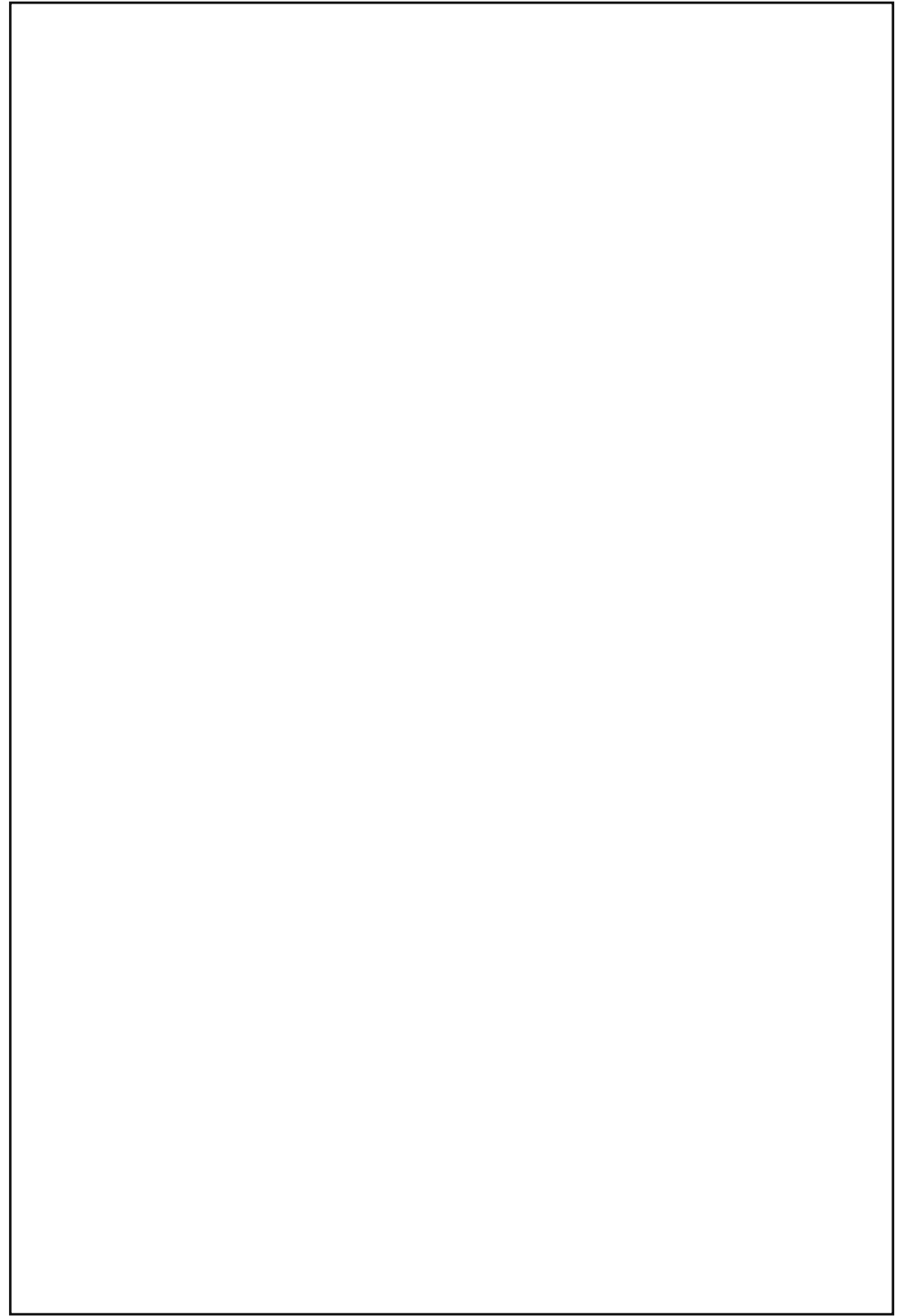
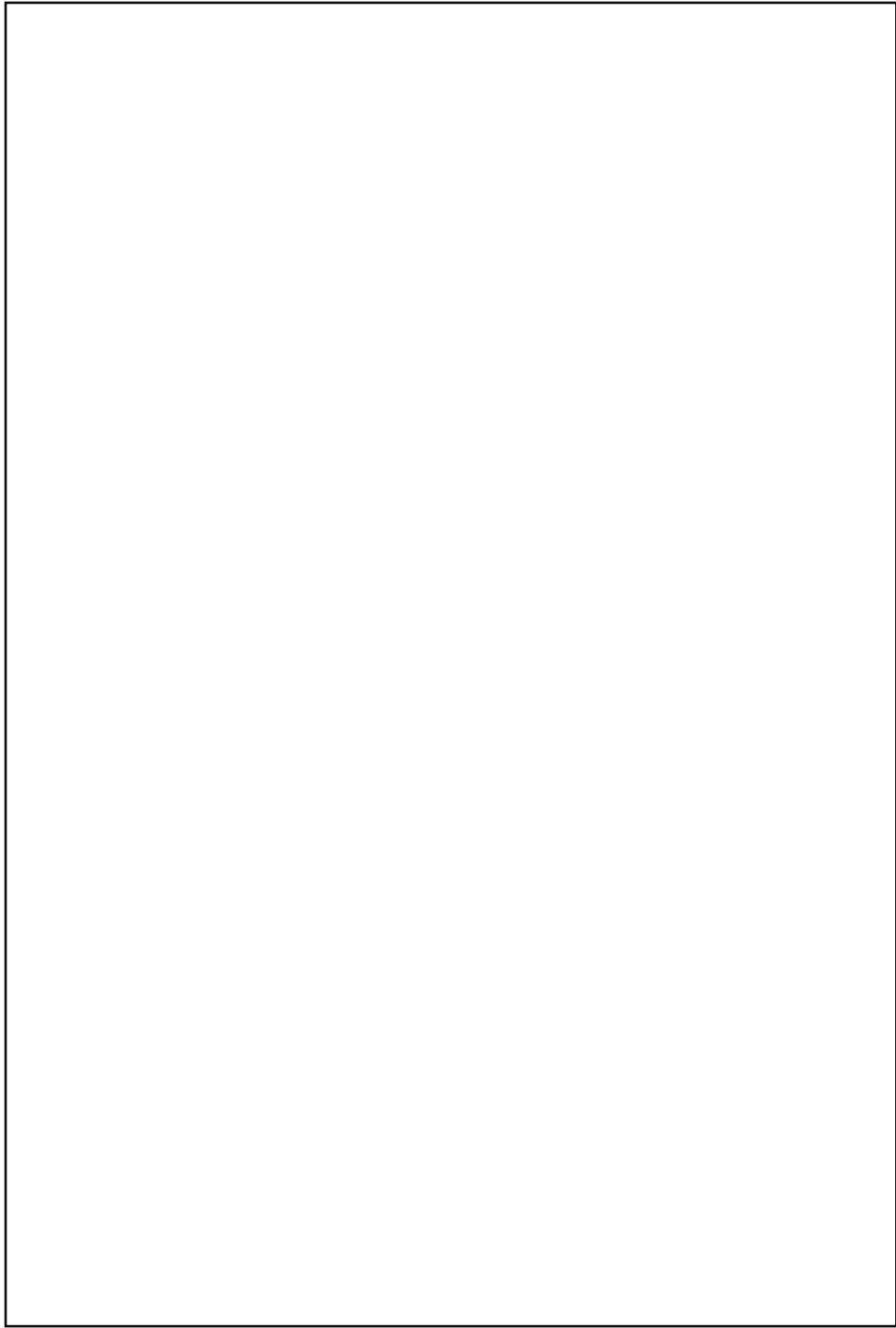


