

Theology Proper: The Doctrine of God

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The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Numbers 6:24-26

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Introduction

Jesus said, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Knowing God is essential to all who seek eternal life in Christ. We should all desire and seek an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus. Paul had such an inward longing to know God that he wrote,

“That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Philippians 3:10). The Psalmist, had such an unquenchable thirst for the God that he cried out, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (Psalms 42:1-2).

If it is indeed our desire to have an intimate knowledge of God, we must study and know as much of Him as is humanly possible. If we want to know God personally, we must begin by developing our relationship with Him through His Word and prayer. When I first gave my life to Jesus, I immediately began studying the Bible day and night.

Shortly after starting Bible College, I began memorizing scripture. I went through the entire Navigator's memorization course, after which I began putting books of the Bible together. I have researched thoroughly all the books of the New Testament and most of the Old Testament books. I have also researched the major areas of theology in depth. I found that an intimate knowledge of the Word of God is one of the greatest assets there is in our quest to know God.

Here, we will be studying what is known as Theology Proper or The Doctrine of God. This is not exhaustive by any means, but it will give the student of scripture and theology a very good and basic understanding of The Doctrine of God and God

Himself. The major areas that will be covered are the Existence of God, the Attributes of God, The Names of God, the Trinity, God's abundance, His ability, and the Worship of God. It is imperative we understand that the study of God alone is not sufficient in itself to knowing God but merely a means to that end.

Along with our study of God, we must pursue Him, seek His face and spend time with Him daily in His Word and prayer. We need a spirit and desire like that of Mary and not the spirit of business that Martha had (Luke 10:38-42). We must seek Him first before all else, spending time seated at the feet of the Master. We are to "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). "And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

It was said of Jesus, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mark 1:35). We must do no less, in our pursuit of God, than Jesus did. "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6). It was said of the Apostles, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" Acts 4:13).

The Existence of God: Opposing Views

The United States was founded on Biblical principles, but in recent years we've seen a growing opposition to the things of God. In this series we discussed [The Existence of God Assumed in Scripture](#) and [Arguments for God's Existence](#).

The two most dominant views opposing the existence of God:

1. Atheism

Webster's definition of atheism is, "A disbelief in the existence of God or any other deity. The doctrine that there is neither god nor any other deity; godlessness in conduct." An atheist is someone who denies or doesn't believe in the existence of God.

Psalm 14:1 – "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that does good."

Five categories, types or aspects of atheism:

1. **Theoretical.** This is the intellectual belief that God doesn't exist. Many make this claim, but I personally believe there are few true atheists. An atheist is someone whose disbelief in God remains in every situation or circumstance. My dad, a World War II veteran, used to say, "There are no atheist in foxholes." When a person has gunfire and bombs exploding around them they seldom doubt the existence of God. They are, in fact, usually crying out to Him.

Also, there will be no atheists in the presence of God. I gave my life to Jesus in prison when I was a young man. There was another young man there who claimed to be an atheist. One day a man, who was doing a life sentence, came and talked with us about God. Before leaving, he asked if he could pray with us. As he began to pray, the atheist began to weep.

He was in the presence of God. Needless to say, he was no longer an atheist. A few days later, he was miraculously released from prison and his life changed forever. He had been in the presence of God. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

No one will deny the existence of God in His presence on the day of Judgment. When they stand before God, at the great white throne judgment, they will not

be in doubt of His existence any longer. John wrote, "I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:11-15).

The Bible says, on that day every knee will bow and every tongue confess Jesus to be Lord to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11). At that time, all atheists will know God exists and that He is real. Sadly, at this time it will be too late. Outside of a relationship with Christ, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrew 10:26).

2. **Foolish.** "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God" (Psalms 14:1a). All atheists fall under this category. It's foolish not to believe in God. They are an atheist because they are first a fool by their very nature. Their disbelief in God stems from their sinful and foolish nature. It's interesting that most people who claim to be atheist do so because of so called "intellectual reasons." Romans 1:22 says, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Corinthians 1:18 and 3:19). Most claiming to be atheists are self dependent and leaning on their own strength but "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong" (1 Corinthians 1:27).

3. **Corrupt.** "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that does good" (Psalms 14:1b). They are an atheist because they are corrupt by nature. Let's face it, most of us don't want to change until we are faced with circumstances or problems that force us to. It's easier not to believe in or make a commitment to God so we can continue to live the way we want. Once we commit our life to Him, we must be willing to change and do things His way. We want to remain corrupt in our thinking and actions. If we believe we must change.
4. **Practical.** Many Christians fall under this category. We have an intellectual belief in God, but in practice we deny Him. James 2:14-19 tells us that faith without works is dead. Our walk doesn't match our talk. We deny Him by our life. "The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same

manner as He walked” (1 John 2:6). “For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written” (Romans 2:24).

This doesn’t mean we should be legalistic (Romans 11:6, Galatians 2:21, Galatians 3:1-3, Galatians 5:4). On the other hand, our faith must be put into action to demonstrate to the world true belief in God (James 2:14-19, Mark 2:5, Matthew 7:21-27, 1 John 3:16-18). Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

5. **Rebellious.** Again, “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God” (Psalms 14:1a). This verse could also be translated, “The fool has said in his heart, No God.” How many of us have said no to God at one time or another? Obedience is the key to receiving God’s blessings (Joshua 1:8, Psalms 1:2-3, James 1:25).

- Obedience reveals Jesus is Lord (Matthew 7:21-23).
- Obedience determines our ability to withstand the storms of life (Matthew 7:41-27).
- Obedience shows we really know Him (1 John 2:3-5).
- Obedience shows we really love Him (John 14:21-24).

We often cover our disobedience with tradition and superficial spirituality. It was Peter who said, “Not so Lord” in Acts 10:9-15 when told by God to eat meat that was considered unclean. What a contradiction of terms. It is virtually impossible for Jesus to be truly Lord and to say those words.

There are times our religiosity gets in the way of our obedience or our willingness to obey Jesus. This experience of Peter’s happened while he was seeking God in prayer. It went against the grain of his religious background as a Jew. It’s important to realize that Peter ultimately did obey, but he first had to work through his religious misconceptions.

Saul was told to destroy the Amalekites and all they had. He returned with the King and the best of their flocks. When confronted by Samuel, he said he kept them to sacrifice to the Lord his God. He thought he could cover up his disobedience with a spiritual act.

As a result, he was rejected as being king (1 Samuel 15). How often do believers today cover up a life of disobedience with spiritual acts. God may be requiring something of us and we cover up our disobedience by attempting to appear spiritual.

We are an acting atheist when we rebel against God. It is a fool who says no to God, even if he says so just in his heart.

As a result of Saul's disobedience, he was rejected from being king. Samuel's response to Saul was as follows, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination (witchcraft), And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the Word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king " (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

2. Agnosticism

The Greek word "gnosis" means knowledge or knowing. Agnosticism means you don't know. The man who discipled me said "agnostic" in Latin means "ignoramus." That really sums it up. It's interesting to me that most people who claim to be agnostic consider themselves intellectual. Agnostics are in essence saying, "I don't know, I don't think it's possible to know, I'm an ignoramus."

Many who claim to be agnostic don't really grasp the magnitude of what it means or what they are saying. The point is, wouldn't you rather know one way or another? Jeremiah 29:13 says, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart." I dare you to seek Him with all your heart and see if He will not reveal Himself to you.

The Existence of God: Assumed in Scripture

The Bible assumes the existence of God without attempting to prove it. Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning, God.” The Bible is God’s letter to His creation, revealing Himself to us. In the other articles in this series we discussed [opposing views](#) to the existence of God and [arguments for God’s existence](#).

The Bible is God’s letter to His creation revealing Himself to us. He desires to have a personal relationship with us. As in the beginning with Adam and Eve, God invites us to fellowship with Him. His relationship with man was severed because of sin (Genesis 3:24, Romans 5:12).

Jesus came that we might be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-21, 1 Peter 3:18). As a result, we can fellowship with God again, as Adam and Eve did in the beginning.

This was made possible through Jesus’ finished work on the cross on our behalf. He was separated from God so we might be reconciled to Him.

Hebrews 11:6 – “Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

If we want to develop an ongoing relationship with Him, the only requirement is we must believe. Faith is the only way to please God and be accepted by Him.

We must come to Him in faith believing He will accept us because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Faith is the only way to please God and be accepted by Him.

Hebrews 10:38 – “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him.”

Romans 1:17 – “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

Habakkuk 2:4 – “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”

What We Must Believe:

- **We must believe that He is (Hebrews 11:6).** We must come to Him in faith, believing He exists. “In the beginning, God” (Genesis 1:1). He is the eternal and self existing one (Exodus 3:14, Psalms 90:2, Psalm 93:2).
- **We must believe in Him.** The Jews asked Jesus what they could do to do the works of God. Jesus said, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent” (John 6:29).

There is absolutely no work that we can do to please God other than believing on His Son, Jesus Christ (Roman 4:4-5, Hebrews 10:38, Hebrews 11:6). We must come through Jesus and Him alone (John 14:6, Acts 4:12).

- **We must believe what He says.** Abraham believed the promise of God and was not only declared righteous, but was also called “the friend of God” (Romans 4:3, James 2:23). That is awesome! We can actually be God’s friend.

Jesus said, “You are My friends if you do what I command you” (John 15:14). Abraham believed and did what God said. God told him to leave his homeland and go to a land which He would show him when he arrived. Abraham left in faith and obedience (Genesis 12:1-5).

- **We must exercise faith.** Abraham left looking for a city whose “builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:10). In Mark 2:5 a paralytic man was let down into the presence of Jesus and “seeing their faith” He healed him (Mark 2:5). Their faith was expressed by their actions. “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (James 2:17).
- **We must believe He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).** As we come to Him, walk with and seek Him diligently, He will reward us with His presence (Jeremiah 29:13) and in every area of life (Jeremiah 29:11, 3 John 2, Psalms 1:2-3, Joshua 1:8, John 15:16).

The writers of scripture claimed to know God personally, therefore assuming His existence. You can also personally know the God of the universe. This is the difference between religion and true Christianity. It’s a relationship with God – knowing Him personally.

It’s no longer the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob but He is my God. Jesus said, “I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God” (John 20:17). He is my God. Paul said, “I know whom I have believed” (2 Timothy 1:12). Knowing God intimately was Paul’s passion and longing, He

said, “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings” (Philippians 3:10).

The Psalmist had this same longing. He said, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (Psalms 42:1-2). Knowing God personally is the essence of eternal life.

Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). Eternal life actually consist in knowing the creator of the universe and having a personal relationship with Him. You can know Him if we will come to Him through His Son Jesus and only Him.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6).

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

Four reasons for arguing God’s existence:

Why should we attempt to prove God’s existence when the Bible doesn’t?

- **To convince genuine seekers.** Peter said we are to, “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15).

Those people who are legitimately wanting to know the truth, but because of life’s difficulties are experiencing doubts.

The enemy has used the circumstances of life to confuse them. This is not for the defiant or those insistent on sin – “I defy you to prove His existence” (Luke 16:31). That would be casting your pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6).

This is for the genuine seeker. We present arguments for God’s existence to assist genuine seekers in overcoming their personal battles with doubt and unbelief.

- **To strengthen the faith of those who already believe.** For example, believers studying [apologetics](#) because they believe. This is like digging a post hole and putting the pole in it. It may stand upright in the hole, but it will not be sturdy. If you pour cement in the hole, the pole will become sturdy. Studying proofs like theology and apologetics is similar. It helps us to solidify the faith we already have.
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- **To enrich our knowledge of God.** What greater object of study is there than God! We should seek to know all we can about Him. Hosea 4:6 says, “My people are destroyed (perish) for lack of knowledge.” Let’s learn and absorb all of Him that we possibly can.
- **To give soldiers of the cross ammunition.** The enemy tries to cast doubt and turn people away from the things of God. It’s always better if His soldiers are equipped with the proper ammunition for battle.

Paul was ministering to the deputy of Paphos, Sergius Paulus, when the sorcerer, Elymas, attempted to turn him away from the faith. Paul was properly equipped to thwart the enemies plans and so must we be (Acts 13:4-12).

We must make sure soldiers of the cross are well equipped with all they need for every potential conflict. According to Ephesians 4:11-13, the job of the [five-fold ministry](#) is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. Let’s do our best to make sure they have all the ammunition necessary for any battle that may arise.

Arguments for God's Existence

This study was written to enlighten genuine seekers, strengthen the faith of those who believe, enrich the knowledge of the God we serve, and provide ammunition to soldiers of the cross. In the other articles in this series we discussed [Opposing Views to the Existence of God](#) and [The Existence of God Assumed in Scripture](#). In this part of the series we will discuss arguments for the existence of God.

The Argument From Creation

The universe must inevitably have had a beginning (Genesis 1:1, Hebrews 11:3, Romans 1:20). It is the effect and therefore must have a cause. How did it all begin if there was no God to create it all? No matter what you believe concerning creation, you have to exercise an element of faith. "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible" (Hebrews 11:3).

