

The background of the cover is a photograph of a serene landscape. In the foreground, there's a rocky, grassy shore. A calm lake reflects the sky and the surrounding mountains. In the distance, there are rolling hills and mountains under a cloudy sky. A bright sunburst breaks through the clouds, casting a golden light across the water and the sky.

The Attributes of God

**12 Daily Readings
from the Bible**

**A.W. Pink
Adapted by Ron Jones**

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Ron Jones is the President of the Titus Institute of California (www.titusinstitute.com).

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TIPN # 104

A.W. Pink Bio

Arthur W. Pink was a Bible teacher that lived from 1886 to 1952. He was born in England. He turned to faith in Jesus Christ in 1908 and traveled to America in 1910 to attend the Moody Bible Institute. However, after just two months he left the Institute to serve the Lord as a Pastor in Colorado. He pastored churches in California, Kentucky and South Carolina.

Later He chose to move from traditional pastoral ministry to a teaching ministry of writing and speaking in Bible conferences. The Lord led him to begin a monthly magazine which he called "Studies in the Scriptures." He wrote and published this magazine for thirty years from 1922 until his death in 1952. His last thirteen years was spent living in Scotland.

His ministry of teaching the Word was carried out primarily through his writings. Most of the material that we have from his teaching comes from this magazine. He loved the great Puritan preachers of the past and taught the Word as they did. A.W. Pink was a man committed to teaching God's sovereignty over all things and His glory above all things!

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Preface

A.W. Pink wrote in his preface to his original booklet on the Attributes of God, "A spiritual and saving knowledge of God is the greatest need of every human creature. The foundation of all true knowledge of God must be a clear mental apprehension of his perfections as revealed in Holy Scripture. An unknown God can neither be trusted, served, nor worshipped. In this booklet an effort has been made to set forth some of the principal perfections of the Divine character. If the reader is to truly profit from his perusal of the pages that follow, he needs to definitely and earnestly beseech God to bless them to him, to apply his truth to the conscience and heart, so that his life will be transformed thereby."

This eBook of twelve daily readings has been adapted from Pink's booklet on the Attributes of God. I have designed this daily reading schedule to help you as a believer focus on our glorious God, the Father, Son, and Spirit. The more we focus on God and his divine nature and attributes, the greater will be our faith in him. I have adapted Pink's writing by updating some of his wording for contemporary readers and by eliminating some of his and adding some of my own exposition to fit the purpose of this eBook. I also added an exposition of two attributes which Pink did not explain, the Eternity and Omnipresence of God. A few attributes which Pink expounded on I left out. His original booklet is readily available on the Internet for your reading and I encourage you to check it out. My purpose was to provide a contemporary version of the attributes of God based on Pink's solid exposition in order to strengthen believers in their faith in Jesus Christ. May the Lord encourage you through his Word in this eBook so that you might grow in your faith in Christ in the days ahead.

Ron Jones

Day 1 The Self-Sufficiency of God

Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? (Exodus 15:11)

There was a “time, in eternity past,” if we can use those terms, when God, in the unity of his nature (though subsisting equally in three divine persons), dwelt all alone. “In the beginning, God.” (Genesis 1:1) There was no heaven, where his glory is now particularly manifested. There was no earth to engage his attention. There were no angels to sing his praises; no universe to be upheld by the word of his power. There was nothing, no one, but God; and that, not for a day, a year, or an age, but “from everlasting.”

In eternity past, the Triune God was alone: self-contained, self-sufficient, self-satisfied, and in need of nothing. Had a universe, had angels, had human beings been necessary to him in any way, they would also have been called into existence from all eternity. The creating of them when he did, added nothing to God essentially. God, in his nature and being, does not change. (Malachi 3:6) Therefore his essential glory can be neither increased nor diminished.

God was under no constraint, no obligation, no necessity to create. That he chose to do so was purely a sovereign act on his part, caused by nothing outside himself, determined by nothing but his own good pleasure, for he “works all things according to the counsel of his will,” (Ephesians 1:11). That he did create was simply for the display of his glory. In the book of Nehemiah, it says, “Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.” (Nehemiah 9:5).

God receives no gain even from our worship. He was in no need of that external glory of his grace which arises from his redeemed, for he is glorious enough in himself without that. What was it that moved him to predestinate his elect to the praise of the glory of his grace? It was, as Ephesians 1:5 tells us, according to the good pleasure of his will.

At the end of Romans 11, where the apostle brings to a close his long argument on salvation by pure and sovereign grace, he asks, “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” (Romans 11:34-35). Paul tells us that it is impossible to bring God Almighty under obligation to his creatures. God gains nothing from us.

It is perfectly true that God is both honored and dishonored by men, not in his essential being, but in his official character. It is equally true that God has been “glorified” by creation, by providence, and by redemption. This we do not and dare not dispute for a moment. But all of this has to do with the display of his glory and the recognition of it by us. Yet had God so pleased he might have continued alone for all eternity, without making known his glory to his creatures. Whether he should do so or not was determined solely by his own will. He was perfectly blessed in himself before the first creature was called into being.

God is the supreme being in the universe, far above the creatures he has made. In Isaiah 40:21-23, Isaiah tells the Israelites to stop worshipping false gods made from wood and focus on the true God, he declared, “Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits

above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.”

Nor is the testimony of the New Testament any different from that of the Old. How could it be, seeing that both have one and the same Author! There too we read what the Apostle Paul proclaimed about our God, “he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion.” (1 Timothy 6:16). Such a One is to be revered, worshipped, and adored. He is alone in his majesty, unique in his excellency, peerless in his perfections. He sustains all, but is himself independent of all. He gives to all, but is enriched by none.

This is a great blessing for us because human beings are so needy. No matter how we try to focus on others, our own weaknesses drive us back to focusing on ourselves. When we go to others for emotional support, they often are distracted with their own problems. But God, our Father, is not like us. He has no weaknesses to overwhelm him and no needs to distract him. He is able to focus his attention on every one of his children at the same time. He is able to provide for us, comfort us, answer our prayers, and work his plan for our good (Romans 8:28) and for his kingdom (Matthew 6:31-33).

He is deeply concerned about our needs and helping us and has the focus and concentration to do it. This is why Jesus could encourage us in Matthew 6:31-33 with these words, “Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Day 2 The Eternity of God

*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth
and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.*

In Psalm 90:2 above, Moses proclaims that before God formed the mountains and the earth and the world, that is, before creation, he existed. But he says more, “even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God. “From everlasting” looks backward into eternity before time existed and “to everlasting” looks forward into eternity after time ends giving us a beautiful description of God’s eternal being. God always existed and God will always exist. God had no beginning and God has no end.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1) This statement marks the beginning of time. It is a statement of a reality that had not previously existed. Before the creation of the heavens and earth, there was no time or space, only eternity. Now there is time and space. Since this verse reveals that God created time, it also reveals that God existed before time began otherwise, he could not create it. As Isaiah the prophet proclaims, “For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.” (Isaiah 57:15)

In Exodus 3:14, when God appears to Moses, he gives the meaning of his name “Yahweh” as “I AM WHO I AM” that is, “I am eternally who I am as God and no one is like me.” In John 8, when the Jewish leaders asked Jesus if he had seen Abraham, Jesus quoted his eternity as the Son of God when he quoted Exodus 3:14 saying, “Before Abraham was born, I AM.” The Son of God, as God, not only existed before Abraham and saw Abraham, but he is the eternal “I AM” with no beginning and no end. This was one of Jesus’ most powerful claims to deity. Hebrews 13:8 claims the same precious truth about our Savior. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

God’s eternity transcends all the limitations of time. Our physical existence is measured in days and weeks and months and years, but God’s existence is not. Our life is divided into a past, present and future, but there is no such division in God’s life. God is the eternal “I AM.” He is outside all temporal limits and all succession of moments, and possesses the whole of his existence in one indivisible present. Because he is outside of time, God is able to see the past, present, and future of his physical creation all at the same time.

