

Ban Seok Cho

*The Nature of the Church's Mission in Light of the Biblical Origin of Social Holiness*

**Abstract**

This paper intends to find missiological implications that the biblical origin of social holiness has for the church's mission. In order to accomplish this purpose, this paper, first, identifies the biblical origin of social holiness in the Old Testament narrative and its development in the New Testament narrative. Then, the relationship between the image of God in Genesis 1 and the development of social holiness in the biblical narrative will be discussed. Lastly, in light of the biblical origin of social holiness, missiological implications for the church's mission are suggested. The thesis of this paper is that social holiness- as a biblical concept that is theocentric, relational, and missional in nature- provides a biblical framework for the church to integrate different dimensions of its holistic mission. In conclusion, this paper suggests that the church's mission, in light of the biblical origin of social holiness, is both social and spiritual, involves the whole life of the church (both *being* and *doing*), is shaped by the grace of God, and includes creation care.

**Keywords:**

Social Holiness, holiness, church, mission, the Image of God

**Ban Seok Cho** is a PhD (Intercultural Studies) candidate at Asbury Theological Seminary. His research focus is the theology and history of mission, and he is currently writing a dissertation on the missional conversion of the church from a biblical-theological perspective.

## Introduction

This paper attempts to find missiological implications that the biblical concept of social holiness has for the church's mission. Credit for the idea of social holiness should be given undoubtedly to John Wesley who used the term social holiness to promote the communal aspect of Christian life (Eli 1993: 1-4). R. George Eli states, "The idea of a 'social holiness' is possibly John Wesley's most distinctive contribution" (Eli 1993: 2). Standing against the idea of a privatized and individualized Christian life, Wesley states there is, "no holiness but social holiness" (1739: viii). While Wesley might be viewed as the first to use the term in the history of theology, the concept of social holiness (or the social aspect of holiness) originated from scripture because holiness is, first and foremost, a biblical concept. Thus, even though we can learn about the notion of social holiness from Wesley's writings, a biblical exploration of that notion can shed light on its meaning and can provide missiological implications for the church's mission. This paper identifies the biblical origin of social holiness and its development in the biblical narrative in order to find implications for the church's mission. The thesis of this paper is that social holiness- as a biblical concept which is theocentric, relational, and missional in nature- provides a biblical framework for the church to integrate different dimensions of its holistic mission.

## Social Holiness, God, and Israel

Holiness is a biblical concept applied not only to God, but also people, objects, time, and space. The following exploration of holiness in the Old Testament focuses on the social nature of holiness by tracing the concept of holiness as associated with God and the people of Israel.

### *Holiness and God: Holiness is First and Foremost, about God*

While a word study of the term *holiness* or *holy* can help us understand the biblical meaning of holiness, the proper starting point in exploring the concept of holiness from a biblical perspective should be God himself because, as J. E. Hartley states, "In scripture, holiness is exclusive to Yahweh. . . . [B]ecause only God is holy, there is nothing either within humans or on earth that is inherently holy, and no scripture attempts to define 'holy'" (Hartley 2003: 420). Thus, as Allan Coppedge points out, "human holiness can not be properly understood without reference to divine holiness" (Coppedge 2001: 16). Thus, the essential meaning of holiness is derived from God. In this sense, *God is the original source of holiness*. Donald S. Metz makes this view of the relationship between holiness and God when he states,

The idea of holiness is possible only in relation to the idea of God. Where there is no concept of God there is no concept of holiness. However, the idea of God does not automatically produce the thought of holiness. For there has been many gods in man's march through time but only rarely does the worship of these gods result in a concept of holiness. It is only when the holy God of biblical revelation invades history and directly confronts man that man is able to conceive of holiness. It is *man's vision of God* that transforms man, and leads him to the concept and the life of holiness. (1971: 21 emphasis added)

Thus, a biblically proper understanding of holiness is associated with God because God is the original source of holiness. Holiness in the Bible is, first and foremost, a notion *about God* (Coppedge 2001: 42-43). It is a biblical concept that descriptively refers to *the essential being of God* (Purkiser 1983: 27, Routledge 2013: 105).

#### *Holiness and Israel: Israel's Holiness Mirrors God's Holiness*

While holiness is a concept that describes the essential being of God, the covenant that God established with the people of Israel at Mt. Sinai in Exodus 19:5-6 reveals his desire to share his holiness with the people of Israel by calling them to be a *holy nation*. In Leviticus 19:2b, God speaks to the people of Israel, "You shall be holy to me; for I the Lord your God am holy."<sup>1</sup> Karen Strand Winslow makes this point when she states, "biblical writers connect divine holiness to people and things... God's holiness is revealed and transmitted to humans. God's holiness may be unique, but it is not inimitable! In fact, *God requires such imitation*" (Winslow 2014: 15 emphasis added). In light of the view of God as the original source of holiness, three aspects of the relationship between Israel's holiness and God's holiness can be identified.

- (1) Israel's holiness is, at best, *derived* holiness, which reflects the holiness of God (Coppedge 2001: 49, Wright 2006: 374).
- (2) Israel's holiness requires its constant relationship with God who is the original source of holiness (Siker 1996: 447).
- (3) Israel's holiness has a *missional* dimension because, through their derived holiness, Israel presents the holiness of God to the world.

#### *Social Holiness and the Moral and Relational Character of God*

The view of holiness as a term that refers to the essential being of God indicates that holiness means *the uniqueness of God*. Gerhard von Rad makes this point when he states, "the concept of the holy cannot in any way be deduced from other human standards of value. It is not their elevation to the highest degree, nor

is it associated with them by way of addition. The holy could much more aptly be designated the great stranger in the human world... [I]t is, in fact, the ‘*wholly other*’” (1962: 205 emphasis added). In the same vein, Walter Brueggemann points out, “The term *holiness*... refers to the radical otherness of Yahweh,” by which he means the “incompatibility” of God (1997: 288). Thus, that God is holy means that God is radically different from the world.

One major aspect of the uniqueness of God revealed in the biblical narrative is the character of God, which is *profoundly moral and relational*. That is why the concept of holiness in the Old Testament is profoundly *moral*.<sup>2</sup> John Oswalt emphasizes the connection of Israel’s concept of holiness with the moral character of God when he states, “The remarkable thing about the OT conception of holiness is a function of the OT understanding of God’s character. What was distinct about this deity was not so much his origin, his essence, or his numinous power. Rather, it was his attitude toward ethical behavior” (1986: 180).

### God’s Moral and Relational Character Revealed

In a sense, the biblical narrative is a story in which God makes himself known to Israel and the world through biblical events, three of which reveal the moral and relational character of God: the exodus, the covenant, and God’s self-declaration (Exodus 34:6-7).

**Revealed in the Exodus.** The exodus is a biblical event through which God fully displayed the uniqueness of God to the world, both Israel and the nations. As W. Ross Blackburn points out, the exodus revealed “God desires to be known as God, and, further, as a particular kind of God... In other words *the Lord seeks to be known for who he is, and... not for who he is not*” (2012: 18 italics in original). On the one hand, the exodus was the event in which God revealed himself publicly to the nations (Goldingay 2003: 293-94, Blackburn 2012: 17).<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, as Christopher Wright points out, “The exodus stands in the Hebrew scriptures as the great defining demonstration of YHWH’s power, love, faithfulness, and liberation on behalf of his people. It was thus a major act of self-revelation by God, and also a massive learning experience for Israel” (2006: 75).<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the Israelites came to know that Yahweh who redeemed them was “incomparable,” “sovereign,” and “unique” (2010: 76).

