# A Cut Above the Rest?  
(Lesson 2 of 4)

| Scope and Sequence | Felt Need: I often look down on others.  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Doctrine: God’s Holiness and Justice</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Objective**  
To help the student grasp the great holiness of God and encourage them to be accepting of others they might otherwise look down on.

**Memory Verse**  
Habakkuk 1:13  
How pure are God’s eyes?

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Worth Repeating: God’s great holiness brings great humility.

**THE FELT NEED:** I often look down on others.  
**Quiz:** Rate yourself in these five areas on a scale of 1-10.  
- Kindness, Honesty, Listening to others, Friendship, Serving God  
Now just to the right on the line, from everyone you know, write the initial of the first name of the person who is the worst at this.  
The problem is we set ourselves up above others. We become the judge of other people and act as if we are capable of judging accurately.

**THE TRUTH:** God’s Holiness and Justice  
**God is the perfect all-knowing judge – Psalm 139:1-3.**

A. You don’t have all the information.

*Illustration:* We believe that most of the time our judgments about people are right.  
*Images:* Judging America: Photographer Challenges Our Prejudice by Alternating Between Judgment and Reality

B. God has all the information making Him qualified to judge – Psalm 139:1-3.  

Notice in these verse how intimately God knows us:  
- He knows your heart – verse 1.  
- He knows when you sit – verse 2a.
God is the only One who has all knowledge about every person.

**God's holiness sets the true standard.**

A. The false standard of holiness – trying to be good

B. We think in terms of comparing ourselves with other people.

C. God’s standard of holiness – perfection
   - Holiness is moral and ethical perfection; the absence of any evil.
   - Habakkuk 1:13a – God cannot look on sin or evil with any form of approval.
   - 1 John 1:5 – He does not have even a hint of darkness in Him.
   - The Bible often uses light to describe holiness and darkness to represent sin. God doesn't accept the smallest hints of darkness or sin.
   - To God even our best efforts and greatest acts of kindness are like a decaying carcass of an animal because they are tainted by our sinful hearts (Isaiah 64:6).

D. Jesus’ standard for holiness – Jesus made it very clear that the bar that God sets for holiness is high.
   - “If you hate...you have murdered.” (*Matthew 5:21-22*)
   - “If you lusted...you committed adultery.” (*Matthew 5:27-28*)

**Illustration**: Have a children’s basketball hoop
If the standard were the same as God’s standard for holiness you would need to make every shot you took.

**THE CONNECTION**: God’s great holiness brings great humility.
When we recognize how far short we fall from the standard God has set, it should humble us.

**Illustration**: Throwing a rock to the moon
When we really see God's holiness like it really is, it puts us all on the same level with everyone else. None of us is qualified to judge someone else.

**THE DECISION**: Catch Yourself Judging Others This Week
Seek to catch yourself when you begin to judge someone this week. Every time you catch yourself, think “**God's great holiness brings great humility.**”

**Checklist**
- Printed copies of the verses and revealed truth for three students for the beginning of the lesson.
- Children’s basketball hoop or dartboard.
- A PowerPoint presentation for this module is available.
- Print out the quiz

Start your lesson off with the quiz below which is to help the student see how easily we judge ourselves as better than other people.

Quiz: Rate yourself in these five areas on a scale of 1-10.

☐ Kindness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
☐ Honesty 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
☐ Listening to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
☐ Friendship 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
☐ Serving God 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Now just to the right of the numbers, from everyone you know, write the initial of the first name of the person who is the worst at this. (Give the students 1-2 minutes to think through this.)

That probably wasn’t very hard to answer these questions. We just naturally judge others pretty quickly. Doesn’t it feel good to look at someone and know that you’re better than them? If we are really honest, we all like that feeling. We all like to see ourselves as better than others because it makes us feel good about ourselves.

The problem with this kind of thinking is we set ourselves up above others. We become the judge of other people and act as if we are capable of judging accurately. Tonight we will look at a few passages of Scripture that help us get a proper perspective on our thinking in this area.

God is the perfect all-knowing judge – Psalm 139:1-3.

A. You don’t have all the information.

Illustration: We believe that most of the time our judgments about people are right.

Use the following web site to give you a group of pictures that show how we make snap judgments about people that are not correct.

Images: Judging America: Photographer Challenges Our Prejudice by Alternating Between Judgment And Reality
http://www.evernote.com/l/AAXx8xBR0sNNZK8hm0FdpUTkAZDJqFob56o
See how well you do at telling me the occupation of the person in the picture. (*Show the first image and have the group guess, then show the real picture.*)

- This is a good demonstration that we are not qualified to judge others because we usually do not have all the information. The only way to be a **perfect** judge is you must have all knowledge.