Behold Your God

a study in the attributes of God



- Acknowledge his presence by talking to him
- Expect to meet with him in worship
- Remind yourself that he is present at all times
- Work and speak as if he is present

When God doesn't seem to be present

God never leaves, but sometimes we lose the sense of his presence. Why?

1 - The Greatness of Knowing God

Jeremiah 9:23 This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, ²⁴ but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.

If the most important thing we can do with our lives is to know God, then the next most important thing is to grow in that knowledge.

Knowing God is the greatest thing we can do with our lives

"let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me" v24

Not everyone can be rich, or successful, but you can know God, and this is the greatest thing.

Knowing God is great because God is so great

He is the creator; we are creatures.

We are sinful creatures.

He is God.

Knowing God is great because it is what we were made for

Colossians 1:10 "And we pray this in order that you may *live a life worthy of the Lord* and may please him in every way: ... *growing in the knowledge of God*"

"We tend to think great thoughts of man and leave only room for very small thoughts of God." – Packer (Knowing God p6)

Knowing God must be great because it cost an immense price

It took God the Son to experience death, to be forsaken by his father, having that perfect eternal relationship torn asunder, to go through Hell, to know the power of the grave. All for us, so that we could enter into and enjoy and delight and explore the riches the depths of knowing God.

Knowing God must be great because it is the activity

that will consume all our thinking for all eternity

John 17:3 Now **this is eternal life**: that they may know you, the only true God.

Application

Make sure you know God

Make time to know God

If this is the greatest thing we can do then making time is a priority.

- Make time to read his word
- Make time to study his word
- Make time to memorise his word
- Make time to pray

Be Thankful

Pray for a hunger to know God

*As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?
Psalm 42:1-2*

Pray that this knowledge would not just be head knowledge

19 - Your God is near

Psalm 145:18 - "The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."

