

God: Holiness, Love, and Justice

By Bob Young

It is difficult to wrap our mind around what God is like. We can barely fathom an all-powerful God. We want to know his presence but do not know what to expect. How does one “practice the presence of God?” Is it a matter of feeling his presence? He is a friend—always present. What does that mean? How do we develop the mind of Christ? How do we learn to think like God? How do we grasp what he knows? Why does someone ask, “Is God going to bring this up at the judgment?” God’s attributes are limitless. We can study the three greatness attributes—omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience (all powerful, all present, all knowing). We may learn more about God by studying his three goodness attributes.

1. **God’s holiness is foundational; his holiness is elevated and exalted.** Holiness is crown jewel of God’s nature, elevates him to third degree
 - a. God is holy. Isa 6:3ff; Rev 4:8. God is love, yes, but not “Love, Love, Love”
 - i. A synonym for deity is goodness
 - ii. God’s love is a holy love; his justice is a holy justice; also his knowledge and his mercy
 - iii. God’s holiness is majestic if and when we see it: Ex 15:11; Rev. 5:4; only God is holy
 - b. God’s holiness can be intimidating, because we are unholy, we often fear him because we are not holy. Only when we understand the concept of holiness can we understand and appreciate his love.
 - c. God’s holiness makes him hate sin and its fruit or consequences.
 - i. Sin violates his nature
 - ii. He hates it because of what it does to us
 - iii. Man was created to be in God’s presence; Isa 59:1-2; Rev. 4:11
 - iv. The problem is man’s failure rather than God’s failure
 - v. Sin is root cause of all problems
 - vi. It is just as bad to slap with the tongue as to slap with the hand
 - vii. Sin affects God, dethrones God, sin is man-centered, sin breaks God’s commands, but more, sin breaks God’s heart
 - d. Sin must be punished.
 - e. All sin is serious, there are no classes of sin, Gal. 5:19-21
 - f. Sin is God’s problem as well as ours.
 - i. God will punish and destroy sin
 - ii. God cannot merely forgive sin. He must express his wrath against sin, either in Christ or the sinner. In a sense, there is no forgiven sin, only forgiven sinners. There is no unpaid sin.
 - iii. We must consider deliberate vs. accidental sin
2. **God’s love is God’s holy solution**
 - a. God loves
 - i. Incarnation, John 1:14
 - ii. The perfect Jesus, Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22
 - b. God extended his love when we were yet sinners.
 - i. Jesus reveals God’s grace
 - ii. Man can now approach God, without a solution to sin, man cannot approach God.
3. **Thus man can only be saved by God’s justice**
 - a. Salvation is only from God, Rom. 3:21-26
 - b. Justification is reflection of God’s court, the judge is God who knows all and know that man is guilty, man is lost, but can be declared righteous, Rom. 4:8; 3:24.