

The background is a vibrant green with a dark gradient. It features several glowing, wavy lines in a lighter shade of green, interspersed with bright, glowing particles or points of light. The overall effect is ethereal and dynamic.

Sharing His Divine Nature

A Series on Holiness

Points to Remember

- Share His Divine Nature
- Share His Holiness
- Created in His Image
- He is Holy
- We are to be Holy because He is Holy

Foundational Principles

- Holiness is not about us.
- It is about God – “You must be holy because I am holy”
- Holiness is not about what we do or how we perform.
- Holiness is about God’s nature and our sharing in that nature.
- Holiness is what God is – “I am holy”
- Holiness is what we choose to pursue – “Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord.”

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, “***Let us make human beings in our image, to be like ourselves.*** They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

Genesis 1:27-28

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

Genesis 2:4-6

This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. The LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. Instead, springs came up from the ground and watered all the land.

Genesis 2:7-9

Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person. Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground -- trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:15-18

The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. But the LORD God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden -- except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.” Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.”

Genesis 2:19-21

So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the opening.

Genesis 2:22-25

Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’” This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. ***Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.***

Characteristics of God's Image

- When God created humanity in His image, He created male humans and female humans. Gender (maleness and femaleness) was a part of God's perfect creation of humanity in His image.
- When God created humanity in His image, the male and female human bodies were not covered or clothed – “the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.”

Genesis 3:6-7

The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Genesis 3:21, 23-24

And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.... So the LORD God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

The Effects of Sin

- **Physical**

- In addition to physical sickness and death, our perception of the body was changed from purity to shame. Instead of beauty and intimacy, we now struggle with pride and lust.

- **Mental**

- Our mental capacity is diminished by the results of our sinful actions and our lack of discipline and control.

The Effects of Sin

- **Emotional**
 - In addition to the vacuum left in our lives by our separation from God (which we try to fill with people, possessions, and achievements), we are constantly made unstable by our desires.
- **Spiritual**
 - In addition to a spiritual death of separation from God, we also struggle with a spiritual nature that is sensitive to and drawn to evil and sin.

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only a craving for *physical pleasure*, a craving for *everything we see*, and *pride in our achievements and possessions*. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. *But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.*

Galatians 5:19-21

When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The Goal of Holiness

- Since sin, God's instructions and discipline concerning holiness have been intended to return us to our original state in which we perfectly share in His divine nature because we are created in His image.
- Put differently, holiness is not only God's nature, it is also his answer and solution to sin – “These are the promises that enable you to ***share his divine nature*** and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.”

The Reality of our Existence

- We are not what God intended us to be because of sin – both our nature and our actions.
- We cannot even understand what we were meant to be and our way of living is not consistent with God's perfect way.

Isaiah 55:6-7

Seek the LORD while you can find him.
Call on him now while he is near. Let the
wicked change their ways and banish the
very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn
to the LORD that he may have mercy on
them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will
forgive generously.

Isaiah 55:8-9

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.”

Isaiah 55:10-11

The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

The Opportunity of Holiness

- When God call us to share in his divine nature of holiness and gives us the instruction and directions needed, he is not simply wanting us to be like him – he is offering the way for us to truly be ourselves.
- We were made holy in the image of God and true fulfillment lies only in our sharing this holiness and living our lives according to our true divine nature.

The Character of Holiness

- Holiness is not relative but it is relevant.
- Holiness is not simply general but particular.
- Holiness is consistent and yet personal.
- The effects of sin are not the same in everyone.
- So while holiness is consistent and based upon the universal divine nature of God, it is also relevant and particular to the individual person.

Where To Now?

- While there are universal applications of holiness within Scripture, the principles upon which these applications rest must be taught in order for us to achieve the fullness of sharing his divine nature.
- So we now turn to specific applications of holiness found within the Scriptures while carefully emphasizing the principles of holiness that extend even beyond the specific applications to the relevant and particular needs of the individual.