consumed, God told him to remove his sandals because the ground upon which he was standing was "holy ground." That is, the burning bush and surrounding area were consecrated by God's holy presence. They were "separated" or "set apart," made holy by God's holy presence.

### B. Israel at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19)

When God came down upon Mount Sinai, He separated, literally sanctified or set apart the mountain from the Israelite encampment. He ordered Moses "to erect a barrier around the base of the mountain, lest any of the people should break through to the LORD to gaze on Him, and many of them perish" (v. 21).

### C. The tabernacle and temple

Similar restrictions were placed upon God's dwelling place, first in the tabernacle and later in the temple. The Most Holy place where God dwelt among His people in resplendent glory was veiled and off limits to any but the high priest, who was permitted access only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

### D. Assorted objects of worship

Objects used in worship, furnishings, implements, priestly vestments, offerings,

water, and land were all consecrated, set apart for God's holy service. The assorted objects used in worship were not holy, but set apart unto God's holy service.

### III. Holiness Applied To Men

God's perfection in holiness is the standard by which God's people are called to live and to serve Him. Following their deliverance from Egypt, the Lord God led the children of Israel to His holy mountain, Mount Sinai. He told the people that since He was holy, they were to live as a consecrated, holy people.

**Leviticus 11:44-45**—"For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. 45 For I am the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy."

The people of Israel were called by God to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod. 19:6). The LORD God placed the people of Israel in covenant with Himself, and established a holy priesthood and instituted Laws and sacrifices as a means of providing forgiveness of sin, and securing righteousness before God and holiness of life with God.

An illustration of Consecration (2 Chronicles 30)

King Hezekiah reinstated the Passover and consecrated the priests and people. However, because there were not a sufficient number of priests who had consecrated themselves they postponed the Passover celebration until the Second month. Look at the response of the people in the Northern Kingdom, who had been invited to attend the Passover (vv. 10-11).

Believers have likewise been called by God to be "A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God's* OWN POSSESSION, and as such you are to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY" (1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Since God is holy, His followers must be holy also. A holy God requires a holy people.

#### **IV. Holiness Of The Son Of God**

God's Son, Jesus Christ exemplified His Father's holiness during His earthly life. Jesus Christ was truly holy.

Peter said that He committed no sin (1 Pet. 2:22). John likewise declared that there was no sin in Him (1 John 3:5). Paul said that He knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21). And the writer to the Hebrews said He was "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners" (Heb. 7:26).

Peter like Isaiah, when He witnessed Jesus' miraculous provision of fish, he bowed in fear and reverence and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8).

Paul stresses the believer's need to appropriate the holiness of Christ in many of his letters. He admonishes believers, called by God to be His children, to separate themselves from unclean things and be perfectly holy as God is holy (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1; also 1 Thess. 3:13 and 4:7). Paul also notes in Ephesians 5:27 that the church is also to be completely holy: she is to "be presented before Him in splendor; without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy without blemish."

When we measure our standard of holiness against God's, the need for a complete change of moral and spiritual condition becomes apparent!

#### **V. Holiness Provided For Believers**

While God's absolute holiness cannot be imparted to His creatures, He has provided a contingent holiness that redeemed men can possess. The holiness God imparts to fallen men is made available through the Person of His Son. It is contingent upon a person's accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Savior from sin and death. God imputes our sin to His Son, and applies His holiness to our account. The blood of Jesus Christ washes away our sins, and He literally becomes our holiness (1 Cor. 1:30). To know we are children of the living God, sinful though we are, is to possess an inestimable sense of real worth.

While Christians enjoy forgiveness of sin and a perfect standing before God in holiness because of our faith in Christ, we all must admit that we continue to sin everyday. We need to acknowledge our sin, confess it, and ask God to

cleanse and strengthen us to live out His indwelling holiness. John tells us in 1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” In order to grow in holiness we need to draw close to God through His Word and prayer. This will help us to learn a little more about God’s holiness and consequently a little more about our own sinfulness. May God help us to catch a glimpse of His holiness, so that we might, like Isaiah, call upon Him to cleanse us by the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit.

Application:

Have you trusted in Jesus Christ to cleanse you from the guilt and penalty of sin? If not, will you ask Him to come into your heart today? He will cleanse you of sin and provide you with His holiness and righteousness. Christian, do you have sin in your life that you need to confess to God? Confess your sin as we close in prayer, and ask God for the power to grant you victory over sin. Be in your daily practice what you are by virtue of your eternal position in Christ.

Let’s pray:

**Closing song: Most Holy One by Horizon Praise Team      put up slides**