GOD'S ATTRIBUTES · STUDY NOTES

Study 5: God is holy

For personal study or groups

Your name

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How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

PART 1

A God of holiness and truth

How is God so different from us?

We have already seen that God is different from us. We are small and insignificant creatures compared with God, and our efforts to understand Him will never tell us everything about Him. One of God's attributes that expresses this well is holiness.

We have seen that the third Person of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit. But the Father and the Son are equally holy. What does this mean? Holiness means that God is pure, righteous, good and morally upright. Applying what we have already learnt, we can say that He is eternally holy, infinitely holy, unchangeably holy, and that His whole being is holy. It is His character to be holy; if He were not, He would not be God.

1 **Look up Isaiah 6:3**

What did the seraphim call to one another?

2 **Look up 1 Peter 1:15–16**

What are believers to be, and why?

God is saying that He cannot and will not tolerate evil and sin of any kind, in thought, word or action. Instead, He positively loves righteousness, purity, and every good and praiseworthy virtue. He commands these, not only in our outward actions but in our hearts and minds as well. He wants to see holiness in individuals and in nations, and in marriages, families, businesses and every relationship.

3 **Look up the first part of Habakkuk 1:13 again**

What can God not tolerate?

4 **Look up Philippians 4:8**

What kinds of things does Paul tell us to think about?

God made this very clear in the Ten Commandments, which He gave to Moses. They tell us how to think about God, how to arrange our week, how to live, and how God wants us to treat our neighbours.

See also: the Ten Commandments: Exodus 20:3–17.

A God who loves truth

Truth deserves special mention; it could fill a whole study on its own. God is a God of truth.

5 **Look up John 14:6 again**

What three things does Jesus say He is?

God does not, and cannot, lie. When He speaks, He tells us the truth. The Bible is the word of truth because it is given to us by the God of truth. Jesus Christ, because He is God, is the very embodiment of truth. Every word He spoke on earth was true. He did not exaggerate, He did not flatter, He did not give false hopes or false assurance.

6 **Read Jesus' words in John 14:1–3**

What does verse 2 say?

He would not be holy if He did not tell the truth; because He is holy, He always tells the truth. We often find the truth uncomfortable to hear. But God always tells us what we need to know. Much of the truth He tells us is about ourselves and the state of our hearts, and it is not pleasant to hear, because it shows that we are wrongdoers in His sight, sinful creatures.

7 **Look up Jeremiah 17:9**

How does this verse describe the heart?

The greatest truths are told us in the Bible so that we are left in no doubt. God has sent His own Son into the world to reveal the most important things of all, through His words and deeds. We may not know everything, but God has given us all we need in order to know Him and His will for our lives.

PART 2

Holiness and judgement

Holiness and judgement

We saw in study 3 that God is the Judge of the earth. Now we can see more clearly how serious this is for us, because God will judge the world by the standard of His absolute holiness. The Bible is clear: every one of us will meet God to be judged after we die.

8 **Look up John 5:28–29**

Who will hear His voice and come out of their graves?

9 **Look up Hebrews 9:27 again**

What is appointed for every person?

Not one person will be missing from the judgement. That is a very serious thought. By God's perfect standard, seen in the life of Jesus Christ, not one person apart from Him has lived as God wants. Not one of us has kept the Ten Commandments perfectly. We have not loved God, or our neighbour, constantly, willingly and from the heart.

10 **Look up Romans 3:23**

What have all people done?

The Bible tells us that there is misery, destruction, agony and unending suffering for the sinner in hell. Breaking God's law – and the utter disregard for His holiness that it shows – is so serious that hell is a place of everlasting punishment.

11 **Look up the first part of Romans 6:23**

What are the wages of sin?

Holiness drives out everything that does not match its perfection. So we would all be condemned if it depended on our own righteousness and holiness.

PART 3

Christ, a sacrifice for sin

Christ, a sacrifice for sin

The next study looks at the love of God in more detail. But God's love already shines out as we see that God – though holy, and the One who punishes wickedness and sin – made His own Son a sacrifice for sin. His Son paid the penalty of sin, which is death, by offering Himself to be punished in the place of many.

This is remarkable, because nothing but pure love prompted it. God's holiness could have left our doom sealed for all eternity: "the wages of sin is death". When Jesus died on the cross, He experienced these wages of sin in the place of multitudes of sinners, so that sinners might be forgiven and pardoned.

12 **Look up 1 Peter 2:24**

What does it say about Jesus?

13 **Look up 1 Peter 3:18**

Who suffered, and for whom? Why did He suffer?

