

I.IX GOD IS HOLY: 1 John 1:5 - Shepherd School

I. OPENING RAYER: All.

III. SERMON:

GOD IS HOLY: 1 John 1:5

INTRODUCTION. Turn in your Bibles with me to **1 John 1:5**. While you find your pace there, let me remind you why we are studying the perfections of God.

"Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.'" **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

Q. Why do you need to know, understand, and apply the Perfections of God?

A1. Because it is God's delight to be known and loved and glorified, and therefore it will lead to your delight. The more you know and love and glorify the Lord, the more happy you will be.

A2. Because God says the way to know Him is to labor to comprehend His perfections (attributes) and actions as they are revealed in the Scriptures.

Therefore, let us draw our attention to another one of the perfections of God tonight—namely, God's Holiness.

Outline: Understand, meditate, and apply God's holiness.

I. LET US FIRST *UNDERSTAND* THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

I) God is Holy

- **THE BAPTIST CATECHISM Q8. What is God? A.** God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in...**HOLINESS."** **Q.** Why?
- **The Apostle John uses illustrative language to communicate this reality in 1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
- **Isaiah is struck with the glorious holiness of God when he is shown the throne room in Is. 6:3. He sees the LORD high & lifted up: "one**

[seraphim] called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!'"

- **Rev. 4:8** "Day and night [the angels] never cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!'"
- **R.C. SPROUL (1939-2017) famously wrote**, "Only once in sacred Scripture is an attribute of God elevated to the third degree. Only once is a characteristic of God mentioned three times in succession. The Bible says that God is holy, holy, holy. Not that He is merely holy, or even holy, holy. He is holy, holy, holy. The Bible never says that God is love, love, love; or mercy, mercy, mercy; or wrath, wrath, wrath; or justice, justice, justice. It does say that he is holy, holy, holy, that the whole earth is full of His glory."
- **THOMAS BROOKS**: "Holiness in angels and saints is but a quality, but in God it is His essence."
- **Q.** What is God's holiness?
 - **A1. THOMAS WATSON (1620-1686)**: "God's holiness consists in his perfect love of righteousness, and perfect abhorrence of evil."
 - **A2. JOHN MACARTHUR (1939-2025)**: "God's holiness is His inherent and absolute greatness, in which He is perfectly distinct above everything outside Himself and is absolutely morally separate from sin."
- **This is what the Hebrew and Greek words for "Holy" mean—altogether separate.**
- **In A Body of Divinity, Thomas Watson (1620-1686) points out four specifics concerning God's holiness: "God is INTRINSICALLY holy...** his very being is made up of holiness, as light is of the essence of the sun.... **II. God is PRIMARILY holy.** He is the original and pattern of holiness. Holiness began with him who is the Ancient of Days. **III. God is EFFICIENTLY holy.** He is the cause of all that is holiness in others. . . All the holiness we have, is but a crystal stream from this fountain. . . **IV. God is TRANSCENDENTLY holy.** . . No angel in heaven can measure the dimensions of God's holiness. The highest seraphim is too low of stature to measure these pyramids."

God is not holy. God is not holy, holy. God is "Holy, holy, holy!"

- IN FACT, MANY HOLD THAT GOD'S HOLINESS BLEEDS—so to speak—INTO EVERY OTHER ATTRIBUTE:
- **LOUIS BERKOF (1873-1957) admitted**: "It does not seem proper to speak of one attribute of God as being more central and fundamental than another; but if this were permissible, the Scriptural emphasis on the holiness of God would seem to justify its selection."
- **IN FACT, THIS IS WHAT STEPHEN CHARNOCK (1627-1680)**

BELIEVED: "If every attribute of the Deity were a distinct member, holiness would be the soul to animate them. Without holiness His patience would be an indulgence to sin, His mercy a fondness, His wrath a madness, His power a tyranny, His wisdom an unworthy subtlety. Holiness gives decorum to them all."

- If Berkof and Charnock are right, which I think they are, then mark this down in your mind:
- **God is not simply holy, just, loving, powerful, faithful.** God's justice is *HOLY* justice; His love a *HOLY* love. His power is *HOLY* power. His faithfulness is *HOLY* faithfulness! "Day and night [the angels] never cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!'" **JOIN THE SONG!**
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

II) God's Works are Holy

- **Exodus 15:11** "Who is like [the LORD], majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?"
- **Psalms 145:17** "The Lord is [holy] in all his ways."
- **In creation, in His workings of *divine providence*, and in redemption God's works are holy!** Not only has He never done anything wrong, He has never done anything that is not perfect in every way! *God's works are holy works!*
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

III) God's written Word is Holy

- **Romans 1:2** "[Jesus was] promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures,"
- **The Bible is not a word from man;** the Bible contains the very words of God carried from heaven as mana in the wilderness! Take and eat: *These are the holy Scriptures!*
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

IV) God's Commands are Holy

- **Romans 7:12** "So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good."
- **It is not the commandment that is unholy,** it is the flesh! *His commands are holy commands!*

- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

V) God's Promises are Holy

- **Psalm 105:42** "For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham, his servant."
- **If God writes a check with a promise, it will clear**—His promises never bounce! *They are holy promises!*
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

VI) God's Covenant is Holy

- **John the Baptists' father Zechariah calls God's covenant**, "His holy covenant" in **Luke 1:72**.
- **How great is The New Covenant of grace!** whereby God elects, redeems, regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, preserves, and glorifies us for Jesus' sake! See how perfect the covenant is—it is called "*His holy covenant*"!
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

II. LET US SECONDLY MEDITATE ON GOD'S HOLINESS.

I) Consider how each person of the Godhead is identified—not simply the Triune God, but each person of the Trinity—is distinctly said to be holy!

- (i) God the Father is Holy! **Jesus, in John 17:11 prays**, "Holy Father."
- (ii) God the Spirit is Holy! **Again, Jesus, in John 14:26** calls the Spirit, "The Holy Spirit."
- (iii) God the Son—the Lord Jesus Christ—is Holy! **Paul, in Acts 13:35 (quoting Psalm 16:10)** "You will not let your Holy One see corruption."
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

II) Consider also how the Lord God manifests Himself in the world—when His holiness goes public!

