

# SHEPHERD'S COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sunday ABF – March 9

“The Knowledge of the Holy”

by A.W. Tozer

## CHAPTERS 13 & 21

### The Divine Transcendence/The Holiness of God

*Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God (Exodus 3:6 b).*

*So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed [Nadab and Abihu], and they died before the LORD.*

*Leviticus 10:2*

*The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God (2 Samuel 6:7; see also 1 Chronicles 13:9-10).*

*"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty" (Isaiah 6:5).*

*“For this is what the high and lofty One says...” (Isaiah 57:15 a).*

*Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events (Acts 5:11).*

*Such a high priest meets our need—One who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens (Hebrews 7:26).*

1) R.C. Sproul teaches in his book, *The Holiness of God*, that the best way to understand God's holiness is to see Him as...

- **absolutely pure**—He is infinitely pure and unstained by sin (Hebrews 7:26).
- **transcendent**—This is the primary meaning of holiness (Isaiah 55:8). He is...
  - separate
  - infinitely different from us
  - foreign or alien
  - other worldly
  - awesomely unique

- Read Leviticus 19:2, Psalm 89:35, Isaiah 57:15, 1 Peter 1:15-16, Hebrews 12:28-29

**From what you know about God's holiness shown in Scripture, do you accept this definition?**

If you don't have a copy of Tozer's book, you can read it online: [www.heavendwellers.com/hdt\\_knowledge\\_of\\_the\\_holy.htm](http://www.heavendwellers.com/hdt_knowledge_of_the_holy.htm)

2) **How does God communicate to us that He is wholly unlike us (that is, infinitely transcendent)?**

3) **If you could come face to face with any person on Earth, which people would you be most nervous meeting? What happens when individuals in society lose their fear of everything and everybody?**

4a) The following are accounts of individuals coming into contact with our holy God—**what was the result?**

- Moses (Exodus 3:1-6)—
- Nadab & Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-3)—
- Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:6-7 & 1 Chronicles 13:9-10)—
- Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:16-21)—
- Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-7)—
- Daniel (Daniel 10:1-8)—
- Peter (Luke 5:1-11)—
- Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)—

4b) **What would prevent God from doing the same to us as He did to Ananias & Sapphira?**

5) In Chapter 21, Tozer states that “we have learned to live with unholiness and have come to look upon it as the natural and expected thing.” Please read 2 Peter 2:7. **How often do you find yourself feeling as Lot felt?**

6a) Tozer writes, “[God] is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is. Because He is holy, His attributes are holy.” **What lesson can we apply to ourselves when we contemplate Isaiah’s reaction to Christ’s holiness (Isaiah 6:1-7)?**

“Holiness is not an experience; it is the re-integration of our character, the rebuilding of a ruin. It is skilled labour, a long-term project, demanding everything God has given us for life and godliness”  
Sinclair Ferguson (*A Heart for God*)

6b) So important is the attribute of God's holiness that it is thrice repeated in Isaiah 6 by the seraphim, and our Lord calls us "saints" (Psalm 34:9; Colossians 1:10-14). Pastor John MacArthur states that "positionally we are already holy in Christ, but God wants our life to match our position" (John MacArthur, *Our Awesome God*). **How, then, do we become more holy in our daily lives?**

"By faith and obedience, by constant meditation on the holiness of God, by loving righteousness and hating iniquity, by a growing acquaintance with the Spirit of holiness, we can acclimate ourselves to the fellowship of the saints on earth and prepare ourselves for the eternal companionship of God and the saints above."

A.W. Tozer

7) Rudolf Otto, author of *The Idea of the Holy*, writes that the holiness of God "runs quicksilverlike through creation's veins." **How does our Lord Jesus reveal to us His holiness in the things He has created?**

- "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; **the whole earth** is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3 emphasis added).
- "The splendor of His holiness" is reflected in **thunder & lightning** (Psalm 29:2-9). One of the names for God, El Shaddai, can be translated "the thunderer."
- "Who among the gods is like You, O LORD? Who is like You—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, **working wonders?**" (Exodus 15:11 emphasis added).

8) **What is the greatest demonstration of the holiness of God found in Scripture?**

"The fact is that nothing reveals more of the terrible depravity of man's heart and his enmity against the living God than to have set before him One who is infinitely and immutably holy." A.W. Pink

"We must take refuge from God in God." A.W. Tozer

9a) The sense of God's holiness can only be given to us by the *Holy* Spirit. **Have you ever come face to face with what Rudolf Otto calls "the Mysterium Tremendum" and trembled before the unseen presence of the Holy?**

*Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. Revelation 15:4a*

9b) When we become Christians, we turn from exclaiming “that awful Thing” to crying out “Mine Holy One!” because we have come to *personally know* “the Mysterium Tremendum.” A.W. Tozer states that “today [our hearts] may leap up with the happy cry, ‘Abba Father, my Lord and my God!’ Tomorrow he may kneel with delighted trembling to admire and adore the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.” **Have you experienced this? How can we experience this?**

9c) A.W. Pink rightly teaches, “the more our hearts are awed by His ineffable holiness, the more acceptable will be our approaches to Him.” **Please meditate on the following verse.**

*Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful,  
and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."  
Hebrews 12:28-29*

10) Stephen Charnock writes: “Power is God’s hand or arm, omniscience His eyes, mercy His bowels, eternity His duration, but holiness is His beauty” (*The Existence and Attributes of God*). A.W. Pink remarks, “it is this, supremely, which renders Him lovely to those who are delivered from sin’s dominion” (*The Attributes of God*). And Puritan Jonathan Edwards encourages all true Believers to seek the “beauty of Christ’s holiness” (*Religious Affections*). Read 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 29:2; and Psalm 110:3. **By what means do we see the beauty of Christ’s holiness?**

*Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!  
Tremble before Him, all the earth.  
Psalm 96:9 NKJV*

In many ways, holiness defines God: “His justice is a holy justice, His wisdom a holy wisdom, His power a ‘holy arm’ (Psalm 98:1), His truth or promise a ‘holy promise’ (Psalm 105:42), His name, which signifies all His attributes in conjunction, is ‘holy’ (Psalm 103:1).” Stephen Charnock