

Searching the Scriptures / 11 / God Is Holy / Part 1

Whenever one talks about God – any aspect of God – we must do so with the utmost reverence, awe, and humility. Whom do we think we are to discuss anything about God? After all, God’s Word says that we are mere men – we are dust and ashes – we are a flower that fades – we are a vapor – in short, the Bible reveals that we are but vanity. Psa 39:11 declares, *“When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah.”* We read in Isa 40:15, *“Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.”*

If the nations of this world are considered by God to be like a drop of water or a speck of dust from His perspective, how big does that make you and me? Yet, in spite of whom we are as created and sinful men, God has afforded us the amazing privilege of learning about Himself through the Bible that He wrote.

Today we want to briefly look at one of God’s infinite characteristics – His Holiness. As we do so, we immediately recognize – and are struck by the fact – that God is absolutely and indescribably unique. In Exo 15:11 we find this statement: *“Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”* As the verse implies, there is only One True and Living God among the pantheon of lesser “gods” that have been invented by the minds of men. And this One True and Living God is Holy. Let’s look at some of the ways that God is declared to be Holy in His Word, the Bible:

- 1. God’s “Name” is Holy.**
- 2. Christians are to Worship God for His Holiness.**
- 3. God’s Gospel, which Provides Salvation, is Holy.**

God’s “Name” is Holy

Let’s first consider the fact that *“God’s Name is Holy”*. Actually, God describes Himself by many “Names” in the Bible, and one of them is “Holy”. Luke 1:49 declares, *“For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.”* When we speak of God’s Name, or Person, we are actually referring to His nature, or character – in other words, everything that God represents. Rev 4:8 paints a very dramatic picture of God’s eternal holiness: *“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were 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.”* Note how this verse also expresses the Triune holiness of God. The same idea is also expressed from a different vantage point in Mark 1:24, *“Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.”* This time it is an “unclean spirit”, a demon, in a man that is acknowledging not only the divine Holiness of God the Son, but also his awareness that Jesus will one day appear as the Judge of the universe to consign all demons (as well as all non-Christians) to Hell forevermore.

Christians are to Worship God for His Holiness

Secondly, let’s consider the fact that “*Christians are to Worship God for His Holiness.*” 1 Chr 16:29 testifies, “*Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*” Did you notice how God considers holiness as “*beauty*”? This world has its own standards for beauty, but those qualifications for beauty do not include holiness, or moral perfection. However, God has declared in Heb 12:14, “*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*” Only God Himself has this quality, and only God can give it to His people.

We just saw a glimpse of God’s holiness when we saw the extent to which He is worshipped in Heaven; and thus, how careful we must be to worship Him on earth as He demands. So, how do we do that? John 4:23-24 gives us the answer: “*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*” We see from this verse and many other passages that as God seeks and saves His people from eternal damnation, He also qualifies them to worship Him for His Holiness “in spirit and in truth” – that is, in obedience to the Bible.

God’s Gospel, which Provides Salvation, is Holy

We read about the “*Holy Covenant*” in Luke 1:72: “*To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant.*” What is God’s covenant? Rom 11:27 gives us the definition, “*For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*” God paints a very accurate picture of our sinful condition in Eph 2:12, “*That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*”

The Greek word for “*covenant*” is really speaking about the Gospel and is also translated in English as “*testament*” in a number of places, including 2 Cor 3:6: “*Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter [Law] killeth, but the spirit [Holy Spirit] giveth life.*” The reason it is “*holy*” is because it is God’s covenant, or testament, which is applied to the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit. We see this in Rom 15:29, “*And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*” God is emphasizing the fact that this Gospel did not originate with man – it was not conceived in the mind of man. According to Gal 1:12-13, the origin of the Gospel can only be traced to God: “*But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*”

Could it be that each us might gain a greater understanding of and appreciation for the holiness of God, to the end that we might be holy, as God is Holy (1 Pet 1:16)? We can only have God’s holiness if He chooses to give it to us by saving us and giving us new birth from above.