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**Because
He Is...
Holy**

#1240-B

Series: The Character of God

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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Because He Is...Holy

We cannot truly fathom what must have happened. The cataclysmic effects shook the very foundations of the universe. All that had been designed began to decay. Nature trembled in horror as the entire balance of natural law collapsed in a moment of time. The bond of harmony between God and His creation began instantly to crumble into an ocean of resistance and rebellion and deceit. The animal kingdom shuddered. The plant kingdom would never be the same again. Thorns and thistles began to force their ugly heads up through the soil, soil intended by the Creator God to be a home for beauty and beauty alone.

The disastrous effects of death began to take their toll. Every bird, every fish, every tree began to die. The most lovely of God's creations, spoken from the mouth of God into His very own image, fell from His presence in utter separation. Man and woman began to die. They began the horrible experience of living life on planet earth apart from fellowship with their Father God.

What happened? Was it the first nuclear explosion? No. It made the first nuclear explosion look like a firecracker. Was it a volcanic eruption? No. It made the fiercest volcano look like a toy. What had happened was that man had sinned against a Holy God. Jehovah, The Holy One, the One who could not taste of evil, create evil, or coexist with evil had watched as the very heart of His creation defied His Holiness and attempted to bring into His very presence that which defiles and corrupts and decays. Instantly, the accord of heaven dissolved, and man carved out on planet earth a life of suffering, sorrow, grief and pain.

It was not what God desired. He is the Holy One. From His heart there flows an ocean of holiness so pure that our minds, corrupted by compromise, cannot even grasp the awesomeness of it. But attempt to grasp it, we must. For we live in a world where the very term "holiness" is a laughing matter. The intensity of God's purity and His design for the Christian are masked behind a horrible commodity called conformity. What was once the very cornerstone of the Christian faith has become, in effect, such a cheap imitation of the real thing, that the world is laughing and deriding the church...not for its holiness, but rather for its hypocrisy.

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Ours is a Holy God. He hates sin, and He hates it no less today than He did that fateful day in the garden when man first tasted of its vial of death. If we are to recapture the awesome “fear of God” we were meant to have, we must recapture the concept of God’s Holiness.

HOLY IS HIS NAME

The Psalmist wrote these words:

The works of His hands are verity and justice; All His precepts are sure.

They stand fast forever and ever, And are done in truth and uprightness.

He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: Holy and awesome is His name.

(Psalm 111:7-9 NKJV)

Holy is His name! And no name is used with more authority in Scripture to describe and define God’s nature than this one.

For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

(Isaiah 57:15 NKJV)

The one who inhabits eternity is called “Holy”. That is His name. So much a part of His name is it, that the place in which He dwells is called “The Holy Place”. Mary, speaking said:

For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.

(Luke 1:49 NKJV)

The name of God which denotes the character of God is “holy”. He is referred to as “The Holy One”, “The Holy One of Jacob”, “The Holy One of Israel”. In fact, He is called “holy” more often even than “almighty”. Whatever it says, it is saying it with exclamation marks; for if God so treasures this aspect of His being that He gives it to Himself as a supreme title, then we must treasure it, as well. We must come to know Him as “The Holy One” or we will fail to see Him as He really is.

HOLY IS OUR GOD

Holy is our God. What does that mean? Why does the One who created heaven and earth call Himself “Holy”? Why do the angels bow before His throne daily and call Him “Holy”? Why is His Son called, even at His birth, “Holy”? Why is His Spirit referred to as the

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“Holy Spirit”? How often we use that word. How seldom do we bow in total adoration and awe as we do. The angels must have a better grasp of it than we do, for they use it constantly as an anthem of worship.

The word “holy” comes from the Greek word *hagios*, and is used in its various forms in the New Testament alone more than 275 times. The Septuagint made frequent use of this word. In ancient Greek, it meant “an object of awe or reverence”. It developed into a word that came to mean “that which is clean or cleansed from all contamination”. Its literal meaning is “to be set apart for special use”. The word “saint” used in the New Testament comes from the same root word. So things or people “set apart” by God for special reasons were referred to as “saints” or “holy”.

