

Doctrine of God

The Holiness of God

1. By way of definition the holiness of God is His moral perfection so that He chooses, necessarily and invariably, that which is morally good, and refuses anything that is morally evil. There is within the essence of God a principle which leads Him to prescribe, love, and reward truth, justice, benevolence, and every other virtuous affection and habit we sum up in the term holiness.
2. Many Reformed theologians have discussed the question whether right is right because God wills it, or whether God wills right because it is right.
3. While there is no consensus on this issue it is certain that “*the Lord loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity*”. God is, by His own designation, “*the HOLY ONE of Israel*” (Isaiah 41:14).
4. The angelic seraphs in the vision of the prophet cry continually “*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is the Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory*” (Isaiah 6:3) thus summing up all His glories in this sole moral perfection.
5. The language of the sanctuary on earth is borrowed from that of heaven: “*Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art HOLY*” (Revelation 15:4).
6. Holiness is an essential attribute of God, and adds glory, luster, and harmony to all His other perfections.
 - *Psalms 27:4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.*
 - *Exodus 15:11 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*
7. God could not be God without holiness.
 - *Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*
8. The holiness of God is infinite and unbounded; it cannot be increased or diminished.
9. The holiness of God is also immutable and invariable.
 - *Malachi 3:6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*
10. God is originally holy; He is holy of and in Himself, and He is the author and promoter of all holiness among His creatures.

11. The holiness of God is made visible in many ways.

- The holiness of God is made visible by His works; He made all things holy. *Genesis 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*
- The holiness of God is displayed by His acts of providence, which are all designed to promote holiness in the end. When God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees it was to promote his holiness so that in the end we read that Abraham “*looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*” (*Hebrews 11:10*).
- The holiness of God is made visible by His grace which leads Christians to long to be holy. The apostle Paul taught that the grace of God has appeared *Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.*
- The holiness of God is revealed by His word which commands it. *1 Peter 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.*
- The holiness of God is made visible by His instructions through the prophets. To the nation of Israel God said, “*I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. 5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods*” (*Jeremiah 44:4-5*).
- The holiness of God is revealed by the punishment of sin in the death of Christ. *Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? 2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*
- The holiness of God is made visible by the eternal punishment inflicted on wicked men. *Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*