

KNOW GOD BETTER SERIES

The KNOW GOD series featured the seven attributes of God that we cannot duplicate or imitate. They are totally divine, eternal, and beyond our scope. They were revealed through the inspired scriptures to provide us with an insight into His nature, and character. God has revealed His desire, plan, and purpose to reconcile mankind back to Himself.

The greater our knowledge of God the more complete our obedience, the more fervent our worship, and the fuller our fellowship with Him.

The greatest burden upon every Christian is the responsibility to possess a pure unadulterated understanding of God as He has revealed Himself **and** assuring that the next generation receives that understanding in teaching, practice, and visible in daily life.

God has revealed Himself to us in, through, and by His Son Jesus Christ. He demonstrated His love for mankind and provided access to God Himself through faith.

As our understanding increases the clearer the mental and spiritual vision of God becomes and His word can have a greater impact on our life.

The following series of lessons will be titled KNOW GOD BETTER.

The Communicable Attributes of God are part of His character, His nature, His majesty, and glory.

Each attribute describes one aspect of God's total being and character. God is infinitely perfect, completely unified, and fully integrated. The scriptures NEVER singles out one as greater than another because each attribute supports and completes another.

These are attributes that are a major part of the nature and character of a Christian. These attributes of God, the sources of purity, holiness, and honesty are to be initiated by EVERY penitent believer. These are the qualifications of a CHRISTIAN!

Is this why we have difficulty in finding shepherds?

1. Blameless
2. Faithful/true
3. Forgiving
4. Gracious/compassion
5. Holy
6. Goodness
7. Love
8. Patience
9. Giver
10. Peaceful
11. Righteous
12. Trustworthy
13. Wise

These are the attributes that God possesses that we are **COMMANDED** in the scriptures to diligently strive to attain, grow, and develop.

There will be **NO** spectators in heaven! Or Hell

Jesus related an event to illustrate a principle – Luke 10: 30-37 We call it the story of the “good Samaritan” -The priest and the Levite were **SPECTATORS**, and the Samaritan was a participant.

Who was Jesus pleased with?

The Hebrew writer gives us another visual image of living life as a Christian. (*Hebrews 12:1*) *Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance THE RACE that is set before us.*

This is a marathon, not a sprint. The course is set and marked so we will not be disqualified. The starting line is the day we become a baptized believer; we begin running the race of life. There will be difficulties, and hardships and the distance may be exceedingly long. We must run this run with patient endurance, it is a race of suffering, overcoming leg cramps, and shortness of breath, by relying on our diligent commitment to the Lord. Preserving by the strength and encouragement of the “great cloud of witnesses “ who are cheering you on even when you “hit the wall” and feel you cannot go another step. (*Philippians 3:13-14*) *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.*

Unless we develop these God-like attributes we may be disqualified, and not finish the race.

It is my hope and prayer that this study will encourage someone to achieve a better understanding of the attributes of God and strive to imitate them to reach the outcome of their salvation.

Blameless

Being blameless before God means denying ourselves and trusting in the Lord. Christians are presented as blameless before God through the righteousness of Jesus. This blameless status is not earned but imputed through the death and resurrection of Christ. God's power and protection ensure that believers maintain a blameless status until the final judgment as we are faithful.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:9)

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. (Job 1:1)

The LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. (Genesis 17:1)

(Psalms 18:20-23) The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD And have not wickedly departed from my God. For all His ordinances were before me, And I did not put away His statutes from me. I was also blameless with Him,

Do you see the pattern ??

Righteous, upright, and BLAMELESS are attributes of God that He is communicating to mankind.

Psalms 18 provides the KEY to remain blameless.

Vs. 1-- The source of strength is the Lord- We are weak and helpless without Him.

Vs. 2-God's protection- Rock-Fortress-Stronghold-Shield- Deliverer- Total dependence on God.

VS. 3- Call on God for help- He will hear our call for help-**IF** we are devoted to Him.

(Hebrews 4:16) Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

VS. 18 Stay/ support and He rescued (Colossians 1:13) For He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, -He keeps His promises.

Vs. 20- Judges on righteousness- (2 Corinthians 5:10) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

VS.21-Keep the ways of the Lord-(John 14:15) "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

Vs. 21- not departed for His ways- (1 Peter 2:21) For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

Vs.22 kept all His commandants-(1 John 5:3) For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

VS. 23-Blameless- Innocent before the Lord because of obedience to the will of God. (2 Peter 3:14) Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,

VS. 23-Kept myself from my iniquity-

Here is the KEY to remaining blameless before the Lord--- God has provided everything for us, nothing is lacking, it is about **what I will do-**

1. Constantly focusing on following the will of God, Psa. 119:1, Psa. 128:1,
2. Clean hands and a pure heart- Psa. 24:4, Job 17:9, Isa. 33:15, Mt. 5:8
3. Priceless value on integrity –Job 27:5, 1Kgs. 9:4, Psa. 25:21, 2 Pet. 2:14
4. Demonstrating the faithfulness and goodness of God- Jn. 13:15, 1Tim. 1:16, 4:12
5. Placing a very high value on moral character 3:7, Prov. 22:1, Eccl. 7:1
6. Have fellowship with God-1 John 1:3, 6,7, 1Cor. 1:9
7. Identify faithful examples – Eph 5:1, Heb. 13:7, Psa. 37:37
8. Avoid snares of sin- 2 Tim 2:26, 1Tim 3:7, 6:9

(Psalms 18:24) *Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His eyes.*

Therefore, based on David keeping **himself** from departing from the way of the Lord, God will reward him, as in God's eyes.