One aspect about God revealed through the exodus is *the character of God*, which is profoundly *moral* and *relational*. Hartley states, “God mightily revealed his holy character to Israel at the sea and at Sinai” (2003: 430). The exodus was God’s act of revealing that he cares for the oppressed as indicated in Exodus 3:7-

10: “The Lord said, ‘I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering.’” God is a God who was not only concerned about their suffering but also took the initiative to liberate them from their life of suffering. In doing so, God presented himself as a compassionate God. The testimony of the Israelites about the God that they experienced through the exodus is further evidence that showed that the exodus was the event through which God proved that God is *a God of steadfast love*. They praised the incompatible power and steadfast love of Yahweh after they crossed the Red Sea, singing in Exodus 15:13, “Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?” Then, in Exodus 15:13, they praised Yahweh for his revealed character: “In *your steadfast love* [emphasis added] you led the people whom you redeemed.”<sup>5</sup> As Philip Graham Ryken comments on this verse, “God had proved his love to Israel over and over. Everything that had happened to this point in the book of Exodus was motivated by God’s love” (2005: 409). John Goldingay agrees with the view of love as the very character of God in the Old Testament, when he states, “What of Yahweh’s character traits? Everyone owns that the Old Testament God is a God of wrath; the New Testament God a God of love. *Oh no they don’t*” (2003: 108; emphasis added)

**Revealed in the Context of the Covenant.** Along with the exodus, the moral and relational character of God is made further explicit in the context of the covenant. Comparing the concepts of holiness in Israel and in the surrounding nations, Oswalt observes that the uniqueness of holiness in Israel is derived from the moral character of God, which was revealed in the context of the covenant. Oswalt states, “Starting where their neighbors end, the Hebrews took the concept [of holiness] far beyond anything to be found around them. What happened?” Then he goes on, “In a word, *the covenant happened*. What God revealed to the Israelites in the context of the covenant was to revolutionize their entire understanding of deity and of the divine nature” (1999: 19). Brueggemann observes that God in the Bible is “a God bound in covenant,” and “covenant requires of Yahweh a practice of faithfulness and steadfast love, an enduring engagement with and involvement for Israel” (1997: 297). The covenant by which God chooses to be bound to Israel shows that “the Holy One is the related One” and that “Yahweh’s holiness... is in and with and for Israel” (1997: 289). In his faithfulness to the covenant, God revealed his moral and relational character to Israel and to the world through Israel. Oswalt states, “by making a covenant with his people God seeks to reveal his holy character” (1999: 38), and identifies three moral virtues that represent the moral

character of God revealed in the context of the covenant: grace, ethical righteousness, and faithfulness (1999: 21-38).

**Self-Declared (Exodus 34:6-7).** One particular biblical text, which explicitly and concretely presents the moral and relational character of God is Exodus 34:6-7, in which God introduced himself as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” Victor Hamilton comments on these verses, “Everything the Lord says autobiographically is something that God is or does *for the benefit of others*, especially his chosen people” (Hamilton 2011: 576 emphasis added). William Johnstone states, “The qualities in v. 6 are relational” (2014: 406). On the one hand, as Johnstone comments, “Exodus 34:6-7 marks a notable expansion in the portrayal of the grace of God” (2014: 409). On the other hand, as T. Desmond Alexander observes, “YHWH emphasizes that he is not only a God of mercy and compassion... but also that he is a God of justice, ‘not leaving the guilty unpunished’” (2016: 645). God’s self-introduction in this text is the clearest description of the moral and relational character of God.

### **The Moral and Relational Character of God as the Origin of Social Holiness**

The view of holiness as a concept about God implies that social holiness can be viewed as a term that refers to the social nature of God. The discussion about the moral and relational character of God shows that God is social in nature. Thus, as Winslow points out, “the holiness of God has relational and social aspects” (2014: 16). The idea of social holiness is biblically rooted in the moral and relational character of God. God’s holiness is “a revealed, shared and relational holiness” (2014: 16). God revealed his moral and relational character through his on-going engagement with Israel. In this sense, from a biblical perspective, the term *social holiness* is a term that points to God who is *moral* and *relational* in character. Thus, the moral and relational character of God can be regarded as the biblical origin of social holiness. Social holiness is not merely a social or ethical concept, but a concept that is *both social and spiritual*. It is spiritual because it is about *God*. It is social because it is about the *moral* and *relational* character of God.

#### *Social Holiness and the Law*

As mentioned above, one aspect of the relationship between God’s holiness and Israel’s holiness is that the Israelites are called to be a people who present the holiness of God to the nations by reflecting the holiness of God in their life. If the social aspect of holiness is rooted in the moral and relational character

of God, the character of Israel, which reflects God's holiness, should be profoundly social; embodying the moral and relational character of God. This social character of Israel is indicated in the relationship between holiness and the law.

### **Leviticus 19**

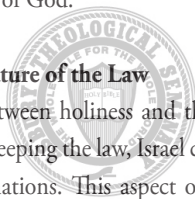
In the Old Testament, the practical way by which Israel can be holy is by keeping the law. One particular text that signifies this point is Leviticus 19. This text begins with God's holiness command given to the whole Israelites, "The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to *all the congregation of the people of Israel* and say to them: *You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy*" (Leviticus 19:1-2 emphasis added). The following verses of the chapter list the laws that Israel ought to keep. This structure—the holiness commandment followed by the law—is an indication that *by keeping the law, Israel can be holy, living a life that reflects the holiness of God*. Jacob Milgrom contends that the laws in Leviticus 19 "emphasize Yahweh's holy nature and that Israel should emulate it" (2010: 852). In a similar vein, Wright states, "The bulk of the Leviticus 19 shows us that the kind of holiness that reflects God's own holiness is thoroughly practical, social and very down-to-earth" (2006: 374). In this sense, Leviticus 19 shows that the law is given to Israel as a practical way by which Israel can be holy, reflecting the holiness of God.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Moral Law**

The relationship between holiness and the law explains the reason why the major bulk of the law given to Israel is moral. The social aspect of God's holiness demands that Israel be a people whose life is profoundly moral. Wright states, "being holy meant living lives of integrity, justice and compassion in every area- including personal, family, social, economic, and national life" (2006: 373). R. Alan Cole points out, "Since God's holiness is defined as being moral, to be a 'holy people'... meant that stern moral demands are made of her... Since YHWH is holy, there is no need for more explanation: the new relationship, brought about by grace, makes inexorable moral demands" (1973: 23). In this sense, the moral law was given to Israel so that they could reflect the social aspect of God's holiness because it was by keeping the moral law that the people of Israel could live a life that embodies the moral and relational character of God.

### **The Missionary Nature of the Law**

The relationship between holiness and the law indicates the missionary nature of the law because, by keeping the law, Israel can be a showcase of the holiness of God in the midst of the nations. This aspect of the law is further established



by the relationship between the law and the lawgiver: *the law reflects the lawgiver*. Drawing from the relationship between speeches and speakers, James W. Watts develops a mirroring relationship between the law in the Old Testament and the lawgiver, Yahweh. Watts states, "Speeches always indirectly characterize their speaker by providing readers the basis for inferring what kind of person talks this way. So *the law codes voiced directly by God in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers provide a powerful impression of the divine character*" (1996: 1 emphasis added). Drawing on Watts' idea on the relationship between the law and the character of God, Blackburn identifies the missionary nature of the law when he states,

By its very nature, law functions to reveal the character of the lawgiver, since a law code reflects the concerns of the one giving it... The context of the law... would serve to make the Lord's character known to all who encountered it, whether Israel who heard it from Moses, or the nations who were to see it manifest in the life of Israel. (Blackburn 2012: 100)

The missionary nature of the law was already revealed even before God gave them the law. In Genesis 12:2, God reveals that he has a missionary purpose when he chooses Abraham: "All the families on earth will be blessed through you." In Genesis 18:16-20, God reveals how the missionary purpose of the Abrahamic Covenant will be fulfilled: "I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord *by doing righteousness and justice*; so that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him." God gives Israel the law as an instruction for living a life of righteousness and justice so that God's blessing may reach all nations. The social aspect of Israel's life is clearly interrelated to the missionary call of Israel. Thus, Israel's mission has a moral dimension.<sup>7</sup>

### *Social Holiness and the Grace of God*

One thing that is significant for understanding the nature of Israel's holiness is the relationship between Israel's holiness and the grace of God. The grace of God that the people of Israel experienced through the exodus served as *the decisive factor* that led to the establishment of the Sinai covenant, in which God called Israel to be a holy nation. This relationship between Israel's call to be holy and God's grace is explained with the following four points.

