

SET

APART

Writer: Andy Bradley  
Editor: Sue Verner  
Designer: Kaeli Hearn

# Lesson 1



Lesson 1:  
Set Apart



Bible Verses:  
Leviticus 20:26, 1 Peter 1:15-16



Bottom Line:  
God calls us to be holy, or “set apart”,  
in order to identify with Him and to be  
different from the world.

# SUPPLIES

- Dry erase board with markers

## OPENING GAME

### Bull in the Pen

Have students form in a circle and hold hands.

Ask one of the students to stand in the middle of the circle.

Tell the students that the one who is in the middle is the “bull” and that the point of the game is for the “bull” to break out of the “pen.”

The bull can do whatever he can to get out of the circle.

At no time are the students who are forming the pen allowed to let loose of their hands.

After a set amount of time or after everyone has taken a turn being the bull, gather the group together and ask the following questions to tie in the game to the lesson.

**For those who broke free:**

How did it feel to get out of the pen? Was it hard work?

When you were part of the pen, was it fun to keep the bull in the pen?

# TEACH

As Christians we have been called out of the “pen”; we have been called to be like God.

Christianity is different from other religions because we are called to follow the characteristics of God in how we live instead of following a set of religious rules.

But how do we live like God?

What is God like?

Ask students to name some of the characteristics of God.

Write down ideas that students say on the white board.

After everyone has had a chance to answer, point out if someone said “holy” or mention it yourself if no one has come up with the term.

We talk a lot about God being loving, kind, forgiving, and mighty, but one characteristic of God that we don’t often think about is God’s holiness.

But what does “holy” mean?

The word holy comes from a Hebrew word (qadosh) meaning sacred or set apart.

God is holy because He is different from anything or anyone else.

A lot of times in church we sing songs of worship that praise God because He loves us and about how much we love Him, and that is great because love is one of God’s characteristics.

Many sermons and Bible studies talk about God’s grace and having our sins forgiven, and that is great because those are important aspects of who God is.

But has anyone ever heard of people talking about God’s justice? His majesty? The fact that He is different from anything and everyone else?

The problem is that we see God as our BFF and Jesus is our bestie, and we don’t realize that even though God is like a father who loves us, He is also completely and wonderfully different from us.

Many times when God spoke to the Israelites, He reminded them that He was “the LORD your God” (**Exodus 6:7; 15:26; Leviticus 11:44; Numbers 10:10**, etc.).

When people in the Bible encountered God, they just didn't go up and shake God's hand. They cowered and bowed down to Him.

God wouldn't even show His full glory to Moses or it would have killed him (**Exodus 33:19-20**).

Daniel was able to stand up to the kings of the land and to sit in the den of lions, but the visions God showed him of His glory and majesty terrified him (**Daniel 7:13-15**).

Job saw God in the whirlwind, and he didn't want to talk anymore (**Job 42:1-6**).

The apostle John saw the visions from God causing him to feel as though he was dead (**Revelation 1:12-17**).

You see, God's holiness is a BIG deal.

Think about it: how do you think you would react if you could meet God today?

**Have a student read Leviticus 20:26.**

If you were an Israelite back in this time, the word holy was a big deal; they knew that God was unlike anything they had ever experienced.

But why would God want US to be holy?

**Ask students to tell the group their favorite football team (or any other popular sport's team).**

What kind of gear do you have to represent your team?

If you are like most fans, you may have a picture of the team logo on your phone, a shirt, a jersey, a hat, or even a poster of the logo or your favorite player on your wall.

When you wear clothes with your team logo on or show your friend your poster, you are identifying with that team.

When God commanded the Israelites to be holy, He was telling them that He wanted them to identify with Him and who He is.

All the laws in the first books of the Bible are about this one theme: identity.

God wanted His people to stand out.

He wanted them to be set apart from the rest of the world, and that is why most of the laws the Israelites had were rules that were different from all of the nations around them.

God wants us to wear His team colors, to put His logo on our hearts.

We should wear our “team colors” from the inside out to show the world that we follow a God who desperately desires for us to be like Him.

Isn't it awesome that God, who is perfect and mighty in all ways, would want people like us to identify with Him and be His people?

Can we be holy?

Is there a way to live this out in our lives?

**Have a student read 1 Peter 1:15-16.**

When the apostle Peter was writing this letter, the people in the churches he was writing to were having problems living out their faith in the midst of the persecution that they were going through.

Peter tells us we should be holy in all that we do.

Being holy is not something that we can just do in our spare time. Holiness is not a hobby that we dabble in or a video game that we play through in a week and then put on a shelf and forget about. Holiness is a lifestyle, a way of living, a constant identification that we are God's and that we are on His team.

Think back to your favorite team.

How cool would it be to be on your team and play in front of thousands of people?

Let's use that to explain how we live out holiness.

Imagine being on the field on your favorite team and everyone in the stadium is watching; that is like the world, waiting and watching for what we will do because they know that we are on God's team.

God is the head coach of the team.

He has created the plays and strategies.

He has written the playbook (the Bible) and He has put each player in a certain place to do the job they are to do.

Jesus stands as the team captain.

He follows every play from the playbook perfectly.

The head coach tells us that we are to follow and do exactly as the team captain does.

It may be hard to follow every play exactly, but the great thing about being on God's team is that we are not alone.

We have other Christians who can help us – teammates that help us along the way.

You see, being holy is a process; it takes us living a life that follows Jesus.

Sometimes we are going to mess up and get distracted, and that is where the other characteristics of God come in – like God's grace and forgiveness.

There are a lot of things that are hard, like going back to school, but as long as we keep our eyes on Jesus, our team captain, we'll be okay.

God has called us to be holy, to be set apart, to be different from everyone else.

God has called us to be holy because He is holy, and He wants us to identify with Him that we are His people.

Being different from the rest of the world is scary. It is hard to go against the way that the world goes, but God makes it clear in His word that He will be with us (**John 16:33**).

You can be different from those in your school; you can really be the example for others to follow.

**Make sure to take prayer requests and pray with your students that they will understand God's holiness and that He calls us all to identify with Him.**

# SMALL GROUPS

1. Why is it such a big deal that God is holy?
2. How do you think that God's holiness connects all of His qualities together?
3. Why is it such a big deal that God desires for us to be holy?
4. What is one way you can live out holiness in your life?
5. How do you think holiness impacts our lives?
6. Does being holy affect every aspect of your life?
7. A pastor named Kevin DeYoung has said we have a "hole in our holiness" and goes on to say that "the hole in our holiness is that we don't really care." Do you think a lot of people don't care about their holiness and being set apart from the world?
8. When was a time that you had a really hard time doing the right thing?
9. Is it always easy to live the life that God asks? Why or why not?
10. Do you think that a person can be holy without God?
11. How can you help another member of your team follow God's playbook more closely?
12. How is Christianity different from other religions?
13. Is it easier to follow a person (Jesus) than a set of rules?
14. How can you become more holy at school?
15. What do your friends see about you that makes you set apart from how everyone else is acting?