- He appeared to Abraham as the One who can *do* all and who *knows* all, even that Sarah had laughed in her tent at the news of a son; (**Genesis 18**)
- He came to Jacob as the great wrestler who displaces hips, and who will

not reveal His name; (**Genesis 32**)

- He revealed Himself to Moses as a Flame of Fire; (**Exodus 3**)
 - He lead the people of Israel as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; (**Exodus 13**)
 - He descended to Israel with flashes of lightning, the sound of thunder, fire, covered in thick darkness, shaking Sinai; (**Ex. 19**)
 - He appeared to Balaam (and his donkey) as One with sword drawn—an adversary against him; (**Numbers 22**)
 - He came to Joshua as a Warrior with a drawn sword prepared for battle; (**Joshua 5**)
 - He revealed Himself to Gideon as one who consumes with fire both meat and cakes by His mere touch; (**Judges 6**)
 - He appeared to Manoah & his wife as One whose name is *wonderful* & who ascends in the flame of sacrifice to heaven; (**Judges 13**)
 - He came to Job as a Whirlwind; (**Job 40**)
 - He revealed Himself to Isaiah as one who's robe filled the entire quaking Temple; (**Isaiah 6**)
 - He appeared to Ezekiel as Armored Fire; (**Ezekiel 1:27**)
 - He joined Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego as the One who does not burn nor allow His people to flame in the furnace; (**Daniel 3**)
 - He came to John as one from whose mouth came a sharp two-edged sword and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (**Revelation 1**)
- **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

III) Consider then the response of those that beheld "the Holy One"

- **Ezekiel wrote**, "And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking." (**Ezekiel 1:28**)
- **Isaiah said**, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for 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 6:5**)
- **Job declared**, "I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."
- **Joshua, obviously taken aback at the sight**, "went to him and said to him, 'Are you for us, or for our adversaries?' And he said, "No; but I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?" (**Joshua 5:13-14**)
- **Balaam** "bowed his head and fell flat on his face." (**Number 22:31**)
- **"And Manoah said to his wife**, 'We shall surely die, for we have seen

God.'" (**Judges 13:22**)

- **Gideon said**, "Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face." But the Lord said to him, "Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die." (**Judges 6:22-23**)
- **The Apostle John said**, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead." (**Revelation 1:17**)
 - **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

IV) Consider then the holiness of God that is manifested perfectly in Christ Jesus!

- (i) He lived in perfect holiness!
 - "Which one of you convicts me of sin?" He says in **John 8:46**.
- (ii) He died in perfect holiness!
 - "for their sake I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth." He says in **John 17:21**.

Only Jesus Christ the Righteous has lived and died without sin. He flawlessly submitted to His Father's will!

- "it was the will of the Lord to crush him;" Isaiah 53:10
 - **THOMAS BOSTON**: "[no] demonstrations that ever God gave... afford[s] such a demonstration of the divine holiness, and hatred of sin, as the death and sufferings of the blessed Redeemer."
- **Q. How can an infinitely Holy God make peace with totally wicked rebels?**
A. Look at the cross of Jesus Christ.
- **Q. How much does God hate sin?**
A. Look at the cross of Jesus Christ.
- **Q. How much does God love His people?**
A. Look at the cross of Jesus Christ.
 - **Isaiah 53:5** "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed." **1 Peter 2:24** "He Himself bore OUR sins in HIS body on the tree." **Psalm 22:1,14-15** "1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?...14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; 15 . . . you lay me in the dust of death."
- **Q. Why?** So that through faith, sinners would become saints! Do you have living faith in the living Christ? Well, then...
 - **1)** Jesus was punished so that *you would be* forgiven; **2)** Jesus was wounded so that *you would be* healed; **3)** Jesus was made sin with *your* sinfulness, so that *you would be* made righteous with His

righteousness; **4)** Jesus tasted death for *you* so that *you would* share His life; **5)** Jesus was made a curse for *you* so that *you would* receive the blessing; **6)** Jesus endured *your* poverty so that *you would* share His eternal riches; **7)** Jesus bore *your* shame so that *you would* share His glory; **8)** Jesus endured *your* rejection so that *you would* have His acceptance with the Father; **9)** Jesus was cut off from the land of the living so that *you would* be brought in to the land of life; **10)** Your Old Self was put to death in Him so that His New Self *would* come to life in you.

– **1 John 1:5**

“God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

III. LET US APPLY GOD’S HOLINESS

I) You will not be accepted by God unless you are perfectly holy

- **Habakkuk 1:13** “You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?”
- **R.C. SPROUL:** “Every sin is an act of cosmic treason, a futile attempt to dethrone God in His sovereign authority.”
- **THOMAS WATSON:** “Sin strikes at his holiness; it does all it can to spite God; if sin could help it—God would be God no longer.”

II) You will not escape God’s wrath if you stand before Him in your unholiness

- **Nahum 1:3-5** “3 The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. 4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; he dries up all the rivers; . . . 5 The mountains quake before him; the hills melt.”

III) You must go to Christ in faith so that God will count you holy

- **Colossians 1:21-23** “21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel...”
- **Philippians 1:1** “...saints...”
- **MARTYN LLOYD-JONES:** “Holiness is not something we are

called upon *to do* in order that we may become something; it is something we are to do *because of what we already are.*"

IV) In Christ, you must sanctify God as Holy

- **Lev. 10:3** "This is what the Lord has said: 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.'"
- **JONATHAN EDWARDS:** "A true love of God must begin with a delight in his holiness, and not with a delight in any other attribute; for no other attribute is truly lovely without this."

V) In Christ, you must live Holy

- **Lev. 14:44-45** "44 For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. . . 45 For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." (The Apostle Peter repeats this in 1 Peter 1:16)
- **1 Thessalonians 4:3-4** "For this is the will of God, your sanctification...that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness..."
- **RICHARD SIBBES:** "Those that look to be happy must first look to be holy."
- **J.C. RYLE:** "Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgment, hating what He hates, loving what He loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word."

VI) Without proper Holiness, you will not see the LORD

- **Hebrews 12:14** "Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."
- Your personal holiness is not what counts you holy and blameless before the LORD—you are not justified by your effort but by the efforts of Christ! Yet holiness of life is a necessary sign that accompanies all who have been born again!
- **JOHN OWEN:** "They are much mistaken in the Lord Christ, who hope to see him hereafter in glory, and live and die here in an unholy state. It is not privileges, nor gifts, nor church office or power, that will give an admission to [glory]."
- It is the blood of Christ applied to a person that guarantees glory for any person! And that the blood has been applied to us through faith is evidenced by a new life following the Lord Jesus Christ—"if anyone is in Christ He is a new creation!"

VII) In Christ, you must worship God in Holiness

- **1 Chron.16:29** "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering & come before him! Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness."
 - **Hebrews 12:28-29** "28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire."
 - **JOHN OWEN:** "The foundation of true holiness and true Christian worship is the doctrine of the gospel, what we are to believe. So when Christian doctrine is neglected, forsaken, or corrupted, true holiness and worship will also be neglected, forsaken, and corrupted."