God’s eternity separates him from all other false gods. At the time of the prophet Isaiah, the Israelites had fallen into idol worship, they were worshipping idols made of wood along with the true eternal Lord God. God condemns them for this and declares who he is, the one true God. “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.” (Isaiah 44:6) The Lord proclaims his eternity. He was the first who existed before all things and he is the last who will continue to exist into the future forever. In this, the Lord also proclaims his absolute superiority over all. The Lord is at the same time beginning and end, Alpha and Omega. To him everything, beginning and end, is absolutely present. There is no other God except him!

God’s eternity is so important for believers in Jesus Christ to understand. God is not bound by all the troubles we have with time. God is not hurried. He is not impatient. He does not make mistakes because he has not taken the time to assess the situation. "Haste makes waste" does

not apply to God. God is patiently working out his incredible plan of redemption which involves each of us and he is not worried about not fitting it all in or running out of time.

He is above time. He created time. Time is not an issue for him. Because he is outside of time, God is able to see the beginning and end of things. Our whole lives are a present reality for him. He will not be caught unawares. He knows what the future holds for us, because he can see it and has control over it.

When Peter encourages the Christians to be patient about the Lord's return because God is patient and he is working to save all those he has chosen for his kingdom, he reminds them in 2 Peter 3:8 "with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." This means that in God's perspective there is no distinction between days and years because he is outside of time. He has an eternal perspective. This gives God incredible patience with his creatures and especially with his people. So, we need to trust him when he does not answer our prayers as quickly as we would like. We need to trust him when we see evil increase in our culture and society and wonder what's going to happen in the future. We need to trust him when the trials that we are facing seem to go on without end. Whatever troubles we face in this physical existence will be forgotten when we experience the joy of God's eternal kingdom. As Psalm 16:11 says, "In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

Day 3 The Sovereignty of God

The Lord reigns; he is robed in majesty. (Psalm 93:1)

The sovereignty of God may be defined as reigning over all that he created which is everything that exists. It is the exercise of his supremacy over all. God is infinitely elevated above the highest creature. He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. God is subject to none, influenced by none, and absolutely independent. God does as he pleases, only as he pleases, and always as he pleases. As Psalm 115:3 says, "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases." None can thwart him; none can hinder him. So, his own Word expressly declares, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose." (Isaiah 46:10)

Divine sovereignty means that God is God in fact, as well as in name, that he is on the throne of the universe, directing all things, working all things "according to the counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:11). In 1 Chronicles 29:11-12, David declared, "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all."

Unbelieving human beings will allow God to be everywhere except on his throne. They will allow him to be in his workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow him to be in his treasury to dispense his financial blessings and bestow his bounties. They will allow him to sustain the earth and bear up its pillars, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean, but when God ascends his throne, his unbelieving creatures then gnash their teeth in anger and rebellion.

We Christians proclaim an enthroned God, and his right to do as he wills with his own creatures as he thinks is best, without consulting them in the matter. This is what God has revealed about himself in the Scriptures which we declare and follow. Unbelievers turn a deaf ear to us, for God on his throne is not the God they want. They want a god who creates human beings and gives them a wonderful place to live and then leaves them alone until he is needed to rescue them. Their god does nothing while watching them destroy each other and every good thing he has created. The god they want is a god of their own image, not the true God that actually exists.

Human beings did not create this universe and do not have the knowledge or wisdom to run it, but they certainly have opinions on how it should be run. The true God who created the vast universe with all its complexity and holds it together by his power does not need the advice of his creatures. Our God is unrivalled in majesty, unlimited in power, unaffected by anything outside himself. As the psalmist declares, "Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps." (Psalm 135:6).

Some think that to emphasize God's sovereignty this excludes human responsibility, but that is not true. Human responsibility is based upon divine sovereignty and is the product of it. God sovereignly placed Adam in the garden of Eden and gave him responsibility in the form of commands to rule and take care of the earth he had created for him and his descendants. Adam

and Eve were to enjoy fellowship with God himself and experience his love and build a civilization from their offspring who would do the same. Along with that blessing, God gave them a command not to eat of a certain tree. In this world, they would be able to joyfully fulfill their responsibility as ground yielded fruit and vegetables bountifully. The animals and nature were in harmony and Adam and Eve met with God each day to enjoy being with him.

Adam and Eve experienced tremendous freedom to make choices for themselves as God allowed them to do whatever they wanted when they wanted within the responsibility and moral limits he had set. There was no struggle with tilling the ground, no struggle with the weather. There was no such thing as famine, natural disasters, disease, crime, war, nothing like that, just God's peace and harmony on the earth. Within God's sovereignty there was much freedom of choice as long as Adam and Eve stayed within the simple moral limits God had set. Unfortunately, they chose to turn away from God and all that he had given them and break his moral standards and they fell into sin and changed the future of their world.

Some may say, it was not right for God to set moral limits and then punish Adam and Eve for going beyond those limits. They do not understand that God did not create human beings because it was right for him to do so. He was under no obligation to create. It was right because he did so. God is sovereign. His will is supreme. So far from God being under any law of "right," he is a law unto himself, so that whatsoever he does is right. He is righteous by his very nature and therefore, he defines what is "right." And woe be to the rebel that calls his sovereignty into question: "Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles?'" (Isaiah 45:9).

Let me give one more example of the exercise of God's absolute sovereignty. After Adam and Eve fell, all their descendants were hopelessly lost and in need of redemption. God could have left them this way, but he didn't. God sovereignly appointed Jesus Christ to redeem his elect, the ones he had chosen for his kingdom. It was his sovereign will that appointed Christ, his sovereign love that sent Christ, his sovereign authority that assigned him his work of redemption.

Our Mediator, Jesus Christ, had to meet certain conditions. He was to become a human being; he was to magnify the law and make it honorable, he was to bear all the sins of all God's people in his own body on the tree; he was to make full atonement for them; he was to endure the outpoured wrath of God; he was to die and be buried. On the fulfillment of those conditions he was promised a reward (Isaiah 53:10-12). He was to be the Firstborn among many brethren; he was to have a people who should share his glory.

He fulfilled those conditions, and because he did so, the Father stands pledged, on solemn oath, to preserve through time and bless throughout eternity every one of those for whom his incarnate Son mediated. Because he took their place, they now share his. His righteousness is theirs, his standing before God is theirs, his life is theirs. Blessed be his name forever. There is not a single condition for them to meet, not a single responsibility for them to discharge in order to attain their eternal bliss. "For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14). Here, then, is the highest and grandest display of the absolute sovereignty of God.

