

Systematic Theology





Last Time

➤ Omnipotence

Personal- Moral: Holiness

- Since God is a personal being he is a moral agent and therefore possesses moral attributes.

Holiness Defined

- Absolute Perfection
- Specifically morally.

Scriptural Data

1. God is the very standard of goodness.
2. God is absolutely holy in his nature and being.
3. God's holiness serves to expose man's sinfulness
4. God's holiness separates man from him.

God is the very standard of goodness.

- God is answerable to no one.
- He is the ultimate standard of justice.

What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So it depends not upon man's will or exertion, but upon God's mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy upon whomever he wills, and he hardens the heart of whomever he wills. You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" But who are you, a man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me thus?" Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?

Romans 9:14-21

ESV

God is absolutely holy in his nature and being.

➤ Even his presence causes things to be holy.

When the LORD saw that he [Moses] turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here am I.” Then he said, “Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

Exodus 3:4-5

ESV

“Say to all the congregation of the people of Israel,
‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am
holy.’”

Leviticus 19:2

ESV

And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to sing, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!'

Revelation 4:8

ESV

God's holiness serves to expose man's sinfulness

- When we compare ourselves to God, it shows us how dirty and flawed we are.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

Isaiah 6:1-5

ESV

God's holiness separates man from him.

- God is so pure, he cannot even behold evil.
- Evil is dispersed from the very presence of God.
- The entire basis for the need for salvation.

You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?

Habakuk 1:13

ESV

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Isaiah 59:1-2

ESV

Systematic Summary

- God's Will or God's Nature
- The Euthyphro Dilemma

Euthyphro Dilemma

- Plato
- Objection given when we claim God is the ultimate source and locus of moral value.

Euthyphro Dilemma

- “Do the gods love something because it is good or is it good because the gods love it?”

Euthyphro Dilemma

- If something is good because God wills it, then that makes good and evil arbitrary.
- If God will something because it is good, then there is a higher standard than God.

Euthyphro Dilemma

- Because of this dilemma, non-theists will argue that moral values cannot be grounded in God.

Euthyphro Dilemma- Solved

- False dilemma
- Real answer is that God's very nature is the Good.
- The moral commands of God are no arbitrary but rather are necessary reflections of God's very nature.

Euthyphro Dilemma- Solved

- God could not have willed a different morality because it would have been contrary to his very nature.
- So not A or B, but rather C.

Euthyphro Dilemma- Implication

- Since God does not issue commands to himself, he doesn't have any moral duties.
- He does not have to obey his own commands.
- He is simply acting within his own nature.
- He is not under any law.

Application of God's Holiness

- God is the locus and source of all moral value and standards.
- He is the plumb line that determines good and evil.
- God's nature is essentially love, kind, impartial, fair, compassionate, etc.
- God's nature issues necessarily in divine commandment to us as finite moral agents.

Application

1. We should strive for personal holiness in our lives.
2. We therefore need to live lives without blemish.
3. Holiness is the secret to happiness.
4. In Christ, God's holiness becomes the source of our justification.

We should strive for personal holiness in our lives.

- We should be as repulsed by our sin as God is.
- We cannot trivialize sin.
- God does not hate people, he hates sin.

Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has power over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." So the angel swung his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God; and the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse's bridle, for one thousand six hundred stadia.

Revelation 14:18-20

ESV

“These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.” Here God is saying, “You thought I was like you, and that is why you thought I was silent – because you thought I would just overlook these things as unimportant or trivial.” He says, “No! I now rebuke you – I lay the charge before you.”

Psalm 50:21

ESV

I think we ignore the concept of the wrath of God at our own cost. Indeed, I would argue for the radical proposition that our only hope as human beings is the wrath of God. (It is also true, of course, that our only hope is the grace of God, but that is another matter). The wrath of God shows that we do not live, as so many today suppose that we do, in a random and morally neutral universe. God's wrath shows us that right and wrong are objectively real, they are to be discovered, not created. The wrath of God is our only hope because it teaches us the moral significance of our deeds and shows us how life is to be lived.

Stephen Davis

We therefore need to live lives without blemish.

- Live a holy life = bringing honor to God.
- Someone who loves God would want to keep his commandments and walk the way that Christ did.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy'.

1 Peter 1:14-16

ESV

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 John 1:5-10

ESV

And by this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says “I know him” but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps his word, in him truly love for God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

1 John 2:3-6

ESV

Holiness is the secret to happiness.

- A great lesson to learn sooner than later.
- Do not seek a happy life, rather a holy life.
- Happiness is a byproduct of holiness.

Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and
all these things shall be yours as well.

Matthew 6:33

ESV

In Christ, God's holiness becomes the source of our justification.

- God's holiness is expressed to those outside of Christ as the wrath of God.
- God's holiness is expressed to those in Christ as the very source of our justification.

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed though faith for faith; as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live."

Romans 1:16-17

ESV

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:21-26

ESV

Next time

➤ Read:

➤ Defenders 2-3- 20: Doctrine of God, pg. 144-149
Personal- God's Love

Questions?