First, *the exodus was God's act of grace for Israel*. As already explained above, God proved that God cares for Israel who had been suffering in Egypt. When God delivered the Israelites, they praised God not merely because God is mighty but because he exerted his mighty power to deliver them from Egypt.



Second, *God called them to be a holy nation on the basis of his grace for them as demonstrated in the exodus*. This point is evidenced by the fact that God invited Israel into the Sinai covenant (Exodus 19:5-6), by reminding them of what God had done for them (Exodus 19:4). In other words, when God invited Israel to the covenant relationship with him, he had the people of Israel think of his grace demonstrated through the exodus. John A. Davies contends, “The past dealings of YHWH with this people provide the basis for the undertaking of vv.5-6” (2004: 104). Thus, as Roger E. Hedlund states, “the terms of the agreement were expressed in covenant law, yet the basis of the relationship was entirely of grace” (1991: 60). In this sense, the Sinai covenant can be viewed as, in John Bright’s words, “a covenant of Grace” (1953: 28).

Third, *the people of Israel accepted the call to be a holy nation as a joyful and grateful response to the grace of God*. The immediate context of the Sinai Covenant indicates that the very reason why they decided to accept God’s invitation into a covenant relationship with God is the grace of God that they just experienced through the exodus. Victor Hamilton convincingly brought about this point when he asks, “Of interest here is that the Lord does not speak to his people anytime before chap. 19 about a covenant. So why wait until now? Why wait until after the exodus, until the sea has been crossed, until they are well into the journey to Canaan?” (2011: 301). Hamilton finds a biblically reasonable answer to the question from a quote that Moshe Greenberg found in a halakic midrash on the book of Exodus:

Why didn’t the Torah begin with the Decalogue? A parable will explain it: A man entered a country and said, “Make me your king.” The people replied, “What have you even done for us that we should make you our king?” So, he built them walls, made them water-works, fought wars on their behalf. Then he said to them, “Make me your king,” and they said, “Yes indeed!” Thus God liberated Israel from Egypt, divided the sea for them, gave them manna from heaven, provided them with a water supply, provisioned them with quail, fought Amalek on their behalf, then said to them, “Make me your king,” whereupon they replied, “Yes indeed!” (Quoted in Hamilton [2011: 301]; also see Oswalt [1999: 27])<sup>8</sup>

Thus, through the exodus, God proved to the Israelites that he deserved their full obedience to his words (Goldingay 2003: 320). Their obedience to God’s words (namely the law), through which they can be holy, is nothing less than their *grateful* and *joyful* response to God’s grace (Gentry and Wellum 2012: 312). They accepted the covenant as a grateful response because God showed his grace to them. It was also a joyful response because they were joyful about the new life they would live

when they would have a special relationship with the God whom they experienced in the exodus.

Fourth, *the people of Israel who experienced the grace of God were called to reflect the gracious character of God, which was revealed through the exodus, in their relationship with one another.* Linking the three covenants- the Noachic, Abrahamic, and Sinaitic covenants- and the gracious character of God, Oswalt states, “So what does the covenant teach us about the holiness of God? From beginning to end it teaches us that *to be holy is to be gracious*” (1999: 27 emphasis added). If the exodus was an event in which God revealed his gracious character to the Israelites, God’s invitation to them into the Sinai covenant was an event in which he called them to live a life that reflects the gracious character of God. This aspect of Israel’s life is clearly mentioned in Exodus 22:21-24, in which God gave the people of Israel a law which reflects the gracious character of God in the way they treat aliens and those who are in need.

These four points show that Israel’s call to be holy is intimately and inseparably interrelated to the grace of God. The exodus, through which God demonstrated his grace for the Israelites and revealed his gracious character, served as the basis on which God called them to be holy and provided them with a reason to accept God’s call. Consequently, Israel was called to live a life that reflects the gracious character of God.

### **Social Holiness, Jesus, the Disciples and the Nations**

The Old Testament concept of holiness continues in the New Testament as Jesus becomes *the new point of reference to holiness*. The following discussion on social holiness in the New Testament explains how God’s holiness and Israel’s call to be holy continue with Jesus and the disciples.

#### *Jesus as the New Point of Reference to Holiness*

The continuation of the Old Testament concept of holiness through Jesus is indicated at least by two observations about the ministry of Jesus: (1) Jesus was a radical advocator of the law, and (2) Jesus was the true revealer of God the Father.

#### **Jesus as the Radical Advocator of the Law**

The people of Israel in the Old Testament could be holy by keeping the law. Thus, the law was at the center of their holiness. The significance of the law for them is not denied nor weakened in the earthly ministry of Jesus. Rather, Jesus demanded their radical commitment to the law. Jesus says in Matthew 5:17, “Do not think that I have come to abolish *the law* or the prophets; I have come not

to abolish but *to fulfill* [emphasis added].” His teaching on the law in Matthew 5 shows not only that he demanded a *radical* commitment to the *whole* law from his followers (5:17-20), but also that he provided a radical interpretation of the law (Matthew 5:21-48), by bringing it into its “divinely intended... meaning” (Hagner 1993: 106). Jesus’ teaching on the divine intention of the law reaches the peak when he summarizes the whole law with his twofold love commandment, the so-called Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-34). Donald Hagner points out, “The essence of the law... is found in the striking twofold love commandment. It is here that the ethical teaching of the law finds its *root*... This is the heart of the law for Jesus and these two commandments accordingly provide a hermeneutic for the understanding of all the other commandments” (2007: 49, also see Gerhardsson 1976, Donaldson 1995). He not only radically advocated and interpreted the law, but, through his death, demonstrated the way of life that practices the divine intention of the law that he taught, proving his radical love for God the Father and for others (Johnson 2016: 70). In this sense, by embodying the divine intention of the law, which reflects the character of God, Jesus radically embodied the profoundly social holiness of God.

### **Jesus as the True Revealer of God the Father**

Along with Jesus’ attitude toward the law, the biblical portrait of Jesus as the revealer of the Father evidences the view of Jesus as the new point of reference to the holiness of God. One aspect of Jesus’ ministry was to reveal God (Bultmann 1951: 54). This aspect of Jesus’ ministry is indicated in John 1:18, which reads, “No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son... has made him known” (NIV). In John 14:9, Jesus says, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” In light of the unity of God the Father and Jesus, Andreas J. Köstenberger states, “what is at stake here is nothing less than Jesus’ ability to provide firsthand revelation of God,” and he even remarks, “the revelation mediated by Jesus exceeds that provided though Moses in the Law” (1999: 153). Jesus was sent to bear the true “witness” of God the Father (1998: 109). This theocentricity in Jesus’ earthly ministry is further made explicit when Jesus based his entire ministry on his intimate relationship with God.<sup>9</sup> The words and deeds of Jesus flow from his intimate relationship with God, and, in doing so, the character of God is truly revealed through and in Jesus. Thus, the concept of social holiness of in the Old Testament is found in the life and ministry of Jesus.