Day 4 The Immutability of God

For I the Lord do not change (Malachi 3:6)

God is immutable (unchanging) which means he is perpetually the same; he is subject to no change in his being, attributes, or determinations. Therefore, God is compared to a rock (Psalm 18:2) which remains immovable, when the entire ocean surrounding it is continually in a fluctuating state. Though all creatures are subject to change, God is immutable. Because God has no beginning and no ending, he can know no change. He is eternally “the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” (James 1:17).

First, God is immutable in his essence. His nature and being are infinite, and so, subject to no mutations. There never was a time when he was not; there never will come a time when he shall cease to be. God has neither evolved, grown, nor improved. All that he is today, he has ever been, and ever will be. “For I the Lord do not change” (Malachi 3:6) is his own unqualified affirmation. He cannot change for the better, for he is already perfect; and being perfect, he cannot change for the worse. Altogether unaffected by anything outside himself, improvement or deterioration is impossible. He is perpetually the same. He only can say, “I am who I am.” (Exodus 3:14) He is altogether uninfluenced by the flight of time. Therefore, his power can never diminish nor his glory ever fade.

Secondly, God is immutable in his attributes. Whatever the attributes of God were before the universe was called into existence, they are precisely the same now, and will remain so forever. This is necessarily so because they are the essential qualities of his being. All of God’s attributes are infinite and eternal. God never changes in his nature and character.

Thirdly, God is immutable in his promises. One of the primary ways God has chosen to glorify his name is to make promises to human beings and then fulfill them. Thus, showing his incredible faithfulness. Moses declared to the nation of Israel, “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.” (Deuteronomy 7:9)

God is faithful to his covenants of promises. In Malachi 3:6, the Lord says, “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.” God made the Mosaic Covenant with the nation of Israel to bless them as a nation if they would remain true to him, but they didn’t. However, God is still faithful to the Abrahamic Covenant and will not allow all the Jewish people, the descendants of Abraham, to be destroyed. There is a remnant of them who have become part of his church by faith in their messiah, Jesus Christ.

The greatest of all God’s promises is given to all believers. God promises salvation to all who will trust in Jesus Christ. The incredible words in John 3:16 gives God’s unchanging promise of salvation, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” God is able to be trusted to fulfill every salvation promise he has made in his Word. These promises are unchanging. As Lamentations 3:23 proclaims, “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

Fourthly, God is immutable in his purpose and plan. His will never varies. God's intentions, his desired aims and goals never change. His determination and resoluteness never change. "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." (Romans 11:29). It must be so, for "he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does." (Job 23:13). God's purpose never alters. One of two things causes a man to change his mind and reverse his plans, want of foresight to anticipate everything, or lack of power to execute them. But as God is both omniscient and omnipotent there is never any need for him to revise his decrees. No. "The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations." (Ps. 33:11). Therefore, do we read of "the unchangeable character of his purpose." (Hebrews 6:17).

So, God's plan never changes, but there are changes within his plan. God has chosen to allow human beings to respond to him freely and he has chosen to respond to their behavior. This is part of his sovereign plan. God's responses will always be consistent with his unchanging nature and character and will always be in agreement with his purpose and plan. In Genesis 6:6, after observing how unbelieving humans had corrupted his beautiful world, Moses wrote, "And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart." Within God's plan for the earth are changes based on how human beings respond to him. Had human beings not corrupted the earth so thoroughly with their evil, God would not have regretted he made man and would not have sent the flood to destroy them. When Nineveh repented before God at the preaching of Noah, "God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it." (Jonah 3:10) Both of God's responses were part of his unchanging purpose and plan.

God's immutability is the basis of great comfort for us who are God's children by faith in Christ. Human nature cannot be relied upon; but God can! However unstable I may be, however fickle my friends may prove, God changes not. If he varied as we do, if he willed one thing today and another tomorrow, if he were controlled by his emotions and suddenly changed his mind or acted irrationally, who could trust in him? Who could confide in him? But, all praise to his glorious name, he is ever the same. His purpose is fixed, his will stable, His word is sure.

Here then is a rock on which we may fix our feet, while the mighty torrent is sweeping away everything around us so we can proclaim with David, "I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." (Psalm 18:1-2) We can be sure that every day when we wake up in the morning, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has not changed his mind about us but continues to keep us eternally in his kingdom. As Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Praise the Lord!

Day 5 The Omniscience of God

Great is our Lord...his understanding is beyond measure. (Psalm 147:5)

God is omniscient. He knows everything, everything possible, everything actual, all events, all creatures, the past, the present and the future. He is perfectly acquainted with every detail in the life of every being in heaven, in earth and in the spirit realm. Nothing escapes his notice; nothing can be hidden from him; nothing is forgotten by him. Well may we say with the Psalmist, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it." (Psalm 139:6). His knowledge is perfect. He never errs, never changes, never overlooks anything. "And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:13). Yes, such is the God with whom "we must give account."

"You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether." (Psalm 139:2-4). What a wondrous being is the God of the universe revealed in the Scriptures! Each of his glorious attributes should render him honorable in our esteem. The apprehension of his omniscience ought to bow us in adoration before him.

To the believer, the fact of God's omniscience is a truth filled with much comfort. In times of weariness and weakness we believers assure ourselves "For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust." (Psalm 103:14). In times of doubt and suspicion we appeal to this very attribute saying, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Ps. 139:23-24). In time of sad failure, when our actions have contradicted our hearts, when our deeds have repudiated our devotion, and the searching question comes to us, "Do you love me?" we say, as Peter did, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (John 21:17).

There is no cause for fearing that the petitions of the righteous will not be heard, or that their sighs and tears shall escape the notice of God, since he knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. There is no danger of the individual Christian being overlooked amidst the multitude of praying people who daily and hourly present their various petitions, for an infinite mind is as capable as paying the same attention to millions as if only one individual were seeking its attention. God declares how his infinite mind responds to our prayers through the prophet Isaiah, "Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isaiah 65:24). God sees us. God knows us. God hears us. God answers our prayers.

"Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure." (Psalm 147:5). God not only knows whatever has happened in the past in every part of his vast domains, and he is not only thoroughly acquainted with everything that is now transpiring throughout the entire universe, but he is also perfectly cognizant with every event, from the least to the greatest, that ever will happen in the ages to come. God's knowledge of the future is as complete as is his knowledge of the past and the present, and that, because the future depends entirely upon himself. Were it in anywise possible for something to occur apart from either the direct agency

or permission of God, then that something would be independent of him, and he would at once cease to be the Supreme God.

Now the Divine knowledge of the future is not a mere abstraction, but something which is inseparably connected with and accompanied by his divine sovereignty and purpose. God has himself designed whatever shall yet be, and what he has designed must be accomplished. As his most sure Word affirms, "he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'" (Daniel 4:35). And again "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand." (Proverbs 19:21). The wisdom and power of God being alike infinite, the accomplishment of whatever he has purposed is absolutely guaranteed.