God is completely present in all places at all times

All of God is present – he is not divided or spread out (Psalm 145:18 in context)

God is present everywhere (Psalm 139)

God's presence should impact our daily lives

God is present with us in every aspect of daily life

- **God's presence is a challenge to keep from sin**

He is watching us, even when others aren't

How can we survive in the presence of the holy God?

Either because of Jesus or because of God's patience – one will run out, the other never will.

- **God's presence is a strength in temptation**

He is closer than the tempter. His strength is available to us

- **God's presence is a Comfort in trial**

In difficulties our comfort lies not in what God might do, but in the fact that he is with us.

- **God's presence is a Help to worship**

If Christ was visibly sitting beside you would your attitude be any different?

- **God's presence brings dignity to all we do**

He is with us in the ordinary details of every day life. Eph 6:7 "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men."

We need to cultivate an awareness of God's presence

- **Go to the place where God has revealed himself**

In his word – 1 Sam 3:21

Amongst his people – Matt 18:20

- **God's wrath means an Angry Presence – Rev 14:10**
God is not absent from Hell. He is present in all his holy fury.

- **God's wrath means an Awful Prospect – Rev 14:11**
It will never end. "Hell is as eternal as Heaven. In life, even in the darkest moments, there is always the hope that things will get better. There is no such hope in Hell." (Peter Jeffery)

Lessons we need to learn

- **Turn to Jesus Christ now, while you have time**
He offers to take God's wrath on himself, so that you don't have to face it

- **How thankful we should be to Jesus**
He has faced that wrath for us

- **There is nothing more important than Heaven and Hell**
We need to let people know. Too often we worry about our reputation.

- **There can be no delight, only sorrow**
People need to see in us that Hell is real, and that God's wrath is to be feared. And that it bothers us that they are going there.

When people see our concern, they will be more ready to listen to our message.

2 - The Benefits of Knowing God

"the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many:" – Dan 11:32b, 33a

Context: Words spoken by God to His people in a time of upcoming trouble.

Spend time getting to know God and you will have your faith strengthened

"The people who know their God will display strength"

"I believe that there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God" AW Tozer

"He, who studies not and loves not the divine perfections cannot plead with God, or be joyful in him, as does he, who delights himself in the Almighty" – WS Plummer

We need to water our faith with the rain of God's attributes.

- **Such knowledge strengthen our faith by bringing us great comfort in affliction**

- **Such knowledge will strengthen our faith by giving us a balanced perspective**

"It doesn't matter, for I have known God and they haven't."

- **Such knowledge will strengthen our faith by giving us a contentment in life**

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." - Phil 1:21

Spend time getting to know God and you will live a productive life for God

"the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." – Dan 11:32

The more you develop your relationship with God the more he will delight to work through you.

If we are going to be Christians who have an impact, we need

to be pure in an impure world.

“A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God.” The same is true for any of us

Spend time getting to know God and you will become an effective evangelist and discipler

Daniel 11:33 And they that understand among the people shall instruct many

Knowing God will give us a holy boldness.

Knowing God will give us a love for the lost.

Knowing God will give us a rich message to feed other believers

18 - Your God is Wrathful

“If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. – Rev 14:9-10

God’s wrath is real

Scripture is full of references: Psalm 5:5, 11:5, Nahum 1:2, Matthew 10:28, Ephesians 2:3, 5:6, Revelation 6:16, 16:1,19

Scripture has many examples: Flood, Sodom & Gomorrah, the plagues in Egypt, the fall of Jerusalem in 587BC, Ananias and Sapphira

God’s wrath falls on everyone who fails to follow Jesus

Rev 14 describes two groups of people.

V1-5 a group of 144,000 people (the number is symbolic) – they represent all those who have been redeemed (v3), and they have the father’s name on their foreheads. They are safe.

V6-20 a second group – marked out as belonging to the devil – anyone who has not been redeemed. God’s wrath falls on them.

God hates both sin and the sinner. Ps 5:5, 11:5

God’s wrath is terrible

God is not cruel, his wrath is not a loss of self-control. It is God’s just reaction to our sin. It will be utterly fair. “God is only angry where anger is called for”

- **God’s wrath means Absolute Poverty - 2 Thess 1:9**

Separation from God; and separation from every good and pleasant thing.

- **God’s wrath means Agonising Pain - Rev 14:10**

Imagery of fire, smoke, burning sulphur, a worm that does not die. Not literal, but much worse. An accusing conscience, the pain of memories.

Heaven will have its degrees of reward – Matthew 25:23

God's judgment and reward will be an utterly fair assessment of your life – whether you find yourself in Heaven or Hell.

