

What does it Means to Be Holy?

What does it mean to be holy? Sometimes we toss this word around... "Holy cow!" "Holy smokes!" "Holy jeans!" (well, that last one might be a reference to tailoring needs...) But for childrens especially, we often neglect to stop and contemplate just what it means and why it is important for us to aspire to holy living. In addition, if Holiness is connected to perfection and we know humans are imperfect, why should we bother even trying? This lesson will take a look at how God is holy, and why we should try to live lives that please Him.

Lesson Opening: What is it used for? Begin with a mini-object lesson using a couple of common items. Play a blindfolded relay game to identify the uses of various things. In a box, have set aside a toothbrush, a hair brush, bug spray, cleaner, a box of tissues, a box of crackers, a spoon, etc...one at a time, students must don the blindfold and hustle over to the box (you can make this a team race or an individual activity). Ask them to find a particular item, like "find what you'd use to clean your teeth" or "an item to get rid of ants..." Blindfolded, the students are to attempt to find the items. After a few rounds, sit and chat briefly about what they were doing. Would a toothbrush be an appropriate tool to de-tangle hair? Would a hair brush work for our mouths? Explain that these things all have special purposes. They are set aside and special. If we used a toothbrush to polish shoes, we probably would not be inclined to use it again for our mouths. Today we will be talking about what it means to be holy, and how holiness means we are set apart and designated for certain things.

Bible Lesson:

Brainstorm with students what the word "holy" reminds them of. Some may think of the Holy Spirit, or of being perfect, and that all has to do with it. The word does have a few potential meanings, but one in particular that we will focus on has to do with being sacred, special, set apart...

one dictionary reference puts the definition this way: "**pecially recognized as or declared sacred by religious use or a authority; consecrated**"

What is a holiday? It is a special day, a day recognized and declared sacred, a holy day. Something holy is set aside for a special use.

Ask children how this relates to our faith...can people be holy? The Apostle Paul tended to think so...he often admonished people to live in a way that was special, sacred, and pleasing to God. This is how he encouraged Timothy to be. Remember who Timothy was?

Invite students to open Bibles to the book of 2 Timothy, Begin with the opening introduction to the book:

I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.⁴ Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy.⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. -2 Timothy 1:3-5

Paul recalls Timothy's strong faith and positive role models of women in his life. He is convinced Timothy is acting faithfully, but he also wants to encourage him to pass on that effort to others and lead by example...look at the next verses.

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. ⁸ So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. ⁹ He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, ¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. -2 Timothy 1:6-10

What is the spirit of God? As challenging as the idea of Trinity can be, remind students of the Holy Spirit's role in our lives...think of it like a little power booster or flavor injector...it comes and fills us up so that we can act with faith and have hope, even though we still make mistakes. Where did Timothy receive this? From God ultimately, and through others as well. Note that nothing we do gives us a holy life, but merely God's purpose and grace. Timothy is to use this gift to help spread the gospel...

And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. ¹² That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for

shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

-2 Timothy 1:11-14

Paul is writing from prison. Here he reminds Timothy that he is not ashamed to suffer for Christ, and hopes Timothy will have the same attitude.

What is the “good deposit” he mentions in verse 14? Not a bank slip...it’s that effort to share and work with the people around him. Paul admonishes his young friend to continue setting an example because he has been set apart for his work. He will be covered and protected by the Holy Spirit as he continues in doing what is right.

And what can we take from that? God calls us all to be Holy, to be set apart. This does not mean we have to be perfect. No one is perfect aside from Christ, after all. But we give ourselves to God and recognize His control over our entire lives. We can be set apart, by and for HIM.

Close with prayer and thank God for who He is. Thank God for the Holy Spirit and ask for help in following and attending to it.