

## **What does righteousness mean?**

Righteousness is generally defined as an action or behavior that is morally right or just. Righteousness is frequently mentioned and discussed in the Bible. The Greek word typically translated as righteousness deals with behavior related to other people or toward God in areas of morality, business dealings or legal matters. It is also often used in contrast with wickedness.

[Psalm 1](#) offers a poetic look at the life and conduct of a righteous person. *"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."*

These words clearly indicate that the righteous person does not focus his life on associating with the wicked, but in meditation upon God's Word. The wicked person will find judgment in the end, but the Lord watches over the way of the righteous. These themes are often repeated in other Psalms and Proverbs.

While the Christian seeks to live a righteous life, the Bible is also clear there is no one who is righteous on his or her own: *"None is righteous, no, not one"* ([Romans 3:10](#)). Instead, Jesus is called the Righteous One ([Acts 7:52](#)) who offers His righteousness to cover the penalty of our sins ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).

In response, the believer is empowered by God's Spirit toward an ever-increasing life of righteous living. As [Romans 12:1-2](#) teaches, *"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."*

An interesting thing about the Christian life is that the perfect righteousness of God gives us righteousness in Christ and helps us to daily grow in righteousness by the

power of His Spirit. In heaven, we will be made perfect in righteousness as we dwell in His presence forever.

### **Holiness**

#### **One of the most important attributes for understanding God and ourselves is God's holiness.**

When we catch a vision of God's holiness, we can regard many things in our lives as holy. When we lose a sense of holiness (as many have), then we lose the realization that anything is holy or unholy. In this latter case, we also lose a sense of our own sinfulness, our need for God's grace, and the desperate plight of our culture.

The Hebrew word for holy is *quadosh*, and the Greek word is *haigos*. In both cases, the meaning is separateness or being set apart from that which is unclean. An encounter with God always produces awe and dread that leads to separation from sin. Living a Holy life naturally incorporates being righteous.

In Isaiah 6:1-8, we see Isaiah's vision of God in the temple. He sees the Lord "sitting on a throne lofty and exalted" (vs. 1). Seraphim surround Him calling to each other, *"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory"* (vs. 3). This triple repetition of a divine attribute is without parallel in the rest of the Bible. Scripture never says that God is "justice, justice, justice" or even "love, love, love," but it does say that He is "holy, holy, holy." The Hebrew does not have a grammatical way to express the comparative or the superlative (i.e., holier or holiest). The way it stresses the importance of something is by repetition.

Similarly, when God is described as "holy, holy, holy," it underlines his utter purity. He is set apart, One who inspires awe and is worthy of worship. The foundations of the temple start to tremble (vs. 4) and so does Isaiah himself. He cries out, *"Woe is me, I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips"* (vs. 5). This is the only time in Scripture that a prophet pronounces the prophetic judgment "woe" on himself. As Isaiah encounters God's holiness, he is acutely aware of his sin and the sinfulness of the society around him. Any vision of God's holiness leads to a sense of our own sin and makes us sensitive to the unholiness of the culture around us.

Isaiah is also particularly aware of the deficiency in his speech and the way of speaking around him. The central passage in Romans 3 that describes the pervasiveness of our sin also emphasizes the "lips." *"There is none*

*righteous, not even one...none who seeks for God...none who does good, not even one*" (Rom. 3:10-12). It goes on to speak of the throat as an "open grave" (vs. 13), "tongues...deceiving" (vs. 13), lips have the "poison of asps" (vs. 13). The mouth contains "cursing and bitterness" (vs. 14).

This emphasis ought to lead us to examine what comes out of our mouths, and to reflect on the unholy ways our culture influences our speech.

However, if Isaiah was simply left with this crushing sense of sin, he would be unfit for the ministry he was called to pursue. So God sends a seraphim with a burning coal from the altar to touch Isaiah's lips (vs. 6). In this way, Isaiah is told that "your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven" (vs. 7). Then (and only then) the Lord asks, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (vs. 8).

Isaiah responds, "*Here am I, send me!*" (vs. 8). When Isaiah responds to God's call, he is under no illusion about the degree of his sinfulness. He is utterly dependent on God's grace. In a similar way, when we each see our own sin, that does not make us unsuitable for ministry, but a candidate desperately desiring God's grace. In fact, if we feel worthy of the ministry to which we have been called, we should beware.

### **"What does the Bible say about holiness? What does it mean to be holy?"**

In [1 Peter 1:13-16](#), Peter writes to believers, "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'" Peter is quoting from [Leviticus 11:44](#) and [Leviticus 19:2](#).

First, let's look at God's holiness. What does it mean that God is holy? Passages like [1 Samuel 2:2](#) and [Isaiah 6:3](#) are just two of many examples of passages about God's holiness. Another way to say it is absolute perfection. God is unlike any other (see [Hosea 11:9](#)), and His holiness is the essence of that "otherness." His very being is completely absent of even a trace of sin ([James 1:13](#); [Hebrews 6:18](#)).

