

ELEVATE: Your Vision of God

Session #3: From Hip to Holy

Session Objective: This session follows closely behind last week's session. We discovered the importance of sin and the need for a Saviour. The surfer is the cool cat who is pretty much okay with everything, while our Saviour is not okay with sin. Jesus paid a price we could never have paid.

Today's session now brings us to a response. Many youth ministries have made Jesus-worship hip. While certainly it is a positive thing to have a youth ministry where spirituality is cool, and where people want to grow in their walk with God, it is not our job to devalue the place of God to accommodate this process. In fact, one of the true realities of God is His unchanging, uncompromised holiness. He is not the next fad, He is unchanging in His character and He is holy!

The theological term used to discuss God's unchanging nature is called Immutability. One theologian (Wayne Grudem) makes this point - It is important to understand that "God is unchanging in His being, perfections, purposes and promises, yet God does act and feel emotions, and He acts and feels differently in response to different situations."

Our purpose today is two-fold – God is unchanging in His holiness, and He calls us to be holy as He is holy – through the power of blood of Jesus Christ!

Minimum Prep: Read through the entire session outline. Prepare an environment where discussion can occur.

- If you cannot do #9, remove the question from the sheet before photocopying, or tell your small group leaders to ignore it.

Extended Prep:

- Question #9 is actually an exercise. To complete the exercise you must provide pens and paper. If you were able you could photocopy the paper so that the scripture passage (be holy...) was already on the sheet of paper, with 2 places to add names and space for words to be added behind those names.

Session Outline

Leader Preamble:

It seems that the cool thing these days is to make Jesus cool. We have cool Jesus figurines, or cool WWJD bracelets that we wear to school. But one of the greatest things about God is that if He is cool, it isn't a fad. God doesn't change like the seasons. He won't be orange just cause orange is in fashion, and He isn't a skater today, or a swordsman four hundred years ago. God, the Bible tells us, is the same, yesterday, today and tomorrow. That means when you get to know who He is in the Bible, you can rest assured, He is the same God today. While the people in Bible times only had portions of the Bible, and so didn't always get to know God as is possible today, we have the entire Bible and can use it to get a great idea of who God is. We can trust that God is trustworthy, because He has been in the past, and He will be in the future. God is unchanging. Today we are going to look at some of the ways that this is a tremendous comfort to us, and how we can understand this concept about God! The title "From Hip to Holy" has to do with the idea that God is not a fad, but is unchanging in His perfection.

Small Group Questions:

1. Have you ever known somebody who experienced a radical change? Maybe they lost piles of weight, or something happened that changed their personality radically, or they suffered with schizophrenia?

Read Psalm 102:25-27

2. What do we learn about God's nature through this verse?

3. Why is it an important truth that God doesn't change?

Leader's Note: If God were able to change, it would indicate that He could change for the better or for the worse, therefore if He changed for the better, He would not already be the best possible being before, and if He changed for the worse, then how can we have any assurance of what kind of God He would become? The issue of God's unchangeableness is different than the question "does God change His mind"?

Read James 1:17, Isaiah 49:9-11, Eph. 1:11; 3:11; I Peter 1:20

1. What promises do we read here about God? How are these promises of great assurance?

Read I Peter 1:13-22

1. What word is used to describe God's character in vs. 17?
2. What do you think God means when he says, "be holy because I am holy"?
3. Why is it important that God calls us to be holy, and then we are reminded by Peter that we were bought with the precious blood of Christ – the perfect lamb without blemish?
4. Peter brings this argument to a close in vs. 22. What is one important way in which we can live as holy people?
5. Exercise. Take a blank piece of paper. On the top of it write:
"Be Holy because I am Holy" – God.

Now take a moment and think through 2 relationships you are presently in. The relationships may include parents, teachers, a boss, friends, girl/boyfriends, or even an enemy. Thinking about the words from God which calls you to be holy, and thinking about Peter's challenge that one way to be holy is through healthy love for other people – write down one thing that through the power of the Holy Spirit you would like to change about each relationship to bring it towards holiness.

Leader's Note: *If you would like, take the time to ask the students to find one other person they would be comfortable sharing their answers with, and then challenge them to have a prayer time for each other, and then to contact each other through the week to see how their actions are making a difference in the relationship...in terms of bringing it towards holiness.*

Leader Note: Contact Rob McAlpine at compass@baptist.ca or Darren DeGraaf – darren@baptist.ca with any thoughts or questions suggestions.

Comments and Feedback:

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

Please see the following handout. You have permission to reproduce these handouts for your group.