We read of “holy ground”, of a “holy mountain”, of “the holy city”. Believers came to be called “saints” or “holy ones” because they were set apart by God unto Himself. They had been cleansed by His blood and in His sight were free from contamination. They and we are, in that sense, “holy”; and are referred to by Paul as “saints”. But the holiness of God is the source of it all. Peter admonishes us:

but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy...

(I Peter 1:15 NKJV)

He does not call upon us to be as holy as He; but rather to be holy based on His holiness. Our holiness is relative. God’s is absolute. Our holiness is conditional. God’s holiness is complete. Our holiness is imputed; His holiness is a perfection of His nature. Our holiness is fragile; His is unshakable. And yet we, who are His, will one day be holy, even as He is holy; for one day He shall inhabit us without the shackles of sin still leaving their ugly marks upon our souls.

Oh, the holiness of God. What it actually means is that He, and He alone, lives completely above and apart from sin. So totally set apart is He that He cannot look upon sin without deep grief and a broken heart. So pure is the heart of God that it is referred to as “His beauty”. We are told to worship Him in the “beauty of His holiness” (II Chronicles 20:21). When we take a photo of someone, we want to see their most beautiful side. When we photograph a landscape, we try to catch a glimpse of its most beautiful angle. God’s beauty can best be defined, according to Scripture, by His holiness. Nothing else so portrays the magnificence that sets Him apart from His creation than this. That’s why nothing man could

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have done could have caused the earth and all that is in it to so dissolve into disarray as sin.

Charnock writes; *“Power is His hand and arm, omniscience His eye, mercy His bowels, eternity His duration, His holiness is His beauty.”* The most beautiful way to worship God is to worship Him for His Holiness. The most beautiful way to serve God is to live a holy life. What truths must we learn about the holiness of God to begin to marvel at it, as we should? Here are a few:

1- Only God is independently holy.

Our holiness is imputed holiness. Christ’s death on the cross for us dealt with sin and allowed us to be viewed as eternally holy by a holy God, and to enjoy imputed, practical holiness on our way to heaven by virtue of His life in us, and His forgiveness of sin as we fail. But God is intrinsically Holy. It is part of His divine nature. While we, in the flesh, naturally sin, God naturally is pure. Only in the supernatural state, inhabited by the Holy Spirit, can we taste of that which is pure. The unbeliever, then, even one who lives a relatively moral life, possesses no holiness. He has not been set apart from sin by the imputed righteousness of Christ.

2- Only God is infinitely Holy.

Any moral purity we possess is relative purity. We can be free from yielding to sin for a season, and to a degree, but never are we totally sinless, or will we be until we get to heaven. God, on the other hand, has never sinned, can never sin, will never sin, and cannot so much as think a sinful thought. All that He is, is holy and pure. All that He thinks is holy and pure. All that He wills is holy and pure. *“Thou only art holy”* (Revelation 15:4) is an accurate phrase of worship.

Pink writes: *He is absolute purity, unsullied even by the shadow of sin. He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5).* Therefore, we read:

You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness...
(Habakkuk 1:13 NKJV)

3- God is immutably holy.

He cannot one day slip and sin. He cannot one day think something impure. And He cannot one day change His concepts of what is and what is not pure. His holiness is immutable. It cannot and could not from the foundation of the world change in context or degree or perfection. What He is He will always be, and each of

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His attributes are immutable. His standards of holiness, therefore, are eternal, as is His nature.

4- Every attribute of God is Holy.

Charnock writes: *“His justice is a holy justice. His wisdom is a holy wisdom. His power is a holy arm. His name, which signifies all His attributes in conjunction, is holy:”* (Psalm 103:1) His holiness is not a separate part of His being. All that He is, is holy. All that He does is holy. All of His decrees are holy. And His Word is accurately described as the “Holy Bible”. The Psalmist wrote:

Your word is very pure; Therefore Your servant loves it.

(Psalm 119:140 NKJV)

5- Nowhere is the holiness of God more evident than at the Cross.