VIII) In Christ, you must be motivated toward personal and proper holiness by God's promises

- **2 Corinthians 7:1** "Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God."
 - **Q.** What promises? **A.** That we are God's Temple and God is OUR God and we are His people through Jesus Christ!
 - **CHARLES SPURGEON:** "If you think you can walk in holiness without keeping up perpetual fellowship with Christ, you have made a great mistake. If you would be holy, you must live close to Jesus."
 - **1 John 1:5**
"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
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III. SONG:

Break (start back at 7:10pm)

IV. 1689 Confession: Ch 3. Par 5-7 (finish by 7:35pm)

V. DISCUSSION (finish by 8pm)

A Body of Divinity discussion

Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices discussion

Closing Prayer

SYLLABUS

 SHEPHERD SCHOOL - SEASON ONE (2025) - THE ONE TRUE AND LIVING GOD

WEEK	Scripture	Book I <i>(read before)</i>	Book II <i>(read before)</i>	1689 Confession	Certificate Essays	Certificate Exposition
1 8/14	2 Timothy 2:1-6 Why Shepherd School + Overview					
2 8/21	Deuteronomy 18:15-22	A Body of Divinity Christ, The Mediator of the Covenant + Christ's Prophetic Office by Thomas Watson	Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices A Word to the Reader, Introduction, Proof of the Point, By Presenting the Bait and Hiding the Hook by Thomas Brooks	Ch 8. Par 1-3		
3 8/28	Psalms 110:1-4	A Body of Divinity Christ's Priestly Office + Christ's Kingly Office by Thomas Watson	Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices By Painting Sin with Virtue's Colors, By the Extenuating and Lessening of Sin, By Showing the Soul the Best Men's Sins by Thomas Brooks	Ch 8. Par 4-6	Short Essay on The Hypostatic Union	
4 9/4	Philippians 2:5-11	A Body of Divinity Christ's Humiliation in His Incarnation + Christ's Exaltation by Thomas Watson	Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices By Presenting God to the Soul, By Persuading the Soul, By Making the Soul Bold by Thomas Brooks	Ch 8. Par 7-10		First Exposition Due
5 9/11	Galatians 3:10-14	A Body of Divinity Christ's The Redeemer by Thomas Watson	Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices By Representing to the Soul the Outward Mercies, By Presenting to the Soul the Crosses, By Causing Saints to Compare Themselves by Thomas Brooks	Ch 11. Par 1-3		<i>*Certificate path will meet in the office during 1689 and book discussion this week to discuss sermons</i>
6 9/18	John 4:24 (Omnipresence) Psalm 147:5 (Omniscience)	A Body of Divinity The Omnipresence of God + The Omniscience of God by Thomas Watson	Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices By Causing Saints to Compare Themselves, By Polluting the Souls Judgements, By leading Men to Choose Wicked Company by Thomas Brooks	Ch 11. Par 4-6		
7 9/25	Revelation 1:8 (Eternity) James 1:17 (Immutability)	A Body of Divinity The Eternity of God + The Immutability of God by Thomas Watson	Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices By Presenting the World, By Presenting to the Soul the Dangers, By Presenting to the Soul the Difficulty by Thomas Brooks	Ch 2. Par 1-3		

Grab your Bibles and go with me First John 1 verse 5. 1 John chapter 1 verse 5. And let me remind you of what Jeremiah says, what God says through the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 9:23 and 24. Thus says the Lord, "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom. Let not the mighty man boast in his might. Let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord. So, as we continue in Shepherd School season 1, we're going to continue with the perfections of God and labor to understand and know the Lord as he has revealed himself through the scriptures. So, with that in mind, let's draw our attention to another one of the perfections of God. And tonight, we're looking at God's holiness. That God is holy. Look at 1 John chapter 1 verse 5. This is God's word. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaimed to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. This is God's word. Praise God. Praise be to God. in him or God is light and in him is no darkness at all. This is obviously metaphorical language that the apostle John is using as he writes to these various churches, but this is a metaphor that's getting at God's holiness. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. So this is the verse that I'll repeatedly quote to you. But what we're going to do is try to understand God's holiness and then meditate think on. I'm just going to point you to things in the scriptures so that we can just think about God's holiness. Meditate on it and then we'll finish with trying to apply God's holiness. What does it mean for our lives? So first understanding the fact that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. What does it mean that God is holy? And then just see some examples from scripture when God reveals himself and his holiness is manifest. And then lastly, so what do we do with it? So first let's understand the holiness of God. The perfection of God's holiness is such a central perfection. I mean you can go to AW Pink's book on the attributes of God. the perfections of God and he's got like 17. But when the Baptist Catechism was pinned and the Westminster Catechism before that, they included a few what they thought were the most central perfections that are the most repeatedly revealed in scripture and that some of the other perfections, you could even say, kind of flow from that. So they don't include God's grace or God's love even in his attributes in the Westminster Shorter Catechism or the Baptist Catechism because those are summarized or those kind of flow from God's goodness. God is good and underneath his goodness is like his grace and his love. But they did include holiness. So, the Baptist Catechism says God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. And then it lists certain perfections, and one of them is he's infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in holiness. The Apostle John uses that same kind of language, but it's illustrative language to communicate this reality that God is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in holiness. when he says God is light and in him is no darkness at all. Isaiah is struck with the glorious holiness of God when he is shown the throne room in Isaiah chapter 6. A familiar scene surely to all of us that Isaiah sees the Lord high and lifted up and then there are seraphim\

