



Sermon Series: Set Apart: A Life Lived for God

To be used with Session 1: Set Apart: The Holiness of God

Sermon Title Possibilities: The Holiness of God Revealed

Scripture: Psalm 99:1-9

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “Set Apart: A Life Lived for God” this sermon will reveal God’s holiness and the Christian’s response in obedience. The only thoughtful response to a holy God is reverence and obedience. A.W. Tozer states, “Holy is the way God is. To be holy He does not conform to a standard. He is that standard. He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is.”¹ God’s standard for his people is holiness. On our own, holiness is a futile pursuit however God invites his people into a new identity and reality of being set apart.

Introduction: God’s holiness is the foundation for belief. In him is the highest moral purity in existence. His holiness attracts us into the most secure relationship that we will ever possess. In a world of constant trauma, calamity, and uncertainty it is to our every advantage to get to know our Holy God through His Word. Jackie Hill Perry in an excerpt from her book, *Holier Than Thou* states, “Holiness makes honesty an obligation. Whether we see ourselves as a communicator of God’s truth like Isaiah or a person with a collar-colored blue, our titles tell us little about who we are really. Whatever we do and however we identify, when near God, we will see the truth and nothing but it.”

1. God’s Holiness Revealed Through Worship (vv. 1-3)

The psalmist reports that God’s reign far exceeds that of any earthly ruler. He is adorned by heavenly hosts that reveal His holiness before us. Humanity and nature must respond to the holiness revealed in God. Proverbs 9:10 reminds us, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” Our only response to this holy King is reverence and worship. God is set apart from any other entity in the world. A proper recognition of God’s holiness results in a healthy fear and motivation towards repentance.

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2. God's Holiness Revealed Through His Righteousness (vv. 4-5)

The holiness of God manifests in humanity through His righteous acts. His character leads the way to justice. He is not just a just God; He loves justice. Isaiah 61:8 states, "For I the Lord love justice; I hate robbery and injustice; I will faithfully reward my people and make a permanent covenant with them." We live in a fallen world, and at times it seems that darkness may be winning. But our God hates injustice and has sent into the world a remedy to overcome the world (John 16:33). The hope of the Christian is in God's promises fulfilled in His Son, Jesus.

3. God's Holiness Revealed Through His Forgiveness (vv. 6-9)

God's holiness is revealed through His forgiveness. God chooses to use men and women as vessels in the world. He called Moses, Aaron, and Samuel to be His priests. Each of these men called upon the Lord, and He answered and used them in mighty ways. He can do the same work today in His church. God specializes in making what the world deems as useless, useful. And being in His presence allows men to pursue a holy calling. He who is set apart then sets men apart for His work.

Conclusion: A proper understanding of the holiness of God helps all of us to be confident in who God has created us to be. The more we worship Him, understand He is for our good, and know that He will forgive our sins can help us to be confident to serve Him. Encountering a holy God means we must remove what's unholy from our lives. How can you honor God with your life? Romans 12:1 says, "Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship." What must be removed in your life?

Author Bio

Jason Thomas serves with the International Mission Board as African American Church Mobilization Strategist in Richmond, VA. Prior to joining IMB, Jason served as the Collegiate Ministry Director of Southern University with Louisiana Baptists. He has been married to his wife, Gaynel, for 12 years and has a Master of Divinity in Church Planting from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

1. A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1961), pp. 104-5.

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