It takes a lot less faith to believe there is an eternal God who created all things than to believe everything started from nothing. Even a "big bang" had to originate from something. There had to be something there first to cause it. Where did it all come from? The cause is God and the effect is the world or universe in which we live. Thomas Aquinas put it like this, "He is the first cause, Himself uncaused." God is the first cause, who of His own volition caused everything else, yet the cause of God's existence lies within Himself.

A young man who had recently graduated from college approached an elderly lady sitting on her porch. The elderly lady was not very educated but had always relied on her common sense. After exchanging pleasantries, the young man said to her, "After studying mathematics, science and philosophy, I am convinced there is no God and that it is but an empty word." The elderly lady paused for a few seconds then said, "May I ask you a question then?" The young man, puffed up in pride (thinking he could impart his wisdom to her), said, "Absolutely."

This simple lady then picked up an egg and asked him, "Where did this egg come from?" He replied, "A chicken." She asked, "Where did the chicken come from?" "An egg," he said. "Which came first," she asked? "The chicken," said the young man. The lady proceeded, "Where did the first chicken come from from which all subsequent chickens and eggs came?" The young man, somewhat frustrated asked, "What's your point?" She answered him, "You can't explain the existence of a chicken or an egg without God and you expect me to believe you can explain the existence of the universe without Him?"

The Argument From Design

Design and beauty imply there was a designer (Psalms 139:6). Our world is indisputably beautiful and incredible. The complexities that caused it and all that is in it to operate and function the way it does is simply mind boggling. As you look at it, you can't help but think there must have been a creator who understood it and designed it for the purpose which it fulfills.

Let's consider a watch. To suggest it had no designer is an insult to intelligence and reason. It had a maker, who understood its construction and designed it for the purpose of telling time. The universe, much more complex, must have had a maker, who understood its construction and wisely designed it for the purpose it fulfills.

Let's compare it to an author, who takes a car load of printers type and a shovel, throws the type into the air and as they fall to the ground they resolve into a book. Let's say there was an explosion at the Campbell's Soup factory (the division that makes alphabet soup) and out pops a copy of Webster's Dictionary.

The most pronounced unbeliever would say nonsense to both of these examples. Atheistic theories that attempt to leave God out of the equation are just as ridiculous, if not more so.

The Argument From Man's Nature

God has placed within man a moral nature. Paul wrote, "For when the gentiles who do not have the law do instinctively the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law to themselves" (Romans 2:14). Man, even in his fallen and corrupt state, has had placed within him a moral law of right and wrong.

Much of what causes man's psychological problems is guilt. Down deep within him, he knows the difference between right and wrong, even if he is unable to live up to it. Butler said, "If conscience had the power to enforce what it commands it would revolutionize the world." Kant, the great German philosopher said, "Two things fill my soul with awe, the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me" ("Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible," by Myer Pearlman, page 42, paragraph 1).

There is also man's search for something beyond and outside of himself. Man has always had the need for worship. Even in the godless society in which we live recovery groups insist addicts have a "higher power." They do this because even godless mankind realizes man's need to worship and rely on something greater than himself. Man has a hole inside his soul that he seeks to fill. The soul would not thirst for what doesn't exist.

Sadly, man seems to look in all the wrong places. Man will always seek to fill this void with something. He often seeks to fill the hole within his soul with external things such as sexual promiscuity, success, drugs, alcohol and even at times morality, religion and his own goodness, but God is the only one who can fill the void within us (Isaiah 12:3; 55:1; John 7:37-39; Matthew 5:3-5; Psalms 42:1-2).

The Argument From History

History can actually be defined as “His story.” It is God’s story of all He has done (Psalms 75:7, Daniel 2:21, Daniel 5:21, Romans 13:1). It’s interesting that national decline and decay has always followed disobedience (sin). As nations become more and more corrupt, their glory seems to dissipate if not eventually collapse all together. We had better be careful as a nation. We are treading on dangerous ground. God’s overruling providence is displayed throughout history.

“God is the Judge: He puts down one, And exalts another” (Psalm 75:7). “He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding” (Daniel 2:21). Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon (634 – 562 BC), was lifted up in pride and therefore rejected as king. It was said of him that, “He was driven from the sons of men, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses” (Daniel 5:21). “There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God” (Romans 13:1).

The Argument of Universal Belief

Humans are incurably religious. We see this in Acts 17 as well as throughout scripture and history. Man has always sought to worship something or someone. This is because people were created to have fellowship with God, and therefore, long for Him within their heart. The problem is we tend to look in all the wrong places. Today is no different, except we tend to lean toward self worship. This longing and need for worship testifies loudly to the God who is there and created us for the purpose of worship. Human beings don’t long for what doesn’t exist, but for what does.

Worship is the purpose for which we were created. In our first glimpse of the heavenly scene, there are twenty-four elders (representing Old and New Testament saints) worshiping before the throne saying, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11). We were created for worship, to bring pleasure to God and to have fellowship with Him. This was displayed in the lives of Adam and Eve until sin entered the picture (Genesis 1-3). Jesus is the only solution to this problem (1 Peter 3:18)!

The Argument From Prophetic Fulfillment

The Bible says God, “Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure” (Isaiah 46:10). The Bible is a book of prophecy. Throughout the Old Testament there are predictions for the future, which have come to pass. We are seeing things today that the Word of God spoke of thousands of years ago. It would have been impossible for the authors of the Bible to imagine or make up such things.

Most prophecy is so improbable in the natural that only God’s hand in it could bring them to pass. For instance, Israel’s dispersion. They were given the promise land and because of their disobedience they were scattered to the nations. From that time, there was no national land for the Jews until 1948 when they were miraculously given their land back and began returning to Israel. (This also reveals the soon [return of Christ](#): Matthew 24:32-33.) How could this have taken place outside of divine intervention.

For example, Jesus fulfilled over three hundred prophecies at His first coming. Think of it, three hundred. That would have been utterly impossible unless there was an omniscient God who was foretelling history in advance. There were thirty some prophecies fulfilled concerning Jesus in one twenty four hour period surrounding His death.

Using the science of probability, Peter Stoner studied just eight of the prophecies surrounding Jesus’ death. The chance that any man who might have lived to this present time could have fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That would be 1 in 1,000,000,000,000,000,000.

To illustrate, he said, you could fill the entire state of Texas with silver dollars two feet deep, place a mark on just one of them, and stir them thoroughly, then blindfold a man and have him walk as far as and wherever he wanted and reach down at random and pick up just one silver dollar. The chance that the one he picked up would be the one that was marked would be the same chance of Jesus fulfilling those eight prophecies. Jesus fulfilled over three hundred. Prophetic fulfillment is an overwhelming proof or argument for the existence of God.

Stoner concluded, “The fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of those prophecies to a definiteness which lacks only one chance in ten to the seventeenth power of being absolute” (Evidence That Demands a Verdict, by Josh McDowell, page 167, paragraph 2). The argument from prophetic fulfillment speaks clearly to the existence of God.

The Power of God to Change Lives

The Bible testifies to the power of God to change lives. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are come new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is full of examples of how God has turned people’s lives around for the good. History also testifies to this, as well as present times. Charles Bradlaugh, at one time one of England’s most outstanding atheist, challenged a minister to a debate.

The minister said to Bradlaugh, “A debate won’t change anyone’s opinion, so I propose that I bring concrete evidence of Christianity, in the form of those whose lives have been redeemed from sin and shame by its influence, and you by atheism. I will bring one hundred. If you can, bring one hundred also. If you can not bring one hundred then bring fifty. If you can not bring fifty then bring twenty. If you can not bring twenty, Mr. Bradlaugh, then I will be satisfied if you can bring just one person whose life has been redeemed from sin and shame by the influence of atheism.” Mr. Bradlaugh withdrew his challenge. The power of God to change lives is one of the greatest arguments there is for God’s existence.

Attributes of God: Essence and Substance

It's difficult for a finite mind to comprehend an infinite God. Trying to understand God with a finite mind is like trying to put the Atlantic ocean in glass. However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't try.

Job 11:7 – “Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?”

Essence and substance are synonymous when referring to God. Thiessen defines them as “That which underlies all outward manifestation, the reality itself whether material or immaterial, the substratum of anything (substance lying beneath a thing). That in which the qualities or attributes inhere” (Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, page 119).

Webster defines essence as “an entity or that which makes something what it is.” Both essence and attribute refer to the nature of God. Although there is a difference between the two, the difference is hard to distinguish. The essence and substance of God is that which underlies His attributes.

Spirituality

Jesus said, “God is a spirit” (John 4:24).

Four things involved in God's spirituality:

1. **God is immaterial or incorporeal.** After His resurrection Jesus said, “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Luke 24:39). What about all the passages where God is described as having body parts? For example, His “stretched out arm” (Jeremiah 32:17); “The Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool” (Daniel 7:9).

These are metaphors which serve to bring the infinite within the apprehension of the finite. The Bible also uses wings to describe God, “He will cover you with His pinions, And under His wings you may seek refuge” (Psalm 91:4). Therefore, to use the above scriptures to say God has a human body, you would also have to say He is a bird. Anyone would say that is absurd. So God is immaterial or without material substance.

2. **God is invisible.** “He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15); “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Timothy 1:17). The scriptures state that no man can see God (Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:16). How do we reconcile this with the fact that Moses looked on God (Exodus 33)? As you read the passage, Moses merely caught a glimpse of God’s glory. No man can see God in His full essence and live.

There are other scriptures which refer to men seeing God. “As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake” (Psalms 17:15). “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). “Pursue peace with all men, and sanctification (holiness) without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). “They will see His face” (Revelation 22:4). R.A. Torrey says, “A man may see a reflection of his face in a glass (mirror). It’d be true for him to say, I saw my face and also I never saw my face” (R.A. Torrey, What the Bible Teaches; page 15).

These, however, seem to refer to our seeing God in eternity after we have been glorified (1 Corinthians 15:50-57). Mortal flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor see God (1 Corinthians 15:50). The Bible says, “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is” (1 John 3:2). At that point, when we are glorified, we will be able to look on Him in all of His glory. Praise the Lord!

3. **God is alive.** The idea of spirit also implies God is alive. Joshua told the children of Israel, “By this you shall know that the living God is among you” (Joshua 3:10). David said, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God” (1 Samuel 17:26)? Peter answered Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

Paul said, “For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). The Psalmist cried out, “My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God” (Psalms 84:2).

Our God is alive – Praise the Lord!

Listed below are a few things we can glean from this:

- **Victory in battle.** It is the living God whom we serve that gives us victory in battle. Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God is among you” (Joshua 3:10). When facing Goliath, David said, “Who is this uncircumcised

Philistine, that he should defy (taunt) the armies of the living God” (1 Samuel 17:26)? Peter’s revelation of Jesus being “The Christ, the Son of the living God” was the foundation upon which Jesus said, “The gates of Hades (Hell) shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:16 and 18).

- **Worship of the true God.** Paul described the Thessalonians as having “Turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9).
 - **The soul longs for such a God.** Psalmist said, “My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God” (Psalms 84:2).
 - **Who Jesus is.** Peter declared of Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). When Peter said Jesus was the Son of the living God, he was declaring Him to be very God. Study John 5:18; 10:30-33; Hebrews 1:8 and Revelation 1:8. These scriptures emphatically state that to declare Jesus as being the Son of God is a confession of [His deity](#).
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- **Our foundation is built on the solid Rock (Matthew 16:16-19, Matthew 7:24-27).** The confession of faith in the person of Christ in relation to the living God is a sure foundation which withstands the powers of darkness and all the storms of life.
 - **The Church is built upon a sure foundation (Matthew 16:16-19).** It was upon Peter’s confession of Jesus being “The Christ, the Son of the living God” that Jesus said, “The gates of Hades (Hell) shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:16 and 18).
 - **This living God appoints authority to His trusted followers.** It was upon Peter’s confession of who Jesus is that Jesus said, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19).
4. **God is a person.** This also is implied in God being a spirit. Take the analogy of ourself being made in His image (Genesis 1:27). If He were not a person, He’d be on a lower level than us. Personality denotes we can have a relationship with Him which is the essence of true Christianity. God manifests all the characteristics of personality.
- **Self-consciousness**– “What man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11).

- **Intellect** – “For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor” (Romans 11:34).
- **Feelings** – “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (Ephesians 4:30).
- **Speaking** – “See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven” (Hebrews 12:25).
- **Anger** – “Therefore I was angry with that generation” and “With whom was He angry forty years” (Hebrews 3:10 and 17)? Again, “See that you do not refuse Him who speaks” (Hebrews 12:25-28).
- **Jealousy** – “I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God” (Exodus 20:5).

God is Self-Existent

“God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM; and He said, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you” (Exodus 3:14). This is hard for the finite mind to grasp. The ground of God’s existence is in and of Himself. Our existence is outside of ourself.