The perfect knowledge of God is exemplified and illustrated in every prophecy recorded in his Word. In the Old Testament are to be found many predictions concerning the history of Israel, which were fulfilled to their minutest detail, centuries after they were made. In them too are many prophecies of the earthly life and ministry of Christ, and they too were accomplished literally and perfectly. Such prophecies could only have been given by One who knew the end from the beginning, and whose knowledge rested upon the unconditional certainty of the accomplishment of everything foretold by his divine sovereignty and power.

So God's knowledge does not arise from things because they are or will be but because he has ordained them to be. God knew and foretold the crucifixion of his Son many hundreds of years before he became incarnate, and this, because in the divine purpose, he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Hence, we read of his being "delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God." (Acts 2:23). In like manner, both Old and New Testament contain many other announcements yet future, and they too "must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44) in the same way.

This infinite knowledge of God should fill us with amazement. How far exalted above the wisest human is the Lord! None of us knows what a day may bring forth, but all of the future is open to his omniscient gaze. The infinite knowledge of God ought to fill us with holy awe. Nothing we do, say, or even think, escapes the cognizance of him with whom we have to do: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good." (Proverbs 15:3). How this truth can change our lives, if we would just meditate upon it more frequently! Instead of acting recklessly, we should say with Hagar, "You are a God who sees me." (Genesis 16:13).

The apprehension of God's infinite knowledge should fill the Christian with adoration. The whole of my life stood open to his view from the beginning. He foresaw my every fall, my every sin, my every backsliding, yet, nevertheless, fixed his heart upon me. Oh, how the realization of this should bow me in wonder and worship before him!

Day 6 The Omnipotence of God

Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you. (Jeremiah 32:17)

We cannot have a right conception of God unless we think of him as all-powerful, as well as absolutely sovereign. He who cannot do what he will and perform all his pleasure cannot be God. As God has a will to resolve what he deems good, so has he the power to execute his will. The omnipotence of God is that ability and strength whereby he can bring to pass whatever he pleases, whatever his infinite wisdom may direct, and whatever the infinite purity of his sovereign will may resolve. As holiness is the beauty of all God's attributes, so power is that which gives life and action to all the perfections of his divine nature. Without divine infinite power, his love, grace, and mercy could not obtain salvation for his people. How vain would be God's purpose and plan, if power did not step in to execute them. Without divine infinite power, his promises would be an empty sound, his judgments mere hollow threats. God's power is like himself, infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; it can neither be stopped, restrained, nor frustrated by any creature.

"Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God." (Psalm 62:11). "Once God has spoken" nothing more is necessary! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word abides forever. God has spoken once: how befitting his divine majesty! We poor mortals may speak often and yet fail to be heard. He speaks but once and a universe is created.

"Power belongs to God," and to him alone. Not a creature in the entire universe has an atom of power save what God delegates. But God's power is not acquired, nor does it depend upon any recognition by any other authority. It belongs to him inherently. God's power is like himself, self-existent, self-sustained. The mightiest of men cannot add so much as a shadow of increased power to the Omnipotent One. He sits on no supported throne and leans on no assisting arm. He does not need the power or strength of any creature, angelic or human. He is himself the great central source and originator of all power.

A great demonstration of God's power is creation. "The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it, you have founded them. The north and the south, you have created them." (Psalm 89:11, 12). Genesis 1:1 tells us that God created the heavens and the earth by the exercise of his divine will. Then beginning in v.2 he molded the earth, separating the water that covered it so dry land could appear and filled it with plants and trees, and insects, animals, fish, and birds. Then he filled outer space he had created with the sun, moon and billions of stars. This was all done by his infinitely powerful word.

Before man can work, he must have both tools and materials, but God began with nothing, and by his word alone out of nothing made all things. God simply commanded it and it was done. Psalm 33:6 proclaims "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host." Then in v.9 the psalmist continues, "he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm." That's infinite divine power displayed!

A great demonstration of God's power is preservation. Nehemiah 9:6 declares, "You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and

all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them.” No creature has power to preserve itself. Both man and beast would perish if there were not plants for food, and plants would wither and die if the earth were not refreshed with rain. God is the preserver of all life on earth. “He upholds the universe by the word of his power.” (Hebrews 1:3).

A great demonstration of God’s power is God’s restraint of Satan. Take his restraining the evil of Satan. “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” (1 Pet. 5:8). He is filled with hatred against God, and with fiendish hostility against men, particularly the saints. He that envied Adam in paradise, envies us the pleasure of enjoying any of God’s blessings. If he had his choice, he would treat all the same way he treated Job; he would send fire from heaven on the fruits of the earth, destroying the cattle, cause a wind to overthrow our houses, and cover our bodies with boils. But, little as men may realize it, God bridles him to a large extent, prevents him from carrying out his evil designs, and confines him to accomplishing only what God allows.

So too God restrains the natural corruption of men. He suffers sufficient outbreaks of sin to show what fearful havoc has been wrought by man’s rebellion from his Maker, but who can conceive the frightful lengths to which men would go were God to remove his restraining hand? Human beings always demand independence from God and then use that independence to pursue their own selfish desires at the expense of others. The strong then dominate the weak. If God did not restrain evil by his Spirit and through his people, the earth would quickly turn into the devastating world God destroyed in the days of Noah. As Daniel 4:35 declares, God “does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’”

A great demonstration of God’s power is his judgment upon sinful and rebellious human beings. When he strikes, none can resist him. How terribly this was exemplified at the Flood! God opened the windows of heaven and broke up the great fountains of the deep, and (excepting those in the ark) the entire human race, helpless before the storm of his wrath, was swept away. But by God’s power he protected Noah and his family who were believers in him and desirous of honoring him. He blessed them and from Noah we all descended.

How can we as Christians not trust our powerful God? He is worthy of our deepest confidence. Nothing is too hard for him. If God were restricted in his power and had a limit to his strength, we might well despair. But seeing that he is clothed with omnipotence, no prayer is too hard for him to answer, no need too great for him to supply, no passion too strong for him to subdue; no temptation too powerful for him to deliver from, no misery too deep for him to relieve. As David declared, “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1). Because God is all-powerful and watches over us, there is nothing or no one we have to fear in this life. We just need to trust him. “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Day 7

The Omnipresence of God

*Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him?
Do I not fill heaven and earth? (Jeremiah 23:24)*

God's omnipresence means that God is everywhere present at the same time. Because God is infinite, he is infinite in terms of space. He transcends all the spatial limitations of his creation, and yet is present in every point of space with his whole being. He is above space and outside of the space and in the space his creation occupies. This attribute of God is a result of God's immensity. "Immensity" points to the truth that God transcends all space and is not subject to its limitations. As King Solomon proclaimed after he completed building the temple in Jerusalem, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27)

"Omnipresence" denotes that he nevertheless fills every part of space with his entire Being. "Immensity" emphasizes the transcendence (outside creation) of God and "omnipresence" the immanence (within creation) of God. God is immanent in his entire creation, but is in no way bounded by it. In Jeremiah 23:24 the Lord says, "Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? Do I not fill heaven and earth?" God is warning his people not to listen to false prophets and appealing to his knowledge of what falsehoods they are prophesying because he is everywhere present. He knows exactly what they are saying. God is declaring his omnipresence in this verse.

