



## **Holiness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Prophetic, Embodied and Embedded**

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**NTC Australia/New Zealand LEAD Seminar (22.10.21)**

What does it look like to be holy as God is holy in this story?

- 1. Biblical Illiteracy**
- 2. Steve and Jessica**
- 3. Sami**

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### **1. The Call to be holy as God is holy**

‘Be Holy, for I the Lord your God am Holy.’

So where does this language of holiness come from?

#### **Holiness in the Bible**

That holiness is a, if not THE, dominant theme of the OT is supported by the sheer number of occurrences of the Hebrew word for holy, or holiness, *qds*. The root occurs almost 850 times.

In the New Testament the call to be holy as God is holy, may be heard as, be Christlike as God is Christlike.

#### **Holiness in the Wesleyan Tradition**

As a denomination, the Church of the Nazarene, we are a part of the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition. This means we take the concept of holiness seriously and have done for many years. Rooted in the teaching of John Wesley and the hymns of his brother Charles, the Church of the Nazarene embraced this tradition from the beginning, just over 100 years ago.

Today we continue to sing ‘called unto holiness’.

#### **Our Task for today**

In every age, followers of Jesus must ask the question: What does it mean to be holy as God is holy in our day?

We begin with a simple definition: To be holy is to be like Christ.

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### **2. Three offices of Christ: Prophet, Priest, and King**

#### **Prophet**

When Jesus asked his disciples, ‘who do the people say I am?’, they replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ (Matt 16.16)

## Priest

Hebrews 2.14-17

<sup>14</sup>Since, therefore, the children **share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things**, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup>and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. <sup>16</sup>For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. <sup>17</sup>**Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect**, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

## King

Jesus uses stories and images to try and help the people understand what he is teaching. These stories are called parables, which simply means, a story used to make a point. Many times in the bible we read of Jesus saying, '**The Kingdom of Heaven is like...**'

***Jesus Kingdom is established not through violence and coercion, but through love and persuasion. It does not conquer from the outside in, but from the inside out.***

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### 3. Who is the Church? (Body of Christ)

TW Manson – the continued ministry of Christ on earth

'The Church is the Body of Christ; and the life of the Church is the continuation of the Messianic Ministry. It follows that the nature of the Church's task can be defined by reference to the records of the public career of Jesus, His teaching and His acts and **his offices**.' – TW Manson, *The Church's Ministry*, 24-25

'What does holiness look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?' It looks like this:

#### **Prophetic, Embodied, and Embedded**

##### **Prophetic** (Prophet)

Holiness is prophetic.

Back to Story 1: Biblical Illiteracy – Prophetic – Prophet – We shared

##### **Embodied** (Priest)

Holiness is embodied.

'One reason why the rich in general have so little sympathy for the poor is because they seldom visit them. Hence it is that, according to the common observation, one part of the world does not know what the other suffers.' – John Wesley, *On Visiting the Sick*

Back to Story 2: Steve and Jessica – Embodied – Priest – We went

##### **Embedded** (King)

Holiness is embedded.

Back to Story 3: Sami – Embedded – King – We welcomed

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### 4. Conclusion