3 - God is Transcendent

Jeremiah 10:6 “No-one is like you, O LORD”

Key Thought - Our God is incomparable. Nothing compares to him. Nothing is like him. He exceeds everything.

Nothing Compares to our God

Is your God too small?

The word ‘transcendent’ simply means ‘above us’ or beyond our reach, beyond our ability to know or grasp fully.

Tozer - “We must not think of God as highest in an ascending order of beings, starting with the single cell and going on up from the fish to the bird to the animal to man to angel to cherub to God. Forever God stands apart. He is as high above an archangel as above a caterpillar.” p 76

Our God exceeds all known limits. He is immeasurable. His love cannot be measured. His wisdom, his being power, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, cannot be measured. He is infinite. Whatever God is, he is infinitely so: he is infinite Wisdom, infinite Goodness, infinite Knowledge, infinite Power. He is the only infinite being or thing in the universe.

Key Rule:

As you think about any attribute, and are stuck by what you have realised, say to yourself, “God is even more than this. Even better than this.”

How then should God's transcendence apply to your life?

Applications

We must be reverent in worship

Jeremiah 10:6 “No-one is like you, O LORD... Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due.”

There should be a humbling of ourselves.
There should be a reverence about us as we come into his presence.
Here is a truth to keep our minds from wandering.

Here is a truth to lift our hearts when they feel that worship is meaningless and empty.

We must not underestimate God

Or think that we should understand everything about him, e.g. Trinity, Predestination

We can trust God in difficulties

God transcends your problems - no problem is too big.
God transcends your sin. There is no sin too bad. There is no stain that his mercy cannot remove.

We should be continually amazed in his love for us

You the sinner can have a relationship with this great being because of Jesus!

Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name *is* Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy *place*, With him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

17 - Your God is Just

"Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" - Genesis 18:25

God's justice is his holiness in action.

God will judge

- **He is patient before judging - v20**
- **His judgment is based on the facts - v 21**
(Revelation 20:11, Matthew 12:36, Corinthians 5:10)
- **God takes no delight in punishing - v22**
(Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11, 2 Peter 3:9)
But God's love doesn't mean he won't judge - Psalm 11:7

God will judge all the earth

v25 "Will not the Judge of **all the earth** do right?"

- **You can't escape being judged by God**
Everyone of us will be judged – Christian & non-Christian.
(Ps 96:13, Hebrews 12:23, Psalm 98:9, 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- **You can escape being found guilty**
1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful *and just* and will forgive us our sins.

God will judge all the earth fairly

"Will not he Judge of all the earth *do right*?"

Sodom is a picture of God's final judgment on the world. The righteous will all escape, and the wicked will all be punished. God will make no mistakes.

Here is comfort in difficult cases

- **God's judgment is fair in its terms**
He will judge us according to our knowledge.
He will judge us according to what we have done
- **God's judgment is fair in its punishments and rewards**
Hell will have its degrees of punishment – Luke 12:47-48

16 - Your God is patient

“The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.” Ex 34:6-7

God's patience is great

- Not because he has no choice.
- Not because he is short of power.
- It is his choice.
- It's a great patience.
 - Numerous warnings
 - Many sins daily
- You owe your existence to the patience of God

A warning to those who ignore Jesus - Hebrews 10:29
An encouragement for believers.

God's patience has a purpose

“The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” - 2 Peter 3:9

We don't deserve a second chance.
Even the angels didn't get a second chance.
All the warnings that he gives are continual invitations to repent.

Comfort amid disaster
A spur to evangelism

God's patience has a limit

“Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished”

“Patience will always eventually give way to justice”
The more patience he shows, the more severe his wrath will be.

Make the most of today. Today is the only day you can be sure of God's patience.

Fellow believers, let us learn to delight in his patience.
And let's not abuse this patience.

4 - Our God is eternal

Ecc 3:11 “He has also set eternity in the hearts of men”

We are not just here for this life, we are made for eternity. Ahead of us stretches a vast immeasurable expanse that will never end. This life is but a stepping stone.

God has always been and will always be

Psalm 90:2 “Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”

If God lasts forever then

It makes Hell even more terrifying

“Oh eternity! If all the body of the earth and sea were turned to sand, and all the air up to the starry heaven were nothing but sand, and a little bird should come every thousand years, and fetch away in her bill but the tenth part of a grain of all that heap of sand, what numberless years would be spent before that vast heap of sand would be fetched away! Yet, if at the end of all that time, the sinner might come out of hell, there would be some hope; but that word ‘Ever’ breaks the heart.”

It makes Heaven more wonderful

The great frustration and sadness of this life is knowing that everything good will end. In Heaven there will never be that moment when we realise that the joy will come to an end. He lives forever to bless. And the blessings are eternal. Listen to some of these scriptures

Psalm 16:11 You will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

His promises last forever

All time is like an open book to God

Psalm 90:4 “For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.”