surrounding around the Lord. They have six wings. They're covering their eyes. are covering their mouth and they're covering their feet or they're covering and they're flying. And just realize that when we read Isaiah 6 and the song of these seraphim, these are sinlessly perfect angels. They've never sinned. They don't have any unholiness in them at all. And so they're not like you and me to where we read of God's holiness or understand it or meditate on it and we're just blown away by it because we are unholy and God is holy and the distance is so great. But even these seraphim are singing or declaring something and they're blown away as well. Even though they are so far as a creature can be a created thing can be they are perfectly holy. The s one seraphim called to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory." You just think about, meditate on that. That struck me today as I was studying that these seraphim are sinless seraphim and they are still blown away as they dwell on the Lord and they're calling out to one another. It's like they're seeing the perfect holiness of God. And even though they as far as they can be are perfectly holy created beings, they're still like yelling at one another. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory. And it's not just in Isaiah 6 that we have God's holiness trebled, but we also have it in Revelation 4:8. In the revelation of Jesus Christ given to the Apostle John, John sees in the throne room day and night, the angels never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come." RC Sproul in his famous book, *The Holiness of God*. It's rightfully famous because he wrote this book and did this teaching series called the Holiness of God, especially in a time that God's holiness was just in the Western church. It was just downplayed. It wasn't focused on it. seemed and I think Sproul was right. He looks around at professed Christians and is thinking like no one has this like grasp or is in awe of God's holiness. We need to understand that God is holy. And he says in that book, only once in sacred scripture is an attribute of God elevated to the third degree. Only once is a characteristic of God mentioned three times in succession. The Bible says that God is holy, holy, holy. Not that he is merely holy or even holy, holy. He is holy, holy, holy. The Bible never says that God is love, love, love or mercy, mercy, mercy or wrath, wrath, wrath or justice, justice, justice. It does say that he is holy, holy, holy. That the whole earth is full of his glory. And Thomas Brooks points out the holiness of God and comparing it to us or created beings. He says holiness in angels and in Christians is just a quality. It's a quality that we may possess or that even the seraphim possess. But he says but in God holiness is his essence. It's who God is. God is holy in such a different way than you and I could ever be holy or even the sinless angels, the seraphim could ever be holy. But what is his holiness? That's what we really need to do. Not just understand the scripture says God is holy and agree with that as we all should, but try to understand what does that mean. Watson simply says, "God's holiness consists in his perfect love of righteousness and per perfect hatred of evil." His perfect love of righteousness and perfect abhorrence or hatred of evil. But the late John MacArthur, I think, gets even clearer. MacArthur said, "God's holiness is his inherent and absolute greatness in which he is

perfectly distinct above everything outside himself and is absolutely morally separate from sin." So his holiness I think MacArthur rightly clarifies it's his inherent and absolute greatness in which he is perfectly distinct totally different above everything outside himself and is absolutely morally separate from sin. In fact that's what the Hebrew words and the Greek words that are used for holy or that are translated holy in our English language. That's what those words mean. It means altogether separate, totally distinct, totally different, totally morally separated from sin. God is holy. In a body of divinity, Watson points out four specifics concerning God's holiness. Watson says, "God is intrinsically holy. His very being is made up of holiness as light is of the essence of the sun. God is primarily holy. He is the original and pattern of holiness. Holiness began with him who is the ancient of days. Watson says God is efficiently holy. He is the cause of all that is holiness in others. All the holiness we have is but a crystal stream from this fountain. Then Watson says fourthly, God is trans transcendently holy. He's transcendently holy. No angel in heaven can measure the dimensions of God's holiness. The highest seraphim is too low of stature to measure these pyramids. He is holy beyond our capability of understanding. God is not holy. God is not holy, holy. God is holy, holy, holy. In fact, many hold that God's holiness, and this is a kind of a crude way of speaking, but God's holiness bleeds into his other attributes, as it were. And we have to be careful when we talk about the perfections of God because the simplicity of God is a doctrine that everyone should believe. And it believe it means that God is not made up of parts and his attributes. You can't like separate his attributes and be like part of God is like this and part of God is like this. He's not made up of parts. And so you can't ever have any of his attributes competing with one another really either because God is not made up of parts. He's this that's the simplicity of God. But multiple theologians have highlighted the fact that God's holiness is such a constant thing revealed in scripture and it's the only perfection of God that is elevated to the third degree like Sproul says and so that leads people like Lewis Burkoff who was in the 19th and the early 20th century into the mid 20th century has a great systematic theology. Burkoff said it does not seem proper to speak of one attribute of God as being more central and fundamental than another. And that he's saying like I know the simplicity of God. It doesn't seem proper to speak that way. He says, "But if this were permissible, the scriptural emphasis on the holiness of God would seem to justify holiness as that selection." In fact, back in the 17th century, Steven Charnock, who wrote possibly the best work ever on the existence and attributes of God, Charnock said this, "If every attribute of the deity were a distinct member, holiness would be the soul to animate them." Charnock says, "Without holiness, his patience would be an indulgence to sin. His mercy a mere fondness, his wrath would be a madness, his power a tyranny, his wisdom an unworthy subtlety. Charnock says holiness gives decorum to them all. If Burkoff, and Charnock are right, which I think they are, then you and I need to grasp this. God is not simply holy, just, loving, powerful, faithful. God is God's justice is holy justice. His love is a holy love. His power is holy power. His faithfulness is holy faithfulness. Day and

night the angels never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come." God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. So God is holy. But the scripture also reveals that God's works are holy. Not only is God essentially holy and his very nature, his very being is he just holy. It's not just like a quality. He is holy. Totally separate from sin. Totally altogether separate from anything else. But he also acts in such a way that all of his works, everything he's ever done is holy. Listen to Exodus 15:11. Who is like the Lord, majestic in holiness, awesome and glorious deeds, doing wonders. This song of Moses in Exodus 15 is highlighting the fact that all of God's works are holy. Everything God does is holy. He's majestic in holiness, awesome and glorious deeds, doing wonders. Who is like the Lord? And Psalm 145:17 says, "The Lord is holy in all of his ways." The Lord is holy in all of his ways. Meaning everything that God does is perfectly holy. In creating, in his workings of divine providence, and in redemption, God's works are holy. Not only has he never done anything wrong, it's not just that. It's not saying God's never done anything wrong. He has never done anything that is not perfect in every way. God's works are holy works. God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. Not only is God essentially holy and his works are holy, but what God says and what he by his providence has had pinned down in the written word, God's written word is holy. Listen to Romans 1:2. And I hope that as you read the scripture, as you have the scripture preached, you'll think and you'll just see little glimpses of this and how many times God is said to be holy. I think Isaiah calls him the holy one. 26 times in the book of Isaiah, more than any other prophet. But he just constantly highlights that. And I hope you'll see what God does and what God says. You'll just see it's like, "Oh, that's talking about the holiness of God." And what God does is holy. What God says is holy. Romans 1:2, Jesus was promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures. Not just the scriptures, but Paul is emphasizing that God's written word is holy. It's because the Bible is not a word from man. Though men pinned it down as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, the Bible is not ultimately a word from man. It contains the very words of God carried from heaven like mana for us in the wilderness.

God is light and in him is no darkness at all. He's essentially holy. His works are holy. His written word is holy. But even more specifically, God's law is holy. God's law is holy. His commands are holy. Romans 7:12, Paul in that great chapter that I think gives a lot of comfort to all of us believers. He's like, "I don't do what I want to do, and I do the very thing that I don't want to do, but there's a battle going on inside of me between righteousness and walking in darkness." But he says this, "The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." God's law is holy. The law is holy. The commandment is holy and righteous and good. The whole point in Romans 7 is not that the law has any defect in it. It's not that the law is not perfectly holy. It's that the flesh is unholy. And so the problem with the law is not that it has any defect in it at all. The problem with the law is that we have the defects in us and we are not able to perfectly uphold the law as we should. So it's not that the commandment is unholy. It is that the flesh is unholy.