What qualified Jesus Christ to do this? He had no sin of His own for which He needed to die.

14 **Look up Hebrews 4:15**

In what way was Jesus like us, and in what way was He different?

Being sinless, Jesus Christ could freely put Himself in the place of death, so that His death could count for others and its benefits be given to them. When we repent of our sins, turning

from them, and put our faith in Him, we receive the gift of salvation and the assurance that we are forgiven – as the second part of Romans 6:23 says.

Raised from the dead

We have said that God always speaks the truth. So God the Father raised His Son from the dead, just as the Lord Jesus said would happen (Matthew 17:22–23). In part this showed that His Son spoke the truth. It also shows that God the Father's holiness and justice were fully satisfied by the sacrifice Jesus made for sinners. You can read about the resurrection in Matthew 28:1–10.

15 **Look up Acts 2:32, from Peter's sermon at Pentecost**

What had God done, and who were the witnesses?

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, there are several things we need not doubt. We need not doubt that Christ has paid for sin. We need not doubt that there is life after the grave. Nor need we doubt that Jesus Christ will be the Judge of all.

16 **Look up Acts 17:31**

What proof has God given that He will judge the world by this Man?

See also: something to read and consider: Exodus 20:3–17; Matthew 5.

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. How realistic are you when you look at your own life? Do you really understand that God sees you as a sinner?

2. Would you feel able to stand before God as your Judge?

3. What do you think you need to do in order to be saved?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 5

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES · STUDY 5 · MEMORY VERSE

“But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”

1 Peter 1:15–16

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

“I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **Isaiah 6:3** *And they were calling out to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts; all the earth is full of His glory."*

2 **1 Peter 1:15–16** *15But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, 16for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*

3 **Habakkuk 1:13** *Your eyes are too pure to look upon evil, and You cannot tolerate wrongdoing. So why do You tolerate the faithless? Why are You silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?*

4 **Philippians 4:8** *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think on these things.*

5 **John 14:6** *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

6 **John 14:1–3** *1"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe in Me as well. 2In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and welcome you into My presence, so that you also may be where I am.*

7 **Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?*

8 **John 5:28–29** *28Do not be amazed at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice 29and come out—those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*

9 **Hebrews 9:27** *Just as man is appointed to die once, and after that to face judgment,*

10 **Romans 3:23** *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

11 **Romans 6:23** *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

12 **1 Peter 2:24** *He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. "By His stripes you are healed."*

13 **1 Peter 3:18** *For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit,*

14 **Hebrews 4:15** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin.*

15 **Acts 2:32** *God has raised this Jesus to life, to which we are all witnesses.*

16 **Acts 17:31** *For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the Man He has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising Him from the dead.”*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says ‘man’, ‘he’ or ‘brothers’ where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 5: God is holy

> **Memory verse:** “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” (1 Peter 1:15–16). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- Understand God's holiness and His love of truth.
- Face the seriousness of judgement by God's holy standard.
- See God's answer: Christ, the sinless sacrifice for sin, raised from the dead.

Suggested timing (about 75 minutes)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer.
- **25 min** Part 1 video (3 min); Isaiah 6:3, 1 Peter 1:15–16, Habakkuk 1:13, Philippians 4:8, John 14:6, 14:1–3, Jeremiah 17:9.
- **20 min** Part 2 video (2 min); John 5:28–29, Hebrews 9:27, Romans 3:23, 6:23.
- **20 min** Part 3 video (3 min); 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18, Hebrews 4:15, Acts 2:32, 17:31.
- **5 min** Summary and closing prayer.

Tips

- Read Exodus 20:3–17 together to show God's standard concretely.
- Speak of hell soberly and briefly, as the study does, then move to the cross.
- Invite personal response gently: "What do I think I need to do to be saved?"

Answers to watch for

- **Isaiah 6:3:** holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts.
- **1 Peter 1:15–16:** be holy, because I am holy.
- **Habakkuk 1:13:** His eyes are too pure to look upon evil.
- **Philippians 4:8:** whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable.
- **John 14:2:** "If it were not so, would I have told you?"
- **Jeremiah 17:9:** the heart is deceitful above all things.
- **John 5:28–29:** all in their graves will rise.
- **Romans 3:23; 6:23:** all have sinned; the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life.
- **1 Peter 2:24; 3:18:** He bore our sins; the righteous for the unrighteous.
- **Hebrews 4:15:** tempted in every way, yet without sin.
- **Acts 2:32:** God raised Jesus to life.
- **Acts 17:31:** God will judge the world by the man He has appointed.