God is present in every point of space with his whole being. God is not spread through space, so that one part of his being is present in one place and another part in some other place. He fills every part of it with his whole being. This is not pantheism where the being of God is thought to be the substance of all things. God is distinct and separate from all his creation, but is yet present in every part of his creation.

In Psalm 139:7-12, David declares the omnipresence of God when he writes, "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,' even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you."

In this psalm, David is praising the Lord for his presence everywhere. He pictures himself dramatically fleeing from God in supernatural ways beginning with the questions, "Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?" David describes all the different directions he could flee from God. If he could fly vertically upward farther and farther until he reaches outer space, the Lord would still be there with him. If he could fly vertically downward into a grave in the ground (Sheol), the Lord would still be there. If he could ride a sunbeam when the sun first came up in the morning horizontally across the earth and dwell in the farthest reaches of the sea, the Lord would still be there. If he went into a dark place, the darkest on the earth, the Lord would still be there and to the Lord, the darkness is the same as the light. He is

everywhere and he sees everywhere. That is great assurance for David who has spent much of his days running for his life.

David knows that the Lord will always be there with him wherever he is. If he goes there on his own or he is forced by circumstances or others. He can be assured he is never away from the presence of the Lord. This gives us great assurance as believers. We may be forced by circumstances to travel to another place where we do not want to be and be placed into a situation we do not like, but we can be assured the Lord is with us and trust him fully to work in our lives. In the darkness of a hospital room in the middle of the night, we may feel alone, but we are not. We can be assured the Lord is there with us. In difficult trials, we may feel alone, but we are not, the Lord is there with us. If we have lost a loved one, we may feel alone but we are not, the Lord is there with us.

Paul gives two great statements that we should cling to in Romans 8. In Romans 8:28, he says "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." This great statement that God will work all things out in our lives for our spiritual good is a great promise, but it is often seen by us as God working from a far distance, but God's omnipresence tells us that God is not far off but near us, in fact, he is in us! Jesus declared, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." Those that "love him and keep his Word" are believers. We are indwelt by the Triune God. You can't get closer to God in this life than that.

In Romans 8:38-39, Paul says, "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." This promise that God's love toward us will never cease is a great comfort to us. We need love. We need to be loved. Again, like the earlier promise, it is easy to think of God's love as coming from a far distance, like from a parent who is in a distant country, but God's omnipresence shows that God's love, like his working on our behalf is near us and in us!

Some Christians say that the Lord withdraws himself from us at times to test us. That is not true. That is not taught in the Scriptures. You may feel that somehow God is not with you or has abandoned you in some way, but it is not a feeling based on God's truth. Our feelings cannot be trusted. We must trust the Scriptures about God's omnipresence and live by faith not by feelings. Jesus said, "Behold, I am with you always." He is with us and he is always with us. This is a characteristic of his nature and being. He will never abandon us.

Practicing the presence of God on a daily basis can be done simply by continuing to remind ourselves by faith that God is here with us wherever we go and wherever we are and trusting and following him with a conscious awareness of his presence with us by faith. This is one of the most important truths we can apply in our daily lives to give us joy and peace.

Day 8 The Holiness of God

Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. (Revelation 15:4).

God only is independently, infinitely, immutably holy. In Scripture he is frequently styled “The Holy One.” He is so because the sum of all moral excellency is found in him. He is absolute purity, unsullied even by the shadow of sin. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). Holiness is the very excellency of his divine nature. Our great God is “majestic in holiness” (Exodus 15:11).

God himself singles out this perfection to prove his faithfulness to his promises, “I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips. Once for all I have sworn by my holiness.” (Psalm 89:34-35) God swears by his holiness because his holiness guarantees that he will always be truthful and thus faithful to his promises.

God’s holiness is manifested in his ways. “God’s ways” refer to his conduct, what he does and how he does it. The Psalmist declares “Your way, O God, is holy.” (Psalm 77:13) Holiness is the rule of all his actions. They are always holy, pure and sacred, because they are actions of a holy God. There is no intent of evil in anything God does toward his creatures. This should be of great comfort to all of us. When people treat us in a way that we do not like, we are prone toward accusing them of selfish or evil motivations which may or may not be true. But God can never be accused of this. His motivations are always holy and righteous.

In the Old Testament, there are many commands and actions of God that we may not understand and may seem to contradict our modern sense of what is right and what is wrong. But we must realize that all of God’s actions are holy and right because he is holy by his very nature and he is the one who defines holiness not human beings. Our understanding as human beings about evil and its effects are skewed by our own sinfulness and thus, we are not in a position to judge what true holiness is. But God is because he is holy.

In Isaiah 6:1-5, Isaiah had a vision of God. He wrote, “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!’ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: ‘Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’” We can only imagine the shock and unworthiness that Isaiah felt in the presence of the Lord and his holiness. All he could proclaim was his sinfulness and the sinfulness of his people before such a holy God. But God forgave Isaiah because of Christ who was to come and he forgives us because of Christ who came. Out of his love, God sent his Son to die for our sins so that we may have our sins forgiven and become holy in Christ, spiritually indwelt by a holy Triune God through the Holy Spirit (John 14:23).

God's holiness is manifested in his commandments. David declares in Psalm 19:7-9, "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether." The words "perfect, pure, and clean" of God's commandments express his holiness. God's commandments express his moral standards.

God's commandments have been given in the form of the Mosaic Law in the Old Testament which were for Israel and the commandments of Christ in the New Testament which are for the church. Following the Mosaic Covenant if one was part of Israel in the OT or following the commandments of Christ if one is part of the church brings great blessing and reward. As David proclaims "More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward." (Psalm 19:10-11)

God's holiness is manifested at the Cross. Wondrously and yet most solemnly does the atonement display God's infinite holiness and abhorrence of sin. How hateful must sin be to God for him to sacrifice his own Son who bore our sins on the cross. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness." (1 Peter 2:24) Never did divine holiness appear more beautiful and lovely than at the time our Savior's death when Jesus Christ, holy and innocent, hung on the cross demonstrating the supreme nature of God's holiness which demanded the supreme sacrifice to remove that which violated it so we can be united to such a holy God.

Because God is holy, we must exalt and praise him. "Exalt the Lord our God; worship at his footstool! Holy is he! (Ps. 99:5). We "exalt God" when we praise and honor him as the supreme being of the universe who is worthy of all praise. The psalms are filled with exhortations to praise his holy name. "Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name." (Psalm 30:4) "For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name." (Psalm 33:21)

Because God is holy, we should desire to be conformed to him in our daily lives. His command is, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct." (1 Peter 1:14-15) We have been called to salvation by the supremely holy God and thus we should turn from the fleshly attitudes and actions of our previous life as spiritually ignorant unbelievers and live out God's holiness in our daily conduct.

Then as God alone is the source and fountain of holiness, earnestly seek holiness from him; let your daily prayer be that he may "sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Along with that prayer, commit yourself to the Word of God as Jesus prayed to God the Father on our behalf, "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth." (John 17:17) We are sanctified (made holy in our daily lives) as we read, understand, and apply God's truth in the Scriptures to our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Day 9 The Love of God

God is love. (1 John 4:8)

There is a misunderstanding about God that many people who do not know the Scriptures believe. They think that the God who appears in the Old Testament is a God of judgment and wrath and the God Jesus preaches in the New Testament is a God of love and compassion. Nothing could be further from the truth.