God’s existence is in Himself alone. His existence is not dependent on anything outside of Himself. This is implied in Exodus 3:14. This can be mind boggling. He is the self-existent one. Thomas Aquinas said, “He is the first cause, Himself uncaused” (Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology; page 122, paragraph 1).

The Immensity of God

This has to do with His infinity in relation to time and space. He is not confined or limited by space. He is here and at the same time He is somewhere else. Solomon said, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built” (1 Kings 8:27)!

God asked Jeremiah, “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 23:24).

The Psalmist asked, “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there” (Psalms 139:7-8). Paul said, “That they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:27).

Here Paul declares that, because of the immensity of God, we should seek Him and when we do we'll be able to find Him. Jeremiah echoes this as well, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). Let's seek Him with all that is within us. When we do He will be made known (manifest or revealed) to us.

God is Eternal

God is free from all succession of time. Time for God is one big eternal now. He sees the eternal past, present and future all at once. Peter said, "With the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day" (2 Peter 3:8). This does not mean that when God refers to a day it is really a thousand years.

God is not stupid nor does He try and make things hard for us to understand. It simply means, He is timeless and sees all time as one big eternal now. He is the cause of time (Hebrews 1:2 and 13; Colossians 1:16). One day time itself will merge into eternity. God is the eternal one!

- "Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God" (Psalms 90:2).
- "Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting" (Psalms 93:2).
- "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 57:15).
- "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

This applies to Jesus as being God as well. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). This verse clearly portrays Jesus' eternal existence. His existence was from eternity past. He had no beginning. His goings forth was from everlasting.

God is One

The scriptures make it clear there is but one God. There are not many gods, but only one true and living God. There is a difference between an [absolute and compound unity](#).

For example man is an absolute unity whereas a man and his wife becoming one is a compound unity. Compare Ezra 3:1 and Ezekiel 37:17 for compound unity and Genesis 22:2, 12; Jeremiah 6:26 and Zechariah 12:10 for absolute unity. The following scriptures make it abundantly clear there is but one God:

- “To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him” (Deuteronomy 4:35).
- “The Lord Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other” (Deuteronomy 4:39).
- “Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4).
- “There is no one holy like the LORD, Indeed, there is no one besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God” (1 Samuel 2:2). “So that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else” (1 Kings 8:60).
- “So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me” (Isaiah 43:10).
- “Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6).
- “Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22).
- “Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one (Isaiah 44:8).
- “Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears” (2 Samuel 7:22).
- “You alone are the Lord” (Nehemiah 9:6).
- “We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one” (1 Corinthians 8:4).

- “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Timothy 1:17).
- “There is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

God is Transcendent

God is above and beyond His creation. In pantheism God is all and in all. The scriptures are clear that God can be seen in nature but nature is not God. “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

God is above and beyond His creation. “For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite” (Isaiah 57:15).

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

God is Immanent

God’s presence and power pervade His entire creation. Though He is above and beyond creation, He is not separated from it. God is clearly involved in and with His creation. One cannot read God’s Word without seeing His involvement with His creation.

He is not so totally transcendent that He set the universe in motion and left it to take care of itself, as deists would have us think. He didn’t create us just to leave us to fin for ourselves. He wants His presence and power to pervade every aspect of our lives.

The Bible says He not only created everything but He actually holds all things together, “Upholding all things by the word of his power” (Hebrews 1:3); “And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17). If we think things are bad now, think of what everything would be like if He ever withheld His hand.

He is, however, a gentlemen and doesn’t typically get involved where he is not wanted. There are exceptions to this. He does get involved in response to His people’s prayers. Prayer moves the hand of God to involve Himself in situations and the lives of people.

He will, at that point, get involved in people's lives who are actually running from Him. If you are running from God, He will let you go if you so choose. On the other hand, if you have a godly person praying for you – lookout.

Mankind has come to the place in our day of moving God to gentlemen status. We, overall, no longer want God involved in our lives. As a result, we see God pulling His hand back more and more. This is a scary place to be.

The more God removes His hand, the more we are left to fin for ourselves. The further He withdraws, the more evil is unleashed and man is left to his own devices. God help us if He ever completely removes His hand.

This is exactly what we will see take place in the end times. Mankind (this world) will push God further and further away. As we do, God will begin to withdraw His hand and we will see evil unleashed in an unprecedented way. We are even now beginning to see this take place more and more. One day it will unfold entirely.

Our only hope is, “If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14). We, the people of God, need to [seek His face](#) like never before.

Attributes of God: Non-Moral Attributes

The [essence and substance of God](#) is that which underlies all outward manifestation. The attributes of God are the inherent characteristics closely associated with or belonging to God. In this study we will be discussing God's non-moral attributes.

Omnipresence of God

“Omni” means all and when combined with presence means he is all present or present everywhere at once. This does not mean God's form is spread out so that parts of him are in every location. God is spirit (John 4:24), he has no physical form. His presence is everywhere in that everything is immediately in His presence. God is not like a thin substance spread out over all the earth. All of Him is everywhere at once.

Psalms 139:7-12 says, “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night’, even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day Darkness and light are alike to You.” Jeremiah 23:24 says, “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.”

No one can hide from God or escape from His presence. What a chilling thought. He is there no matter where we are or what we are doing. That can be very comforting or scary according to our perspective. If you are trying to hide or run from God, give up. Jonah tried it, and in his quest to run away from God he ended up running right into Him.

This is also comforting. His presence is always with us. He promises He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). He is always present, but His presence is manifest in special ways when we:

1. Worship Him (Psalm 100, Psalm 22:3, Acts 13:1-3).
2. Gather in His name (Matthew 28:19-20).
3. Submit to His authority (James 4:7-8).
4. Draw near to Him in prayer (James 4:8).
5. Practice His presence (Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 28:20).

6. Proclaim His Word (Matthew 28:19-20).

Omniscience of God

God knows the past as well as the future. He knows all that we have done and all that we will do. He also knows the thought and intent of our heart.

1. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3).
2. He knows our works and deeds (Psalms 33:13-15).
3. He knows our thoughts and motives (Psalms 139:1-4).
4. He knows our needs and desires (Matthew 6:8 and 32-33)
5. We stand naked before Him. "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account (Hebrews 4:13)"
6. Nothing is hidden from God. Everything we've done in secret He is aware of. We will give an account of all. "Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." (Jeremiah 13:24).

Omnipotence of God

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:6). Our God is omnipotent. He is the all powerful one. There are five times in the scripture when it says nothing is too hard or difficult for God.

1. God's purposes being fulfilled (Job 42:2).
2. God's ability and creative power (Jeremiah 32:17).
3. In confronting Abraham concerning Sarah's laughter and unbelief (Genesis 18:14).
4. The impossibility of man to save himself (Matthew 19:26).
5. When dealing with Mary's astonishment at her pregnancy (Luke 1:34-38).

Seeing that God is all powerful, is there anything He cannot do? Yes, there are some things God cannot do. He cannot do anything contrary to His will, character, or nature.

Five things God cannot do:

1. Look on iniquity or sin. He will never allow anyone to stand in His presence apart from Christ (Habakkuk 1:13).
2. Deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13).
3. Be unfaithful (2 Corinthians 1:20, Lamentations 3:23-24).
4. Lie (Hebrews 6:18, Titus 1:2).
5. Not do what He says He will do (2 Corinthians 1:20, Numbers 23:19).
6. Tempt people to sin (James 1:13). God may test our faith and obedience, as He did Abraham (Genesis 22:1), but He will never tempt us to sin.
7. Do what is self contradictory. We've all heard absurd questions from unbelievers like, "If God is all powerful, can He make a circle square or a rock so large He cannot move it?" C.S. Lewis responded, "Nonsense is still nonsense, if talking of God or something else" (Know What You Believe, Paul E. Little).

The Immutability of God

God is unchangeable (Hebrews 1:12, James 1:17). Malachi 3:6 says, "For I am the Lord, I change not." This verse refutes Joseph Smith's doctrine of eternal progression. God cannot change. All change of necessity must go from worse to better or better to worse. Seeing God is perfect, He cannot be more perfect, truthful or holy. For example:

1. His plans and purposes do not change (Psalms 33:11, Isaiah 46:10, Romans 11:29).
2. His righteousness and justice (Genesis 18:25, Isaiah 28:17). God is always perfectly just and righteous in all He does.
3. His goodness and light (James 1:17).
4. His Love and mercy (Psalm 103:17).
5. His promises (1 Kings 8:56, Hebrews 6:17-18).
6. His Son (Hebrews 13:8). Immutability being attributed to Jesus declares his deity. Jesus bares the same attributes as the Father.

Omniscience of God

The omniscience of God refers to Him being all wise. This also includes His discernment and judgment. Below are a few scriptures declaring God's infinite wisdom.

1. "Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite" (Psalms 147:5).
2. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out" (Romans 11:33)!
3. "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen" (Romans 16:27).
4. "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself (Ephesians 1:8-9).
5. "That the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 3:10-11).
6. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Timothy 1:17).

Sovereignty of God

God does as He pleases, which is encouraging in light of all His attributes. If you had the choice, would you choose to be ruled by blind fate, chance, irrevocable natural law, short sighted and perverted self (man), or an infinite, wise, holy, powerful, all knowing God who loves us and knows what's best for us? D.S. Clark said, "He who rejects God's sovereignty may take his choice of what is left" (Pearlman, Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible, page 63).

Scripture dealing with God's sovereignty:

1. "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isaiah 46:11).
2. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things" (Matthew 20:15)?

3. "So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens....Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor" (Romans 9:16-18 and Romans 9:21)?
4. "Being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Ephesians 1:11).
5. Daniel brings to bear God's sovereignty perhaps better than any other writer. "He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding" (Daniel 2:21).
6. "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, What have You done" (Daniel 4:35)?
7. "His heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses" (Daniel 5:20-21).

So God's Non-Moral Attributes consists of His Omnipresence, Omniscience, Omnipotence, His Immutability, the Omnisapience of God, and His Sovereignty. Wow – What a God We Serve!

Attributes of God: Moral Attributes

The attributes of God are the inherent characteristics closely associated with or belonging to Him. In this study we will be dealing with God's moral attributes. His holiness, righteousness, goodness, love, mercy, grace, and faithfulness.

The Holiness of God

There is a great need for a recognition of God's holiness in the church today. We are told to "Hallow His name" (Matthew 6:9). We need a revelation of the holiness of God, without which we will never be used of Him the way he desires. Anyone who desires to make an impact for God must understand His holiness (Exodus 3:3-5, Joshua 5:13-18 and Isaiah 6:1-6).

1 John 1:5 says, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all." Light philosophically represents truth, physically God's glory, and morally His holiness. God is holy and there is nothing unholy or sinful in Him.

There are five things we learn from God's holiness:

1. **Our own personal sinfulness.** At Isaiah's revelation of God he said, "I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:5).

Peter, at his first revelation of the master, fell down at Jesus' feet saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Luke 5:8).

Where there is a revelation of God's holiness, there will also be a revelation of our own personal sinfulness and depravity.

2. **There is a chasm between God and man.** Sin separates us from God. Isaiah cried out, "Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

Immediately after sinning Adam and Eve hid from the presence of the Lord (Genesis 3:10). As a result of sin, "God drove the man out" (Genesis 3:24). They were driven out of the garden and God's presence. God is holy and we are sinful, therefore, there's a great chasm between God and man.

3. **We must approach God in the merits of another.** We cannot approach God in our own merit. The only way we can approach God is through Jesus' blood and righteousness. Ephesians 2:18 says, "For through Him we both have access by

one Spirit to the Father.” Romans 5:2 says, “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Hebrews 10:19-20 says, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.”

4. **We must approach God with reverence.** In these days of casualness, we’ve lost a sense of reverence in the church. People should be free to attend church however they feel comfortable, but have we taken things too far? Have we lost our reverence for God?

Hebrews 12:28-29 says, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.”

5. **Aim for holiness.** 1 Peter 1:15-16 says, “As He who has called you is holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be holy; for I am holy.” Hebrews 12:14 says, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

We’ve heard over and over without holiness no man shall see the Lord, but that’s not what it really says. The key word is “follow.” It’s without the pursuit of holiness that no man shall see the Lord.

None of us will ever be completely holy, but we must pursue being holy as He is holy. We are to “be imitators of God as dear children” (Ephesians 5:1). We are “to walk even as He walked” (1 John 2:6).

The Righteousness of God

Righteousness is God’s holiness in action. In Abraham’s intercessory prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah he said, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right” (Genesis 18:25)?

God always does what is right in every situation and at all times. It’s not in His character to do otherwise. He is always just. No one can point an accusing finger at God asking, “What have you done” (Daniel 4:35)? He always does what is right.

How can God be just and still withhold punishment from us as sinners? He judged all our sin at the cross by pouring out His wrath on His Son in our place. “To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus” (Romans 3:26). He is both just and the justifier of all who trust Christ. Whenever we sin, we can be assured that when “We confess our sins, He is

faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Hebrews 6:10 says, “God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” Whatever we do in His name He does not overlook. Pastors, the service you do for God to the body of Christ does not go unnoticed.

