

Holier Than Thou

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Lesson Title: “Holy, Holy, Holy: Moral Perfection” (pp. 21-35)

Session 2

December 10, 2023

The main point of this lesson is: God’s holiness is based on and calls for moral perfection.

Focus on this goal: To help adults understand their sin as disbelief in God’s holiness

Key Bible Passage: Exodus 20:1-17; Luke 4:1-13

Before the Session

Write on a placard, When we don’t believe in God’s holiness, we don’t trust Him because we don’t believe what He’s said. When we don’t trust Him, we don’t obey Him. (Step 5)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Invite adults to identify personality traits of people they would rather not be around. If no one mentions perfectionism, ask why we might like and not like being around “perfect” people.

Read the main point of this lesson statement (p. 33). Consider why that truth might cause some people to not want to be in God’s presence. Declare: God’s perfection is for our good. When we believe that, we trust Him.

Step 2. Moral Perfection and the Law

The apostle Peter needed to learn that truth because he initially did not want to be in Jesus’s presence. Invite a volunteer to read Luke 5:1-8. Ask: Why might people in our culture be offended by Peter’s response? What was Peter declaring about Jesus with his declaration about himself?

Invite a volunteer to read the second paragraph of Day One (p. 21). Remind adults from Session 1 that God revealed His holiness at the mountain in Exodus 19. He then revealed His holiness through His law.

Discuss Day One, activity 2 (p. 22). Evaluate how the law reveals God’s holiness. Analyze how His holiness reveals His love. Explore why people resist the goodness the law has to offer, using remarks in Day One (p. 23) to add to the discussion.

Step 3. Moral Perfection and the Christ, Part 1

Ask: What best helps you understand a principle—reading a description of it, seeing it lived out in real life, or a combination of the two? Declare the law gives us a picture of God’s holiness but Jesus fleshes out that picture to show us what God’s holiness looks like in real life.

Discuss Day Two, activity 1 (p. 24). Ask: Why might people want to be around a “good” Jesus rather than a holy Jesus? Invite a volunteer to read the second paragraph of Day Two (p. 24).

State Jesus demonstrates what holiness does when tested. Discuss Day Two, activity 2 (p. 25). Ask rhetorically: If Jesus relied solely on Scripture to stay morally perfect, what makes us think we can be “good” according to our own standards and power? Holiness in action resists temptation by the powerful truths of God’s Word.

Step 4. Moral Perfection and the Christ, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read Luke 4:3-4. Examine what Jesus was revealing about holiness with His response to Satan’s first temptation. Explain when Jesus quoted Scripture, He was recalling the full context of that verse. Invite a volunteer to read Deuteronomy 8:1-3. Ask: How can remembering these truths empower us to resist temptation when we’re facing a need?

Point out Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6 when resisting Satan’s next two temptations. Ask a volunteer to read Deuteronomy 6:10-19. Lead a discussion with: What are crucial keys to worshiping God alone? What might we worship when we forget God is the source of all our blessings? What are some attitudes and actions of people who do not trust that God keeps all His promises? How could Jesus know God would keep His promises?

Invite responses to Day Three, activity 2 (p. 27).

Read and discuss the last paragraph of Day Three (pp. 27-28).

Step 5. Moral Perfection and Our Unbelief, Part 1

Ask: How is every sin that’s ever been committed, starting with Adam and Eve, based on the belief that God is a liar? How is every sin at its core a disbelief in God’s holiness?

Display the placard and read the statement. Brainstorm reasons people resist God’s truth. Cross out all the “don’ts” on the placard and guide the group to read the statement aloud in unison.

Ask: How can we believe what God has said? Invite a volunteer to read the last paragraph of Day Four (p. 30).

Step 6. Moral Perfection and Our Unbelief, Part 2

Ask: Why should we want to be in the presence of this perfect God? Draw attention to the Day Five Note (p. 30). Consider when that may be a difficult truth to believe.

Invite volunteers to share verses they lean on in difficult times when they are tempted to doubt God’s goodness. Ask: How can looking to the cross help us believe God can be trusted with our cares?

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Note: It is a sobering truth that we sin when we don’t believe in God’s holiness. It’s a glorious truth that when we confess our sin of unbelief He is faithful and just to forgive us (1 John 1:9).

Urge adults: Talk to God if you’re struggling to believe in His perfect holiness. He can handle it and He can empower you to believe if you ask. Be truthful with God; He’s always truthful with you because He is Holy.

**Close in prayer.**

