

### HOLINESS, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

"Jesus is Lord" is the title is used by the Apostles to assert that Jesus is God. Confessing that belief is essential for Salvation (Romans 10:9, Philippians 2:11). And God is holy- not only all-powerful, all-knowing and all-present, but "Holy". To confess that Jesus is Lord means Jesus is God which mean Jesus is Holy. The Biblical starting point for all consideration of Ethics and Moral teaching is not simply Love or the "Sermon on the Mount", it is the Holiness of God.

I have tried to work out a Biblical approach to economic and social issues in America, trying to accommodate the reality that we are a pluralistic and secular Society [albeit a religious one]. Principles that are Liberal or Progressive, Conservative or Libertarian are inadequate. None of them have a foundation or basis upon which to build any Policy, eg about economic inequality, the minimum wage or matters such as healthcare insurance other than a foundation of political compromise [the rule of the Majority of - something] or pragmatism or some ideology about what makes America great. What is missing in all of them is God, particularly the Holiness of God. These economic and social issues all are moral issues. And the measure of "moral" is the nature and character of God as that is revealed in Christian Scripture, i.e.- His Holiness. "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. (Lev.19:2)

#### **Definition of "Holiness"**

There are two aspects to the Holiness of God. The first refers to the sum of His nature and character- His all-together otherness or separateness from the natural, created order; particularly His moral nature and character The second aspect is that the moral character of God is the measure of all human action and behavior. It is the all-encompassing ground for Human Morality and the basis for Human Ethics. The latter are meant to express or conform to the righteousness and goodness of God, His Holiness.

*Lev 20:26 You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.*

## BECOMING A BIBLICAL FAMILY TODAY Part 1

Written by Calvin Fox

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The root meaning of the concept of Holiness is separation- separation, specifically consecration, dedication to God and His Law and separation from anything that is contrary to God and His Law. Or conversely, separation from all else in order to be consecrated to God alone. All personal and social activities, all economic and political activities and programs, are to be Holy.

Conservatives will strongly defend the right to private property and advocate for traditional (ie- heterosexual, two-parent) Marriage or the sanctity of Life without grounding their position on these matters in God and what the Bible says Life, Marriage and Family. Likewise, Liberals will advocate alternative forms of Marriage and Family and the distribution of private property to the Poor or the abolition of Capital Punishment without grounding the policies they support in God and Biblical Marriage and Family. Neither group understands that the the Biblical context for all moral choices and hence, for their Policy Positions, is the Holiness of God.

*Lev 11:44 For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves ... 45 For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."*

Chapters 18-20 of Leviticus is a catalog of practical examples of everyday holiness. "I am the Lord your God" occurs some 50 times in these chapters and "[You must] be holy because I, your God, am holy" occurs 4 times. These phrases are repeated to drive home the authority behind particular laws about all aspects of living,- the reason they are to be obeyed. Holiness is as much an imperative in the New Testament as it is in the Old Testament. The Bible makes it emphatically clear that we are saved by grace alone, apart from any "works" we may do. The Bible also makes it clear that there is no Salvation without Holiness. God commands and expects it of everyone who would be saved. It is not optional.

*Hebrews 12:14☐☐ Make every effort... to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*

*1 Peter 1:15 just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;*

*1 Thessalonians 4:3 It is God's will that you should be holy*

*2 Corinthians 7:1... let us purify ourselves ...perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*

If the People of God are to be separated and consecrated to God in all their behavior and conduct, that includes, first and foremost their Marriages and Family Life.

## WHAT DOES A HOLY MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LOOK LIKE?

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The Decalogue begins with the declaration that God and God alone is to be worshipped. It proceeds to command that the Sabbath on which God is to be worshipped is to be treated as holy and then, next, parents are to be honored.

**Definition of "Honor":** To treat with dignity and respect, particularly acknowledging their authority.

Treating God as holy and honoring parents go together. Both God and Parents are to be honored and obeyed. The reason for this? Parents, especially the Father, is to represent God to their children. They are responsible to teach their children the Law of God (The Torah)

*Exodus 20:12, Leviticus 19:1-3, Deut 4:1-10, Deut 6:4-7+20ff, Psalm 78:1-8, Prov. 17:6, Prov. 19:26, Eph.6:1-3, Col.3:20*

To disrespect (curse, blaspheme) Parents is to disrespect (curse, blaspheme) God

*Lev.24:16 Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him.*

*Lev.20:7 Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. 8 Keep my statutes and do them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 9 For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death;*

God, Marriage and Family. The Commands about relationships with other persons follows those which deal with these three subjects. There is a reason for this sequence. Any attempt to implement the last five must begin with the first five. Clearly, Worship and Family, together, are the foundation of Society. To undermine the former, is to destroy the latter. This has often been said, but is rarely implemented and that forebodes ill for the future of America where all the cultural trends are contravening.

Marriage and parenthood are the bridge between God and Society. Marriage in the Bible

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means a covenanted heterosexual relationship and parenthood means father and mother. God is God and parents represent Him in the life of their children and are responsible for passing on His Law to to them (among other important things). There are many forms of Marriage in American Society and probably shall always be. The problem is not that "Marriage" is endangered. The problem is that this Biblical form of Marriage is endangered! There is no permanent or meaningful solution to many of Society's problems apart from this form.

Ancient Israel was a Society based on a kinship network. The Society as a whole supported family, kinship ties. The Biblical family can survive only where these ties are greatly valued. The Biblical family was not today's nuclear or permissive, child-centered family. Everything about the Biblical Family was was God-centered and shaped to conform to all the religious and moral teachings of the Torah. It was patriarchal and multi-generational and largely self-supporting, meeting all of its own basic needs.