If you want to know how God feels about sin, take a trip to Calvary. Relive the darkest hour in history, which led to the brightest hour, when the veil was torn asunder, and man was free to taste of the holiness of God at will. Pink describes that moment this way:

“Not all the vials of judgment that have or shall be poured out upon the wicked world, nor the flaming furnace of a sinner’s conscience, nor the irreversible sentence pronounced against the rebellious demons, nor the groans of the damned creatures, give such a demonstration of God’s hatred of sin, as the wrath of God let loose upon His Son. Never did Divine holiness appear more beautiful than at the time our Savior’s countenance was most marred in the midst of His dying groans.”

Read Psalm 22. There we hear the Holy Spirit, thousands of years in advance, quote the Master’s voice at that very instant in history when sin met Savior. He wrote:

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?

(Psalm 22:1 NKJV)

Then He cries out:

But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.

(Psalm 22:3 NKJV)

At the moment of His separation from the Father, the Master instinctively cried out in anguish. God separated from His own Son by our sins...what grief! Then it was as though Christ’s heart was

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filled with wonder at His Father's Holiness. There was the basis for the separation. God could not look upon sin. There was no choice, if God's holiness was to remain intact. Oh, Beloved, do you see what price He paid to maintain His holiness, while redeeming mankind? The holiness of God came to all of its fullness at Calvary. That is why, when we are tempted to take His holiness lightly, we ought to fall before that Cross and worship and repent.

HOLY ARE HIS WORKS

It is also imperative that we visualize God's works as Holy, as well. He who cannot touch that which is not pure, cannot create anything or do anything that is less than perfect. Psalms makes this statement:

The LORD is righteous in all His ways, Gracious [holy] in all His works.
(Psalm 145:17 NKJV)

His original creation was perfect. You ask, "What about Satan?" We read these words:

"You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.

You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground...
(Ezekiel 28:14,15,17 NKJV)

God cannot create anything that is not holy, because He in His essence is holy. Satan was created a beautiful, perfect being, who chose to disobey, dishonor God, and reject His holiness. All of God's works are holy. That's why, "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning*" (James 1:17). That evil thing that happened to you did not originate in the mind of God. God cannot devise that which is unholy or plan that which is unholy. All of His works are holy from eternity past and ever shall be. Conversely, nothing good can come from your life, apart from His holiness. Anything you do that is eternal, comes as a gift from Him through you as an expression of His holiness.

HOLY MUST BE THE ATTITUDE OF HIS CHILDREN

This leads us to the application portion of this study. We have established that the holiness of God is a primary, if not the primary

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expression of the Godhead. He is...Holy. But, the issue at stake in our lives now comes down to the age-old question: "How does that affect me?" To answer that, we must take a look at several Biblical principles regarding holiness and the believer. The passage we referred to earlier in I Peter 1 holds the key. It reads like this:

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;

but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,

because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

(I Peter 1:13-16 NKJV)

If God is holy, and we were created to reflect His likeness, then His children must be holy. No, we cannot become as holy as He is while living in this body of sin, but we can become progressively more like Him, thus we must be becoming increasingly holy in all our behavior.

The great revivals that have stirred whole nations and revolutionized the church in generations past have all revolved around this one issue: sin and the believer. But as the pages of history turn towards the latter chapters, man has chosen to emphasize other elements of the gospel in an effort to remain evangelistic, while maintaining an audience with a world that is increasingly hostile to the very concept of sin.

The result is a saccharin-sweet kind of Christianity that so emphasizes the love of God and the grace of God that it violates the whole counsel of God by refusing to face up to the holiness of God and wrath of God. Part of it, no doubt, is an overreaction to some of the preaching that formed the turn of the century American gospel wherein the pendulum had swung to the opposite extreme. But no matter the cause, the reality is that the depth of the magnitude of how sin affects God is no longer clear in the average church. Thus, without an emphasis on holiness, the world cannot see the difference between the behavior of the believer and the lifestyles of its own. And the saddest thing of all is that, as the world tumbles towards its conclusion in these last days, the world needs more than ever to be able to see a distinct difference between God's standards and theirs.