God will reward your faithfulness! Don’t let the devil ever make you think your service for Him is in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

The Goodness of God

God is a good God. No matter what happens or what you may be facing remember, He is good. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1:17). There is not even a shadow in God’s goodness. He is pure, unadulterated goodness. “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalms 34:8). Even the bad things in life He promises He’ll turn out for our good (Romans 8:28).

Your future is bright. “Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come” (Hebrews 9:11). You say, things have been good. Well, there’s more good to come. Maybe you’ve been going through a rough patch, things are going to get better. There are “good things to come.” “No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly” (Psalms 84:11).

It’s important we continue in His goodness. “Consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness” (Romans 11:22). If you have strayed from His path let His goodness turn you back to Him today. “The goodness of God leads you to repentance” (Romans 2:4). “I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness” (Jeremiah 31:3). When we stray God uses three things to turn us back to Him.

1. **Conviction.** John 16:8 says, “When He has come, He will convict the world of sin” (John 16:8).
2. **His goodness.** Romans 2:4 says, “Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance.”

3. **Discipline.** Hebrews 12:5 says, “Despise not the chastening (discipline) of the Lord, Nor faint (be discouraged) when you are rebuked by Him.”

The Love of God

This is one of the most well known of all God’s attributes. The Bible emphatically states, “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:16). It’s not that God loves, He is love. It’s not something He does, but who He is. Love isn’t God, this concept only perverts His love. God’s very nature is love. Manifestations of His love flow from His being.

God manifests His love through:

1. The sacrifice of His Son (John 3:16, 1 John 3:16, 1 John 4:9, Romans 5:6-8).
2. Calling us His children (1 John 3:1).
3. Giving us new life and position in Christ (Ephesians 2:4-6).
4. His discipline (Hebrews 12:5-11).
5. His inability to forget about us (Isaiah 49:15-16).
6. Rejoicing over our return (Luke 15:3-24).

What should our response be to God’s love?

1. Continue in His love (Jude 21).
2. Love Him back (1 John 4:19).
3. Love one another (1 John 4:11-12).

The Mercy of God

Mercy is not giving us what we deserve. Praise God! We deserve judgment, but God had mercy on us for Christ’s sake.

Ephesians 2:4 ~ “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us.” God is abundant in mercy toward us.

Psalms 86:15 ~ “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”

1 Peter 1:3 ~ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

Even when we fall short and sin, we are encompassed about with mercy when we turn to Him. David had sinned with Bathsheba and had her husband killed, but when he turned back to the Lord he said,

“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusts in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about” (Psalms 32:10).

There’s a wall of mercy surrounding us. When everyone is condemning and expecting us to get what we deserve, mercy shouts back “leave them alone!”

Lamentations 3:22 ~ “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed.”

There was a story of a painter who was painting a portrait of a women. She was anxiously awaiting to see the end product. When it was finally complete, she looked at it and angrily said, sir, this portrait doesn’t do me justice. He replied, It’s not justice you need, it’s mercy.

Thank God He doesn’t give us what we deserve!

The Grace of God

Where mercy is not giving us what we deserve, grace is giving us what we don’t deserve. It’s unmerited favor. A. W. Tozer said, “Ages upon ages will hardly be long enough to allow us to experience all the riches of His grace” (Root of Righteousness, page 86).

“So that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7). “Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace” (John 1:16).

[There’s enough grace in God’s storehouse to:](#)

1. Save us (Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. Make us His work of art (Ephesians 2:10).
3. Make us workers (Ephesians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 15:8-10).
4. Help us when we don’t measure up (Romans 5:20).

5. Pick us up when we fall (Romans 5:20-21).
6. Sustain us in times of trouble (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
7. Fulfill our financial needs (2 Corinthians 9:8).

The Faithfulness of God

He is a faithful God. We may try to be faithful, but it is part of His very being. Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning, great is Thy faithfulness." 2 Timothy 2:13 says, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."

God is faithful to:

1. Fulfill His calling through us (1 Thessalonians 5:24).
2. Protect us from evil (2 Thessalonians 3:3, John 17:15, 1 Peter 1:5, Psalms 91-1-16).
3. Keep His Word and promises (Numbers 23:19-20, 2 Corinthians 1:20).
4. Complete the work He began in us (Philippians 1:6).
5. Forgive (1 John 1:9).
6. Not deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13).
7. Show us fresh mercies daily (Lamentations 3:22-23).

1 Thessalonians 5:24 – "Faithful is He that calls you, who also will do it."

The Trinity: The Unity and Oneness of God

The trinity is one of the most important and foundational doctrines of the Christian faith. It is extremely important that we be well equipped and versed in what we believe concerning this doctrine.

Dr. Walter Martin said that cults twist the majority of Christians into doctrinal pretzels because we know what we believe, but not why. Peter said, “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). We are admonished to “Contend (fight) for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

The term “trinity” is not mentioned in the Bible. It was first used in the second century to describe the Godhead, which is a Biblical term (Colossians 2:9, Romans 1:20).

So trinity is merely another word to describe the Godhead. The planet Jupiter existed before it was ever named. Therefore, just because the term trinity came along later, doesn't make it any less valid.

Deuteronomy 6:4 says, “Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.” Lord is Yahweh in the original and is singular. On the other hand, Elohim is plural for God. It could read, “Yahweh (singular) our Elohim (plural) is one Yahweh (singular).” This is referring to the oneness of God, but it also refers to plurality. There is no other way to properly explain this other than the trinity.

There is only one God

There is only one God that we worship and serve. There are not many gods, but only one true and living God. The following scriptures make this fact abundantly clear:

1. “Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4).
2. “So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me” (Isaiah 43:10).
3. “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me” (Isaiah 44:6).
4. “Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22).
5. “There is none like You, and there is no God besides You” (2 Samuel 7:22).

6. "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).
7. "There is no God but one" (1 Corinthians 8:4).

God is a compound unity

God is a compound rather than an absolute unity. There are plenty of places in scripture where God is speaking in the plural:

- "Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26).
- "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3:22).
- "Come, let Us go down" (Genesis 11:7).
- "Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" (Isaiah 6:8).

The following prophecy refers to each member of the trinity (Godhead) within the verse:

"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn" (Zechariah 12:10).

Notice how the pronouns are interchanged or intermingled in the verse "I will," "They will look upon Me," "They will mourn for Him," and "They will weep bitterly over Him". The wording here can only be explained by viewing it as the compound unity of the Godhead.

Let's look at a few examples of compound unity in other things. Remember, no illustration is perfect, it merely sheds light on the subject. A wise man of ancient Greece once said, "Every illustration limps." The following examples will help bring understanding to the composite unity of the trinity or Godhead as opposed to a solitary unity.

Marriage. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24, Mark 10:8). Obviously, Adam didn't become Eve and Eve didn't become Eve, but they became as one before God.

A cluster of grapes. “Then they came to the valley of Eshcol and from there cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two men” (Numbers 13:23-24). Moses sent twelve men to spy out the promise land and bring back samples of what the land had to offer.

They brought back one cluster of grapes that was so large they had to carry it on a pole between two men. It was one cluster of grapes, clinging from the same stem, and drawing it's life from the same source. There were many grapes within the one cluster.

A group of people. A group often says they “stand as one” in time of crisis, to defend themselves, to protest, or to fulfill some purpose:

- “Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same (one) language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them” (Genesis 11:6).
- It was said of the early church, “Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart” (Acts 2:46).
- On September 11, 2001 America was attacked on it's own soil and our entire nation came together as one like few other times in history.

The Trinity: One God, Three Persons

There is only one God. This fact is made clear throughout scripture. However, there are three persons eternally existent in the one God. Paul Little said it this way, “God is one in His essential being, but that divine essence exist in three modes or forms, each consisting a person, yet in such a way that the divine is wholly in each person.”

There are not three Gods all independent and self existing. The three co-operate with one mind and purpose so that in the truest sense of the word, they are one. Instead of being independent, they are wholly dependent on each other or interdependent. There are three separate and distinct persons that are called God in scripture. The trinity is one God, but three persons.

God the Father

Very few people dispute the existence of God the Father, unless they are an atheist. Paul begins his letter to the Galatians saying he was appointed an apostle, not by man, but by Jesus Christ and “God the Father” (Galatians 1:1). In referring to Jesus’ incarnation, resurrection and exaltation, Paul says that one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess Jesus to be Lord “to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:11). Clearly there is a person called God the Father within the Godhead.

God the Son

This is where most erroneous teachings begin. Cults and false teachers deny the divinity of Jesus. In doing so, they create another Jesus and a different, false gospel (2 Corinthians 11:3-5 and Galatians 1:6-9). This doctrine is so frequently attacked because of its importance. If you don’t have the right Jesus, your salvation is negated. If your Jesus is anything other than God Almighty, God the Son, the second member of the trinity, you have the wrong Jesus.

Paul said, “But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully” (2 Corinthians 11:3-4).

From this passage we see clearly there can be another Jesus portrayed by false teachers, which is a false Christ. Any Jesus that is anything other than God incarnate is a false Christ.

Paul said again, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:6-9).

From this we see that whereas there is another Jesus, there is also a different gospel – A false gospel. It is a perversion of the true gospel of Christ. Paul uses very stern words here in dealing with those who espouse false doctrine. Twice he says, “Let him be accursed.” He says it twice because, as the dreams of Pharaoh of old, the thing is sure.

The Greek word translated “accursed” is “anathema.” In this context, “anathema” refers to someone who is without hope of being redeemed, doomed to destruction, and accursed, under the divine curse. In essence, Paul was saying of those who preach a false gospel, “Let them go to hell!”

I suggest you study the following scriptures thoroughly and even put them to memory. This is where the gospel we preach is attacked and we must be equipped to defend and fight for it diligently. Jude says, “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

We must be able to give an answer for the hope that is in us. “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). We must be so well equipped with the Word of God that we are able to give an answer to those honestly seeking answers and be able to adequately defend our faith.

1. The Incarnation

In a prophecy about Jesus being born of a virgin, Isaiah said, he would be called Emanuel (Isaiah 7:14). Matthew quotes Isaiah and defines Emanuel as meaning “God with us.” “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23). His very name refers to the incarnation, hypostatic union, the union of two natures or God becoming man. Jesus was very man and very God.

John begins his gospel with this, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). He goes on to say, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only

begotten of the Father” (John 1:14). The Word was with God and the Word was God and was made flesh. These verses not only declare the eternal existence, divinity, and incarnation of Christ, but they also shows the plurality of persons in the Godhead, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and and the Word was God.” The Word (Jesus prior to His incarnation) was already there in the beginning. He was with God and was in fact, very God.

In a prophecy about where Jesus, the Messiah, was to be born, Micah declares, “But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousand of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2).

This verse declares that the baby that was to be born in Bethlehem was from “everlasting.” He had, as his origin, eternity past (an everlasting past). This clearly means He had no beginning. This was said of God, thus making the baby in the manger God Almighty (Psalms 90:2 and 93:2). Also read Philipians 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:9; John 14:8-9; 20:19-29.

2. The Son of God

Whenever Jesus said God was His Father, He was claiming to be God Almighty and the Jews knew it. It is extremely important, when we call Jesus the Son of God, we define what we mean. There is typically a language barrier that exist between cults and authentic Christians. What they mean by the Son of God and what the Bible teaches are usually totally different things. If their definition isn't that He is very God, then we have a major point of disagreement.

The Jews were seeking to kill Jesus, as they so often were. John reports, “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God” (John 5:18).

The Jews knew when Jesus said God was His Father, He was claiming equality with God. If Jesus was not very God, He was committing blasphemy, which was punishable by death. This is why they sought to kill Him. They knew He was claiming equality with God. Therefore, we must conclude, Jesus is very God.

Again Jesus said, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). You can't stop here. The context is always imperative. When dealing with false teachers and cults, they will always say, we are one with God too. We are one with Him in purpose, desire and so on. John continues,

“Then the Jews took up stones to stone Him. Jesus answered them. Many good works have I shown you from my father; for which of those do you stone me? The Jews

answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone you not; but for blasphemy; because you being a man make yourself out to be God” (John 10:31-33). The penalty for blasphemy was stoning. The Jews knew, when Jesus claimed to have God as His Father, He was making Himself out to be God.

Let’s look at one more verse dealing with Jesus as the Son. “But unto the Son He (the Father) saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom” (Hebrews 1:8). Here, the Father is talking to the Son and says, your throne O God. The Father is calling the Son God. You can’t get much clearer than that.

When I was young in the Lord and just starting out in ministry, I was visiting an old friend. There was another young man there who was part of the Way International. The Way denied the divinity of Jesus. Their founder had written a book entitled “Jesus is not God.” We began debating some about the person of Christ. I went through all the scripture I shared above and more.