When Moses stood before the new nation of Israel before they entered the promised land, he reminded them of all that God had done for them in rescuing them from slavery and hardship in Egypt out of his love for them. In Deuteronomy 7:6-8, Moses declares God's motive in making them a holy nation, set apart from the pagan nations, to be a herald of his truth and a people who would birth the messiah. It was God's love. "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

Unfortunately, the Israelites didn't follow, but God kept his promise to their fathers and sent the messiah, Jesus, to redeem those in Israel who would accept him as their Savior and to redeem all those outside the nation of Israel who would do the same. Jesus was the good news of God's love for the world. John 3:16-18 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."

Jesus offered a new and spiritually intimate relationship with God in his family. 1 John 3:1 declares this incredible truth, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." The Greek word for "love" is "agape" which is used in the New Testament for God's love and in the Greek Old Testament to translate the Hebrew word for "love." The root idea of "agape" is "valuing someone highly." The Biblical definition of love is "to value others so highly that you sacrifice yourself for them." This is God's love. God values us so highly that he sent his Son to die on the cross and redeem us.

God's love has several characteristics. God's love is sovereign and uninfluenced. By this we mean, there was nothing whatever in the objects of his love to attract or prompt it. The love which one creature has for another is because of something in them; but the love of God is free, spontaneous, uncaused. The only reason why God loves any is found in his own sovereign will, "We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19). God did not love us because we loved him, but he loved us before we had an ounce of love for him. Had God loved us in return for ours, then it would not be spontaneous on his part, but because he loved us when we were loveless, it is clear that his love was uninfluenced.

It is highly important if God is to be honored and the heart of his child established, that we should be quite clear upon this precious truth. God's love for me, and for each of "his own," was entirely unmoved by anything in them. What was there in me to attract the heart of God? Absolutely nothing. But, to the contrary, everything to repel him, everything calculated to make him loathe me, sinful, depraved, a mass of corruption, with "no good thing" in me. (Romans 3:9-18) This truth is called "the depravity of man." But God chose to love us in spite of our sin. We can only praise and thank him every day for his love.

God's love is eternal. As God himself is eternal and had no beginning and will have no end, his love is the same. Granted that such a concept far transcends the grasp of our finite human minds, nevertheless, where we cannot comprehend, we can bow in adoring worship. How clear is the testimony of Jeremiah 31:3, "I have loved you with an everlasting love." How blessed to know that the great and holy God loved his people before heaven and earth were called into existence, that he had set his heart upon them from all eternity. Since it is true that "from everlasting to everlasting" he is God (Psalm 90:2), and since God is "love," then it is equally true that "from everlasting to everlasting" he loves his people.

The same precious truth is set forth in Ephesians 1:4-5, "even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ." What praise should this evoke from each of his children! How calming for our hearts this is.

God's love is infinite and unchanging because God is infinite and unchanging. His love is not affected by time or space. It is never hurried, never late, and never absent from our lives. There is a depth to it which none can fathom; there is a height to it which none can scale; there is a length and breadth to it which defies measurement, by any creature-standard. Beautifully is this intimated in Ephesians 2:4, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us."

No tongue can fully express the infinitude of God's love, or any mind comprehend it. As Paul tells us Ephesians 3:19, "the love of Christ...surpasses knowledge." God's love toward us is like a flowing river of fresh water that has no end and keeps supplying its goodness no matter what it encounters turning every obstacle and every trouble into a blessing for his children. And that love never changes. It is always flowing toward us every day without fail. In Romans 8:38-39 Paul so clearly reveals this, "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We need to continually trust in the Lord and his divine love for us. Whatever may come our way, the Lord will be there to guide us through it as he works in and around us by his infinite power until the day he guides us to our final destination with him in his eternal kingdom.

Day 10 The Grace of God

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8)

The Grace of God is the eternal and absolute unmerited free favor of God in giving spiritual and eternal blessings to the guilty and the unworthy he has chosen. It is the sovereign and saving favor of God bestowed upon those who have no merit in them and for which no compensation is demanded from them. It is the favor of God shown to those who are thoroughly ill-deserving and hell-deserving. It is completely unmerited and unsought, and is altogether unattracted by anything in or from or by the objects upon which it is bestowed. Grace can neither be bought, earned, nor won by the creature. If it could be, it would cease to be grace. When a thing is said to be “of grace” we mean that the recipient has no claim upon it, that it was in nowise due him. It comes to him as pure charity, and, at first, unasked and undesired.

The fullest exposition of the amazing grace of God is to be found in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. In his writings, “grace” stands in direct opposition to all works and worthiness, of whatever kind or degree. This is abundantly clear from Romans 11:6, “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.” The same can be said of “works.” If it is by works, then it is no longer on the basis of grace; otherwise works would no longer be works.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” God’s grace, his absolute favor saved us. It was a free gift accepted by faith. God’s grace can no more consist with human merit than oil and water will fuse into one. Paul makes it very clear in this passage and in Romans 4:4-5 that our salvation is based not on works, but on God’s unearned grace embraced by faith in Jesus Christ when he writes, “Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.”

There are three principal characteristics of Divine grace. First, it is eternal. Grace was planned before it was exercised, purposed before it was imparted, as Paul explains, he “saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.” (2 Timothy 1:9). Second, it is free, a gift that no one can purchase. Again, Paul writes that we “are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:24). Third, it is sovereign, because God exercises it toward and bestows it upon whom he pleases. The Lord declares, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.” (Exodus 33:19). Our great God is under no obligation to any human being since all have rebelled against him and no one deserves to be saved.

Eternal life by God’s grace is a gift, therefore it can neither be earned by good works, nor claimed as a right. Seeing that salvation is a gift, who has any right to tell God on whom he ought to bestow it? It is not that the Giver ever refuses this gift to any who seek it wholeheartedly according to the way he has prescribed in the Scriptures. No! He refuses none who come to him humbly, realizing they have nothing to offer God in exchange for salvation, but only to accept

God's gift of Jesus Christ by faith. But if out of a world of impenitent and unbelieving, God is determined to exercise his sovereign right by choosing a limited number to be saved, who is wronged? Is God obliged to force his gift on those who value it not? Is God compelled to save those who are determined to go their own way? No.

Now the grace of God is manifested in and by and through the Lord Jesus Christ. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17). This does not mean that God never exercised grace toward any before his Son became incarnate. But grace and truth were fully revealed and perfectly exemplified when the Redeemer came to this earth, and died for his people upon the cross. It is through Christ the Mediator alone that the grace of God flows to his elect, believers in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. "For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many...For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:15,17)

In Acts 20:24, Paul calls the gospel of Jesus Christ the "gospel of the grace of God" because the grace of God is proclaimed in the Gospel which is to the self-righteous Jew a "stumbling block," and to the conceited and philosophizing Greek "foolishness." And why so? Because there is nothing whatever in it that is adapted to gratify the pride of man. It announces that unless we are saved by grace, we cannot be saved at all. It declares that apart from Christ, the unspeakable gift of God's grace, the state of every man is desperate and hopeless. The Gospel addresses men as guilty, condemned, perishing sinners in rebellion against God.