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Holiness! God demands it of us. And here are some of the principles we must understand clearly for it to happen:

1- God imputes relative righteousness to the believer.

While we will not be sinless until that day when sin is crushed under the feet of Jesus once and for all, we are called to become holy ones. He who has called us is holy. The choice, minute by minute, is ours. The power, minute by minute, is God's. We, as obedient children, are not to fashion our lives as we once did, using the declining standards of the world as a slide rule to measure righteousness. No, as He who has called us is Holy, we are to become holy in everything we do. How can we? We can, because He who called us is holy, and He lives in us. We cannot simply make up our minds to grit our teeth and become holy. The change in our behavior comes from a yielding of the will to God and a choosing in the will to let Him, in us, cause us to obey. But that is God's will. It's serious business. We are to "gird up the loins of our minds" knowing that our hope is in the "grace that is to be brought to us". The issue is clear. Holiness is what God expects.

2- God expects our holiness to increase as we grow.

Herein is the great stumblingblock in the process. Ephesians 3:18 indicates that we are to be like those who are constantly looking in a mirror, only the mirror of the Word reflects back to us not only what we look like, but what Christ in us looks like, when He is free to be Himself. And what He looks like is holy.

What often happens is this. Men and women come to Christ from all different kinds of moral and emotional backgrounds. At the point of conversion, there is often a deep conviction of sin, a real hostility towards evil, and an awareness of what that sin cost God...His Son. At that point in time, there is the beginning of a holy sensitivity to sin. If the church were doing its job, that would be followed by progressive sensitivity towards sin, whereby the believer in ever increasing splendor, from one degree of glory to another, would become more and more and more aware of the slightest offense towards the nature of God.

Two things, however, don't happen as they once did.

1- We don't clearly make sin an issue in the new birth as once we did. Salvation has become focused on the goodness of God and the love of God who will "give meaning to life" and "peace" to troubled souls. God will do that. But the reason we need a savior is

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because we are sinners. That must return to our preaching.

2- In an effort to counter the “don’t drink, smoke, cuss or chew” mentality of a generation ago, preachers today refuse to focus on the life we are to leave behind to follow Christ. Peter wrote:

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.

They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.

But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self controlled so that you can pray. (I Peter 4:1-5,7 NIV)

Peter is saying you just don’t do the things you used to do. You just don’t go to the places you used to go. You just don’t have the same close friendships that affect you, that you once had. You are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. They (your old friends) will think you are strange when you refuse to go and do what once you did. Let them. They will have to answer to God. You have to answer to God for whether or not you are becoming progressively holy in all your behavior. Every day we live we ought to be more sensitive to sin than we were the day before, until we progressively come to hate it the way God does. But so often, when the “new” wears off the new birth, we begin to look around and see that “Christians do those things, too”. And so begins the satanic compromise that bases moral righteousness on what “good men do”, rather than on the Word of God.

3- It is God’s reputation that is at stake, not ours.

We forget that it is not enough that the world is satisfied with our level of holiness, because it is not our reputation that is at stake. It is God’s. And God’s reputation will not be vindicated as long as we are satisfied with a standard of holiness that is less than what Scripture requires of the Christian. And the longer you live, the more accountable you become. The more of the Word you study, the more sermons you listen to, the more tapes you hear,

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the more studies you do...the more responsible you are to be holy. You are to be increasingly holy, set apart, literally overwhelmed at the very presence of sin, and deeply angry over sin that is allowed to fester in your own life.

4- God hates sin the way a parent hates disease.

If you want to know how God feels when sin is allowed to infiltrate our lives, think of how a parent feels when a deadly disease overtakes his child. Then imagine that it is your child, and there is a cure, but the child refuses to take it. Jesus said:

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

(Matthew 7:11 NKJV)

You grieve over your children, wanting the very best for them. Now imagine how God, the perfect Father, feels when that which is impure separates Him from His own and weakens His own until they no longer have power. That's what you do to God each time you accept any standard of holiness that is less than His.

5- The wrath of God is the holiness of God on the offensive.