### *The Disciples’ Call to Be Witnesses of Jesus and Israel’s Call to be Holy*

The view of Jesus as the new point of reference to the holiness of God indicates not only that God revealed his holiness through Jesus, but also that Israel’s

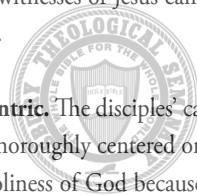
call to be holy continues with the disciples who are called to be *witnesses of Jesus* (Luke 24:48, Acts 1:8).<sup>10</sup>

### **Being Theocentric by Being Christocentric**

The continuity of the holiness of God in and through Jesus is indicated in the ultimately *theocentric* goal of the disciples' call to be witnesses of Jesus. One of the aspects of Israel's holiness is theocentric: reflecting the holiness of *God* and, in doing so, presenting it to the world. The theocentric aspect of Israel's call to be holy continues with the disciples, while their new call- being witnesses of Jesus- is Christocentric.

**Thoroughly Christocentric.** The people of Israel in the Old Testament could be holy by keeping the law. Thus, the law was at the center of their holiness. While, as briefly discussed above, Jesus advocated the significance of the law in the lives of his followers; the holiness of the disciples was centered not on the law, but *on Jesus*. W. T. Purkiser makes this point when he states, "Holiness in the Gospels centers chiefly in the picture given of the character of Jesus... Jesus is, in a way quite unintended by Protagoras who first used a similar phrase, 'the Man who is the measure of all things'" (1983: 75). In his biblical analysis of holiness in the Gospel of Mark, Kent E. Brower states, "Mark paints a picture of the restoration and re-creation of the holy people of God centered on Jesus. He makes this case through the narrative re-application of key biblical themes leading to a renewed understanding of holiness" (2007: 57). The view of Jesus as the center of the disciples' holiness is indicated in that Jesus is presented not only as a new Moses, the lawgiver, but as greater than Moses. The formula, "You have heard that it was said... But I say to you..." proves the authority of Jesus as greater than Moses who gave the law to the people of Israel at Mt. Sinai. Snodgrass articulates, "Jesus is the authoritative interpreter of the law, but Matthew does not now suggest that we merely follow Rabbi Jesus. The law is no longer the center of gravity; *Jesus is*" (1996: 126 emphasis added). The holiness of the disciples is no longer measured by the law but by the teaching and life of Jesus (Hagner 2007: 46). Through the whole ministry of Jesus, Israel's theocentric holiness became Christocentric in the disciples' holiness. In this sense, the disciples' call to be witnesses of Jesus can be regarded as the culmination of the whole ministry of Jesus.

**Ultimately Theocentric.** The disciples' call to be witnesses of Jesus shows that the disciples' holiness is thoroughly centered on Jesus, but what they are called to ultimately present is the holiness of God because what Jesus ultimately revealed



through his earthly ministry is God the Father. Darrell Guder articulates, “These events [the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus] reveal the nature and purpose of God; they are events God is carrying out within our human history, in which he is the subject, the initiator and doer of that which happens” (1985: 41). As briefly discussed above, this theocentricity in Jesus’ earthly ministry is made the most obvious in the Gospel of John, in which Jesus’ ministry is depicted as revealing God the Father, rooted in his intimate relationship with God. Jesus in his life and ministry was fully identified with the Father in unity (Barrett 1982: 16). In this regard, the disciples’ call to be witnesses of Jesus is *ultimately theocentric* because what Jesus ultimately presents in his earthly ministry is God the Father. Thus, as Andreas J. Köstenberger states, the disciples’ mission is “theocentric by being Christocentric” (1995: 453). The disciples’ being witnesses of Jesus means that *they are called to present the holiness of God, which is profoundly social, to the world by being witnesses of Jesus who is the new point of reference to the holiness of God.*

### **Israel’s Call to Be Holy Is Expanded**

Israel’s call to be holy not only continues with the disciples but also is *expanded* as Jesus initiated the Gentile mission, in which the disciples are called to participate. Israel’s call to be holy was missionary in nature, but was primarily about *being* (living a life that reflects the holiness of God), instead of *doing* (intentionally reaching out to the nations). However, because the risen Jesus sent the disciples to all nations with the disciple-making command (Matthew 28:16-20) and the message about repentance for forgiveness (Luke 24:47), their mission is no longer merely about *being*, but also about *doing*. They are called to engage with the nations by witnessing to Jesus in *being* and *doing*.

These two dimensions of their mission of witnessing to Jesus are *inseparably interrelated*. Guder makes this point clear when he states, “*Being* a witness and *saying* the witness are inseparable aspects of the one calling” (1985: 47 italics in original). For the disciples, the events that happened to Jesus were the events that already transformed those who are witnesses of the events. They witnessed to the events, not merely as the ones who knew about the events, but, first and foremost, as the ones who were profoundly transformed by the events. Because Jesus is both the one who transformed the disciples and the one whom they are called to witness to in the world, their life in the world and their message to the world are *inseparable* in such a way that “The message comes from messengers whose own identity has really been transformed by the One who is the theme of that message” (1985: 47).

This inseparable relationship between the message and the messenger implies that the faithful and authentic witnessing to Jesus in the world involves

both *being* and *doing*. Guder points out, “Christians are converted people, which means that, as changed people, they have been turned around and are now going in a different direction. They march in that new direction so that they will be witnesses in the world, *authentic evidence of the truth of the gospel* as the Spirit works through them to call forth faith” (1985: 42 emphasis added). *Doing-without-being* makes the disciples’ witnessing *untrustworthy*. *Being-without-doing* makes their witnessing *unfaithful*.

### *Holiness and All Nations*

As mentioned above, God had all nations in view when he called the people of Israel to be holy. The relationship between holiness and all nations are made explicit when Jesus commissioned the disciples for the gentile mission. Particularly, holiness is related to all nations in two ways that Jesus envisioned about all nations.

First, *Jesus envisioned that all nations are called to share in Israel’s call to be holy*. The disciples’ call to be holy by being witnesses of Jesus is not limited to the disciples, but open to all nations, as Jesus initiated the Gentile mission. Like the disciples, all nations are called to obey “everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). The commandments of Jesus that the disciples are called to teach in their disciple-making mission were the commandments given to the disciples before they were told to teach all nations. Both the disciples and all nations are called to obey the same commandments of Jesus. In this regard, all nations are called to be what Jesus called the disciples to be. Initiating the Gentile mission, Jesus envisioned all nations to reflect and present the holiness of God as the disciples are called to. In this sense, as Wright points out, all nations as well as the disciples are called to share the identity of Israel as a holy nation (2006: 527).<sup>11</sup>

Second, *Jesus envisioned all nations to be holy as a grateful and joyful response to the grace of God as the people of Israel did*. This point is indicated by the biblical observation that the relationship between Israel’s holiness and the grace of God in the establishment of the Sinai covenant in Exodus 19 is also found in the Great Commission in Matthew 28. As explained above, the people of Israel accepted the call to be holy, as a grateful and joyful response to the grace of God they experienced in the exodus. God provided the Israelites with the reason why they would want to accept God’s call to be holy. This holiness-grace relationship is also identifiable when Jesus initiated the Great Commission in Matthew 28. Jesus initiated the gentile mission only after his death and resurrection. He did not call all nations to share in Israel’s call to be holy until his death and resurrection. Why would the gentiles want to obey the teaching of Jesus, which was originally given to the disciples? There was

nothing that God did for the nations like what he did for Israel through the exodus until the death and resurrection of Jesus. However, the death of Jesus was the once-for-all universal grace of God for all nations. As Paul in Romans 5:8 states, “God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.” The death of Jesus undeniably revealed that God is a God who loved all nations as well as Israel, and introduced the gracious character of God to all nations. In doing so, God provided gentiles with the reason why they would want to obey the commandments of Jesus not in a sense of duty or obligation, but in gratefully and joyfully responding to the radical love of God for them demonstrated by the death of Jesus. In this sense, it can be said that all nations are called to be holy on the basis of the grace of God for them, as he called the Israelites to be holy on the basis of the grace of God for them.

