

Be Thankful For This

Written by Bill Perkins

In my lifetime I remember no other occasion when I questioned the veracity of so many people and organizations. Who can we trust? Politicians? The media? Scientists? Military leaders? Medical professionals? I don't completely trust any of them. In the face of such darkness, I know a single thought that drives away all darkness and fear and replaces them with thankfulness and joy. The thought: *God's Holiness*.

What does "Holy" mean?

The word *holy* describes the essence of God's moral attributes. When Isaiah beheld God sitting on his throne, high and exalted, with his robe filling the temple, angels flying around him 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, pure, loving, just, or merciful. They said he is holy. The word describes the sum of God's moral excellence.

If I were asked to describe the sun I would say, "The sun is bright." Why? Because *brightness* describes the essence of the sun's characteristics: hot, burning, gaseous, and explosive. Brightness is to the sun what holiness is to God.

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.

But God's holiness is more than just separate; it's also *transcendent*. Webster tells us the word *transcendent* means "going beyond ordinary limits, surpassing, exceeding." God is above and beyond his creation. The more we focus on God, the more all else fades away, like a picture frame as we gaze at the picture.

God's Holiness and Evil

So how does the holiness of God relate to evil? Since we're engaged in a war between good and evil, between a holy God and an unholy army of demons, between servants and enemies of God. Nobody is neutral in this conflict. Nobody.

Because God is intrinsically holy, evil can no more invade his person than darkness can infiltrate light. Who ever heard of a black beam of darkness shooting across a brightly lit room? Because God is light, he lives unpolluted by evil. He possesses eternal innocence in his nature and in his 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 his fallen creation but dispels it as light dispels darkness.

God is not only separate from evil, but he hates every manifestation of evil. I've often wondered what that must be like. There are foods I dislike and refuse to eat, like liver. I don't care if it's fried with onions or marinated in a delicious French sauce, I hate liver and refuse to take a single bite of it. That illustration breaks down because God not only hates sin, but it's also the opposite of his nature. God is light and evil is darkness. Or to put it differently, he repels evil like the positive ends of two magnets repel each other.

Revel in God's Holiness

Confused by the evil around us, our soul finds clarity and rest in the holiness of God. During this Thanksgiving season, fast from the news. Spend those minutes and hours reveling in God's holiness. Now that's something to be thankful for on Thanksgiving and every other day of the year.

Serving you and the King,

Bill Perkins