The third Person in the Godhead is the communicator of grace, therefore he is described as "the Spirit of grace." (Hebrews 10:29) God the Father is the fountain of all grace, for he purposed in himself the everlasting covenant of redemption. God the Son is the only channel of grace. The Gospel is the proclamation of grace. The Spirit is the bestower of grace. He is the one who applies the gospel in saving power to the soul, quickening the elect while spiritually dead, conquering their rebellious wills, melting their hard hearts, opening their blind eyes, cleansing them from the leprosy of sin.

When we consider God's grace that we have received in Jesus Christ how can we respond with anything but deep gratefulness for all that he has done for us? No matter what happens to us on this fallen earth, we know every day that God is with us showering us with his grace and we know that he has secured for us a future with him forever by his grace. Praise be to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior who has provided this grace to us as a free gift by his incredible sacrifice on the cross!

Day 11 The Mercy of God

For the Lord your God is a merciful God. (Deuteronomy 4:31)

The Bible proclaims and celebrates the mercy of God. "For the Lord your God is a merciful God." "Our God is merciful." (Psalm 116:5) "Great is your mercy, O Lord." (Psalm 119:156) "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end." (Lamentations 3:22) "To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness." (Daniel 9:9) For this perfection of God is greatly to be praised by all especially by believers who have been so blessed by God because of his mercy.

The Mercy of God refers to God's compassion and sympathy expressed in actions toward his creatures who are suffering. God's mercy is shown or demonstrated not felt. Compassion and sympathy are the feelings for those who are suffering and become mercy when God acts to relieve their suffering. The ultimate act of God's mercy is his salvation and deliverance of sinful human beings from their future deserved suffering and punishment in hell. Everything that God does for human beings after the fall of Adam and Eve is from his mercy because we have gotten ourselves into so much trouble and brought into our lives so much suffering which God never intended for us.

In endeavoring to study the mercy of God as it is set forth in Scripture, a threefold distinction needs to be made. First, there is a general mercy of God, which is extended not only to all men, believers and unbelievers alike, but also to the entire creation. "His mercy is over all that he has made." (Psalm 145:9) "He himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything." (Acts 17:25). God has pity upon his creation in their needs, and supplies them with suitable provision.

Second, there is a special mercy of God, which is exercised toward human beings, helping and supporting them, in spite of their sins. Also, he shares with them all the necessities of life, "for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). Third, there is a sovereign mercy of God which is reserved for believers, the heirs of salvation, which is given to them in a covenant way, through the Mediator, Jesus Christ.

It is important to note that the mercies which God bestows on unbelievers are solely of a temporal nature, that is to say, they are confined strictly to this present life. There will be no mercy extended to them beyond the grave if Jesus Christ is not their Savior.

It is pure sovereign grace which alone determines the exercise of God's mercy. God expressly affirms this fact in Romans 9:15, "For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.'" It is not the wretchedness of the creature which causes him to show mercy, for God is not influenced by things outside of himself as we are.

Still less is it the merits of the creature which causes him to bestow mercies upon them, for it is a contradiction in terms to speak of meriting mercy. "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy." (Titus 3:5), the one standing in direct antithesis to the other. It is "through" or because of the tender mercy of our God that Christ was sent here to his people (Luke 1:78). The merits of Christ make it possible for God to righteously

bestow the incredible mercy of salvation and all of its blessings on his elect, justice having been fully satisfied by Christ's payment of the penalty for sin.

Unfortunately, many unbelievers assume that, even though, they are in rebellion against God, in the end his mercy will save them or at least put them in some pleasant existence after death. God is a God of justice as well as mercy, and he has expressly declared that he will judge the world. In Acts 17:31 Paul proclaims that God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness." Human beings will give account for the sins they have committed against God and their fellow human beings. But God in his mercy has provided a substitute who paid the penalty for their sins so God's justice is satisfied, but they can go free.

In Romans 3:22, Paul declares that there is "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe." God offers his righteousness to be given to those who submit to Christ and trust him as Savior. He further states, in v.23-25, "For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith." Every human being needs to receive God's justification through faith in Christ that his or her sins might be given through Christ's payment on the cross. This justification is offered by our infinitely merciful God.

Believers, the elect, are designated "vessels of mercy." (Romans 9:23). It is mercy that made them spiritually alive when they were dead in sins. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved. (Ephesians 2:4-5) It is his abundant mercy which gave them an eternal inheritance. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you." (1 Peter 1:3-4).

Time would fail us to tell of his preserving, sustaining, pardoning, supplying mercy that he showers upon us on a daily basis as his children. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4) We are in a desperate condition in a fallen world with a fallen nature and its sinful desires that wage war in our hearts and minds. We need God's mercy every day without exception and we have it. As David declares, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Day 12

The Patience of God

The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Numbers 14:18)

In 2 Peter 3:8-9, Peter reminds the Christians to whom he is writing why Jesus has not yet returned and brought judgment on the world. It is because of God's incredible patience. He writes, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." God is giving time for the maximum amount of people to come to know his Son as Savior and escape the coming judgment. He showed this patience in our lives and desires to show it in the lives of others.

God often uses the phrase "slow to anger" to describe his patience. God is slow in becoming righteously angry and slow in reacting from that righteous anger or wrath towards human beings who commit sins against him which deserve his anger and wrath. God cannot get sinfully angry as fallen human beings can. His anger is always righteous. Every sin is a violation against the moral standards that God has set for his creatures, therefore every sin is committed ultimately against God himself. If God would immediately punish every person as soon as he or she sinned, he would be justified. But God's patience causes him to hold back his righteous anger and just reaction.

The patience of God is manifested in his dealings with fallen human beings. How strikingly was it displayed toward those who lived before the flood. When mankind was universally degenerate, and all flesh had corrupted his way, God did not destroy them until he had forewarned them. He waited (1 Peter 3:20), probably no less than one hundred and twenty years (Genesis 6:3), during which time Noah was a "preacher of righteousness," (2 Peter 2:5) calling them to repentance and faith in the true God. Only then, after no one responded for years did God destroy them and preserve Noah and his family.

Marvelously was God's patience exercised and manifested toward Israel. It was to this excellency in the Divine character that Moses appealed, when Israel sinned so grievously at Kadesh-Barnea, and there provoked Jehovah so seriously. In Numbers 14, after the Israelite spies returned from the land of Canaan and reported the formidable might of the Canaanites, the people rebelled against the Lord rather than trusting his sovereign and infinite power he had already displayed in delivering them from Egypt and providing manna and quail in the wilderness. They complained, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" (Numbers 14:23) Then they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt." (Numbers 14:4) This was a rebellious and ungrateful response in light of all that the Lord had done for them.

Because of their sinful and evil response, the Lord said to Moses, "I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them." (Numbers 14:12) Moses then pleaded, "Please let the power of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, 'The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression.'" (Numbers 14:17). Moses appeals to God's patience of being "slow to anger," which is God's power of self-restraint.

