

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”,  
Message # 16 – “Serving the Holy God”, Presented in the Adult Sunday  
School Class by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.**

**Chapter 2 – Of God and the Holy Trinity, Paragraph 1 -**

The Lord our God is but (a)one only living and true God; whose (b)subsistence is in and of Himself, (c)infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself; (d)a most pure spirit, (e) invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who is (f)immutable, (g)immense, (h)eternal, incomprehensible, (i)almighty, every way infinite, (k)most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute; (l)working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, (m)for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; (n)the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and withal most just (o)and terrible in his judgments, (p)hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the (q)guilty.

**John Brown of Haddington says in his Systematic Theology** – “The Holiness of God is that essential perfection of His nature, which lies in perfect freedom from, and hatred of all sin, and in perfect love to everything holy and pure.”

**1. God is infinitely holy** – Isaiah 57: 15

**2. It is good to catch a vision of the holiness of God if you are going to serve Him.**

**a. Those who are called to preach need to have a good sight of God’s holiness.** Isaiah 6: 1-5, Revelation 4: 8, Revelation 5: 8-12

**b. Those who will serve God with their household, in any capacity, should also have a good understanding of the way whereby He, the Holy God, can be served.**

It is not simply by self-determination, but rather by repentance (putting away all idols) and inclining your heart to Him.

**Joshua 24: 14-24** – “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God." But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good." And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!" So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses!" "Now therefore," he said, "put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel." And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"

**John Gill says:** “**Ye cannot serve the Lord**; which Joshua said, not to discourage or deter them from serving the Lord, since it was his principal view, through the whole of this conversation with them, to

engage them in it, but to observe to them their own inability and insufficiency of themselves to perform service acceptable to God; and therefore it became them to implore grace and strength from the Lord to assist them in it, and to depend upon that and not to lean to and trust in their own strength; as also to observe to them, that they could not serve him perfectly without any defect and failure in their service, for there is no man that does good and sins not; and therefore when a man has done all he can, he must not depend upon it for his justification before God; or consider it as his justifying righteousness, which was what that people were always prone to; some supply it, 'you cannot serve the Lord with your images,' or along with them, so Vatablus: for he is an holy God: perfectly holy, so that the best of men, and the heat of their services, are impure and unholy before him and will not bear to be compared with him, and therefore by no means to be trusted in; and it requires much grace and spiritual strength to perform any service that may be acceptable to him through Christ. In the Hebrew text it is, "for the Holy Ones are He": which may serve to illustrate and confirm the doctrine of the trinity of, persons in the unity of the divine Essence, or of the three divine holy Persons, holy Father, holy Son, Holy Spirit, as the one God, He is a jealous God; of His honour and glory, and of His worship, in which He will admit of no rival, of no graven images, or any idols to be worshipped with him, or besides Him; nor will He suffer the idol of men's righteousness to be set up in the room of, or in opposition to, the righteousness of God, even no services and works of men, be they ever so good, since they cannot be perfect before Him: He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins; even the transgressions and sins of such that forsake the worship and service of him, and fall into idolatry, or who seek for justification by their own services, these are both abominable to him; otherwise He is a God pardoning the iniquity, transgression, and sin, of all those who seek unto him and serve him, confess their sins, and renounce their own righteousness; see Exo\_23:21.

### **3. God is Infinitely Pure in His Holiness –**

**Habakkuk 1: 12 and 13** – “Are You not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One?” “We shall not die.” “O Lord, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.” “You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness.”

**Stephen Charnock says:** “The holiness of God negatively is a perfect and un-polluted freedom from all evil. As we call gold pure that is not imbedded by any dross, and that garment clean that is free from any spot, so the nature of God is estranged from all shadow of evil, all imaginable contagion. Positively, it is the rectitude or integrity of the divine nature, or that conformity of it in affection and action to the divine will as to his eternal law, whereby he works with a becomingness to his own excellency, and whereby he hath a delight and complacency in everything agreeable to his will, and an abhorrency of everything contrary thereunto.”

**Charnock again:** As there is no darkness in his understanding, so there is no spot in his will. As his mind is possessed with all truth, so there is no deviation in his will from it. He loves all truth and goodness, he hates all falsity and evil. In regard of his righteousness, he loves righteousness : Ps. xi. 7, 'The righteous Lord loveth righteousness ; ' and ' hath no pleasure in wickedness,' Ps. v. 4. He values purity in his creatures, and detests all impurity, whether inward or outward. We may indeed distinguish the holiness of God from his righteousness in our conceptions.\* Holiness is a perfection absolutely considered in the nature of God; righteousness, a perfection as referred to others, in his actions towards them and upon them.”