B. God has all the information making Him **qualified** to judge – Psalm 139:1-3.

Notice in these verse how intimately God knows us:
- He knows your **heart** – verse 1.
- He knows when you sit – verse 2a.
- He knows when you **stand** – verse 2a.
- He knows all your **thoughts** – verse 2b.
- He knows when you go out – verse 3a.
- He knows when you go to sleep or nap –verse 3a.
- He knows everything you do, all your **habits** – verse 3b.
- He knows your **words** before you **speak** them – verse 4.

God is the only One who has all knowledge about every person. He alone knows everyone perfectly and completely. He knows every situation perfectly and completely. No one else has this ability, making God distinctly different and set apart from us.

**God’s holiness sets the true standard.**

A. The false standard of holiness – trying to be good

B. When we think of holiness, we might think about trying to be good. We think in terms of comparing ourselves with other people. We set a standard we like and then everyone else must measure up to that standard.

C. God’s standard of holiness – **perfection**

- Holiness is moral and ethical perfection; the absence of any **evil**. God is holy and distinctly different than anyone else. He has never sinned, stretched the truth, or even made a mistake. Most things change over time, but not the character of God. He has never, and will never, change in His holiness. Let’s look at a couple of verses that show us what God’s holiness looks like.
  - Habakkuk 1:13a (*Read*) – HOLINESS.
  - 1 John 1:5 – (*Read*) HOLINESS.

God cannot look on sin or evil with any form of approval. The revealed truth about God’s holiness is that God sees everything and is present everywhere. Yet God is so holy that He cannot even look on sinful actions of people with any interest or approval. God has never, nor will He ever be guilty of taking a second look of interest at something sinful. God, by His very nature, cannot condone sin.

- 1 John 1:5 – (*Read*) HOLINESS.

He does not have even a hint of darkness in Him. The truth about God’s holiness is that there is not even a speck of sin or evil in Him. Imagine how gross it would be to drink out of a glass that had dirt and spider webs in it. God responds with the same disgust toward sin. The Bible often uses light to describe holiness and darkness to represent sin. God doesn’t accept the smallest hints of darkness or sin.
God's holiness reveals an extremely high standard for living. As we see God's perfection, it reveals how short we come to measuring up to Him because of our sinfulness. Without exception, everyone is a sinner and struggles daily with lustful thoughts, selfish motives, or wrong actions. Compared to the standard of God's perfection, we look even worse than we imagined.

- To God even our best efforts and greatest acts of kindness are like a decaying carcass of an animal because they are tainted by our sinful hearts (Isaiah 64:6). **God's great holiness brings great humility** because when we see ourselves compared to God, we see how far short we fall.

D. **Jesus'** standard for holiness

Jesus made it very clear that the bar that God sets for holiness is high. Each of these verses set a different standard than the common thought of that day or even in the present day.

- "If you hate...you have murdered." (Matthew 5:21-22)
- "If you lusted...you committed adultery." (Matthew 5:27-28)

We do not make the standard for holiness; God does. When we measure ourselves by this standard, we all fall far short.

Illustration: Have a children's basketball hoop set up in the front of the room. Get two students to help stand in the back of the meeting room and see if they can, with one try, make a basket. Be sure the hoop is far enough away to make it difficult. You can give them several tries.

You could also use a dart board and have the participants throw to hit a bull's-eye. Make sure you are careful here if you use real darts not to get anyone stuck by a dart!

If we use God's standard (perfection) with this game, we see that both of you did not do so well. The point we are making is that if the standard were the same as God's standard for holiness, you would need to make every shot you took. Once again we see **God's great holiness brings great humility.**

The Connection: God's great holiness brings great humility.

When we recognize how far short we fall from the standard God has set, it should humble us. It should cause us to look at others differently. None of us are really that much better than each other since we all are so far short of the high standard God has set.

Illustration: Throwing a rock to the moon

Imagine we had a contest to see who could throw a rock to the moon. The two of us pick a perfect rock, get our arm warmed up, and then launch that rock as far as we can. Let's say that your rock went about one hundred yards and mine only went fifty. You beat me soundly but the problem is the standard was to throw the rock to the moon, right? In light of the goal (the standard set), we both came so far short. It would be ridiculous for you to make fun of my effort, when in essence, your effort was about the same.
When we truly see God’s holiness, we are humbled and recognize none of us is qualified to judge someone else.

The Decision: Catch Yourself Judging Others This Week

Become a judgment inspector this week, not of someone else, but of yourself. Catch yourself every time you start to judge someone else in your thinking. When you recognize it, thank God that even though He could rightfully judge us, if we have trusted Jesus as our Savior, He took the full judgment for our sins. This gives me freedom to offer love, forgiveness, and grace to others instead of judgment.

Seek to catch yourself when you begin to judge someone this week. Every time you catch yourself, think “God’s great holiness brings great humility.”