God's commands, his law, his commands are holy commands. Not only his law is holy, not only his written word and works and his essence, that God's promises are also holy. God's promises are holy. Psalm 105:42, for he remembered his holy promise. and Abraham his servant. The Lord makes a promise and the psalmist says that is a holy promise. Whatever promise God has ever made, if he writes a check with a promise, it will clear every single time. His promises never bounce. They are holy promises. But also, not only his promises, his law, his written word, his works, and his essence, but also God's covenant is holy. God's covenant is a holy covenant. John the Baptist's father, Zechariah, says that God's covenant or he calls God's covenant his holy covenant. His holy covenant in Luke 1:72. How great is the new covenant of grace. How awesome is the new covenant of grace in Christ Jesus whereby God elects us before the foundation of the world. Redeems us through the perfect work of Jesus. Regenerates us making us alive by the work of the spirit. Justifies us for Christ's sake. Sanctifies us to be more like Christ. Preserves us so that we don't apostatize and leave him and abandon him. And then finally, how great is the new covenant of grace whereby God will one day glorify us and give us new resurrected bodies. See how perfect the covenant is. It is called his holy covenant. So God is light and in him is no darkness at all. His covenant is holy. His promises, his law, his written word, his works, and his essence are holy. But I hope we have some kind of understanding now of what the holiness of God means. Totally distinct and separate, totally separate from evil. And not only his essence, but everything that he does and says and all of the promises that he makes. But I want to do something now. I want you to just think with me. And you don't need to turn to these passages. I just want you to think and dwell on the perfect holiness of God so that you and I would through the written word be able to have some kind of vision as it were like Isaiah has in the throne room and sees these seraphim calling out to one another and Isaiah saw Jesus and spoke of his glory. I want us to get that by the work the illuminating work of the spirit as we consider these things. Before I highlight certain things, I just want to clarify and consider how each person of the Godhead is identified as holy. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. God the Father is holy. Jesus says in John 17:11, he prays holy father. Again, Jesus in John 14:26 calls God the Spirit, God the Holy Spirit. And then the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul calls him in Matthew 13:35, he says, "You will not let your holy one see corruption." All three persons of the Godhead, each person of the Trinity is distinctly said to be holy. So it's not just God is holy, but then each person of the Trinity is separately said to be holy as well. So we don't miss it at all. But I want you to now just imagine all of these scenes that God reveals in the scriptures and that actually happen to people and just meditate on the awesome holiness of God. He appeared to Abraham as the one who can do all and who knows everything. He even knew that Sarah had laughed in her tent at the news of having a son. Sarah comes back out and the pre-incarnate Christ is there and he says, "Why'd you laugh when I promised Abraham that you would have a son even in your old age?" She says, "I didn't laugh." Christ knew that she laughed. He came to Jacob then later as the great

wrestler who displaces his hip and who will not even reveal his name. He revealed himself to Moses as a flame of fire.

He led the people of Israel as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He descended to Israel with flashes of lightning, the sound of thunder, fire covered in thick darkness and shaking Mount Si. He appeared to Balaam and Balaam's donkey as one with a sword drawn, an adversary against Balaam. He came to Joshua as a warrior with a drawn sword prepared for battle. He revealed himself to Gideon as one who consumes with fire both meat and cakes by his mere touch. Do you remember when he reaches out, Gideon makes him meat and cakes? He meets the pre-incarnate Christ, the angel of the Lord, and makes him food. He says, "Will you please wait here while I make you food?" And then the pre-incarnate Christ reaches out and touches them, and they go up in fire. He appeared to Manoah and his wife, Mrs. Manoah as one whose name is wonderful and who ascends in the flame of sacrifice to heaven. He came to Job as a whirlwind. He revealed himself to Isaiah as one whose robe filled the entire shaking temple. He appeared to Ezekiel as armored fire. Go read Ezekiel chapter 1 later. Like write that down and go read Ezekiel chapter 1 and see that the image that Ezekiel sees when God manifests his presence to him and he sees his perfect holiness. Ezekiel's explaining it and when you just like what is he saying? It's fire wearing armor. That's how he reveals himself to Ezekiel. He joined Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as the one who does not burn nor allow his people to flame in the furnace. He came to John in Revelation 1, as one from whose mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. Now, I want you to not only consider like what the people saw and how God manifested himself and like puts his holiness on display through a revelation, through a vision, through things like this. But I want you to consider how the people who had this kind of revelation of God's perfect holiness, how they responded. Think with me how these people responded. Ezekiel wrote, "When I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of one speaking." Isaiah said, "Woe is me, for I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have king have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." Job declared, "I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you. Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes. Joshua obviously taken aback at the sight of Christ standing there with a drawn sword. He went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or are you for our adversaries?" And Jesus said, "No.

Are you for us or are you for our adversaries?" And he said, "No." Meaning, I'm not for you or your adversaries. I'm for me. That's what he means. Says, "No, but I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?" Balaam bowed his head and fell flat on his face. And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." Gideon said, "Alas, oh Lord God,

