

This midweek study will explore why it's important for students to recognize God's holiness. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.

Essential Doctrine: God Is Holy

God's holiness refers to His uniqueness in being separate from all He has created. The Hebrew word for *holy* means *separate* or *set apart*. God's holiness also refers to His absolute purity. God is unstained by the evil of the world. His goodness is perfect, and the moral code we find in the Scriptures is a reflection of His holy nature. As people made in God's image, we are called to holiness.

1 God's holiness sets Him apart from creation.

(1 Sam. 2:2; Jas. 1:13)

- ▶ How would you define holiness? (Record responses on the board. Don't respond or correct at this time, just allow students to share.)

Read 1 Samuel 2:2.

The literal meaning of the word *holy* is *to be separated or set apart*.

- ▶ Who is speaking in this verse? Why did Hannah proclaim that there is no one holy like the Lord?

Hannah praised God for His blessings and great works.

- ▶ Review students' definitions of holiness and invite them to choose which definition they think is best.

When people think of holiness, they immediately rush to moral perfection. While this is part of what it means to be holy, it also refers to being distinct and different from everything else.

- ▶ How is God set apart from us? Why is that necessary?

Read James 1:13.

- ▶ What does this verse tell us God will never do? Why?

God is completely separate from sin; He cannot sin, is not tempted to sin, nor does He tempt anyone to sin. He is not capable of evil. Nothing evil or sinful can come from Him. His holy nature will not allow sin into His presence.

- ▶ How would you explain the holiness of God to someone who doesn't know Him?

When it comes to God's holiness, it is easy to recognize He is different from all parts of creation, just as a painter is different from his painting. The Bible affirms that God is "Holy, Holy, Holy," (Rev. 4:8-11) meaning there is none more morally perfect than He is. Because He is perfect in both His character and attributes, God is completely without sin and even incapable of sinning.

2 God calls His people to be holy.

(Isa. 6:1-8)

- ▶ How do you know when you've sinned? Is sin always easy to recognize? Why or why not?

Read Isaiah 6:1-5.

Standing in the presence and holiness of God helped Isaiah recognize his sinfulness.

- ▶ What does it take for us to recognize our sin? Why is this important?

When we truly encounter the holiness of God, we can't help but see ourselves for who we really are—sinners in need of a Savior.

- ▶ Why is it important to confess sin? How do you confess your sin? Do you hate your sin as much as God does? Explain.

Read Isaiah 6:5-7.

According to *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, the sight of a holy God and the sound of the holy hymn of worship brought great conviction to Isaiah's heart, and he confessed that he was a sinner. Unclean lips are caused by an unclean heart. ()

- ▶ What was God's response to Isaiah's confession?

It is not enough to simply recognize your sinfulness.

Confronted by a holy God, you must be cleansed by Him through confession of your sin.

WRAP IT UP

- ▶ What difference does God's holiness make in your life?

Read Isaiah 6:8.

- ▶ What is God's call to you? What keeps you from responding?

God calls His people to share in His holiness, to live holy lives. We are to be distinct and separate from the rest of the world. While Christians should engage culture with the love and message of Christ, we should be different and stand out from the crowd by glorifying God in all we do. Even though we are incapable of morally perfect here on earth, we can strive toward greater degrees of holiness within our lives as we are transformed daily into the image of Christ (Rom. 12:1-3).