Later, in the book of Judges, when the Israelites had entered Canaan, but followed the evil customs of the nations around them and turned to idolatry God chastened them, but he did not

destroy them. Instead, when they repented and turned to him in their distress, he was patient with them and raised up deliverers (judges) for them. When their iniquity was raised to such a height that none but a God of infinite patience, could have borne them, he still waited many years before he allowed them to be carried down into Babylon in judgment. Finally, when their rebellion against him reached its climax by crucifying his Son, he waited forty years before he sent the Romans against them, and that only after they had judged themselves “unworthy of eternal life.” (Acts 13:46).

How wondrous is God’s patience with the world today. On every side people are sinning with a high hand. The Divine law is trampled underfoot and God Himself openly despised. It is truly amazing that he does not instantly strike dead those who so brazenly defy him. Why does he not suddenly cut off the prideful, unbelieving and blatant blasphemer? Why does God not cause the earth to open its mouth and devour all these persecutors of his people?

Why does not the righteous wrath of God make an end of such abominations? Only one answer is possible. It is because of God’s patience. Paul tells us in Romans 9:22-24, “What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?” God patiently bears with all the sins of those who rebel against him that he might save as many as he has chosen to experience the riches of his glory in Christ.

And what about God’s patience in our own lives? We have been shown so much patience, mercy, grace, and love by God in Christ. “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved.” (Ephesians 2:1-5)

Paul says here that we were dead, dominated, and doomed before God opened up our hearts to Jesus Christ. We were spiritually dead and separated from God. We were dominated by Satan through the world motivated by our own selfish desires. We were doomed, under God’s wrathful judgment for our sins. But God showered upon us, his mercy and love and lifted us up into his kingdom. His patience bore with the sins of world for millennium until we were born and then later brought into his kingdom. His patience bore with our sins as unbelievers until the day we turned to him in faith and repentance.

This infinite patience he shows to us every day as a patient and loving Father as we struggle with our own fleshly desires within us and Satan’s temptations through the world around us and fall into sin. He patiently convicts us, rebukes us, and exhorts us through his Word by his Spirit to bring us to greater holiness in our lives so we can reflect our Father in all that we do. We all have experienced his incredible patience toward us every day and proclaim with David “The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.” (Psalm 145:8)

An Invitation from Jesus

Maybe you have been reading this book and have been encouraged as you have seen the glory of Jesus Christ in his claims to be the Son of God, but there is a doubt in your mind whether you truly are a Christian, a child of God. You want to experience all of the blessings that the Lord offers, but you are not sure that you are experiencing them. Maybe you have even gone to church your whole life, but never made a personal commitment to Jesus or you are not sure you have. I invite you to read this chapter and make sure of your salvation by turning to Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

Maybe you know that you are not a Christian and have thought about Jesus, but have never really done anything about it. You have never made a personal commitment to him. In this chapter, I would like to share with you what the Gospels say about how you can come to know the Good Shepherd, Jesus, and become a child of God.

Jesus came to give people the opportunity to enter into a personal relationship with him. Jesus said that he was the good shepherd who cared deeply about his sheep, so much so that he was willing to lay down his life for them. When Jesus laid down his life at the cross to pay the penalty for the sins of people, he gave them the opportunity to come to him and receive forgiveness and become a part of his spiritual flock. Jesus said,

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep...For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. (John 10:14-15, 17)

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand." (John 10:27-28)

Jesus invited people to come to him for salvation

Jesus knew that the trials and tribulations of life bring spiritual weariness and burden to the hearts of people. He invited people to come to him for spiritual rest and peace. Jesus said,

"Come to me, all 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 souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

To come to Jesus involves trusting in Jesus

Jesus said that people "come" to him by believing in him, that is, by trusting that he is the Son of God who died on the cross for the sins of people, and that he will give them eternal life if they trust in Him. Jesus said,

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not

condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (John 3:16-18)

To come to Jesus involves turning away from sin

Jesus was very specific about the issue of sin in people's lives. Sin is turning away from following God's moral standards. Jesus offered forgiveness for sins if people would turn to him and accept his payment on the cross. Jesus preached a simple message of "repentance," which means "turn away from sin and turn to God."

"From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17)

Jesus said that if people did not turn to him and believe in him, they would die in their sins. Dying in their sins meant divine judgment. Divine judgment meant punishment forever away from the presence of God. Jesus said,

"For unless you believe that I am he [the Son of God], you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)

And Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. (John 12:44-49)

Trusting in God is not enough, you must trust in Jesus

Many people assume that it doesn't matter what they believe about Jesus. As long as they "believe in God and love him" they will go to heaven. But Jesus did not teach that belief. Jesus taught that God the Father desired that he, God the Son, also be honored and glorified. Anyone that does not honor the Son cannot honor the Father who sent him. Jesus said,

"For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." (John 5:22-24)

Jesus clearly said that he was the only way to salvation and receiving eternal life. There are no other ways to heaven or living with God forever.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

To come to Jesus involves asking him to save you

The Gospels record that the people that came to Jesus all did the same thing. They believed that he was who he claimed to be; they turned from their sins; they trusted him to save them; and they asked him to save them.

An example of this is the last person Jesus saved before he died. He was a criminal on a cross hanging next to Jesus. He had sinned against God and man and had received the just penalty of his crimes. Yet God in his mercy gave him the opportunity while facing death to hang on a cross next to God's own Son. This man realized who Jesus was and humbled himself before the Son of God. He turned from his sin, trusted Jesus, and asked Jesus to save him. Jesus responded to the man's faith as he always did, promising him that he would receive eternal life with the Son of God forever. This is what Luke records,

Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. (Luke 23:32-33)

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:39-43)

Will you come to Jesus and receive eternal life?

The words of Jesus that you have just read are not only for those who lived at the time of Jesus, but also for you. Jesus is speaking these words to you and inviting you to come to him for salvation and to receive from him eternal life. He desires that you come into his kingdom.

How do you do it? By coming to him in prayer and asking him to save you. You must turn from your sin and acknowledge to God that you are a sinner and no longer want to live according to your own will but you want to follow Jesus' will. You must believe that Jesus is exactly who he claimed to be, the Son of God, God become a man, and that he died on the cross for your sins.

Ask the Lord Jesus to save you from the penalty of your sin and accept his payment for your sins on the cross. Ask him to be your Savior. Trust him to save you; trust that he will save you if you turn from your sin and ask him. If you are not sure what words to use to speak to Jesus, below is a prayer that you could use. It is not the words; it is the desire of your heart.

"Lord Jesus, I admit to you that I am a sinner and have sinned against you. I turn from my sinful way of life. Please be my Savior. I accept your payment on the cross for my sins. I trust that you are the Son of God and will save me now that I am asking you. Thank you, Lord. Amen."

If you are not sure that in the past you have asked Jesus to be your Savior, you can ask him today. In fact, you may have gone to church most of your life, and yet have never turned to Jesus

and asked him to save you, you can make that commitment right now. Turn from your sin and ask him. Once you have asked him, trust that Jesus has fulfilled his word and is now your Savior.

You may not “feel” like a change has taken place in your life, but it has. You must believe by faith that Jesus is now your shepherd and you have eternal life in him. May the Lord bless you as you enjoy a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!