for now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face." But the Lord said to him, "Peace be to you, do not fear. You shall not die." And the Apostle John said, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead." God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. Have you I just want you to examine yourself. Have you had any kind of experience like that? though I'm I'm not talking about you've seen a vision from the Lord, but through the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart, have you encountered as it were the thrice holy God and just been totally undone? That's like if I don't have Jesus as my savior, I am utterly sunk. I have no hope. and maybe you didn't physically do it, but feels like in your spirit you fell on your face as though dead. Have you Have you been confronted with the perfect holiness of God and then had all of your sin exposed by that and realize I'm undone. Woe is me. Like Isaiah said or like the rest of them, most of them just fall on their face. This is the experience that every true Christian has to a greater or lesser degree. You realize who God is and who I am in light of who he is. It's like if I don't have a savior, I'm sunk. I am unholy. I am a man of unclean lips. I live amongst the people of unclean lips. I'm dead for my eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts. or Manoah and his wife. Manoah turns to his wife after the pre-incarnate Christ reveals himself to them and he just goes, "Well, we're dead. We just saw God. We're going to die. He's going to put us to death. We cannot even be in the presence of the holy creator, sustainer, and redeemer. We're dead." But they did not die because of Christ. So, I want you to consider that. And if you haven't had that or you've had that and it's to like a small degree, just ask God. Ask God through faith in Christ, do help me have that kind of experiential understanding of your holiness that I am so utterly debased when I consider how perfect you are and how imperfect I am on my own. And just ask God to do that. Go read through or think back through these passages and ask God to blow you away as he did Ezekiel, Isaiah, Job, Joshua, Balaam, Manoah, Gideon, and John. Ask him to blow you away with his awesome, majestic holiness. That'll help you appreciate the cross of Jesus Christ far more than you ever have. when you actually taste your own unholiness in comparison. And not just because you're self-deprecating and you're always thinking about your sins. That's not what I mean. I mean in view of God's perfection. It just makes you totally abandon any self-salvation effort and totally just cling to the Lord Jesus Christ through faith and be more and more thankful for what Jesus has done and promised to do. So consider next the holiness of God that is manifested perfectly in Jesus. Christ lived in perfect holiness. He lived in perfect holiness. He says in John 8:46, "Which one of you convicts me of sin?" They wanted to stone him for what he said, but he said basically it's like, "But am I wrong?" Which one of you can convict me of sin? You don't like what I've said, but it was true. And which one of you can convict me of sin? The answer, of course, is no one. But he not only lived in perfect holiness, he died in perfect holiness. In his high priestly prayer in John 17:21, he says, "For their sake," meaning not just the disciples, but all who would come to believe in him, all of his elect. "For their sake, I sanctify myself. I set myself apart to go to the cross." This is the night before he goes to the cross. "For their sake, I sanctify myself that

they also may be sanctified in truth." He lived in perfect holiness. He died in perfect holiness. Only Jesus Christ the righteous, as John calls him in 1 John 2 or 1 John 2 1, only Jesus Christ the righteous, has lived and died without sin. He flawlessly submitted to his father's will in his role as a mediator. And it was the will of the Lord to crush him. Christ perfectly submitted to the father's will and his role as a mediator and his role as a redeemer as our representative and it was the will of the Lord to crush him. Boston said, "No demonstrations that ever God gave afford such a demonstration of divine holiness and hatred of sin as does the death and sufferings of our blessed redeemer." You want to see the perfect holiness of God? Look at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is so holy that he will not simply say, "I'm not going to carry out my judgment on you even though you deserve it." He will not, as the phrase goes, sweep sin under the rug of the universe.

How can an infinitely holy God make peace with totally wicked, unholy rebels? Look at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. How much does God hate sin? Look at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like JC Riyle said, "How black must sin be that only the death of the son of God could take away that darkness from people and give God's light?" How black must sin be? How much does God hate sin? Look at him slaughtering his son in our place so that our sins could be forgiven. How much does God love his people? Look at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon Christ was the chastisement that brought us peace. And with his wounds, we are healed. Isaiah 53:5. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. 1 Peter 2:24. So why did Christ do that? Simply so that through faith sinners would become saints. Why did God have to do that? Because God is holy and will not overlook sin. Will not sweep sin under the rug, but deals with it head on in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider the perfect holiness of God that is manifested in Christ Jesus, living in perfect holiness and perfectly submitting to his father's will, even dying in perfect holiness. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. Now for our time remaining, let's try to ask like what does that mean for us? What are some inferences, implications that we should draw from properly understanding and meditating on God's holiness? Well, first, you will not be accepted by God unless you are perfectly holy. God will not accept you unless you are perfectly holy. This is why the imputed righteousness of Christ is so crucial. It's not simply that you need your sins taken away and be brought back to zero. You need your sins all taken away and to have perfect righteousness, perfect holiness to stand before God. He doesn't accept anything less than perfect holiness. Habakkuk 113 says about the Lord, "You who are of purer eyes than can see evil, you who cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?" You who are of pure eyes than to see evil. You who cannot look at wrong, you will not be accepted by God unless you are perfectly holy. And you have no hope to achieve through your works, even by God's help, like the Armenians believe, even by God's help, like the Roman

Catholics believe that it's all of grace. It's all God infusing righteousness or holiness in us. and then we cooperate with it and then we can achieve justification. That's what Rome still teaches. That's what Trent taught. And they anathematized the gospel saying if you believe in faith alone and Christ alone, you're going to hell. Which is the strange thing about frankly it's strange how many Roman Catholics were like Charlie Kirk was awesome and we celebrate him. It's like, "Dude, Charlie Kirk emphatically believe things that your church says. If you believe that, you are going to hell." It's a strange a strange thing. Hopefully, those people that are saying that don't actually believe what Rome teaches and they do believe what the scripture says that by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone are we actually justified. And it's not God working in us so that we end up working righteousness and that's how we're justified. You have no hope for that. You cannot achieve perfect holiness in this life and you have to have perfect holiness or you will not be accepted by God. That's why justification and that doctrine is like Luther said it is the article upon which the church stands or falls. if you get justification wrong that it's not just forgiveness of sin but it's also the gifted perfect righteousness or we could say the gifted perfect holiness of Christ that is credited to you that covers you that counts for you that God sees you as if you are perfectly holy because of what Christ has done for you. If you don't have the imputed righteousness of Christ you have no hope. We have to have that. You will not be accepted by God unless you're perfectly holy. So look to Christ Jesus and find all the perfect holiness to stand before God and be declared righteous. To be declared holy, all of it is in the Lord Jesus. But next, what should we learn and how should we apply God's holiness? You need to know that you will not escape God's wrath if you stand before him in your unholiness. And this is what unbelievers need to know. I don't love telling people that they're going to hell. I don't think anybody likes to do that. I don't like and I'm not saying just walk up to someone who's like, "Hey, you're going to hell." But when you're evangelizing, I don't love that. But if you love them, you have got to warn them. I think the fact that I don't love that is probably because I care too much what people would think about me or if I'm going to make somebody upset. If you love somebody and they're walking towards a cliff and you know if they fall off that cliff they are doomed. Telling them, hey, you're walking towards a cliff and if you keep walking you're going to fall off and die. Like that's a loving thing. They may get mad at you if you tell them that. It's like you can get mad at me if you want for telling you you're walking towards a cliff, but I'm loving you and I'm trying to keep you from walking off that cliff. You need when you evangelize, it needs to be very clear. It's like if you don't have the forgiveness that Christ purchased, if you don't have the gifted righteousness that he gives to everyone who turns from sin and trusts in him alone, you're going to stand before God and you will not escape his wrath. You will stand before him in your unholiness. And God is perfectly holy. Listen to Nah 3-5. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power. And the Lord will by no means clear the guilty. He will not clear the guilty. We have to have our guilt removed and perfect holiness, perfect righteousness gifted to us by grace alone through faith alone in Christ