### **Social Holiness and Imago Dei**

The discussion above viewed the moral and relational character of God as the biblical origin of social holiness, but the biblical origin of social holiness is related to the meaning of the *imago Dei* (a Latin word for the image of God) in Genesis 1 in two ways: (1) holiness as the interpretive key for understanding the meaning of *imago Dei*, and (2) *imago Dei* as another term for holiness.

#### *Social Holiness and the Image of God*

Holiness in the Bible is, first and foremost a theocentric concept that points to the uniqueness of God, namely *what God looks like* or *the image of God*. As James Muilenburg states, “Yahweh’s uniqueness is the uniqueness of his holiness” (1962: 619). Israel’s holiness is at best derived holiness that reflects the holiness of God. In this sense, being holy means *being God-like* or *bearing the image of God*. Wright states, “Israel was to be YHWH-like rather than like the nations. They were to do as YHWH does, not as the nations do” (2006: 374). Brueggemann puts it this way: “The premise of the command of Sinai is that Yahweh is holy... and Israel, who is contingently holy, is to *imitate Yahweh* and so *become holy* likewise” (1997: 290 emphasis added). Hartley makes a similar view when he states, “To heed this call [to be holy for Yahweh is holy] the Israelites were to respond to God *by becoming like God*; that is, they were to develop in themselves characteristics such as those God possesses” (2003: 427 emphasis added); thus, Israel’s call to be holy means that “[Israel] can, in some way, become like God” (Wells 2000: 31). In this sense, *Israel’s being holy means that they are called to be bearers of the image of God by being God-like on earth*.

Two observations- one is biblical and the other archeological- about the way that God revealed himself support the point that Israel was called to be



bearers of the image of God: (1) the biblical evidence that the physical description of the image of God was not the focus in divine self-revelation in the Pentateuch (Arnold 2017b), and (2) the archeological evidence that, unlike the temples of the nations surrounding Israel, there was no iconography representing God's physical appearance in the Temple in Israel (Arnold 2017a). In light of these two pieces of evidence, the biblical-archeological observation that the two stones, on which the Ten Commandments were written, are located in the place where gentile nations would place an iconography that describes their gods' physical appearance is an indication that the law which reflects the holiness of God represents the image of God. Given that, as explained above, by keeping the law, the people of Israel were able to be holy as God is holy, the people of Israel were called to be bearers of the image of God in the midst of the nations. In this sense, it can be said that the way that God intended truly to reveal or present his image was not through physical appearance nor through an iconographic form, but through a people who bear the image of God by keeping the law that reflects the character of God. Therefore, *the image of God can be viewed as what holiness ultimately means from a biblical perspective.* This connection between holiness and the image of God implies that *the image of God is profoundly social as holiness is.*

### *Jesus as the Image of the Invisible God*

In the New Testament, as briefly explored, the theocentric concept of holiness in the Old Testament continues with Jesus who is the new point of reference to holiness. If holiness is a biblical concept about the image of God, Jesus represents the true image of God. This point is observable in the apostle Paul's writings in which he views Jesus as "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15, also see 2 Corinthians 4:4). The image of God is fully revealed and presented by the person and work of Jesus. If this is the case for Jesus, the disciples' call to be witnesses of Jesus is nothing less than a call to be bearers of the image of God, which was fully and truly embodied and revealed in and through Jesus. If being holy in the Old Testament means being God-like, being holy in the New Testament means being Christ-like. This is how the New Testament writers understand what the community of believers is called to be. 1 John 2:6 says, "Whoever claims to live in him[Jesus] must live as Jesus did." Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 says, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." In Ephesian 4:13, Paul urges believers to grow up to "the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." In the New Testament, a community of believers is called to be God-like by being Christ-like, or to bear the image of God by bearing the image of Jesus.



*Imago Dei as Another Term for Holiness*

The view of holiness as the image of God or God-likeness indicates the connection between the biblical concept of holiness and the creation account in Genesis 1 in which God created human beings in his image and commanded them to fill and reign over the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). Thus, it is quite possible that Israel's call to be holy can be traced further back to the very beginning of the Bible.

**Three Major Views of Imago Dei and Their Weaknesses**

Theologians throughout the history of theology have had different interpretations of the meaning of the term *imago Dei*, with no agreement on the meaning of the term. By and large, the term has been interpreted in three ways: the *substantial view* which focuses on attributes or capabilities of humankind, the *relational view* which emphasizes the relational nature of humankind based on the relational nature of God, and the *vocational (or functional) view* which interprets the image of God as being a royal representation of God for dominion over the world.<sup>12</sup> While it is true that the adequate understanding of *imago Dei* in Genesis 1 is significant for a biblical view of humankind, it seems more proper to approach the term *imago Dei* by focusing on what God looks like because *imago Dei* is, first and foremost, a term about God.

One problem with these three views of the term *imago Dei* is that the focus is not on what God looks like but on the nature of humankind. Claus Westermann's remark on Genesis 1:26 is correct when he states, "The main interest has been on what is being said theologically about humankind: *what is a human being?*" (1984: 185 emphasis added). Another problem with these three views is the *either-or* approach those three views use to explain the meaning of *imago Dei*; each of the views defines *imago Dei* in a narrow way, even though scripture does not define it in that way.<sup>13</sup>

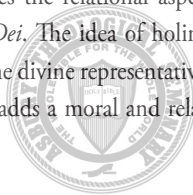
**Holiness as the Interpretive Key for Imago Dei**

One exegetical issue surrounding the phrase *the image of God* in Genesis 1 is that neither the Book of Genesis nor the whole of scripture gives a clear description of the meaning of the phrase. To interpret the term in light of how God revealed his image throughout the unfolding biblical narrative can be a hermeneutical approach that overcomes this exegetical issue.<sup>14</sup> No one would disagree that the biblical narrative is the story in which God self-revealed what he looks like to the people of God and to the world through them. If this interpretive approach is taken, holiness, which points to God-likeness, can serve as an interpretive key for the meaning of *imago Dei*, shedding light on the biblical meaning of *imago Dei*. The exegetical

possibility of using the biblical concept of holiness as the interpretive key for the term *imago Dei* is proposed by Bill T. Arnold, who views Genesis 1 as a “holiness preamble” (2012). He suggests that it is possible that the creation of humankind in the image of God is a theological import from the author of the so-called Holiness Code, which refers to Leviticus 17-26 where holiness is a dominant theme (2012: 342).

If the concept of holiness is taken as an interpretive key for the meaning of *imago Dei*, the biblical origin of social holiness, which is the social aspect of holiness, can be further traced back to the *imago Dei* in Genesis 1. In other words, *the image of God in Genesis 1:26-27 can be viewed as another biblical term for holiness*. In this view, human beings created in the image of God mean that they were created to reflect the moral and relational character of God, which is the biblical origin of social holiness. Wright states, “the image of God is not a link for abuse based on arrogant supremacy, but a pattern that commits us to humble reflection of the character of God” (2004: 121, also see Spanner 1998: 222). This point finds further support from the biblical observation that when God created a human being in his image, he created the human being as a person-in-community by creating man and woman (Genesis 1:27, 2:18).<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the biblical fact that the loneliness of human beings was not good in the eyes of God (Genesis 2:18) indicates that the social nature of humanity is part of God’s creational intention for humanity (Wright 2006: 427-28). In other words, when God created human beings they were put in a social context in which they can reflect the moral and relational character of God in their relationship with one another.