He seemed to have a way of explaining everything away in order to dispute Christ’s divinity. Near the end of our discussion, I quoted Hebrews 1:8, “But to the Son He says: Your throne, O God.” He got a puzzled look on his face and said, “I haven’t seen that one before. I’ll have to work that out.” I replied, “Work what out? Either Jesus is God or God the Father lied.” He had no further argument. God says just what He means. Jesus, the Son of God, is very God.

3. The Resurrection of Christ

Paul begins his letter to the Romans by saying Jesus was “declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). The resurrection is an infallible proof that Jesus is indeed the Son of God or God Himself.

Jesus “presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). Read also 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.

Thomas, who had doubted before, after seeing the resurrected Christ, proclaimed, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Jesus never rejected Thomas’ worship and declaration. Throughout scripture, whenever an angel or man received worship, they always rejected the person’s adoration. The fact that Jesus never rejected Thomas’ worship is proof of His divinity.

4. Jesus, the Firstborn

Let's clear up a common misconception of Jesus as the firstborn. The Bible says, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Colossians 1:15). Cults and false teachers conclude from this that Jesus was the first to be created and is therefore a created being. God created Jesus first and then used him to create all other things. This is an erroneous and false concept.

As we have already seen, Jesus is very God and had no beginning. His existence was from eternity past. Again the context is always of utmost importance. If you will go down just a few verses, you will see, "He is also the head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything" (Colossians 1:18). This defines what the writer meant by firstborn in verse 15. Notice it says, "He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead." So we see that firstborn was referring to Him being the first to rise from the dead, never to die again.

Firstborn is also a title of preeminence in scripture, "So that He Himself will come to have first place (preeminence) in everything." Jesus being the firstborn of all creation refers to Him being the first to rise from the dead, never to die again, and not the first to be created. Jesus was not a created being but the creator of all things - God the Son!

5. The Great "I AM"

Jesus was arguing with the Pharisees, as He so often did, and said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad. So the Jews said to Him, You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham? Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am. Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple" (John 8:56-59). The penalty for blasphemy was death by stoning.

They knew what Jesus was asserting. "Before Abraham was born, I am." He was claiming to be the very same "I AM" God that spoke to Moses through the burning bush, the self-existent one. "God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM; and He said, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:14). Thus, Jesus was God Almighty. Jesus told John, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation 1:8). Jesus' claim here is clear, "The Almighty!"

God the Holy Spirit

One of the best proof texts for the divinity of the Holy Spirit is found in the book of Acts. Many in the church were selling what they had and giving it to the Apostles to distribute to those in need. This was done voluntarily and not mandated. Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold their property, but secretly kept back part of what they received.

We read, “A man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife’s full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God. And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it” (Acts 5:3-5).

Notice Peter said, “Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit” and then, “You have not lied to men but to God.” First Peter said he lied to the Holy Spirit and then, in the next breath, you didn’t lie to man but God. He was clearly attributing deity to the Holy Spirit. It is impossible to look at this passage and not see that the Holy Spirit is very God, the third member (person) of the Godhead (trinity).

Another common misconception about the Holy Spirit is that He is just a force and not a real person. The Holy Spirit is more than a force but the third person of the trinity.

Five characteristics of personality attributed to the Holy Spirit:

1. Intellect (1 Corinthians 2:11, Romans 8:27).
2. He has a will (1 Corinthians 12:11).
3. Sensibility (Romans 8:26-27, Romans 15:30). This has to do with the ability to feel, be affected emotionally or intellectually, and have a sensitive awareness or responsiveness.
4. He grieves (Ephesians 4:30).
5. He speaks (Acts 13:2, Hebrews 3:7).

The Triune Existence of God

We see that God is one in nature, but three in person and manifestation. This is beyond comprehension to the natural, finite mind. God is infinite and we are finite. We can not expect to grasp the concept of Him in all its totality. We can however, understand it to some degree, knowing that the concept is clearly taught in scripture.

One of Job's Friends said to him, "Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty" (Job 11:7)? The obvious answer is no, but we can sure try. The only way we can begin to grasp the greatness of God is through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-15).

Let's explore all the depths of God and ask Him to supernaturally reveal Himself to us.

The Trinity: Illustrations and Examples

God is one and there are three distinct persons within one God. Each is a separate and distinct person, yet each one is God. It's impossible to totally grasp this principle with the finite mind. However, we can understand the concept and know it is the clear teaching of the Word of God. Below are several scriptural and non-scriptural illustrations and examples of the Trinity. No illustration is perfect, but these will help us understand the infinite God (Job 11:7).

Scriptural Examples of the Trinity

1. **The birth of Jesus.** In Luke 1:35 an angel appeared to Mary he said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God." All three members or persons of the trinity are mentioned in this verse concerning Mary's miraculous conception.
2. **The discourse of Jesus in John 14 and 15.** In these verses all three persons of the trinity are mentioned and often interchangeably. The Father is mentioned in John 14:2, the Son in John 14:7-9, and the Holy Spirit in John 14:15-18 and 15:26.
3. **Creation.** All three persons of the trinity or Godhead are referred to as participating in creation. The Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:2 is seen "Moving over the surface of the waters" just prior to creation. The Son of God is mentioned as being a part of creation, "His Son, through whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:2).

Both the Father and the Son are involved here. Of the Son it is said, "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16).

4. **The baptism of Jesus.** Luke 3:21-22 says, "Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." Here we see the Son being baptized, the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, and the Father speaking out of heaven.
5. **Paul's benediction.** In 2 Corinthians 13:14 Paul says to the Corinthians, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." He pronounces a blessing on them utilizing all three persons of the Trinity.

6. **The resurrection of Christ.** All three persons of the Trinity are seen as active participants in the resurrection. The Father raised Jesus from the dead, “God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways” (Acts 3:26).

Jesus claimed He would raise Himself from the dead. He said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. He was speaking of the temple of His body” (John 2:19 and 21).

7. The Holy Spirit also is said to have raised Jesus from the dead, “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11).

Each person of the Trinity was equally involved in the resurrection.

Non-Scriptural Examples of the Trinity

1. **Man.** Man was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Man is made up of three parts. He has a body, soul and spirit. Take away any part of him and he ceases to be, yet there are three distinct parts to man. Man has three parts, a trinity, yet he is one man.
2. **The sun.** There are three parts to the sun – heat rays, light rays and chemical rays. Heat rays are felt and not seen, light rays are seen but not felt. Chemical rays have an effect though they are not seen nor felt. All together we have sunshine, three rays and one light.

Without one aspect we would have no sunlight. The same is true of the Trinity or Godhead. God is made up of the three distinct parts or persons, take away any aspect and we cease to have God.

3. **Addition and multiplication.** In addition, $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$. In multiplication three ones multiplied together equals one. Three ones equals one? I don't pretend to be a mathematician, but that doesn't make much sense to me. However, I know it's a mathematical fact. Likewise, we may not be able to completely grasp the concept of three persons in one God, but we know it to be a Biblical fact.
4. **A triangle.** A triangle has three sides. Take away either side and it will cease to be a triangle. It's similar with the trinity (Godhead). Take away one aspect and He ceases to be God.
5. **The universe.** “Uni” means one, yet the universe is made up of space, time and matter. Take away any of the three components and it is no longer a

universe. The same is true of God, take away any one of His persons and He ceases to be God.

6. **Water.** In thermodynamics, the triple point of a substance is the temperature and pressure at which three phases (gas, liquid and solid) of that substance coexist in thermodynamic equilibrium. Water under pressure, in a vacuum and at a given temperature below freezing, simultaneously exists as liquid, steam and ice. We see the Trinity (Godhead) in all of creation (Romans 1:20).
7. **The United States Government.** The United States Government is one government with three branches: executive, judicial and legislative. There are three distinct parts of the one government. So it is with God, there are three distinct persons within the one God.

Applications

Know Him. In 2 Timothy 1:12 Paul said, “I know whom I have believed.” Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). Let’s seek both to know personally and all we can about Him.

Defend the faith. We are to fight for and defend the faith that was delivered to us (Jude 3). There are many false teachers and cults who pervert the pure gospel and Jesus Himself (2 Corinthians 11:3-5, Galatians 1:6-9). This requires you must “Study to show yourself approved” (2 Timothy 2:15). We must be equipped to give an answer for the hope that is in us (1 Pete 3:15).

Disassociation. We are to disassociate ourselves from all who do not hold to solid Biblical doctrine. I’m not talking about peripheral areas of theology but the fundamentals or essentials of our faith.

The Bible makes it clear we should not associate with those who hold and propagate false doctrine (1 Corinthians 15:33). In fact, we are not to let them into our home or even give them greeting. I know this may seem harsh, but God said it not me.

“For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward.

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds” (2 John 1:7-11).

The Names of God

God reveals Himself and His true nature by making known and proclaiming His name. Knowing God intimately, including the names of God, is a crucial part of salvation. John 17:3 says, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

Psalms 91:14-16 – “Because he has loved me, therefore I will deliver him. I will set him securely on high, because he has known my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will rescue him and honor him. With a long life I will satisfy him and let him see my salvation.”

For those of us who know His name, God promises to deliver us, set us securely on high, answer when we call on Him, be with us in times of trouble, protect, rescue, honor, satisfy, and most importantly, save us.

Names of God Revealed in Scripture:

Elohim

El is singular and is used 238 times in the Bible. Elohim is translated “God” 2,600 times in scripture. This is not His personal name as Lord found in Exodus 6:3, but His title. The President is not our president’s name, but his title. Even so, Elohim is God’s official title. Elohim is the plural for God and foreshadows [the trinity](#) or godhead in Romans 1:20 and Colossians 2:9. Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God.” Genesis 1:26-27 says, “Let Us make man in our image, according to our likeness” and “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him.” Deuteronomy 6:4 says, “The Lord our God is one Lord.”

Elohim means “the putter forth of power.” Being plural it signifies fullness of power. It also suggests creative power as in Genesis 1:1. Jeremiah said, “Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee” (Jeremiah 32:17).

Speaking of his creative power, Jeremiah was telling us if God created the heavens and earth He can handle anything. God is powerful and there is nothing that you might be facing that is too hard for Him. In the midst of all his trouble Job said, “I know that You can do everything and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You” (Job 42:2).

None of us has any power but what God has given us. Jesus said, “Apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). Psalms 127:1 says, “Unless the Lord builds the house,

They labor in vain who build it.” We must depend on the power God has given us and not our own strength. 2 Peter 1:3-4 says, “According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.” Thank God we “receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon us” (Acts 1:8). Philippians 4:13 tells us that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

YHWH

YHWH is without vowels and is pronounced Yahweh. It is usually translated as “Lord” and sometimes “Jehovah.” In Exodus 3:15 God told Moses that He was the “Lord (YHWH or Yahweh) God of your fathers.” Exodus 6:3 says, “I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by My name Jehovah was I not known to them.” Exodus 20:2 says,

“I am the Lord (YHWH or Yahweh) thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” He is Yahweh, the everlasting God! Yahweh means redeemer or deliverer (2 Chronicles 18:31). This name is always related to His own people in a redemptive way, but to His creatures (the unregenerate) He is Elohim.

YHWH is God’s personal name. There are many gods but only one Yahweh. He said, “I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:2-3). Israel had been engulfed in idolatry under the reign of Ahab. God spoke to Elijah to confront him. Elijah told him that because of Israel’s Idolatry it would not rain in Israel until he said. When he returned three and a half years later he told the king to gather the 450 prophets of Baal and meet him on Mount Carmel. Upon their arrival he said,

“How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him” (1 Kings 18:21). He then commanded wood and two oxen to be brought, one for the false prophets and one for him, but no fire was allowed. He then said to them, “You call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord (Yahweh), and the God who answers by fire, He is God” (1 Kings 18:24).

The contest was to see which God (Elohim) Baal or Jehovah (Yahweh) was the real God. “They took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, O Baal, answer us. But there was no voice and no one answered” (1 Kings 18:26). Elijah mocked them and they cried out to Baal more and more, even cutting themselves trying to get their god’s attention, to no avail.

Finally, Elijah called all the people to himself, rebuilt the alter of the Lord, twice had four pitchers of water pour on the wood and sacrifice. He then called on the Lord and the “fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw

it, they fell on their faces and said, 'The Lord, He is God, the Lord, He is God'" (1 Kings 18:38-39). Thus, Jehovah (Yahweh) proved Himself to be the the true and living God.

Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal, do not let one of them escape. So they seized them and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (1 Kings 18:40). God hates idolatry above all. John commanded, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

God said, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Paul commended the Thessalonians, "How you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Paul rebuked Athens saying, "The times of this ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). We must put God first in all things.

Jah (Yah)

This is most probably an abbreviation of Jehovah. It is used 48 times in scripture. The meaning is the same, redeemer or deliverer, and is always used in connection with praise. After being delivered through the Red Sea they worshiped saying, "The Lord is my strength and song and he has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will praise Him. My father's God, and I will extol Him" (Exodus 15:2). The Psalmist said, "Sing to God, sing praises to his name. Lift up a song for him who rides through the deserts, whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him" (Psalms 68:4).

