

THE MEANING OF HOLINESS  
(Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:16)

- I. What Exactly Does the Bible Mean by the Word *Holy*?
  - A. Most people think of holiness in terms of moral purity or righteousness
  - B. There are two major meanings of the term *holy*
    1. The secondary meaning refers to righteousness and purity
    2. The primary meaning of holiness is separation or apartness
      - a. God is other or different
      - b. God is transcendent (that which goes above and beyond the commonplace)
      - c. What makes something sacred or holy is the touch of God upon it
      - d. We fear God because He is different
- II. The Sociology of Holiness
  - A. Rudolph Otto studied people's reactions to that which they considered to be holy
    1. He used the term *mysterium tremendum*
    2. This refers to that which provides a sense of mystery and incites fear
  - B. The basic response of human being to that which they consider holy is a response of ambivalence
    1. Holiness both fascinates us and terrifies us
    2. It can attract us as well as repel us
- III. Holiness Is at the Very Core of the Character of God
  - A. Understanding this aspect of God is the priority of learning
  - B. The first petition of the Lord's Prayer is that the name of God be treated as sacred—"Hallowed be Thy name"
  - C. We are not to take the name of the Lord God in vain
  - D. When we are called to be holy, we are called to bear witness to the righteousness of God—to mirror and reflect His character