

Rediscovering Worship In the Beauty of Holiness

*“O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness:
fear before him, all the earth.”
Psalm 96:9*

The Importance of God’s Holiness

- Henry Thiessen:
 - “Holiness occupies the foremost rank among the attributes of God.”
 - “Because of the fundamental character of this attribute, the holiness of God rather than the love, the power, or the will of God should be given first place. Holiness is the regulative principle of all three of them; His throne is established on the basis of His *holiness* (Ps. 47:8; 89:14; 97:2).”
- John MacArthur:
 - “Of all the attributes of God, holiness is the one that most uniquely describes Him. In reality, this is a summarization of all His other attributes. The word *holiness* refers to His separateness, His otherness, the fact that He is unlike any other being. It indicates His complete and infinite perfection. Holiness is the attribute of God that binds all the others together. Properly understood, it will revolutionize the quality of our worship.”
- It is clear from the plethora of references that God emphasizes His holiness: Leviticus 11:44-45, Joshua 24:19, I Samuel 6:20, Psalm 22:3, Isaiah 40:5, Habakkuk 1:12, Mark 1:24, Acts 3:14, I John 2:20, Revelation 3:7.

What is Holiness?

- God’s holiness is not just how He acts, but is an integral part of His nature.
- Holiness has three aspects:
 - Perfection – cannot be more or less – Matthew 5:48
 - Purity – cannot be defiled – James 1:17
 - Partition – cannot contact sin – Habakkuk 1:13
- An oversimplification could describe *holiness* as “hatred of sin” (Psalm 5:4-6) and “love of righteousness” (Psalm 11:7).

A Fundamental Problem

- The holiness of God is a primary problem when it comes to His interaction with man, both in salvation and worship.
- In salvation:
 - Sinful man is separated from a holy God – Isaiah 59:1-2

- God has provided a means of reconciliation through Christ – Romans 5:1-2, I Peter 3:18
 - We are granted God's own righteousness through imputation – Romans 4:22-24, Philippians 3:9
- In worship:
 - We are to interact with God “with reverence and godly fear” – Hebrews 12:28-29
 - Our worship should reflect the holiness of the One we worship.
 - The Hebrew word for “holy” (*qodesh*, Strong's H6944) occurs 460+ times in the Old Testament. 223 of those are from Exodus through Deuteronomy, in which God reveals to Israel how they are to worship Him.
- The solution to both is to come to God on His terms, not our own.
- You cannot truly worship God without first being saved from your sin.
 - This opens the way to access to approach God – Hebrews 4:14-16

Worshipping in Holiness

- The marks of encountering God and His holiness are:
 - a conviction of sin – Isaiah 6:5, Job 40:4
 - humility and pleas for forgiveness – Isaiah 6:5, Luke 5:8
 - acknowledging the greatness of God – Psalm 96
 - reverence and fear (awe) of God – Hebrews 12:28
 - a holy heart and character to our actions – I Peter 1:16
- Through understanding His holiness, we truly grasp the greatness of His grace extended toward us – Lamentations 3:22
 - This in turn causes us to worship and praise Him more!