All your sins are always before him

Here is a motivation to keep from sin. When you are tempted to sin – think to yourself – this sin will be before God for all eternity.

All your praise, obedience, service, love, delight is always before him

All your life is before him

That means that there is nothing in your life that he did not plan. He sees the end from the beginning.

We must live with eternity at the forefront of our minds

This life is shorter than you think - be ready for the next

How pointless it is to make this life the focus of our thinking!
(v12)

A right perspective on suffering

In this world you will have trouble, Jesus said. But look, ahead of you lies an eternity free of trouble. These troubles are but momentary - 2 Corinthians 4:17

Whatever else you do Get your family ready for eternity

Psalm 90:16,17.

This was Moses focus - Lord let my children and their children know about you, let them know the God of eternity.

15 - Your God is Merciful and Gracious

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin." Ex 34:6-7

Mercy is not getting what we deserve

God loves to be merciful - Micah 7:18

God in his mercy doesn't give us what we deserve - Jonah 4:2

God's mercy cannot be earned - Rom. 9:14

Applications

- Seek this mercy
- Be thankful
- Be merciful

Grace is getting what we don't deserve

Grace is "God's undeserved, unearned favour"

Grace is God's favour/blessings

- Common Grace - For everyone - Food, homes, friendship, pleasure, safety.
- Special Grace – God's work in the lives of the elect, saving, sanctifying, strengthening, blessing, guarding, preserving.

Grace is free to us, because it has been paid for by Christ - Ephesians 2:8,9

Applications

- Assurance – salvation *is* for the unworthy
- Live by grace – Realise we don't deserve any blessing from God. And then ask him to bless.
- Look at others through the eyes of grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

God's love in Salvation is a Giving Love

People who love much will give much.

“For God so loved the world *that he gave*”

- God gives although it was us who owed.
- God gives the best - His Son
- God gives what we need – a substitute
- God gives extravagantly – Why then should we worry? – Rom 8:32
- God gives graciously/freely

God's love in Salvation is a Secure Love

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him *shall not perish* but have everlasting life.”

His love for you is based on Christ, not on you. He loves you because of Jesus. And his love for his son will never change. So you are secure.

Conclusion

Our response?

Love Him

Trust him

Why do I ever grumble and show discontent and resentment at the circumstances in which God has placed me?

Why am I ever distrustful, fearful, or depressed?

Why do I ever allow myself to grow cool, formal, and half-hearted in the service of the God who loves me so?

Why do I ever allow my loyalties to be divided, so that God has not all my heart?

5 – Your God does not change

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” James 1:17

Your God does not Change – Proved

Numbers 23:19, Psalm 102:27, Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8, James 1:17

This is a message that everyone needs

In him we find a shelter in the restless change of life, a place where peace is real where happiness cannot be snatched away, where riches are forever and love never changes.

Your God does not change – Explained

Your God's personality does not change

His love does not change - Isaiah 54:10

His truthfulness does not change - Numbers 23:19

His mercy does not change - Psalm 136:1

He is no less loving, no less powerful, no less wise, no less good, no less merciful, no less just, no less near than he was in Bible times.

Your God's plans do not change

God has a plan, a purpose that no-one or nothing in Heaven or Hell can thwart. Psalm 33:11

Your God's Promises do not change

Hebrews 6:18

God's punishment does not change

John 3:18 “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.”

Your God does not change - Applied

1. The Comfort of knowing your God doesn't change

This is great comfort when we fall, when we sin.

“Consider what you owe to His changelessness. Though you have changed a thousand times, He has not changed once.”

-Charles Spurgeon

This is great comfort when we pray

This is great comfort when we lack assurance.

And why should Christ order his disciples to rejoice that their names were written in Heaven, if God were changeable to blot them out again?

Let it comfort you when you face all the unknowns of life

This is what James is telling these people – although the world is changing all around you, and you may wonder how will we cope in a changing world. James says – here is what matters – God doesn't change.

2. The Challenge of knowing your God doesn't change

Will you Trust him?

You can trust him – he is not like a shadow. You can lean on him.

Will you get close to God?

Charnock “The nearer we come to him the more stability we shall have in ourselves”

Will you expect more from your relationship with God?

The people of the Bible they had a much more vital and living relationship with their God. We say to ourselves – “Ah yes, but times have changed” – But God hasn't changed. How can we content ourselves with anything less?

Conclusion

Key thought - Every time you read your Bible, say “It's the same God”

14 - Your God is Love

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.” – John 3:16

Nobody loves like God loves.

An important qualification: God does not love everyone equally.