When we've been redeemed praise should be as natural as breathing. You can usually look out in a worship service and tell who's been redeemed and delivered by the way you see them worshipping. We see this demonstrated in the heavenly scene in Revelation 5:11-14 and it should be demonstrated by all God's people. Have you been delivered from the hand of the enemy? Psalms 107:2 says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy." Praise also initiates God's deliverance (2 Chronicles 20:20-23).

Adonai

In most translations Adonai is translated Lord, where Yahweh is rendered LORD. It is used 439 times in the Bible. Adonai (Lord) means master or owner and is a title expressing dependence and submission as a servant to his master. It is used in Abraham's prayer to the Lord in Genesis 18:27, "Then Abraham answered and said, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord (Adonai), which am but dust and ashes."

In Exodus 15:17, "In the Sanctuary, O Lord (Adonai)," and in Exodus 23:17, "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord (Adonai) God."

God wants to be our master. We are to be His bond servant or slave (Exodus 21:1-6). Jesus said, "You call me Master and Lord and you say well, for so I am" (John 13:13). On the day of Pentecost Peter said, "God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). This is the full gospel when we make Jesus both Lord and Christ (Savior).

He doesn't want to be just Savior, He demands to be Lord as well. "God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Eloistic Combinations:

El Elyon – Most High God

Genesis 14:18 says, "And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High." It means "one with all power" or "all powerful one." He is the all powerful one. Abraham went to battle against the kings and rescued his nephew Lot in the power and authority of God.

We too are to go forth and see people rescued from the god of this world in the power and authority of the Lord God (Colossians 1:13). Jesus said, "All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 2:18-19).

El Olam – Everlasting God

Genesis 21:33 says, "Abraham called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God." He is the eternal one. "Before the mountains were born, you gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God" (Psalms 90:2). "Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting" (Psalms 93:2). Paul said,

"But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God" (Romans 16:26). It was said of Jesus, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). His origin was from everlasting. Jesus had no beginning. He is The everlasting God!

El Shaddai – Almighty God

Genesis 17:1 says, “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, I am Almighty God.” This is one of the most cherished of God’s names by Bible students everywhere. El Shaddai means “strong one.” El means strong and Shaddai comes from shad meaning “breast.” Isaiah 28:9 says, “To whom would He teach knowledge, and to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just taken from the breast?”

It means the “breasts of God” – nourisher, strength giver, satisfier, the God who is enough and is able. Hebrews 7:25 says, “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Ephesians 3:20 says, “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Also read Jeremiah 32:17 and Job 42:2.

Jehovistic Combinations:

Jehovah Jireh – The Lord will Provide

When Abraham was about to sacrifice his son in Genesis 22:14 the Lord provided a ram instead and he named the place “Jehovah Jireh.” God wants to be Jehovah Jireh on your behalf. As in Abraham’s case, it may get down to the wire, but at the last minute He will become your Jehovah Jireh. This is promised throughout scripture.

Romans 8:32 ~ “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

Philippians 4:19 ~ “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

2 Corinthians 9:8 ~ “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”

It’s significant that these promises were in the context of sacrificial giving.

Jehovah Rapha – The Lord Who Heals

Divine health and healing is provided for in the atonement. This has to do with physical, emotional, mental, relational, natural and spiritual healing. Plead the blood of Jesus and God’s promises of divine health over and yourself and and those for whom you are pray!

Exodus 15:26 – “I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians – the world: For I am the Lord (Jehovah Rapha) that healeth thee.”

Psalms 103:3b – “Who healeth all thy diseases.”

Isaiah 53:3-6 – “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

1 Peter 2:24-25 – “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

Divine Healing is a touch of future resurrection power.

Romans 8:23 – “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

Romans 8:11 – “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

When we encounter illness we must follow the prescription in scripture:

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven” (James 5:13-15).

Jehovah Nissi – The Lord our Banner

Exodus 17:15 says, “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-Nissi.” In the battle against Amalek, as long as Moses held up his hand Joshua was victorious. When he lowered it, Amalek prevailed. Aaron and Hur held Moses’ hand up

when he became too tired to hold it up on his own. As a result, Joshua and Israel defeated Amalek. In honor of the victory, Moses built an altar to the Lord and called it Jehovah-Nissi (The Lord our Banner).

Israel's battle against Amalek in Exodus 17:10-13 and Jehoshaphat's battle in 2 Chronicles 20 teaches us that praise initiates victory. We've diminished the value of praise through uplifted hands (Psalms 63:4, 1 Timothy 2:8).

Everyone becomes weary during a battle, especially pastors and ministry leaders. We need people to hold up our hands when we become weary. Let's hold the Lord's banner high and unashamed for all to see when He has brought victory into our midst (Revelation 12:11).

[There's power in praise!](#)

Jehovah Qadash – The Lord who Sanctifies

Exodus 31:13 says, "That you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you." God is our sanctifier and sanctification is the will of God (1 Thessalonians 4:3). We often think it's up to us to help people get their act together in the Lord. We can't do it! When we try, it usually causes more trouble than good. It's God who does the sanctifying, not us. We can't even sanctify ourselves. The only thing we can do to assist the process of sanctification is to get in the presence of the sanctifier - the Spirit of God and His Word.

The Word of God will take us further in the sanctification process than anything else ever will. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). "If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

If we will diligently study, meditate on, memorize, and listen to the Word of God being preached and taught, we will be set free from all that holds us in its grip. All too often we trust other things to straighten our lives out. If we will spend as much time committed to God's Word, as man-made things, we will see God work wonders.

Jehovah Shalom – The Lord our Peace

Judges 6:24 says, "Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-Shalom." Gideon had only 300 men in the battle with Midian. The odds against them were insurmountable. This would have caused anxiety in the heart and soul of anyone. Gideon found that the Lord, Jehovah-Shalom, was his source of peace in midst of his greatest challenge. Ephesians 2:14 says, "He Himself (Jesus) is our

peace.” Whatever you are facing, set your heart on Him. Isaiah 26:3 says, “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.”

Peace is His promise to us. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Paul said, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). There’s a tremendous prescription for peace is found in these verses.

- **Prayer.** We must take everything to God in prayer. Peter said, “Casting all your care upon Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7 KJV). Jesus said, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). However, we must not stop there. All too often we are fixed on prayer for the negatives in life, but this focuses on that which produces anxiety.
- **Praise.** Prayer focuses on the negative whereas praise focuses on the solution. Thanksgiving is essential to peace. “With thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds.” We read, “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful” (Colossians 3:15).
- **Positive.** All praying must be followed by praising God for the outcome in advance, along with a positive outlook – dwelling on the positive. Paul went on in verse eight challenging us to focus on the positive,

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

Jehovah Tsidkenu – The Lord our Righteousness

Jeremiah 23:6 says, “This is His name by which He will be called, the Lord our righteousness.” He is our righteousness. We have no righteousness in ourselves. Isaiah 64:6 says, “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags.” Our righteousness is found in Him alone.

Paul, after listing all his accomplishments in Judaism, said, “What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Philippians 3:7-9).

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). We are to seek God and His righteousness alone (Matthew 6:33). Anything else inevitably comes up short. Also read Romans 10:3-5 and Matthew 5:20.

Jehovah Shammah – The Lord is Present

Ezekiel 48:35 says, “The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there.” We know God is omnipresent, His presence is everywhere. Jesus promised, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Hebrews 13:5 says, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

God promises His presence will be especially with His people. There are situations where [God’s presence manifests](#) in special ways. Those who trust in Christ will [experience God’s full essence of His presence when we meet Him face to face.](#)

Jehovah Raah – The Lord my Shepherd

Psalms 23:1 says, “The Lord is my shepherd.” Shepherds care for their sheep. They protect, feed and go after them when they stray (a lesson pastors should learn). Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). Shepherds have a heart of compassion for the sheep.

Matthew 9:36 says Jesus seeing the people “felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.” He cared about everything they were feeling and going through – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

At one time or another, we’ve all strayed from Him. Isaiah 53:6 says, “All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned, every one, to his own way. And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Jesus went to the cross to pay for our sins, and He is even now waiting for all lost souls to return to Him. 1 Peter 2:25 says, “For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.” God did His part. Will you return to Him today?

God's Abundance: Getting the Most out of Life

Most people never experience life to the extent they were meant to. Having a good job and making decent money doesn't mean you will experience fullness of life. Many who have been successful and had more than they could have ever dreamed of still end up disappointed with life. It doesn't just fall in our laps though. So what can we do to move toward this abundant life Jesus promised?

Experiencing God's best.....

The Bible says, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The devil is set on our destruction but Jesus came that we might experience life to its fullest – Abundance!

How to tap into the abundance God has for us:

1. Choose Life

Experiencing fullness of life is first and foremost a choice. We must choose life! We can choose to either be in a funk all the time or choose to enjoy the life we have. The Bible says,

"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and cursing. So choose life in order that you may live, both you and your descendants" (Deuteronomy 30:15 and 19).

It's interesting that he says, "both you and your descendants." Our choices or whether we choose life or not, may very well may have an affect on our descendants, our children and all those to follow. If we will choose life, we could be setting the course for our bloodline.

Let's choose life at every corner in life's experience!

2. Be Faithful in the Small Things

Luke 16:10-12 ~ “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon - money, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?”

Matthew 25:29 ~ “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

Life is not a broad (long) jump. We don't go from step one to step ten all at once. We must move from step 1, 2, 3, and so on, one step at a time. We must be trustworthy in the little things of life first if we ever expect to experience the big opportunities in life. That's why [tithing](#) is so important. (Read also Matthew 25:14-29)

3. Have an Attitude of Gratitude

Be thankful instead of complaining. It is so easy to complain. I have struggled with this somewhat my entire life. We can easily develop the outlook that if we don't complain we don't care. We will find ourselves getting to the other side of difficulties much sooner if we would adapt an attitude of gratitude.

Ephesians 5:20 ~ “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ~ “ In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

Philippians 2:14 ~ “Do everything without grumbling or arguing.”

4. Don't Focus on nor Neglect Yourself

We live in a world in which we are taught to look out for number one. If your entire focus is on yourself you will always end up empty. On the other hand, you can't neglect yourself either. The key is to find the balance in completely focusing on yourself and looking outside yourself to the needs of others.

Philippians 2:3-5 ~ “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

5. Maintain a Sober Estimation of Yourself

Many either think too much or too little of themselves. It's either one extreme or another. Some think they are all that – the world revolves around and can't get along without them. Still others have too low of an estimation of themselves. They tend to think they are of no value, worthless, and can't do anything. Balance is the key. The truth is without an element of ego no one would ever accomplish a thing.

Romans 12:3 ~ "I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Having a sober estimation of one's self is imperative!

6. Pursue Excellence

Many just want to get by and experience the bare minimum. They are addicted to mediocrity. They live this way in all areas of their life. If we are going to get the most out of life we will have to give everything our best.

Philippians 1:10 ~ "That ye may approve things that are excellent!"

The pursuit of excellence is imperative if we expect life's best!

7. Be a Visionary

Proverbs 29:18; Hebrews 12:2; Philippians 3:12-14

You will only accomplish what you first envision (John 5:19). My good friend, Dr. Dave Rahn once said, "Future direction is much more significant than past successes or failures." Keep your eyes off the past and on what's ahead of you.

Keep your eyes on the course (your goals, dreams, or vision) God has set before you. Blinders on horses are used to keep them from looking away at other things, getting distracted and their eyes on the course. We need spiritual blinders to keep us on course.

Philippians 3:12-14 ~ "Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Habakkuk 2:2-3 ~ “And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie (It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail): though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

Hebrews 12:2 ~ “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Proverbs 29:18 ~ “Where there is no vision, the people perish - are unrestrained, run aimlessly.”

8. Having a Support System is a Must

Every one of us will need help at one time or another. We all go through times of difficulty. You can't conquer life solo. We need the support of others. Get with a group of people who are positive, uplifting, and encouraging. Meet with them on a regular basis. Peter and John, when threatened, “went to their own company” (Acts 4:23).

We all need our own company to go to in times of trouble. Those who won't condemn us but who will be there to support, pray for and encourage us. When Peter was arrested “prayer was being made fervently for him by the church” (Acts 12:5). Now that's support.

The best support system we have as believers is the body of Christ. That's why church is so very important.

Hebrews 10:24-5 ~ “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting – encouraging one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Paul had such a support system which thrust him into his first missionary journey. They, in fact, continued their support of him throughout his journey.

Acts 13:1-3 ~ “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

9. A Positive Outlook on Life is a Must

We live in a negative world. We're surrounded by negative things and people. When you pick up a newspaper or watch the news most of the emphasis is on the negative. If we are to get the most out of life we are going to have to be different. Have you ever seen negative, critical people who had peace and joy (Romans 14:19a)? Let's make a disciplined effort to retrain our thinking and outlook.

Philippians 4:8 ~ "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Proverbs 23:7a ~ "As he (a man) thinks in his heart, so is he."