This hermeneutic approach, which takes holiness as an interpretive key for the meaning of *imago Dei*, does not reject the three major views of *imago Dei*. Rather the concept of holiness provides a way that integrates these three views, while none of them are what *imago Dei* fully means in light of the biblical concept of holiness. The view of holiness as another term about the *imago Dei* needs the substantial view because, for human beings in order to embody the moral and relational character of God, they need those attributes and capabilities that the substantial view highlights. Without the human attributes and capabilities, human beings would not embody the moral character of God. The view of holiness as the interpretive key for the meaning of *imago Dei* assumes the relational aspect of *imago Dei* in the case of the relational view of *imago Dei*. The idea of holiness as a concept that points to God-likeness does not reject the divine representative role of humankind, which the dominant view espouses, but adds a moral and relational character to their divine representative role.

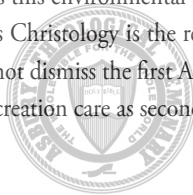


### **The Cultural Mandate and the Great Commission**

The so-called “creation mandate” or “cultural mandate” in Genesis 1:28 consists of two parts: the mandate of human population and the mandate of dominion. The view of the image of God in Genesis 1 as another biblical term for holiness sheds light on the meaning of the cultural mandate and the Great Commission.

Regarding the mandate of human population, the relationship between holiness and the image of God suggests that what God envisioned about humankind is not fundamentally different from what Jesus envisioned about all nations in the Great Commission. Most commentators interpret the mandate of human population merely as the blessing of fertility. However, if human beings are created to be bearers of the image of God by reflecting the holiness of God in the world, the mandate of human population is more than the matter of fertility because, in the mandate of human population, God envisioned that the earth is filled with his holiness reflected by human beings. In this view, the mandate of human population is strikingly not different from the Great Commission because, as already pointed out above, what Jesus envisioned about all nations when he sent the disciples to all nations is the holiness of God reflected by all nations. In this sense, *the Great Commission is nothing less than Jesus’ initiative to fulfill what God originally envisioned about humankind in Genesis 1.*

Regarding the mandate of dominion, the view of *imago Dei* as another term for holiness implies that creation care should be viewed as an essential part of the church’s commitment to the Great Commission. As most commentators affirm, the mandate of dominion implies that creation care is a vocation commonly given to all human beings created to be bearers of the image of God. However, creation care is often ignored or considered as secondary among those who base the church’s mission on the Great Commission probably because the Great Commission does not explicitly mention anything about creation care. As mentioned above, both God in Genesis 1 and Jesus in the Great Commission envision all nations bearing the image of God; consequently, creation care, which is a vocation given to bearers of the image of God, continues in the church’s mission to participate in the Great Commission. The apostle Paul’s view of Jesus as the last Adam who fulfilled what the first Adam failed reinforces this environmental aspect of the church’s mission.<sup>16</sup> The Adamic typology in Paul’s Christology is the reminder that the Christocentric mission of the church should not dismiss the first Adam’s original call. In this sense, the church should not regard creation care as secondary to its missionary call.



### Implications for the Church's Mission Today

This paper explored the biblical origin of social holiness and how it continued and expanded in the Bible. From a biblical perspective, social holiness is *missionary* in nature because of the two aspects of social holiness- *theocentric* and *relational*. Social holiness is theocentric because it points particularly to the moral and relational character of God. Social holiness is relational because God desires to share it with his people and with all nations through them. Social holiness is missionary in nature because the social holiness of God reflected the people of God makes God, who is invisible, visible to all nations, drawing all nations to Him.

This biblical concept of social holiness, first applied to God and then applied to Israel, runs throughout the biblical narrative from the moment when God created humankind in his image. It has been demonstrated that it is possible that the biblical concept of social holiness is an interpretive key for the meaning of *imago Dei*. Social holiness is inseparably associated with Israel's call to be holy. The theme of social holiness continues with Jesus as the embodiment of and the revealer of the holiness of God. Israel's call to be holy continues and is expanded with the disciples who are called to be witnesses of Jesus in both *being* and *doing*. Jesus envisioned that all nations share in Israel's call to be holy as the disciples did. The biblical exploration on the origin of social holiness shows that, throughout the biblical narrative, God sought to restore the whole world, which was originally intended to be filled with the image of God being reflected by all nations. In this sense, mission- both the mission of God, and the mission of God's people- is intrinsically linked with the biblical concept of social holiness. The biblical understanding of mission cannot be properly understood apart from the biblical concept of social holiness. In this sense, *the mission of God in the Bible is, in a sense, God's social holiness movement through God's people*. The biblical origin of social holiness sheds light on the nature of the church's mission. Several missiological implications for the church's mission can be drawn in light of the biblical origin of social holiness as summarized below.

#### *The Church's Mission is Profoundly Social*

The discussion about the biblical origin of social holiness suggests that the church's mission is *profoundly social*. On the one hand, the origin of Israel's missionary call to present the holiness of God to the nations goes back to the creation account in Genesis 1, in which God envisioned the whole earth filled with the image of God reflected by human beings. On the other hand, Israel's call continues and is expanded with the disciples of Jesus in the New Testament. The connection between holiness and the image of God indicates that the origin of the

church's missionary call is not found in the New Testament. Like Israel, the church is called not only to embody the moral and relational character of God in its life, but also to socially engage with the world. Thus, in light of this biblical origin of the church's missionary call, the church's mission is profoundly social. The church's mission is not limited to evangelism (verbal communication of the gospel about Jesus), but social engagement with the world is an essential part of the church's mission. In other words, the church's mission essentially entails its active and critical engagement with socio-economic issues. Thus, the church's social engagement with the world should not be viewed as secondary or optional. The church is called to present God not only in words but also in deeds, actively and critically engaging with the world. The world today, which is rife with socio-economic issues such as racism, injustice, violence, and poverty, needs the church to be an agent toward bringing the world back to what it was originally envisioned to be. Evangelical and conservative Christians often hesitate to embrace social engagement as an essential part of the church's mission, but the biblical narrative looked into in this paper shows that God originally envisioned the whole world profoundly shaped by the image of God who is social in nature. Thus, the biblical origin of social holiness encourages the church to critically engage with socio-economic issues.

### *The Church's Social Engagement is Profoundly Spiritual*

Social holiness is not merely an ethical concept, but it is also *a spiritual term* because the origin of social holiness is found in God. Thus, social holiness is a term that points to what God looks like in his character. Thus, the church's social engagement, which is an expansion of Israel's call to be holy, is *profoundly spiritual*. Furthermore, the spiritual dimension of the church's social engagement becomes obvious in the relationship between God's holiness and Israel's holiness: *Israel's holiness requires their constant relationship with God because God is the original source of holiness and because Israel's holiness is at best derived holiness.*

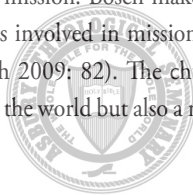
This point makes a fundamental difference between the church's social engagement and the social projects of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). NGOs look into something other than God for the motivation and goal of their social work. The nature of NGOs' social engagement is profoundly secular, and the goal of NGOs is the well being of the world. However, the biblical origin of social holiness indicates that the church's social engagement is *profoundly spiritual*. This point has two implications. First, the motive for the church's social engagement comes from its relationship with God. In light of the biblical origin of social holiness, the church is motivated for social engagement neither by human capability (as in the case of secular humanism) nor human dignity (as in the case of the human

rights movement), but by its relationship with God, its belief that true hope, joy, and life is found in God, and its vision for the world filled with the image of God. Second, the church's social engagement aims at the world being brought into God. The church's social engagement does not aim merely at the well being of the world but at the world brought into a relationship with God. The ultimate goal is not worldly prosperity but, as Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, *the world glorifying God*.<sup>17</sup> Thus, in light of the biblical origin of social holiness, *the church's mission is holistic, both social and spiritual*. These dimensions of the church are inseparably interrelated with each other.