He is high above any other, and no one can compare to Him ([Psalm 40:5](#)). God's holiness pervades His entire being and shapes all His attributes. His love is a holy love, His mercy is holy mercy, and even His anger and wrath are holy anger and holy wrath. These concepts are

difficult for humans to grasp, just as God is difficult for us to understand in His entirety.

Next, what does it mean for us to be holy? When God told Israel to be holy in [Leviticus 11](#) and [19](#), He was instructing them to be distinct from the other nations by giving them specific regulations to govern their lives. Israel is God's chosen nation and God has set them apart from all other people groups. They are His special people, and consequently they were given standards that God wanted them to live by so the world would know they belonged to Him. When Peter repeats the Lord's words in [1 Peter 1:16](#), he is talking specifically to believers. As believers, we need to be "set apart" from the world unto the Lord. We need to be living by God's standards, not the world's. God isn't calling us to be perfect, but to be distinct from the world. [First Peter 2:9](#) describes believers as "a holy nation." It is a fact! We are separated from the world; we need to live out that reality in our day-to-day lives, which Peter tells us how to do in [1 Peter 1:13-16](#).

Finally, how can we become holy? Holiness only results from a right relationship with God by believing in Jesus Christ as Savior (accepting His gift of eternal life). If we have not placed our faith in God's Son alone to save us from our sins, then our pursuit of holiness is in vain. So, we must first make sure we are born-again believers (see [John 3](#)). If we truly are believers, then we recognize that our position in Christ automatically sets us apart from the world ([1 Peter 2:9](#)). After all, we have a relationship with the living God! Then we must daily live a set-apart life, not trying to "blend in" with the world, but instead living according to God's Word as we study the Bible and grow in it.

To fully understand Holiness. One must understand what it means to be absolute. Absolute means the state of being a perfect entity. For instance, Gold in its natural state is mixed with impurities. It must be melted and all that is not pure has to be separated and disposed of. God by nature is 100% pure. SO then, he can truthfully be described in the ultimate. For example, God is not powerful but omnipotent; He is not wise as we would describe a person: He is Omniscient rather than being smart or wise

He not only tells the truth. He describes Himself thus; ***"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."*** (emphasis added)

By using this phrase, Jesus is establishing that knowing Him is not only the ultimate meaning and fulfillment of life on earth, but the only way to really know the Father in [heaven](#).

*"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."*

*Jesus has told us that He will send the Holy Spirit to guide and teach us, But he does more than that.*

### **We are His Temple**

**God did more than send His Holy Spirit to Guide, teach and to help us to become more like Him -that is: we are to be holy as He is holy. He dwells within us.**

#### [1 Corinthians 3:16](#)

*Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in you?*

#### [Romans 8:9](#)

*You, however, are controlled not by the flesh, but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.*

#### [Romans 14:7](#)

*For none of us lives to himself alone, and none of us dies to himself alone.*

#### [1 Corinthians 6:3](#)

*Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!*

#### [1 Corinthians 6:13](#)

*"Food for the stomach and the stomach for food," but God will destroy them both. The body is not intended for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.*

#### [2 Corinthians 6:16](#)

*What agreement can exist between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be My people."*

#### [James 4:5](#)

*Or do you think the Scripture says without reason that the Spirit He caused to dwell in us yearns with envy?*

#### [1 Corinthians 6:15,16](#)

*What? know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own?*

*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid...*

#### [1 Corinthians 3:16](#) You are God's Temple

*15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as if through the flames. 16 Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 **If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, and you are that temple....***

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

#### [2 Corinthians 6:16](#)

*And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

#### [Ephesians 2:21,22](#)

In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

**To fully understand that our body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, one must become knowledgeable of the Temple of God beginning in Exodus and other parts of the Torah. One of these requirements are in Leviticus concerning the requirements of the priesthood. Why: ?**

**We are ultimately like Jesus, our High Priest.**

### **The Qualifications for High-Priest**

*Hebrews 5 Verses 1-4*

**1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.**

**2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.**

**3 Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.**

**4 And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was.**

**High Priest:** The office of High Priest was first given to Aaron and his sons, following the establishment of the Mosaic Covenant on Mt. Sinai. (Exodus 28-29). They were to administer the sacrifices with the articles described by God to Moses on the mountain (Exodus 25-27). The High Priest was a foreshadowing of the coming

Messiah, who would ultimately fulfill the office. The High Priest was the Human representative to God, administering sacrifices on his and the nation's behalf. He was over the other Priests, and alone would enter the Holy of Holies, once a year.

During the wandering in the desert, the temple was located directly in the middle of the camp. God was present in the Holy place. During the day, a cloud emanating from the Holy place led them on the next step of the journey, During the night, a light glowed ensuring the people that God was still their companion safeguarding them.

The Tent of Meeting and its articles were copies of their Heavenly counterparts (Hebrews 9:23) revealed in the Book of Revelation. (Exodus 25:40). Today all believers are filled with the Holy Spirit in the same manner that God was in the Temple of the Wilderness.