alone. But thirdly, you must clearly go to Christ in faith so that God will count you holy. You must not only understand that you need imputed righteousness and total forgiveness through what Christ has done. You don't need to just understand it and understand I won't escape God's wrath. I won't be accepted unless I'm perfectly holy. Christ can make me perfectly holy. It can't just be the understanding. You have got to actually turn from your sin and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ in faith. Listen to what Colossians 1:21-23 says. And you who were once alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him. Christ died so that all who come to him through faith would be presented before him holy and blameless and above reproach. This is why the most frequent thing that Christians are called in the scripture is saints. Saints that's the most frequent thing more than Christian. Christians only a few times. Believer is there a lot but saints more than anything because that means holy ones. holy ones, not because of their own holiness, but because of that imputed righteousness and being presented holy and blameless and above reproach before God through Christ. Lloyd Jones said, "Holiness is not something we're called upon to do in order that we may become something. Holiness is something we are to do because of what we already are." So our actual living in holiness is because we've already been presented holy and blameless through the forgiveness and imputed righteousness of Jesus. It's not something we're called upon to do in order that we may become something. It's something we are to do because of what we already are. You must go to Christ in faith and you must tell your children, your wife, your family members, the people that you work with, anybody in your charge that they must go to Christ in faith so that God will count them holy. God will count them righteous. But then if you have faith in the Lord Jesus and these are application those first three applications are just for anybody and everybody. The rest of them are all for Christians specifically. The fourth application concerning God's holiness I want to give you is that in Christ you must sanctify God as holy. You must set apart God in your mind. Set apart God through faith. set him apart through your actions. You must sanctify God as holy. This is what Leviticus 10:3 says. This is what the Lord has said. Among those who are near me, I will be sanctified and before all the people I will be glorified. That means in our minds, in our actions, in our words, God is set apart in such a way that we will reverence him. We will honor him. We will labor to obey him. We will not presume on his kindness. We will not presume on his patience. And this, just as a reminder, Leviticus 10:3 is right after Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, offered strange fire. They were worshiping the Lord and they offered strange fire and it's called strange fire because it's they were worshiping the Lord in a way that God had not prescribed. God had not expressly told people you do not offer any other fire or I will kill you. God had positively prescribed how they were to worship him. And they said, "But God hasn't forbidden us from worshiping him like this." So we didn't do the positive command, but God didn't negatively tell us we can't do this. So it must be okay because he would have told us we you cannot do that. They did that.

They did the normative principle of worship. If God hasn't expressly forbidden it, then we can do it in worship. They did the normative principle and God killed them immediately.

And his whole point then is the Lord says this, among those who draw near to me, I will be set apart as holy. I will be sanctified. I will be treated as though I am holy. And especially the worship that you offer up to me must be what I have positively prescribed in the scriptures. anything else. I think we're doing what Nadab and Abihu did. We're offering strange fire to the Lord. If what we do in worship is not this is what God has said, this is how God wants to be worshiped. Then we are not sanctifying him as holy. We're not setting him apart. We're not reverencing him. We're saying, "Well, my intentions are good." Nadab and Abihu's intentions might have been perfect, but their actions were not according to the revealed positive will of God concerning how he wants to be worshiped. It's the same kind of thing. I personally think that images of Jesus of any kind, pictures, movies, all of that, I can't reconcile anything like that with the second commandment. I think those are second commandment violations. And so follow me here. If you would agree with me, pretend if you don't agree with me that any kind of picture movie of presenting the God man, the Lord Jesus Christ, this is the second commandment, act like you think it does. Anybody who has painted beautiful I mean the cysteine chapel beautiful windows like awesome artwork none of them I don't I don't think any of them did it from bad motives like these men did that I I would guess assuming the best being charitable as we should be like they did it to help illiterate people like stained glass windows in churches if you look back at the history of it a lot of it was like people were illiterate and It was a a really like vivid way to show something that they could like more easily grasp as a picture. Great motives if you're trying to communicate the truth of God's word and you want people to know Jesus better. And I think Mel Gibson made the Passion of the Christ movie because he wanted people to see and really like taste and experience how brutal the cross of Jesus Christ was. I think his motives were awesome. But if images of Christ are second commandment violations, it doesn't matter what the motives of somebody was because they're breaking a commandment of God. And in the same way with worship, what we have with Nadab and Abihu is they do not sanctify God as holy and offer up to him the worship and only worship that he says he wants. They offer up to some to him something that he hadn't said he didn't want. and the normative principle which is that if God hasn't forbidden it, we can do it. The regulative principle is we only do in worship what God says. The regulative principle I think is the safe place and I think Leviticus 10 is there so that we would know the normative principle is not what I want to do because I think Nadab and Abihu are like the poster boys for the normative principle of worship. I want to sanctify God as holy. And the context there is worship him in the ways that he's prescribed. You must sanctify God as holy. Fifth, you must live holy. In Christ, you must live holy.

We're counted holy. We're counted righteous through faith alone in Christ alone, not through our works. But then God converts us and saves us and works in us through his spirit and commands us now live holy. That's like Lloyd Jones is saying, we don't live holy so that we can become something. We live holy because of what God has already made us. He's already saved us. He's already made us a saint. And then he commands us now live in holiness. And admittedly, all of our holiness falls woefully short of God's perfect standard. But our proper holiness, living in holiness is not trying to attain God's justifying acceptance, but it's trying to live in a manner pleasing to the Lord and reflecting his glory to creation as he's created us to. Listen to Leviticus 14 44 and 45. I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. I am the Lord, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy because I am holy. And then, lest you think that's the Old Testament or that's just under the Old Covenant, Peter repeats the exact same thing in 1 Peter 1:16 to New Covenant Christians. You don't need that. But it's there. Peter says the exact same thing. The Lord says, "Be holy because I am holy and you represent me." And so you are to represent me in striving through faith in Christ by the power of the spirit through prayer and hard work to live in holiness. 1 Thessalonians 4, this is the will of God, your sanctification. What does Paul mean? that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness. What's sanctification look like? Well, from our point of view and from our effort, it looks like striving to live in holiness. Striving to live in obedience to God. striving to live through faith and dependence on Christ, through prayer, and through living in actual functional holiness. Richard Sibbs said, "Those that look to be happy must first look to be holy." You want to be happy, labor to be holy. JC Ryle said, "Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God according as we find his mind described in scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgment, hating what God hates, loving what God loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of God's word. That is good. Listen to it again. Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God according as we find his mind described in scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgment, hating what he hates, loving what he loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of his word. In Christ, you and I, we must live holy. We're commanded to live in holiness. Now, sixth, without this holiness that I've just described, I'm not talking about the imputed righteousness of Christ. that holiness that we're presented holy and blameless before him. I'm talking about what we in theological terms call proper holiness or functional holiness or actually like walking out and living in holiness, not just counted holy. You with me? Without proper holiness, you will not see the Lord.