10. Faith – Romans 12:3

Everyone has an element of faith. For instance, when you enter a room and sit in a chair you demonstrate faith in the chair. You did so when you sat in it. You were confident the chair would hold you up if you sat in it.

- **Faith outside of yourself.** Everyone needs something outside yourself that you can look to and trust in. Otherwise, we are doing nothing but trusting in ourselves and you will inevitably let yourself down at some time or another and most of us do so quite frequently. You need something (someone) you look to greater than yourself. Hopefully that is God Almighty.
- **Faith in yourself (Philippians 4:13; Proverbs 23:7a).** Believe in what you can do and are good at. Most aren't good at everything but you can find a few things that you are really good at. Be confident in yourself and what you can do.
- **Act in faith (Hebrews 4:2; James 2:17).** If your going to accomplish anything you will have to step out and do something. Just like sitting in the chair, you must exercise faith and step out and do whatever it is that you are believing and hoping for. There are things in life that if you don't jump in and do you will never get done. It will at times be scary, but ever so rewarding.
- **Speak in Faith (Proverbs 18:20-21).** I am not nor have I ever been part of the Word of Faith movement. Nevertheless, there is always an element of truth in everything. We mustn't throw the proverbial baby out with the bath water. We must declare what we are believing God for. What we speak forth comes from our heart. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks"

(Luke 6:45). The wise man said, “As he thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7).

If negative things are spewing out of our mouth perpetually, that is probably what we believe. We must change our heart and as a result change what we say. We will ultimately become what we believe and speak forth. Let’s renew our minds and hearts (Romans 12:2) and begin to speak forth what we believe God for in our life – His goodness (Romans 11:22, Hebrews 9:11, James 1:17).

11. Be Audacious

Boldness is the absence of fear. But you may say, what if I fail? What if you don’t? What if you succeed? There will be times you do fail, but you won’t always. If you never try you will never succeed. Those who shrink back in fear and never step out in faith and try things will never accomplish a thing. Those throughout history who have accomplished great things frequently failed. They often failed an innumerable amount of times before actually succeeding. Be bold and try things.

Thomas Edison once said, “I haven't failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.”

Proverbs 28:1b ~ “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.”

12. Hard Work is a Must

The harder you work the luckier you’ll become. There is simply no short cut to good old fashion hard work. The lazy never experience abundance in life.

Hebrews 6:11-12 ~ “And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That you be not slothful – lazy, sluggish, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Proverbs 10:4 ~ “He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.”

Romans 12:11 ~ “Not slothful – lazy, sluggish in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.”

13. Make Steppingstones Out of Life's Experiences Not Stumbling Blocks – Philippians 3:14; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 11:23-33

Life will throw difficult things your way from time to time. You can depend on it. It's what you do with those things that will make all the difference in the world. Difficulties can cause us to stumble and defeat us in life. They can also be used as steppingstones taking us to higher ground. It's all up to us and what we do with them. Will the things of life keep us down or will we use them as steppingstones on the upward course?

Let's choose to keep moving upward to higher ground. Defeat mustn't be an option.

14. Never Give Up

Hebrews 12:1-3 ~ "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Quitters never experience fullness of life. Thomas Edison said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." If we are going to have abundance in life we have to be determined to never give up.

Perseverance is key! Continue moving forward and upward. Never stop! If you will refuse to quit you will overcome and get the most out of life. It's the devil's job to get you to give up. Never, never, never quit!

God is Able

Do you believe God can do anything? Is there something you're facing that makes you wonder if God is able to handle it? There are six accounts in the Bible where God declared that nothing is too difficult for Him.

1. When Confronting Abraham about Sarah's Laughter and Unbelief

Abraham was entertaining three persons who appeared to him (A Theophany – God appearing in human form) and gave him the promise of having a son. Abraham and Sarah were advanced in age and past child bearing age.

Undoubtedly she had already gone through menopause. It was impossible for them to have a child in the natural. Sarah heard the promise from her tent door and laughed. And the Lord said, "Is anything too difficult for the LORD" (Genesis 18:14)?

Is there something you feel God has promised you that seems impossible? It may be so outlandish that if you told someone they would laugh. God's question for you today is the same He asked Abraham, "Is anything too difficult for the LORD" (Genesis 18:14)?

2. In Relation to God's Purposes Being Fulfilled

At the end of his trouble, trials and testings, Job said, "I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You" (Job 42:2).

What are you presently going through? What trial or time of testing are you facing? Do you believe God can do anything, and that nothing can thwart His purposes from being fulfilled? It's one thing to believe in God's ability when all is well, but quite another when, like Job, you've lost everything and your world is falling apart.

3. When Comparing His Ability to His Creative Power

In contemplating the creation of the universe, Jeremiah wrote, "Ah Lord God! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee" (Jeremiah 32:17).

If God was able to create the heavens and the earth with His spoken Word, could there possibly be anything that is too hard for Him?

“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Hebrews 11:3).

4. In View of God’s Impending Judgment

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me” (Jeremiah 32:27)?

We see God’s omnipotence displayed even in the light of His judgment. When looking upon God’s end time judgment there are three Alleluias listed in praise to our God for His mighty power manifest in His judgments:

1. “Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are His judgments.” – Revelation 19:1-2
2. “Again they said, Alleluia And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.” – Revelation 19:3-4
3. “And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him.” – Revelation 19:5-7

All flesh subject to Him. This also has to do with all flesh being in subjection to the Lord and under the power and control of God. “I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for Me” (Jeremiah 32:27)? He created us – all flesh or mankind and we are therefore subject to Him. Decree those for whom you’re praying, their lives and circumstances to be made subject to God and His will.

5. When Dealing with Mary’s Astonishment that She, as a virgin, would Give Birth to the Son of God

Mary was engaged to be married, and unlike most today, she had never slept with her fiancé. An angel appeared to her, telling her she was going to give birth to a son. In her astonishment she said, “How can this be, since I am a virgin” (Luke 1:34)?

The Angel’s response was, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also the holy child which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. For with God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:35 and 37).

I love Mary's response. It was one of faith. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; BE IT UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD." (Luke 1:38). Let's respond to His promises in faith like this young women did.

David had a similar response to God's promise to him, his household and descendants. "Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and DO AS THOU HAST SAID. Let it even be established, that Thy name may be magnified for ever" (1 Chronicles 17:23-24a).

6. When Dealing with Man's Inability to be Saved

Jesus had just finished ministering to the rich young ruler, who said he had kept all the commandments from his youth. Jesus told him he lacked one thing, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions" (Matthew 19:21-22).

Jesus went on to tell his disciples it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples responded, "Who then can be saved? But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:25-26).

God is omnipotent and is able to do anything. No matter what you are going through or facing, our God is able! It may seem impossible in the natural, but let me assure you on the authority of God's Word, He is able.

I'm personally going through something right now that seems impossible. There have been times that the situation seemed to be dealt with, but the same thing continues to raise it's ugly head over and over again.

I'm reminded of something I read in Dake's Annotated study Bible. "All men (Christians) believe God can do anything, but few believe that He will." Will we dare to believe God is not only able to work in our situation but that He will?

6 Things God is Able to do:

1. God is Able to Save

"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). The word uttermost in the King James Version can also be translated, completely and forever.

God is able to save us completely and forever. No matter how messed up you are, or how far you've fallen into sin, God is able to save you completely and forever if you will surrender to Him with all your heart.

God is not only able to save completely and forever, He is also able to save the most unlikely candidate among us. Think of the one who seems so far from God, the likelihood of them ever giving their life to Christ is simply beyond comprehension. Let me encourage you, those are the very ones God specializes in. He specializes in hard cases.

Peter, after preaching the gospel on the day of Pentecost, told those who had responded, "For the promise is to you and to your children, and **to all who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). If there's someone you're praying for, but they seem almost beyond saving, be encouraged, our God has an affinity for those "who are afar off."

"With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:25-26).

2. God is Able to Deliver Us

The three Hebrew children expressed confidence in God's ability and said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king" (Daniel 3:17). They not only expressed faith in God's ability, but that He would deliver them – "He will deliver us".

God is able to deliver us from sin and peril. "He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Romans 11:26-27 KJV).

Jesus said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18).

"The angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear Him, and delivers them" (Psalms 34:7).

God's in the delivering business!

3. God is Able to Heal

“The blind men came to Him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto Him, Yea, Lord” (Matthew 9:28). Jesus is still in the healing business. He is able to heal us from whatever ails us. Whether we are suffering physically, emotionally, from depression, mentally, mental illness or from some sin that has us in it's grip. God is able to heal us.

The key is, will we let Him? Jesus said to a lame man, “Do you wish to get well” (John 5:6)? Do we really want to be made whole? That was Jesus' condition of healing and deliverance. Frequently, people appear to hate their illness or sin, but do they really want to be well? Do they truly want to be healed and set free from their illness or sin?

For those whose lives have thrown them into intense bondage, there is something that is necessary on your part. You must give your life to Jesus without reservation. It's usually the case of those who have sold out to sin that they must fully surrender to Christ with all their heart. It's then that salvation, deliverance and complete wholeness comes into their life. On the authority of God's Word, God is still in the business of saving, delivering and healing.

4. God is Able to Keep Us from Falling

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24). Once He has delivered us, God is more than able to keep us from falling into the same sins and traps that have previously held us in their grip. If we will cling to and hold onto Him, He will sustain us and keep us from stumbling.

5. God is Able to Keep Us from Temptation

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

When we are facing temptation on every front, God is able to deliver us and will provide a way of escape. We must, however, walk through the escape route He provides.

6. God is Able to Provide

“God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8). The context of this verse is referring to financial provision. The key is, God is able to bless us financially so we can abound to every good work – and not just lavish it upon ourselves.

There are some who are reading these words that God has blessed abundantly. If you want to continue in His blessing, you must find an outlet for the blessings you have received. Find a reputable ministry and [sow into it](#). God has blessed you for that very purpose, in order that you might be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).

If you don't use some of your abundance to abound to every good work, God may take away that which you have. “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath” (Matthew 25:29).

In closing, let me share a couple encouraging verses from God's Word:

“Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Ephesians 3:20).

“The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him – completely His” (2 Chronicles 16:9).

The Worship of Our God

Expressions of Worship

Worship should be the primary focus of every Christian. While there are different ways to worship God, He's not as concerned about how we express our praise and worship, but that we continue to worship Him. Worship will be the primary focus in heaven when we see Jesus face to face. While in our earthly bodies, we are on-the-job training for eternity.

Worship can be defined as "worth-ship." The degree to which we praise and worship God is the degree of His worth to us. If there is anything that God needs from us, it's worship. There are many expressions and [styles of worship](#) in the church, and God loves them all.

Many congregations get hung up on a certain type of worship and want to stick with that style only. God doesn't want us stuck in rut when we worship Him. He can be praised in a myriad of ways, and we should use them all. Below are some Biblical expressions of worship.

Silent Worship

We are challenged in Psalm 46:10 to "be still, and know that He is God." At times it's appropriate to worship God in silence. There's something about being completely still and calm before the Lord.

At such times, we often feel a sense of awe in His presence. In Revelation 8:1 we see a scene in heaven "when the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour." This was the calm before the storm. The problem is, in most churches instead of silent worship, we simply have dead silence.

Uplifted Voices

Psalm 47:1 encourages us "Shout to God with the voice of triumph." This was done in both worship and prayer. The early church "lifted their voices to God with one accord" (Acts 4:24). When Judah was under attack the Levites "stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a very loud voice" (2 Chronicles 20:19).

Worship was always expressed in the Bible with uplifted, loud voices. In Revelation 19:6, as the Apostle John viewed a heavenly scene of worship, the worshipers were so radical in their expression he heard it as "the voice of a great multitude, as the

sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns.”

The Clapping of Hands

Vocal expressions of worship are frequently accompanied with clapping. Psalm 47:1 says, “Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!” An offering of praise can be expressed by people clapping and lifting their voices to God.

Some think this is a strange thing to do in church, but what do we do at ball games or other times of celebration? We clap our hands and shout. How much more should we applaud and celebrate the one who redeemed us from sin and shame?

The Lifting of Our Hands

Psalm 63:4 says, “Thus will I bless thee while I live. I will lift up my hands in thy name.” Paul wrote to Timothy, “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands” (1 Timothy 2:8).

Lifting our hands is a sign of worship, surrender and adoration. This was not invented by Charismatics and Pentecostals, but by God Himself. It was a practice of worship in the Old Testament long before the birth of the church.

Singing

Psalm 146:1-2 – “Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord while I live. I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.”

Paul wrote, “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19). There are different kinds of songs mentioned in these verses – psalms, hymns and [spiritual songs](#). In churches today we sing hymns, choruses and new worship songs. The point is, we are worshiping in song.

Musical Instruments

Psalm 150:3-6 – “Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance. Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals. Praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”

Obviously, any kind of instrument can be used when worshiping God. The verses above tell us they worshiped with loud, clashing cymbals. They really got into it. Psalm 33:3 says, “Sing unto him a new song. Play skillfully with a loud noise.” Notice, the only restriction is that it must be done skillfully. God deserves nothing more than our best.