When the Bible talks about God's love it isn't always referring to the same thing. It sometimes refers to the:

- God's providential love over all he has made – sinful people do enjoy many blessings from God
- The way God looks at the world and decides to save people out of it
- God's particular love towards his people
- The love God has towards his own people is sometimes said to be conditional on their obedience

Today we are looking at his saving love

God's love in Salvation is a Sovereign Love

“For God so loved...”

God loves because he chooses to love. Ephesians 1:4ff, 2:3ff
God is under no obligation to love any person.
God's love is an uninfluenced love.

Great comfort in this. God loved us while we were sinners.

God's love in Salvation is a Great love

“God *so* loved”

John 17:23 – “you [God the Father]... have loved them even as you have loved me [Jesus].”

God's love for you is the same as His love for His Son.

“The love of God is like the Amazon River flowing down to water one daisy.”

Do not conform – do not try to fit in. You are God’s people.

Pure

They will strive, not just to avoid wrong, but to be positively righteous.

Matt 5:48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

We are to root sin out of every corner.

Beautiful

It is an honour to be like God. It is our purpose to be like God.

Holiness brings deep and lasting happiness. God is the holiest and happiest being in the universe.

God’s way of holiness brings real happiness that goes deep, and lasts for eternity.

6 - Your God is faithful

“Great is your faithfulness.” - Lamentations 3:25

If we are to live with confidence in this sin wrecked world we need to grasp this: Your God’s faithfulness is 100% certain.

God always achieves what he sets out to accomplish

God’s faithfulness resides in there being nothing false about him. His word will never break a promise, he is reliable, dependable, and always does what he promises to do.

The Bible is full of illustrations of his faithfulness from beginning to end. God is faithful, not just in his purposes in the Bible, but in his purposes for you

God is faithful in his pardoning

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, *he is faithful* and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

God is faithful in his protection

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But *the Lord is faithful*, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

God is faithful in his provision

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And *God is faithful*; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

God is faithful in his promises

Hebrews ^{10:23} Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised *is faithful*.

God is faithful in his preserving

1 Corinthians 1:8-9 He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, *is faithful*.

God is faithful even when it seems he isn't

Trouble doesn't mean that God isn't faithful. It means that he is at work.

He is faithfully purifying us, pruning us, developing Christ-like qualities in us – 1 Thessalonians 5:23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. ... 24 The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

There are qualities that we can never learn except in adversity – E.g. Patience, endurance, trust
There are qualities that cannot be seen except in adversity.

The hardest pressure is meant to bring us the biggest profit.

God's faithfulness can be rested upon

A wonderfully comforting doctrine.

Grasping this truth will:

- ... keep us from worry.
- ... check our grumblings and complaints.
- ... increase our confidence in God.
- ... give us hope.
- ... make our testimony shine brightly.

“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart” - Psalm 91:4

13 - Your God is Holy

“Be Holy for I am Holy” 1 Peter 1:16

God is Holy

God's holiness has three characteristics

He is awesomely separate from us

“holy” means to separate or to cut.

God is separate from his creation.

Exodus 19 – the people not allowed on God's mountain – he is holy
The Tabernacle – the Holy of Holies. The place where no man may come, except High Priest only once a year.

God is in a class of his own. He is so far above us, so utterly majestic that we cannot question him, and we cannot challenge him. When people see God there will be no shaking of fists, no smart remarks, no defences of disobedience. God is awesomely separate. This should fill us with a reverent fear.

He is utterly pure

Separate from all things sinful.

Isaiah 6 – This holy man feels his unholiness.

He is wondrously beautiful

Holiness is beautiful - Psalm 27:4, 29:2, 93:5, 96:9

You are to be Holy

We cannot be holy in exactly the same sense that God is holy. We cannot be awesomely separate, transcendent. But nevertheless God expects us to be holy in as far as we can, because that is what he is and that is what he values.

Separate

Separate = set aside, devoted to God.

Whatever circumstances God has placed you in, you are set apart – there to serve God.

1 Peter 1:14 As obedient children, ***do not conform*** to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

God's providence isn't for our comfort but for his service

"so that ... you will abound in every good work."

God abounds in giving so that we can abound in serving

You can live confidently in God's providence

Your God is sovereign and you live in his hands.

7 - Your God is Good

"They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness... The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made." - Psalm 145:7,9

Your God is abundantly Good

God has a big hand and a big heart.

God is good in what he has given you

Think of all that God has given you:

You don't even have to be a Christian to enjoy God's goodness

v9

Romans 2:4 "God's kindness leads you towards repentance"

God is good in what he has done for you

Psalm 145:7 says: They will celebrate your abundant goodness, and *joyfully sing of your righteousness.*

You have been called.

You have been saved

You have been adopted

You have been made right with God

You have been given a name and a place among his people;

You have been given the rights and the nature of his sons;

You have been given the complete forgiveness of all your sins;

You have been given a robe of righteousness;

You have been given access to him in prayer;

You have been given this world and worlds to come;

You have been given all that he has;

You have been given his own Son,

And he gives it to us for free!

