

GOD IS HOLY

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE GOOD FORGIVE ABOUND HOLY

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Exodus 19; Leviticus 19:1-4

MEMORY VERSE

"You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you" (Psalm 86:5, NIV*).

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children know that God is holy.

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

God is holy, and he calls us to be like him, holy. He wants a holy nation that honors him above all else. In Exodus 19, the Lord is preparing to establish a covenant with his people, as a holy nation, "You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites," (v. 6, NIV).

To be holy means to be separate, set apart, to live lives that reflect the true nature of God. The essence of holiness, just as we find in the Bible, is that we be conformed to God's character.

On Mount Sinai, God made a covenant with the nation of Israel. God's part of the covenant was seen in the actions he took that were climaxed when he freed them from Egypt. Their part as his people was to give him total devotion and obedience of his commandments. The result would be a holy nation.

The cloud, the smoke, and the fire were visible signs of divine presence and protection. Israel responded to God by declaring, "We will do everything the Lord has said," (v. 8, NIV). They had the freedom to reject the Lord's proposition, but they chose to be obedient. God never obligates anyone to make a pact with him. What he does is create an atmosphere that motivates humans to give a positive answer.

The nation had gone through an intense preparation to be able to be with God at Mount Sinai. Their preparation took the form of

an objective lesson which helped them to understand the purity of the Lord. All of the rules were in place to teach the nation about the necessity of holiness, total devotion and absolute obedience that God asked for.

God allowed them to have this experience to create in them a deep reverence for God and inspire them to completely obey his commandments.

Leviticus 19:1-4 - This passage is part of a longer section generally referred to as the Holiness Code.

This code gave instructions to the people for how to live a holy life in their daily lives. The word "holiness" is the key word in this book:

God is the source of all holiness (vv. 1-2).

God is the measure of holiness (v. 2).

Holiness is separation from evil and unity with God (vv. 3-4).

ADAPTATION

This unit (God the Father) will help the children to begin to understand what God is like. In today's lesson, they will learn about the holiness of God. This means that he is perfect, pure, without sin, and free from any kind of wickedness.

Dennis Kinlaw says, "Holiness should not be considered as just another characteristic or attribute of God. If you are going to see it as an attribute, it should be the attribute of all attributes. But in reality it is the essence of the character of God itself that determines the nature of his attributes. The holiness of God tells us about the difference that exists between him and his creation in terms of his importance, majesty, moral perfection, ethics, and sovereign love."

It is important to know that God is a God of holy love. This helps us to erase the common misconception that he is just waiting for us to mess up to punish us. Your children should not have the impression that it is impossible to please God. They should know that he called his people to live holy lives.

To live a holy life is not an option that God presents to us to decide if we want to put it into practice. He gives us his grace so that we can be holy like he is holy. This is an exciting promise, not an irrational demand!

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Tell the group: "It is important to develop the correct concept of God from an early age. For this reason it is necessary for us to understand the Lord's holiness. We cannot think about God the Father without connecting that to his holiness." Ask the children: "What does "holiness" mean to you?" (listen to their responses) Then say: "Our understanding of holiness is important for shaping our lives and preparing us for eternity."

This is why it is so important for you as the teacher to prepare especially for this topic. Remember that you are forging the way of the foundation of the spiritual lives of your children. Do not take this work lightly. You are not only teaching a Bible lesson, nor is the class meant to just entertain the children! Take your work seriously; get on your knees and ask God to help you.

TEACH THE LESSON

Carefully study Exodus 19 and Leviticus 19:1-4 and be prepared to tell the story in your own words. If you have doubts about the subject, do not hesitate to talk with your pastor. Holiness is a concept that should become very clear to your children; one bad explanation or lack of clarity in your class could affect their way of understanding God. This is why it is so important that you prepare to present this topic very well.

As you present the lesson, you need to be very careful about the vocabulary you use. There may be new children. Also remember that just because children have been attending church for a long time that does not mean that they have a good understanding of religious concepts and terminology. As you use words with symbolic or religious importance, give a detailed explanation of their meaning. If necessary look up the meaning of some words in a dictionary of the Bible and Christian doctrine.

Explain the word "holiness." The children need to understand that this is the essence (nature) of God. Tell the group: "It is not that God could be holy, or that he has the capacity to be holy, but that the Bible says: 'God is holy.'" Make the concept of holiness very clear. Tell the group that A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English (Eby, Lyons, Truesdale: 2004) explains:

“Holiness is the quality of God that makes him completely different from his creation...Jesus Christ is the perfect revelation of the holiness of God. He shows us what God is like. His life shows how God wants people to live...He wants his people to show his righteousness in all they do. They, too, should act justly and love mercy (Micah 6:8). Christian holiness is the sanctification of believers through Jesus Christ. This comes when Christians give themselves fully to God. They receive the cleansing by faith. This makes them holy before God. God is the source of all holiness.”

Explain to the children: “Holiness is not an option or an opportunity; it is a command - a requirement. The Bible says, ‘Without holiness no one will see the Lord’ (Hebrews 12:14).” The Global Wesleyan Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology (Branson: 2020) explains:

“Holiness is thus a relational term centered on love. Human holiness is always derived and dependent on being in relationship with the holy God...Humans, created in God’s image (Genesis 1:27), are called to act in God’s ways...The epicentre of this call is love – the love of neighbour and alien (Leviticus 19:18 and 34) and the love of God in the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).”

Do not forget to include songs in today’s lesson. If you wish, you could sing a hymn like “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty” or any other song that relates to the lesson. Remember to include motions for the songs.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Mystery puzzle

Be sure Student Activity Sheet #137-A and #137-B are aligned and printed back to back. Also provide the group scissors and tape. If you are able to, also give them envelopes to put their puzzle pieces in. Give them time to cut out the puzzle pieces. Then they should choose the words that describe God and stick them together. When they have taped them together, have them turn the puzzle over and try to find the secret message.

Let them know that if they do not place the pieces correctly on the front, the message on the back will be hard to read. Say, “Because God is Holy, he wants us to be holy as well.” Read the Bible passage from Leviticus 19:1-4. At the end say, “According to this Bible passage, what does God expect from holy people?” (That they respect their parents, that they respect the Sabbath, that they attend church to worship God, that they do not worship other gods, and that they love and obey God.) “What can you all do today to show that you honor and obey God?” (All of the above.)

Give your children an envelope to keep their puzzle pieces in. Tell them they can show it to their family or friends.

Explain to the children that if God has asked us to be holy, it is because he has given us the capacity and made his help available to do so. Give some practical examples to go along with the teaching.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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For this lesson, you can cut out shapes to make a train. On the engine place the Bible reference, and on each car put one word of the verse (the engine and cars can be the size of a regular sheet of paper).

Once it is finished, put the train on the wall or chalkboard. (Do not glue it down because you need to be able to move it; stick the pieces up with a small folded piece of tape on the back of each piece.) Put the train in order and have the children repeat the verse. Then, turn over a few of the cars and have them repeat the whole verse (including the missing words). Repeat this until they are repeating the verse with all the cars turned over.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Finish with a prayer. Ask the children to make a circle and hold hands. Ask them if they have any prayer requests and include the requests in your prayer.

Encourage

Thank each child for attending today’s session. Encourage the children to give themselves fully to God.

Invite

Remind the children to take their things home. Give a small recap of the session. Give a preview of what is coming up in the next lesson, trying to make a connection and spark interest in the children so they do not miss it. Tell them to invite their friends.