

Leviticus 19

When I was growing up, my friends and I all had a good idea of what we wanted to be when we were older: astronaut, professional footballer, army colonel... superman!

I cannot recall a single friend wanting to be 'holy'. That may be unsurprising for a school playground, but what about in the church family. Do we desire to be holy? Well Leviticus helps us think that through...

#1 - A clear command: Be holy, because I the LORD your God, am holy

The first thing to notice is that the reason given for God's people to be holy is because the LORD is holy (v2). We are reminded again in this chapter that it is the LORD who is speaking... the LORD ***our God***... the LORD ***who rescues*** (v36-37). The basis for this command is rooted in the fact that they are God's people, whom God has already rescued. Therefore, this call to be in holy, is in response to what God has already done.

The second thing to notice is that when God's people are holy, they reflect the LORD. The LORD rescuing them was not the end... they have been rescued for a reason. And that reason is to reflect the LORD in the way they live. Therefore, these verses are not simply a list of regulations, but revelation about who the LORD is.

This call to be holy then is to imitate by our moral behaviour the LORD who is himself holy. I find this definition very helpful...

"Holiness is, in the deepest sense, a definition of God's nature as he expects to find it reflected in his children"

So what does being holy actually involve?... Well the rest of the chapter is full of practical advice!

#2 - Being holy involves loving God and loving others, each and every day

Again, there are two things worth noting. The first is that these verses speak to every area of life. The point is simple: God's people are to seek to be holy each and every day. There is no situation where God's people are not to be intentional about being holy.

Secondly, holiness is not a mysterious thing requiring candles and cushions and retreating from society. Rather, it is about showing generosity, honesty, compassion, mercy and love towards the people around us.

And nothing has changed. Just as God's people in the days of Leviticus were called to be holy, so too, is the christian believer today (1 Peter 1vv13-16).