Without proper holiness, you will not see the Lord. And that doesn't mean without perfect holiness, we're only going to see the Lord ultimately or we're only justified through that imputed righteousness and forgiveness. But listen to Hebrews 12:14. The first word, strive. Strive for peace with everyone and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Strive for holiness and if you don't have holiness,

you will not see the Lord. Is that not contradictory? Like we're justified through faith alone and Christ alone. We're presented holy and blameless before him through the death of Christ. And then he says, the apostle of the Hebrews says, you don't have holiness, you're not going to heaven. Your personal holiness is not what counts you holy and blameless before the Lord. You are not justified by your effort, but by the efforts of Christ. Yet, holiness of life is a necessary sign that accompanies everyone who has been born again. That's the point in Hebrews 12. You profess to be a believer, you don't have any holiness, no desire to live for the glory of God, no hatred of sin, no love for God, no obedience to his commands. It's like you're not going to see the Lord. I mean, that's all throughout the New Testament, especially that the apostles are essentially the way I put it, the simplest way is if you don't want to obey Jesus, you are not in Jesus. If you don't want to obey him and even strive to obey him, if you don't want to live in holiness and strive to live in holiness, that's a clear indicator that you haven't been born again, you don't have faith in Christ, you don't love Christ because he says, "If you love me, you'll keep my commandments." And James says, "We all stumble in many ways." So, we're not talking about attaining some high level of holiness. We're talking about striving after holiness. Strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Owen said they are much mistaken in the Lord Christ who hope to see him hereafter in glory and live and die here in an unholy state. It is not privileges nor gifts nor church office meaning pastors or deacons or power that will give admission to glory. Like you can have privileges, you can have gifts, you can have a church office, you can be pastors, you can be deacons, you can be most faithful church member, but if you don't have holiness, you're not going to heaven. And this is the sobering thing that God does throughout scripture to I think God's principle his mind in this if I can speak like that is for those who have professed faith in Christ but they don't actually possess faith in Christ. Those things are all throughout the New Testament to make false converts go whoa. And God uses things like that to wake up people who have made a profession of faith. They've been baptized or a member of a church. They come to church every Sunday, but they've not actually been converted. God uses those kind of things to just and they God uses that to drive them to the cross again. And God uses that to save people. That's our friend Amy Squirrel. Amy Squirrel was saved like four and a half years ago, even though she had professed to be a Christian since she was much younger, but she she listened to a John MacArthur sermon on YouTube and it was a sermon that was very much like that. It was like how to know if you're truly converted and here's signs of false conversion. And it says like, "If this is you and you profess to be a Christian, but this is you, this God is saying you're not a Christian." And God used that exact message to cause her to be born again. And she truly became a Christian and then started immediately seeking for a church that believed something in the ballpark of what this John MacArthur guy believed because he was like, "This guy teaches the Bible. I've got to find a church that just teaches the Bible." And so she ended up I think finding us listening to some sermons and then called me was like I want to come and visit because and then we

end up talking. She's like I just got saved. I was a false convert for years. Ash got saved. But it was that kind of text that God uses to wake up those who say they're a Christian, but they've not actually been born again. And so is that you strive for peace with everyone and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. This is not make to make you be a naval gazer and have morbid introspection like I don't think I'm good enough. That's not what we're talking about. But does that prick you and you're like I have zero holiness. I have zero desire really to obey Jesus. I don't really want to glorify Jesus. I just like the sound of not going to hell. That's why I say I'm a Christian. Or is it I really do want to live in holiness. I stumble in a lot of ways. I don't do what I want to do. I do the very thing that I hate like Paul says in Romans 7, but I'm striving after holiness.

Do not become a naval gazer and just through morbid introspection always like look your justification is not based on your works but if you have no works no desire you're not converted and you need God to save you. There are I think there are a lot of people in the Bible belt who need to hear that because a lot of people through altar calls through like sinners prayer repetitions have been given a false assurance of faith and their life shows nothing of actually being born again and they need to hear those kind of things and I think that's why God has put them in scripture so that be like Jesus just says if you actually love me you will keep my commandments. So if you have no desire to keep Jesus commandments like so you don't love Jesus. That's what he's saying, no holiness, no heaven. It's the blood of Christ applied to a person that guarantees glory for any person. And those that the blood has been applied to through faith is evidenced by a new life following the Lord Jesus Christ. Because if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Without proper holiness, you will not see the Lord. Now, seventh, we'll say this one quickly because I've already kind of belabored the point, but in Christ, you must worship God in holiness. Not only sanctify him, set him apart, but worship him. 1 Chronicles 16:29, worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.

Then eighth and finally in Christ, you must be motivated toward personal and proper holiness, motivated by God's promises. The promises of God in Christ are what motivates us to live, to labor, to live by the power of the spirit like Christ. The motivation can't be, I'm going to prove that I'm actually converted. That can't be your motivation. I'm going to prove that I'm actually born again. It's like because you can muster up all sorts of seemingly good works through effort, but they're not actually good because it's just I'm going to prove myself. But in 2 Corinthians 7:1, this is what God says. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. Because we have all of these great promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. The promises are what motivate and has to be the motivation for why you're laboring to live in holiness. Since God has made us these great promises and just so you know the promises at the end of

2 Corinthians 6 is that we are God's temple. He dwells in us. God is our God and we are his people through Jesus Christ. He is our God. We are his. We are the temple of God. Since we have these great promises, let's cleanse ourselves in every way that we can and bring holiness to completion in the fear of God. The promises of God in the gospel have to be the motivation for living in holiness. Spurgeon said, "If you think you can walk in holiness without keeping up perpetual fellowship with Christ, you have made a great mistake. If you would be holy, you must live close to Jesus. That's what Spurgeon said. And he's right. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. May God give us the grace to understand his holiness, to meditate upon it, and to apply it appropriately, banking all of our hopes on the perfectly holy Christ. Let's pray. Our father, we thank you for your word. We ask you to help us to understand and apply it. Change us. Make us more like Jesus. In his name we pray. Amen. Okay, man. Let's stand up. Colton's not able to be here with us tonight, so I just want to sing the first verse and the chorus of the solid rock. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. Got that? All right. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but holy lean on Jesus name. On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking sand. Amen.