

A Deep Look At God's Holiness

Written by Bill Perkins

God is the reality I believe people seek in the extraterrestrial. He exists apart from and above His creation. Perhaps that's why the word "holy" is used more often as a prefix to God's name than any other attribute. I think most people believe the words *holy* and *pure* are synonymous. They aren't. The word "holy" describes the essence of *all* of God's attributes of which purity is an element.

The Sum God's Moral Excellence

When Isaiah beheld God sitting on His throne, high and exalted, with His robe filling the temple, angels flew around Him and said to one another, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3). The angels didn't say the Lord is powerful, loving, just, or merciful. They said He is holy. The word describes the sum of all of God's moral excellence.

If I looked at the sun I would say, "The sun is bright." Why? Because brightness is a word that describes the essence of all of the sun's characteristics: hot, burning, and explosive. Brightness is to the sun what holiness is to God.

Apart From

While the word *holy* describes the essence of all of God's attributes, the primary meaning of *holy* is "separate." Not separate in the sense of being "apart from" but in the sense of possessing a "superior excellence." We might say that an excellent diamond, sports car, or team is set apart. It's in a class of its own. It's holy.

Transcendent

But God's holiness is more than just separateness, it's also *transcendent*. Webster tells us the word *transcendent* means, "going beyond ordinary limits, surpassing, exceeding." God is above and beyond all of His creation.

So how does the holiness of God relate to evil? Because God is intrinsically holy, evil can no more invade His person than darkness could infiltrate light. He lives unpolluted by evil. He possesses eternal innocence in His nature and deeds. No wonder the Apostle John wrote, "God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). He sees evil all around Him in a fallen creation but dispels it as light dispels darkness.

God is not only separate from evil; He hates sin in all of its manifestations. God is light and evil is darkness. Or to put it differently, He repels evil like the positive end of a magnet repels the positive end of another magnet.

Set Apart For God

We have been called to a holy God. Because of this, Peter said, “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do” (1 Peter 1:15). As servants of a holy God we must be holy—set apart for God’s use. We must be holy in all of our thoughts, words and deeds.