We hate to talk about God's wrath in our generation. Not to do so is sin. The wrath of God is as much a part of His divine character as His love. There is, in fact, more written in Scripture about the wrath of God than even the love of God. It is a dominant theme in the Word. God hates sin. We need to say that over and over in our day to reinforce it into our consciences, for we do not hear it often enough. Pink writes:

"The wrath of God is eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is the displeasure and indignation of Divine equity against evil. It is the holiness of God stirred into activity against sin."

The wrath of God and the holiness of God are inseparable. Understanding God's wrath is essential to our understanding of His holiness. If His holiness were not such a vital part of His divine character, He could look on sin with apathy or indifference. But because it is, He cannot. His hatred of sin requires that His anger be unleashed against sin.

And God is angry with the wicked every day.

(Psalm 7:11b NKJV)

As one author put it so well, "God can forgive the sinner; God cannot overlook sin." We confuse the two. We think because God

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loves and forgives the sinner that He has lightened His judgement on sin. Not so. Each time He forgives, He must at the same time hate the thing that caused the separation. His nature requires it. If we are to become increasingly holy, we must come to see how deep the wrath of God burns against sin. We must come to hate it as much as God does. In fact, if we cannot praise God for His wrath, we cannot praise God properly, because His righteous anger is as much a part of His nature as His grace. And selective praise for the nature of God is indefensible. Either He is God and as God is perfect, or He is not God at all. If He is perfect, then His wrath must be cause to praise Him as well.

6- The missing experience in the church today is learning to stand on “holy” ground.

In Exodus we read about a man named Moses whose only claim to fame was his faithful tending of his father-in-law’s sheep on a hillside. His name was not, at that time, a household word. But one day, as he went about doing what he had been called to do, something incredible happened. Remember?

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.

Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.”

So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”

Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”

Moreover He said, “I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

(Exodus 3:1-6 NKJV)

Holy ground! Moses was approached by the Son of God in the form of the angel of God out of the midst of a flame that burned, but did not consume the bush. Moses was awed. He could not take his eyes off the bush. He could see the flames, he could feel the heat, but not a single leaf was charred. God waited until He had

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Moses' full attention. And when he saw that he turned aside to look, God spoke. He said, "Moses, Moses".

Moses responded, "Here am I". Stephen, preaching in Acts, chapter seven, gives this account:

When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the LORD came to him,

saying, 'I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and dared not look. (Acts 7:31,32 NKJV)

What made Moses "tremble"? What made the ground "holy"? Was it not the same ground Moses had led his sheep over again and again? Why was this ground suddenly "holy ground"? It was holy because God spoke it so. And God spoke it so, because this man Moses needed to realize that he was in the presence of absolute holiness. Moses could not so much as look up. He trembled in awe.

In Joshua we see Joshua coming upon Jericho, facing the impossible, but prepared to lead, nonetheless. And we read:

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?"

So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come."

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?"

Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so. (Joshua 5:13-15 NKJV)

Here were two crucial times in the history of man when Jehovah needed the attention of his chosen leaders. And so the Holy One of Israel appeared as the angel of the Lord and arrested their attention. Both were calls to greatness. Moses was to lead his people out. Joshua was to lead his people in. Both were helpless apart from some supernatural act of God. So God spoke. And as He spoke, He called to His chosen ones and told them to take off their shoes.

Removing shoes before entering a place of worship is common among Orientals, as common as removing one's hat is in our culture. It is a symbol of respect. God was saying to Moses and to

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Joshua, “You are in the presence of Holy Deity. You must not stand there as though you were talking to mere men.” Immediately, these two men complied. They realized what an awesome privilege it was to stand before perfect holiness.

There is no longer that kind of awe in the presence of God. We stroll into His chambers with the same kind of attitude we show as we walk into a movie theatre. There is infinitely more respect shown to the President of the United States than there is the Presence of Divine Holiness. The reason is that we don’t understand holiness. We do not grasp that the perfect, sinless, Creator God, Maker of heaven and earth, the One who cannot look upon sin, has agreed by divine decree to accept the death of His Son as propitiation for our sins, and allowed us the awesome right to come boldly into His presence and find grace to help in time of need.