### *The Church's Mission Begins from Within*

One observation in exploring the biblical origin of social holiness is that Israel's call to be holy is profoundly about *embodiment*. Israel is called to embody the moral character of God in their relationship with one another. In this sense, Israel is called to be a *contrast people whose distinctiveness is shaped by the moral character of God*. This aspect of Israel's holiness continues with the disciples who are called to be witnesses of Jesus by being profoundly shaped by Jesus who is the new point of reference for social holiness.

This point implies that the church's mission involves both *being* (its embodiment of the character of God in its life) and *doing* (its intentional engagement with the world). The church's mission does not begin on a frontier between the church and the world, but it *begins from within* as its members reflect the moral and relational character of God in their relationship with one another. Jesus' new commandment of loving one another (John 13:31-35) is a biblical reminder of this aspect of the church's mission from inside out. This point is a corrective to the traditional view of the church's mission merely as intentionally reaching out to the world. In this traditional view, mission is reduced to being merely one of the ministries that the church does. However, the biblical origin of social holiness implies that every aspect of the life of the church has a missional dimension; the church's total life that reflects the social holiness of God is a significant part of its mission of presenting God to the world. In this sense, the church does not have a separate function of mission, but the church herself *is* mission. The whole aspect of the church's life is involved in mission. Bosch makes this point when he states, "If the church is 'in Christ,' she is involved in mission. Her whole existence then has a missionary character" (Bosch 2009: 82). The church has not only a missionary intention in its reaching out to the world but also a missionary dimension in its total life.



*The Church's Mission Is Grace-Shaped*

Both in the Sinai covenant and the Great Commission, God called Israel and the nations on the basis of the divine act of grace. The establishment of the Sinai covenant was all about the grace of God from beginning to end. God called the people of Israel to be a holy nation on the basis of the grace of God for them as demonstrated in the exodus. Israel decided to accept God's call to be a holy nation in a joyful and grateful response to God's grace for them. As a holy nation, they are called to embody the *gracious* character of God. This holiness-grace pattern is expanded to the relationship between God and all nations when Jesus initiated the gentile mission not only with his universal authority, but also *on the basis of the grace of God for all nations as demonstrated by the death of Jesus*. Jesus calls all nations to obey his teaching not as a duty or obligation, but as a joyful and grateful response to the love of God for them, which was already expressed through the death of Jesus.

This grace-holiness relationship implies that the church's mission is *grace-shaped*. In other words, the church's mission is profoundly shaped by the grace of God. In this sense, the church is committed to its missionary call neither as a duty nor an obligation to the mission command, but as nothing less than a joyful and grateful response to the love of God. This also means that what the church presents to the world through its mission is the love of God so that all nations can be drawn to God as a joyful and grateful response to the love of God that was holistically presented by the church in both words and deeds. One important question the church needs to ask for self-examination of its mission is whether the church truly and authentically presents the love of God. In this sense, the focus of the church's mission is not the quantitative outcome of their mission but their *qualitative* witnessing to the love of God.

*The Church's Mission Essentially Includes Creation Care*

The view of the *imago Dei* in Genesis 1 as another term for holiness connects the cultural mandate in Genesis 1 with the Great Commission in Matthew 28. If the cultural mandate describes what God originally envisioned for the whole world, the Great Commission is Jesus' initiative to restore the fallen world back to God's creational intention for the world. If the cultural mandate describes human beings' original call given by God, the Great Commission reveals how fallen human beings can fulfill that call. In light of this connection, creation care, which is part of the original call of human beings, should be viewed as an essential part of the church's missionary call. As creation care is part of an original vocation given to those who are created to be bearers of the image of God, the church called to be a witness of Jesus, who is the image of the invisible God, has the same vocation to

take care of the created world. The apostle Paul's view of Jesus as the last Adam who fulfilled what the first Adam did not reminds the church that its Christocentric mission should not dismiss the first Adam's original call to creation care.

Creation care has often been neglected in the thought and practice of the church's mission as the church understood its mission as anthropocentric. Today, environmental issues which are detrimental to human beings bring the attention of people, both Christian and non-Christian, back to the environmental problem. However, for the church, environmental issues are significant not only because of environmental problems that human beings face today, but also because creation care is the original call given to them when they were created as bearers of the image of God.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Also see Leviticus 11:44, 45; 20:7, 26; 21:8. Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

<sup>2</sup> Unlike holiness in the Bible, holiness in the nations surrounding Israel is a non-ethical concept. See Oswalt (1999, 18) and Hartley (2003, 420).

<sup>3</sup> What God did in Egypt reached the surrounding nations to the extent that, as Goldingay observes, "The story of deliverance ends with Moses' Midianite father-in-law coming to hear what Yhwh did in defeating the Egyptians and delivering the people and to acknowledge that Yhwh is indeed greater than all gods (Ex18:8-11)" (2003, 294).

<sup>4</sup> Also see Rowley (1950), Wright (1950, 20-29), Hedlund (1991, 51) and Matthew (1995).

<sup>5</sup> The phrase "steadfast love" is translated differently in different English translations. It was translated as "unfailing love" in the NIV, "lovingkindness" in the NASB, "mercy" in the KJV, and "love" in the JPS Tanakh.

<sup>6</sup> This relationship between holiness and the law is also indicated when the structure of Leviticus 19 is compared with the structure of the Book of Exodus. The structure—the holiness commandment followed by the law—of Leviticus 19 is observable in the Book of Exodus: First, God invites Israel into the Sinai covenant, by which Israel is called to be a holy nation in Exodus 19, and then gives them the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20.

<sup>7</sup> For the biblical discussion on the ethical dimension of mission, see Wright (2006, 357-92).



<sup>8</sup> Later the midrash was translated in English; the English version of the midrash is available now. For the quote in the English version of the midrash, see Lauterbach (2004, 313).

<sup>9</sup> According to C. K. Barrett, the unique relationship between Jesus and God in the Gospel of John is characterized by two passages: John 10:30, in which Jesus says, “The Father and I are one,” and John 14:28, in which Jesus says, “the Father is greater than I.” For his full argument, see Barrett (1982, 19-36).

<sup>10</sup> In Luke 24:48, Jesus says to his disciples, “You are witnesses of these things” (emphasis added). In Acts 1:8, he says to them, “you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (emphasis added). If “witnesses of these things” in Luke 24:48 implies that their witnessing is about the events that happened to Jesus, namely (primarily his death and resurrection), “my witnesses” in Acts 1:8 indicates that what they witness to is about who Jesus is. However, as investigated in the discussion of the resurrection and death of Jesus, the events that happened to Jesus and who Jesus is are inseparable in such a way that these events revealed who Jesus truly is.

<sup>11</sup> For Wright, this is the vision that the Old Testament has about the nations and Paul shared in the same vision. For Wright’s full argument on this, see Wright (2006, 522-30).

<sup>12</sup> For a brief overview of these three views of the image of God, see Sands (2010).

<sup>13</sup> As already mentioned in this paper, the New Testament writers view Jesus as the image of God, but none of these three views of *imago Dei* does not provide a biblically sound rationale that connects Jesus with the image of God.