God is good in what he is doing in you

All the situations you face are from the hand of a good father to develop you and bring you closer to him, the fountain of all joy and happiness

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." Psalm 23:6

God is good in what he has in store for you

“How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you.” - Psalm 31:19

Responding to God's Goodness

Repentance

Trust

God's goodness does not run hot and cold. It is steady. What ever is happening to you as a Christian is coming from the hand of a good God.

Praise

“They will celebrate your abundant goodness, and joyfully sing of your righteousness.”

And not just when things are going our way.

Remember

v7 literally says “They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness”

Tell

That's the context of these verses – God's people delighting in his goodness, telling others about it. It bubbles out of them like an overflowing fountain.

Imitate

“Why has God given generously to some and not to others? Was it merely for ourselves, or rather that we might have the wherewithal to have the honour of imitating him?”

Kindness to our worst enemies.

12 - Your God Directs

God's attributes of his goodness, his power, his knowledge, his wisdom, and his sovereignty converge on this one point of God's providence.

What his knowledge knows we need, his wisdom knows what is best, his goodness longs to give it, his power is able to give it, and in his sovereignty he commands it.

“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” - 2 Cor 9:8

Our Problem with God's providence

Paul encouraging Corinthians to give. Possibly they are first looking at their own needs, asking the question, “What have I to spare?”

Our problem is the same - We look at our situations and we worry because we forget about the God who provides, the God with big hands and a big heart.

God's providence covers all things

Listen to the word ‘all’ - 5 times - All grace... in all things... at all times... all that you need... able to do all good works.

In all things – no circumstance too hard
At all times – no time that we are overlooked
All you need – no shortage, abounding provision

Whatever, whenever, however, we need God's grace is able to overflow and fill that need. There is an awesome breadth to God provision.

Personal provision – “all grace abound *to you...* having all *that you* need, *you will* abound...”

God's providence gives us what we need

“having *all that you need...*”

God gives to us not all things. Just what we need – but always what we need.

Here is the realisation of what we pray for in the Lord's prayer, "your kingdom come."

We have seen the future and we know that we will be vindicated. One day all the world will see our king, and will fall before him. Some in love and admiration, others in fear and trembling.

Application

How should a Christian live if their God reigns Supreme?

Live with Joy and praise

Psalm 47:1 Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.

Psalm 47:6 *Sing* praises to God, *sing* praises; *sing* praises to our King, *sing* praises.

Four times, there's an urgency, and a delight, and an excitement.

Live in obedient submission

God does not tolerate competition

Live with confidence

We do not need to be anxious. We do not need to be apologetic for what we believe. Your God reigns

8 - The Power of God

"Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing." - Isaiah 40:26

What would it be like to read a Bible story for the first time and not to know how it was going to turn out?

Our God is Awesome in Power

He is breath taking in his power. It is utterly astounding, overwhelming. Let's take a whirlwind tour of some of the mighty acts of God to see that

Creation – Genesis 1

Everything made from nothing – Is anything too hard for him?

Moses – Numbers 11

Where do you get meat for 2.5 million people in the desert?

Num 11:23 "Is the Lord's arm too short?"

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego – Daniel 3

Three men in a furnace, living, ropes burned, but not their clothes or skin. Is any difficulty too much for God?

Paul – Acts 9

Is any person too lost for God to save?

The Spread of the gospel

It flourished despite all the attempts of emperors to silence it, despite the men whom Jesus commissioned being executed and exiled, it flourished.

Conclusion

God has no power reserves; he doesn't run out of power. He is no more tired after creating a universe than he is if he had created a grain of sand.

Jeremiah 32:27 "I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything **too hard** for me?"

God's power works for you and in you

If you are a Christian here is some spectacular and stunning news – When God saves a person, his power comes into their life.

God's power works in You – Eph 1:19-20, 3:20, Col 1:29
God's power is to help us live the Christian life – Col 1:10-12

We don't need any more power – we just need to learn to use it in the way God has commanded us. 2 Peter 1:3 “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”

Application

It Warns

“How great must be vengeance be, that is backed by all the strength of God”

It Comforts

No circumstances are so black but God cannot transform them. Here is comfort when we are in need. God is able to provide No temptation too strong
The church is never so small and weak but that God can raise us up again.
Here is comfort when sin has made a complete mess of your life – God is powerful, he can turn things around

It Humbles

God doesn't need us to do anything for him. He is all powerful. We can have no pride about what we do in service for God.

It deepens our Dependence

We can do nothing without God.

It Encourages

There is no power that can defeat God
You are on the winning side.
You will make it to the end; you will be preserved by God as you seek to persevere in the Christian life.