Yes, He is our best friend. But, Beloved, He is God! We ought to loose the shoes from off our spiritual feet the moment His Name is mentioned. We have lost our awe at His holiness. We have forgotten who it is we stand before. We are so accustomed to praying and worshipping in a casual atmosphere, we confuse the freedom to be casual with the responsibility to be awe-struck in the presence of our God. Holy Ground! That is what we are on each time we name the Name of Jesus. Holy Ground! That is where we stand each time we pray. Holy Ground! That is the surface beneath our feet each time we enter the sanctuary of the redeemed to worship Him together. Holy Ground! That is where we stand each time we confess our sins, and He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. When we stand in the presence of holiness, we stand on Holy Ground.

Isn’t the reason we don’t stand in the “fear of God” when we enter His presence predicated on the fact that we no longer see sin as the grievous offense against His holiness that it is?

We see sin as something that has to get bad enough to offend God before we fear consequences, and since the consequences in this church age are often spiritual and internal and unseen, we think we haven’t really sinned until we’ve sinned a long time.

Arthur Pink wrote these words:

“For one sin God banished our first parents from Eden. For one sin Moses was excluded from Canaan. Elisha’s servant was smitten with leprosy for one sin. Ananias and Sapphira were cut off out of the land of the living for one sin.”

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Sin. God hates it. And until we come to hate it as much as He does, and until we come to progressively see our responsibility to holiness as greater each day, we will never understand the holiness of God. Only when we face God each morning with grieved and broken hearts over the sins of the day just past, will we begin to become...holy. Only when we see the sins of the heart as just as grievous to God as the sins we commit that are visible, will we have even begun to understand the kind of holy fear of God that turned the first century upside down and led the forces of godliness onto the battlefields of revival in days gone by.

Isaiah chronicles an encounter between the prophet and God that we ought each to memorize in the week to come. It reads like this:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."

(Isaiah 6:1-5 NKJV)

Oh, Beloved, when we have beheld the holiness of God...truly beheld the holiness of God...the doorposts of our hearts will quake with awe. From our lips will pour an anthem of repentance. We will not strut into God's chamber extolling our works or demanding His attention. We will cry out, "Woe is me...I am unworthy to so much as be here...I am unclean...for mine eyes have seen the Holy One, the King, the Lord of Hosts."

When we recover that kind of awe at the presence of God and that kind of response to our sins, then we will have at last begun to return to the sanctuary of Holiness wherein we see our God as He is, our sins as they are, and our hearts as broken in the process. He who has called us is holy. By His grace, may His Holiness become ours.

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Dear Holy One, may we even this moment, Father, take the shoes from off our spiritual feet and stop standing in Your presence with pride and presumption as though You needed us. May we fall down at Your feet and worship the Holy One.

And may we see, Father, as we look upon Your holiness, that woe is me, I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the King.

Take us this week, Father, and give us a renewed consciousness of Your holiness, a renewed sensitivity to sin and a willingness for that sensitivity to grow, until we reach that day when sin is gone and we, too, can gather around Your throne singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy" for all eternity.

In Jesus' name, Amen

A Challenge to Further Study

1- In your own words, write an essay describing what you think happened on planet earth when sin entered the world. As you write, bow before God and worship Him for His holiness.

2- Why is it important that God named Himself "Holy"? Try acknowledging His holiness this week as you pray.

3- Name three things that set God's holiness apart from ours. How do you think the cross typifies the holiness of God?

4- Visualize Jesus on that Cross as the Father withdrew His presence so Christ could bear our sins. Recognize that your sins put Him there. Worship.

5- If you have been a Christian for several years or more, how would you characterize your hatred of personal sin? Is it increasing year by year? Day by day? Have your standards of what is acceptable slowly been lowered to those of the world?

6- Try to look at the sin in your life, as a Father would see his child overtaken by a curable disease. Imagine how God feels.

7- As you pray this week, why not symbolically take off your shoes and bow before God as one who stands on Holy Ground? Spend time this week worshipping God for His Holiness.

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