<sup>14</sup> Stanley J. Grenz connects the image of God in Genesis 1 directly to the New Testament, and, by doing so, his approach fails to find any biblical implications from the Old Testament narrative that follows the creation story. For this approach to the image of God in Genesis 1:26, see Grenz (2001, 201-203, 222).

<sup>15</sup> For an in-depth biblical-theological study of the social nature of humankind in Genesis 1:27 and 2:18, see Grenz (2001, 267-303).

<sup>16</sup> Paul compares Christ with Adam particularly in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15.

<sup>17</sup> According to Walter Brueggemann, God’s concern about His holy name and about the well-being of the world are inseparably interrelated. However, God’s ultimate concern is not the well being of the world, but His holy name. See Brueggemann (1997, 293-96).



## Works Cited

- Alexander, T. Desmond  
2016 *Exodus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Arnold, Bill T.  
2012 "Genesis 1 as Holiness Preamble." In *Let Us Go Up to Zion: Essays in Honour of H. G. M. Williamson on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, edited by Mark J. Boda, Iain W. Provan, and H. G. M. Williamson, Leiden, South Holland; Boston, MA: Brill.
- 2017a "A Singular Israel in a Pluralistic World." *The Asbury Journal* 72(2): 8–20.
- 2017b "Divine Revelation in the Pentateuch." Presentation for Asbury's Advanced Research Programs Interdisciplinary Colloquium held on October 13, 2017. Asbury Theological Seminary. Wilmore, KY.
- Barrett, C. K.  
1982 *Essays on John*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press.
- Blackburn, W. Ross  
2012 *The God Who Makes Himself Known: The Missionary Heart of the Book of Exodus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Bosch, David J.  
2009 "Witness to the World." In *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, edited by Ralph D. Winter, Steven C. Hawthorne, D. Bruce Graham, Bruce A. Koch, and Darrell R. Dorr, 78–82. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Bright, John  
1953 *The Kingdom of God: The Biblical Concept and Its Meaning for the Church*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
- Brower, Kent E.  
2007 "The Holy One and His Disciples: Holiness and Ecclesiology in Mark." In *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, edited by Kent E. Brower, and Andy Johnson, 57–75. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub.
- Brueggemann, Walter  
1997 *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Bultmann, Rudolf K.  
1951 *Theology of the New Testament*. New York, NY: Scribner's Sons.
- Cole, R. Alan  
1973 *Exodus*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity.

- Coppedge, Allan  
2001 *Portraits of God: A Biblical Theology of Holiness*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Davies, John A.  
2004 *A Royal Priesthood: Literary and Intertextual Perspectives on an Image of Israel in Exodus 19.6*. London; New York, NY: T & T Clark International.
- Donaldson, Terence L.  
1995 "The Law That Hangs (Matthew 22:40): Rabbinic Formulation and Matthean Social World." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 57(4): 689–709.
- Eli, R. George  
1993 *Social Holiness: John Wesley's Thinking on Christian Community and Its Relationship to the Social Order*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Gentry, Peter John, and Stephen J. Wellum  
2012 *Kingdom Through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.
- Gerhardsson, Birger  
1976 "The Hermeneutic Program in Matthew 22:37-40." In *Jews, Greeks and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity: Essays in Honor of William David Davies*, edited by Robert Hamerton-Kelly, and Robin Scroggs, 129–50. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
- Goldingay, John  
2003 *Israel's Gospel*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Grenz, Stanley J.  
2001 *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Guder, Darrell L.  
1985 *Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Message, and Messengers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.
- Hagner, Donald A.  
1993 *Matthew 1-13*. Dallas, TX: Word Books.
- 2007 "Holiness and Ecclesiology: The Church in Matthew." In *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, edited by Kent E. Brower, and Andy Johnson, 40–56. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.
- Hamilton, Victor P.  
2011 *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- Hartley, J. E.  
2003 "Holy and Holiness, Clean and Unclean." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, edited by T. Desmond Alexander, and David W. Baker, 420–31. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Hedlund, Roger E.  
1991 *The Mission of the Church in the World: A Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.
- Johnson, Andy  
2016 *Holiness and the Missio Dei*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.
- Johnstone, William  
2014 *Exodus 20-40*. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys.
- Köstenberger, Andreas J.  
1995 "The Challenge of a Systematized Biblical Theology of Mission: Missiological Insights From the Gospel of John." *Missiology: An International Review* 23(4): 445–64.  
1998 *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples According to the Fourth Gospel*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.  
1999 *Encountering John: The Gospel in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Lauterbach, Jacob Zallel  
2004 *Mekhilta De-Rabbi Ishmael. Vol.2: A Critical Edition, Based on the Manuscripts and Early Editions With an English Translation, Introduction, and Notes By Jacob Zallel Lauterbach*. Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society.
- Matthew, Ed  
1995 "Yahweh and the Gods: A Theology of World Religions From the Pentateuch." In *Christianity and the Religions: A Biblical Theology of World Religions*, edited by Edward Rommen, 30–44. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Metz, Donald S.  
1971 *Studies in Biblical Holiness*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press.
- Milgrom, Jacob  
2010 "Holy, Holiness, Old Testament." In *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol.2*, edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, 850–58. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Muilenburg, James  
1962 "Holiness." In *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. Vol.2*, edited by George Arthur Buttrick, 616–25. New York, NY: Abingdon Press.

- Oswalt, John N.  
1986 *The Book of Isaiah: Chapter 1-39*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.
- 1999 *Called to be Holy*. Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House.
- Purkiser, W. T.  
1983 *Exploring Christian Holiness, Volume 1: The Biblical Foundations*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.
- Routledge, Robin  
2013 *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach*. Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Rowley, Harold H.  
1950 "Living Issues in Biblical Scholarship: The Antiquity of Israelite Monotheism." *The Expository Times* 61(11): 333–38.
- Ryken, Philip Graham  
2005 *Exodus: Saved for God's Glory*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.
- Sands, Paul Francis  
2010 "The Imago Dei as Vocation." *The Evangelical Quarterly* 82 (1): 28–41.
- Siker, Judy Yates  
1996 "Holiness." In *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology. Vol.2*, edited by Walter A. Elwell, 477–80. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Snodgrass, Klyne R.  
1996 "Matthew and the Law." In *Treasures New and Old: Recent Contributions to Matthean Studies*, edited by David R. Bauer, and Mark A. Powell, 99–127. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Spanner, Huw  
1998 "Tyrants, Stewards - or Just Kings?" In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions About Animals for Theology and Ethics*, edited by Andrew Linzey, and Dorothy Yamamoto, 216–24. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- von Rad, Gerhard  
1962 *Old Testament Theology, Vol. 1*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.
- Watts, James W.  
1996 "The Legal Characterization of God in the Pentateuch." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 67:1–14.
- Wells, Jo Bailey  
2000 *God's Holy People: A Theme in Biblical Theology*. Sheffield, United Kingdom: Sheffield Academic Press.

- Wesley, John  
1739 *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. London, United Kingdom: William Strahan.
- Westermann, Claus  
1984 *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Pub.
- Winslow, Karen Strand  
2014 "Enfolding Others: Social Holiness in the Bible and Biblical Interpretation." In *Holy Imagination: Rethinking Social Holiness*, edited by Nathan Crawford, Jonathan Dodrill, and David Wilson, 11–27. Lexington, KY: Emeth Press.
- Wright, Christopher J. H.  
2004 *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- 2006 *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- 2010 *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Wright, G. Ernest  
1950 *The Old Testament Against Its Environment*. London, United Kingdom: SCM Press.