11 - Your God Reigns Supreme

Psalm 47

The God who reigns

He is Supreme - v2

He is Active v3

He is Kind v4

He is Victorious v5

The extent of God's reign

God reigns over all things

“the great king over all the earth”

God reigns over all people

Psalm 47:3 He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet.

Psalm 47:8 God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.

He expects unbelievers to obey him as well. He is still King.

God reigns in Salvation

V4 - **He chose** our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

The King doesn't wait for people to come to him, he brings new life to lost people. He rescues them.

The Result of God's Reign

A present purpose - God reigns over all things and all people for the sake of the church

Psalm 47:3 He subdued nations under **us**, peoples under **our** feet.

A future purpose – The Day is coming when all will see God's reign

Psalm 47:9 The nobles of the nations assemble **as the people of the God of Abraham**, for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.

God's wisdom means you can be content with who you are and where God has placed you

God's wisdom means you won't understand everything

You can have wisdom from God

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

God's word needs to be studied, not just read.

Whatever else you do – get wisdom.

9 - Your God Knows

Our God knows all things

This is called Omniscience. He knows all about :

- Himself - 1 Corinthians 2:11
- Nature - Job 37:16
- Our secret actions - Psalm 139:12, Joshua 7:11
- Our Words - 1 Samuel 2:3
- Our Thoughts - Revelation 2:23, Psalm 139:4, Isaiah 66:18
- The Future - Isaiah 46:9-10
- All things - 1 John 3:20, Hebrews 4:13

God knows all things instantly, completely and permanently

- He knows everything instantly. There is no progression from one thing to another.
- He knows with a perfect clarity. All things sit before him.
- He knows everything easily.
- He knows everything perfectly or completely. There are no gaps in his knowledge
- He knows everything permanently. He never forgets.

God's knowledge is cause for Adoration

God has known all about our sin and yet has been prepared to forgive and love us.

God's knowledge is cause for comfort

God knows exactly what we are going through and how we feel

It comforts us when we feel at our wits end, that we can't take any more

He remembers we are dust, and he our frame well knows. He knows what we can and can't take.

It comforts us in a world full of accidents and uncertainty

God will never make a mistake, or fail to plan ahead, or fail to take into account all the eventualities. Job 23:10

It comforts when we consider our sin, when we have questions about forgiveness

“No talebearer can inform on us, no forgotten skeleton can come tumbling out of some hidden closet to shame us”

It comforts us when we come to pray

Our prayers will never be missed by God.

It comforts us when fail to live up to our own desires

God knows our desires and our longings and he knows when we long to serve him more closely.

It comforts us when no-one notices us

The world may ignore us, but nothing is missed by God.

It comforts us to believe his promise

There is no circumstance that is unforeseen.

God's knowledge is cause for terror

Nothing can be hidden from God. There is no refuge. Secrecy is pointless. Hypocrisy is pointless. Coming to church is pointless.

God's knowledge is cause for challenge**Challenges us to root out sin from our hearts****Challenges us to worship from the heart****Challenges us to humility**

“How humble we ought to be before God... we have a drop of knowledge, but nothing to the Divine ocean.”

Challenges us not to insult this Divine perfection

How easily we insult God's knowledge:

- When we pry into things he has not revealed
- When we make judgmental statements about the hearts and motives of other people.
- When we worship without engaging our heart
- When we come for communion without having any interest in the things of God, or only come when its communion time.
- When we are more worried about people seeing us sin than about God seeing us sin. In other words when we refrain from doing something wrong because someone will see us, rather than because God will see us.
- When we presume upon God's knowledge and don't pray about things because we think “God already knows.”

10 - Your God is Wise

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! - Romans 11:33

Wisdom is the ability to look at a situation and know the best possible way to bring about the best possible outcome. The best way to the best outcome. Wisdom is using knowledge for the highest and best results.

Sinclair Ferguson writes: “Unless you become familiar with the wisdom of God, you cannot make much real progress in the Christian life. True stability over an extended period of discipleship will often depend on trusting that God is wise in everything he does and in all his dealings with his children.”

Your God is wise

Rom 11:33 – follows 11 chapters of Paul examining the gospel. What is his conclusion? – Isn't God's wisdom amazing!

The Best Result

Christlikeness - perfection

Heaven – pleasure that never ends in God's presence

The Best Way

Two great problems: Our sin & God's wrath.

In Jesus life and death, mercy is displayed and justice is seen to be done. The best solution – a substitute.

Through Faith – the easiest of requirements

How wise! All the work is done, we just have to trust.

Implication

There is only one solution to man's great problem.

You can trust God's wisdom in all circumstances

God's Wisdom means that nothing he does could be done better

God's wisdom means you don't have to worry in trying circumstances