

**Systematic Theology Pt. 12**  
**Theology Proper (C)**  
**“The Communicable Attributes of God”**

**I. The Holiness of God**

- Isa. 6:1-3, Rev. 4:8, Rev. 15:4

1. The importance of God’s Holiness! William Evans, *“If there is any difference in the importance of the attributes of God His holiness would seem to occupy the first place.”*

- In his classic book *The existence and Attributes of God*, Stephen Charnock noted God’s holiness “is the crown of all His attributes, the life of all His decreed, the brightness of all His actions. Nothing is decreed by Him, nothing is acted by Him, but what is worthy of the dignity, and becoming the honor, of this attribute”. The holiness of the Lord is awesome, fearful, and majestic. David wrote, “holy and awesome is His name” (Ps. 111:9) In her song of thanksgiving Hannah prayed, “There is no one holy like the Lord, indeed, there is no one besides Thee” (1 Sam. 2:2). Moses and the sons of Israel said of God, “Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness?” (Ex. 15.11).

2. Ask, “What does the holiness of God mean?”

- “This is a general term for the moral excellence of God... Holiness, on the one hand, implies entire freedom from moral evil, and on the other, absolute moral perfection. Freedom from impurity is the primary idea if the word. To sanctify is to cleanse; to be holy is to be clean. Infinite purity, even more than infinite knowledge or infinite power, is the object of reverence. - Charles Hodge

- The Holiness of God has two sides.

A. The negative side - God is separate from all that is unholy or sinful.

B. The Positive side - God has absolute moral perfection. he is independently, infinitely holy.

- God is holy as to His very nature, it is what distinguishes him from everything else.
- Simply put God is without sin. He doesn’t conform to some holy standard. He is the standard. He never does anything wrong or sinful. There are no degrees to His holiness, for he is perfectly holy.
- God’s holiness is seen in His law (Rom. 7:12), in His works (Ps. 145:17), in the cross (Heb. 9:26).

3. What application does God’s holiness have in our lives?

*“The absolute, innate holiness of God means that sinners have to be separated from Him unless a way can be found to constitute them holy. And that way has been provided in the merits of Jesus Christ. A proper*

*view of the holiness of God becomes the standard for the believer's life and conduct (1 John 1:7). This should put to an end the often useless discussions over what is permitted and what is not in the Christian life. Proper conduct can be tested by the simple question, Is it holy? This is the believer's standard. While he does not always measure up to it, he must never compromise it". - Charles Ryrie*

- We should hate sin.
- We should be holy. 1 Pet. 1:15-16
- We will be like Him. 1 John 3:2

## **II. The Righteousness and Justice of God**

### 1. Its meaning.

- While holiness principally concerns the character of God, justice or righteousness has more to do with His character expressed in His dealing with men.
- It means that God is equitable or that He is no “respector of persons”.

*“Though related to holiness, righteousness is nevertheless a distinct attribute of God. Holiness relates to God's separateness; righteousness, to His justice. Righteousness has to do with law, morality, and justice. In relation to Himself, God is righteous; i.e., there is no law, either within His own being or of His own making, which is violated by anything in His nature. In relation to His creatures he is also righteous; i.e., there is no action which He takes that violates any code of morality or justice. Sometimes these two aspects of righteousness are called absolute (in relation to Himself) and relative (in relation to His Creation).”*

- Charles Ryrie

### 2. Scripture

- Ps. 145:17    • Ps. 11:7
- Ps. 19:9     • Ps. 116:5
- Jer. 12:1    • Dan. 9:7
- Acts 17:31

### 3. Application

- A. A Comfort
- B. A Warning

## **III. The Goodness of God**

### 1. Scripture

- Ps. 136:1    • Ps. 107:1    • Ps. 52:1    • Ps. 34:8, “taste and see...”

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### 2. Its meaning.

*“Goodness, in the Scriptural sense of the term, includes benevolence, love, mercy, and grace. By benevolence is meant disposition to promote happiness; all sensitive creatures are its objects. Love includes complacency, desire, and delight, and has rational beings for its objects. Mercy is kindness exercised towards the miserable and includes pity, compassion, forbearance, and gentleness... Grace is love exercised towards the unworthy... All these elements of goodness... exist in God without measure and without end. In Him they are infinite, eternal, and immutable (Systematic Theology [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988], pp. 156-57).” - Charles Hodge*

*“The Hebrew word for “good” describes what is pleasant, agreeable, and beneficial. Besides describing God’s character, it also describes His actions. In Psalm 119:68, the psalmist wrote, “You are good, and what you do is good.” that God is a source of good is evident from the biblical account of creation. with each act of creation God said it was “good” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). That God intended good for His creation is evidenced in the creation account by the repeated reference to blessing. God “blessed” the first couple (1:22, 28), and He blessed the “seventh day” (2:3). Contemplating the goodness of God, David exclaimed, “How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you” (Ps. 31:19).”*  
- J. Carl Laney

### 3. Application

James, the brother of our Lord, remarked that since God does not change, He will never alter His pattern of giving only good gifts. “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:17). The expressions of God’s goodness are not limited to believers. Paul told the unbelieving people at Lystra that God “did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:17). -J. Carl Laney

- Remember it is God’s goodness that prevents us from falling over dead.
- We should be thankful to God for His goodness.
- The supreme expression of God’s goodness is the cross of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:32

## IV. The Mercy of God

### 1. Scripture - Ps. 145:8-10

- God’s mercy is his goodness manifested towards those who are in misery or distress.
- It’s one of the most comforting of God’s moral attributes.
- God’s mercy is Him not giving us what we deserve!

### 2. God’s Mercy is:

A. Great - 1 Kings 3:6

B. Plenteous - Ps. 86:5

C. Full and abundant and from everlasting to everlasting - Ps. 103:17

D. Tender - Luke 1:78

E. Abundant - 1 Pet. 1:3

F. Higher than the heavens - Ps. 103:10-14

### 3. Application

A. God the Father sent God the Son to save us because of His mercy. Luke 1:78

B. God saves us by His mercy. Rom. 9:16, Eph. 2:4-5, 1 Pet. 1:3, and Titus 3:5.

C. As God's children, we should show mercy. Luke 6:36 and Matt. 5:7.

D. We should praise Him for His mercy.

*“When all thy mercies, O my God, my rising soul surveys,  
transported with the view I'm lost, in wonder, love, and praise.”*