Some groups believe you shouldn’t use instruments at all when worshiping God. They say it’s because instruments are not mentioned in the New Testament. However, 1 Corinthians 10:11 says, “These things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction.”

Although we are not under the law, things written under the old covenant were written for our example and instruction. In Revelation 5:8 we see that each of the 24 elders had a harp. If instruments were used in the Old Testament, and in heaven, why would God forbid us from using them in worship today? The answer is obvious. He would not!

Dancing

Psalm 150:4 says, “Praise him with the timbrel and dance.” David was so excited that he danced before the Lord with all his might. Michal, his wife, thought he was making a fool of himself and despised him in her heart.

As a result, God struck her barren (2 Samuel 6:14-23). We should be willing to make fools of ourselves when worshiping God. God help anyone who mocks us for it.

In Spirit and Truth

No matter how we express our worship of God, sometimes we do it in the flesh and not the spirit. John 4:23-24 tells us we must worship in spirit and truth. Too often in church our flesh is worked up into a frenzy, and it has nothing to do with the Spirit.

That being said, most worship begins in the flesh before it can move into the realm of the Spirit. We live in the flesh and worship must begin somewhere, just don’t let it stay there.

No matter how we [express worship](#), we must put all we have into it. In some of the heavenly accounts of worship (Revelation 4:8-11, Revelation 5:9-14, Revelation 7:9-12, Revelation 19:1, and Revelation 19:4-6) they sang, fell on their faces, and put everything they had into their worship.

Psalms 103:1 – “Bless the Lord, oh my soul and all that is within me, bless His holy name.” Worship God with everything you have.

Preparing to Worship

Worship is something we choose to do, even when we don't feel like it. Maybe we've had a bad day or are going through a time of discouragement. Whatever the reason, it's in these times we must choose to worship, offering a sacrifice of praise to God.

Scriptures:

Hebrews 13:15 – “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.”

John 4:23 – “The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.”

Psalms 146:1-2 – “Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life. I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.”

1 Corinthians 14:15 – “I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.”

Worship is a Willful Act

Notice the repetition of “I will” in 1 Corinthians 14:15. It was something they choose to do. At times we must challenge and encourage ourselves in worship.

Psalms 103:1 and Psalm 146:1 tell us to, “praise the Lord my soul” and “bless the Lord oh my soul.” The Psalmist was determined to worship the Lord. We also must be determined to praise the Lord as a willful act.

I'm reminded of Jacob who had experienced a hard life with many trials, discouragements and set backs. It was so bad that at one point he cried out, “All these things are against me” (Genesis 42:36). Yet, at the end of his life, at 120 years of age, he “worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff” (Hebrews 11:21). If only we had such a determination in worshipping God.

Worship is an Act of Obedience

We are commanded to worship. Psalm 100:4 says, “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name.” We are priests of the most high God and our function is that of a worshiper (1 Peter 2:9). Every person has a built-in worship mechanism. Worship is something we must

choose to do in obedience. People frequently refrain from worshiping for a couple of reasons:

1. **Pride.** They feel foolish giving outward expressions of worship, especially in a public setting. It's okay for everyone else. They may even enjoy seeing others involved in worship, but they feel foolish participating. James 4:6 says, "But He gives more grace. Wherefore He says, God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble." Let's humble ourselves and surrender to worshiping the Savior.
2. **Rebellion.** Not worshiping God is an act of willful rebellion. We often try to disguise our rebellion with some other type of service, as if it were for God. Teaching a class, cleaning the church, etc. Imagine a worship leader challenging everyone to worship and seeing someone standing with their arms folded and with a nasty look on their face saying, "I'm not doing that."

1 Samuel 15:22-23 – "Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry."

We Should Arrive Having Already Prepared to Worship

In our personal time with God we should spend time in the Word asking for divine help to worship Him. We cannot worship God on our own. It's the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which enables us to worship Him (Romans 5:5). It's His spirit of adoption which cries out from within us "Abba Father" (Romans 8:15).

As for public worship, Paul said, "Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm" (1 Corinthians 14:26). He gives the indication that we should have our gifts of worship ready when we come to the assembly (church). We must prepare our hearts for our worship experience before arriving at church.

If we are honest, many times we arrive at church ready to worship, but we feel resistance. This must be broken before we get there. I imagine few actually come to their local assembly already equipped to worship.

We should spend time in the Word and prayer prior to the worship service. For all of us, there are things in both the natural and spiritual realms that must be dealt with and broken before we worship God. This is why I insist on a prayer meeting before each church service. I can tell how the worship service will go by the atmosphere of the prayer meeting beforehand.

The Participation of the Individual Determines the Participation of the Majority

In a public worship service, there may be people who are inhibited by the folks around them. If each person has prepared for worship and begin to worship as a willful act of obedience, the walls of inhibition will come down (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

If the majority are actively involved in the worship experience, individuals will lose their inhibitions and find themselves lost in the freedom of [praise and worship](#). No matter where or when, you help to determine the degree to which God is worshiped.

The Purpose of Praise and Worship

Mention worship and most Christians think about the music and singing that occurs during church services. Praise and worship should be a large part of every Christian's life, but there are also clear Biblical reasons for us to worship God. There is a purpose in all God does. Likewise, there is a purpose for our praise and worship of Him.

Worship is an Expression of God's Worth

Praise and worship is the measuring rod of His worth to us. Show me a person involved in worship and I will show you someone who has a high estimation of God. Likewise, one who doesn't express God's worth through worship is one who has a low estimation of God. Praise and worship is the means through which we express His worth in our sight.

How much do we really love Him? If we really love and esteem Him, we will show it through our praise, worship, surrender, and obedience. "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me" (John 14:21). Paul exhorts, "To present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship" (Romans 12:1).

Worship is the Purpose for Which We Were Created

In Revelation 4:11, twenty-four elders were praising God saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Our purpose is to bring pleasure to God. One of the best ways to do that is through praise and worship. We don't think of God as having needs, but there's something within His make up that needs worship from His creation.

"The Father seeks such to worship Him." ~ John 4:23

Worship will be one of the primary activities in heaven. We are presently enrolled in on-the-job training for eternity. If we feel out of place worshipping here, imagine how awkward we will feel in eternity. For a clear picture of what worship will be like in eternity study Revelation 4:8-11, Revelation 5:9-11, Revelation 7:9-12, and Revelation 19:1-8.

Worship Ushers in God's Presence

Psalm 100:1-4 – “Make a joyful noise, shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God. It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise.”

Jesus promised He would always be with us, especially when we gather in His name (Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 18:20). He also promised that we will [enter into His presence](#) in a special way when we worship and praise Him.

You can feel the presence of God in a powerful way when you are worshiping. I've always been able to tell a huge difference when I'm putting all I have into my worship experience, as opposed to when I'm not. We enter into the presence of God through praise and worship.

Psalm 16:11 tells us that being in His presence brings “fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore.” When Moses left God's presence in Exodus 34, his face was glowing. As Solomon worshiped the Lord the glory of God filled the temple so much that the priests could not stand to minister (1 Kings 8:11, 2 Chronicles 5:6 and 2 Chronicles 7:1-4). Throughout the Bible, when people experienced the presence of God they were changed (Isaiah 6:1-8).

What would it be like if we worshiped God with all our might? How would we be affected by His presence? One thing is sure, we will never be the same. When we enter His presence through worship “we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

We Minister to God Through Worship

In Acts 13:2, the church at Antioch was “ministering to the Lord.” We talk about ministering to others, and God ministering to us, but God needs us to minister to Him as well. John 4:23 says, “For the Father seeks such to worship Him.”

We normally don't think about God having needs, but He wants and needs our worship. The only way His need will ever be met is by [praising and worshiping](#) Him with all of our heart.

The Power of Praise

Praise is the act of expressing approval or admiration. Worship is reverent honor and homage paid to God. While most Christians think of praise and worship as interchangeable, there is tremendous power in praise.

Praise is the Means of and Response to the Infilling of the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:18-19 – “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

Praise and worship triggers the overflow of God’s Spirit in our hearts. We not only enter God’s presence through praise (Psalms 100:4), but we are also filled with His presence through worship. Are you feeling spiritually dry? Worship Jesus with all your heart and the Spirit of the living God will fill your innermost being to overflowing.

James 4:8 – “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”

John 7:37-39 – “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. This He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive.”

Praise is also the response to being filled with God’s Spirit, which cries out from within us in prayer and praise.

Romans 8:15 – “You have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

Galatians 4:6 – “And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

Throughout scripture people were worshiping and magnifying God when filled with the Holy Spirit. Worship is one of the evidences of the Spirit filled life. As the Holy Spirit flows within our heart, the natural response of the human spirit is praise and worship.

Acts 10:45-46 – “On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.”

Praise Creates an Atmosphere for Hearing From God

If you want to hear from God, you must worship Him. Acts 13:2 says, “While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said.”

When I am in a service where the praise and worship is intense, I feel the greatest anointing in my preaching and teaching. It’s in this type of atmosphere that God seems to speak the clearest. Whether in your personal time with God, or a public setting, [praise is the key](#) to us hearing from Him.

We also find this when we are in a spiritual battle. It’s when we are going through a time of difficulty and spiritual conflict that we desperately need to hear from God. In 2 Kings 3:15-16, Ahab and Jehoshaphat ran out of water while going to battle Moab. Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not a prophet of the Lord here that we may inquire by him?” One of the king’s servants said, “Elisha the son of Shaphat is here.” Jehoshaphat said, “The Word of the Lord is with him” (2 Kings 3:11-12).

They went to Elisha and he told them, “Bring me a minstrel.” After the minstrel played Elisha proclaimed, “Thus says the Lord.” It was when the musician began to play that the Lord spoke to Elisha, giving him the needed Word to lead them to victory.

It was only after the musician began to play that the Lord spoke to Elisha, who gave them the Word of God they needed for victory. This is why a [worship leader’s job](#) is so important.

People who minister on a worship team should never underestimate the importance of their calling. They are the ones who set an atmosphere for the church hearing God speak. Worship ushers in the anointing of God, not only in church services, but also in our personal devotions. We should always have a time of praise and worship prior to our study of the Word, whether it’s in a corporate setting or in our personal devotions.

Praise Releases Stress and Anxiety

Philippians 4:6-7 – “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

The prescription for stress and anxiety in Philippians 4:6-8 is prayer, praise, and a positive mindset. We need to “cast all our care upon Him, for He cares for us” (1 Peter 5:7). That said, prayer alone is not enough. Prayer focuses on the problem, whereas praise focuses on the solution. Prayer keeps our concentration on the cause of our

stress and anxiety, whereas praise moves our focus and concentration from the cause to the one who is the solution to our stress.

It's important to pray, but don't stop there. We must always move from prayer to praise, so we aren't dwelling on the problem but on the solution. In Matthew 11:28-29 Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your soul." True rest is found in God! "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9).

From there we must proceed to setting our focus and mindset on the positive – Faith!

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." ~ Philippians 4:8

Praise Releases the Generosity of God

Think about how you feel when your children tell you how great you are. Our immediate response is usually, "What do you want?" We laugh, but if they are constantly praising us, we usually give them anything they want.

This is especially true of grandchildren. God is the same. If we are continually praising and worshiping the Lord, telling Him how much we love Him and how great He is, He is likely to give us anything we desire (Psalm 37:4), sometimes even before we ask.

Isaiah 65:24 – "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer, and while they are still speaking, I will hear."

How great is that? Praise brings this to fulfillment in our lives. If we will spend more time in praise and worship, we will have a lot less to pray about.

Praise Causes our Enemies to Flee

In 2 Chronicles 20:12, the enemy was coming against the people of God and Jehoshaphat was afraid and said, "We have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

Have you ever been in a place where you were afraid, felt completely overwhelmed, and had no idea what to do? That is exactly where they were. It was only when they praised the Lord with all of their heart that He struck down the enemy before them. They didn't even have to lift a hand to fight.

Their praise was not timid and ritualistic, they “stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a very loud voice” (2 Chronicles 20:19). They praised Him with all their might, and as a result, God fought for them, struck down their enemy, and gave them victory.

In Exodus 17:10-13, when Amalek fought against Israel at Rephidim, Moses sent Joshua to fight for Israel while he stood on top of the hill with Aaron and Hur. When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed. When he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.

When Moses grew weary, Aaron and Hur held up his hand allowing Joshua to overwhelm Amalek. Every man of God needs those who will hold his hands up when he becomes weary.

In Exodus 17:15, Moses built an altar and named it [Jehovah-Nissi](#), “The Lord is My banner.” As long as Moses kept his hand lifted high in praise, Israel prevailed against the enemy.

The same is true for us. If we constantly praise and worship Him, God will cause us to prevail and our enemies to flee before us. Let’s lift up His banner high and unashamedly for all to see. Victory is ours!

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