(2 Corinthians 5:10) *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. We will be rewarded just like David- Clean hands and a pure heart will receive eternal life.*

We often struggle with the term “perfect” because we know our own failures and shortcomings, David had them also, but he trusted in the Lord to forgive him.

(Psalms 51:7) *Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

(Psalms 51:9) *Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities.*

(Psalms 51:10) *Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

His heart had been damaged by sin and he prayed for God to clean his heart to prepare a dwelling place for God to dwell with him. Let us examine the scriptures and apply them to our lives.

(Matthew 5:48) *"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

(James 1:4) *And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

(1 Peter 1:15-16) *but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."*

(2 Peter 3:14) *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, -- pray for a clean heart as God forgives our sins.*

(1 Peter 5:10) *After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.*

(NAS95)

(Philippians 2:14-16) Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

Do you want to PROVE yourselves to be blameless and innocent- APPEAR- show yourselves, demonstrate the love of lost souls by shining the light of the gospel of Christ to the crooked and perverse generation that we live in today.

Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this:

to visit orphans and widows in their distress,

and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

(James 1:27)

Blamelessness is an attribute of God communicated to mankind to be more god-like.

FAITHFUL

Nothing about God is changeable, He is what He is first, last, and always. He is faithful and immutable simultaneously in every word, act, or deed. Mankind can become unfaithful because of lust, desire, fear, and just losing interest in spiritual things. The most often falling away is caused by outside influences with Satan is the source.

The faithfulness of God is the foundation and source of our hope of eternal life.

“The tempted, the anxious, the fearful, the discouraged may all find new hope and good cheer in the knowledge that our Heavenly Father is faithful” A. W. Tozer

"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (NAS95) (Num. 23:19)

If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:13)

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. (1 Thessalonians 5:24)

(Hebrews 3:2) who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. (NKJV)

(Hebrews 3:6) but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house--whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

The faithfulness of God has been proven time and time again, there are many examples that are recorded for us to see, understand, and learn the lesson-God is faithful, what He says, He will do.

Gen. 3:3 don't touch the tree, or you will die- Gen. 3:19 the body returns to dust when you die.

Gen. 12- God promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation- 25 years later his son Isaac was born. Gen 21.

1 Kings 3 Solomon asks for wisdom rather than riches and honor- VS. 28 God's wisdom is demonstrated in Solomon.

(Matthew 1:21) "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." (NAS95) (Matthew 1:23) "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US." Isa. 7:14

(Matthew 1:25) but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

(1 Corinthians 1:9) God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. We are called into fellowship with God the Father through God the Son

IF we are faithful. God calls on every believer to be faithful, true, loyal, and devoted to the Lord to have fellowship with Him. Faithful men-2 Tim. 2:2—faithful women-1 Tim. 3:11- devoted servants-1Cor. 16:15

(Acts 11:23) Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord;

*(Acts 11:23) On getting there he was delighted to see the grace which God had bestowed; and he encouraged them all to remain, with fixed resolve, **faithful to the Lord**. (WNT)*

A fixed resolve, purpose, and a plan to remain faithful to God. It won't happen unless we plan to serve the Lord all the days of our lives. What is your plan? What have you resolved to do to assure your faithfulness? The entire mind, will, and affections be devoted to serving the Lord.

(1 John 5:20) And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

(John 17:3) "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. Because God the Father is faithful to do all He says and He sent his faithful Son so we may know God the Father, the source of eternal life. He has given us understanding so we can truly revere Him, love Him, honor Him, and obey Him. To come to a fuller comprehension of His greatness, goodness, and majesty. To regard Him as our Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign Lord.

We are part of God the Son IF we abide in His [John 15] and it is vital to view Him as our Mediator, High Priest, Savior, and King.

These two verses are the sum total of God's plan and purpose of the gospel, to KNOW GOD! There are no schemes of idolatry, philosophy [Col 2:8], or prosperity theology, just serving the "true and living God" [1Thess. 1:9]

This is God's plan for you and me. What is our plan to be faithful, and remain faithful?

Suggestions:

Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work. (2 Timothy 2:21)

(2 Timothy 4:2) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. Urgent, zealous, instant,

*(1 Timothy 6:11-12) But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; **take hold of the eternal life** to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

*(Revelation 2:10) 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. **Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.***

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and **God is faithful**, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Follow God's plan - But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. -(Jeremiah 10:10)

The LORD's loving kindnesses indeed never cease,
For His compassions never fail.

They are new every morning.
Great is Your faithfulness.

(Lamentations 3:22-23)

Faithfulness is an attribute of God communicated to mankind to imitate.

Forgiving

KNOW GOD BETTER

*(Exodus 34:6-7) Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, **who forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin;** yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." (NAS95)*

Another of God's attributes is His willingness to forgive those who come to Him with a penitent heart seeking forgiveness and desiring to obey the true and living God. Only God the Sovereign can forgive the sins of mankind.

(Psalms 78:38) But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; And often He restrained His anger and did not arouse all His wrath.

*(Numbers 21:5) The people **spoke against God** and Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food."*

God would have been justified in destroying them, but He restrained His anger and did not arouse His wrath.

Ponder—Would He have been justified in destroying me and you for our disobedience?

However, He is slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. However He will not leave the guilty unpunished. —Adam, Eve, Cain, all the people of Noah's day, and 603,550 minus 2 of the children of Israel that fell in the wilderness because of dishonoring God.

(Exodus 34:8) Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. God desires that his people pay honor to Him and obey His commands.

(Exodus 34:9) He said, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord- He is full of compassion and is very gracious to those who honor and obey.

I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, (Leviticus 26:12) 'I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. The verse is repeated in 2Cor. 6:16 -God is willing to dwell among His obedient people and be their God.

even though the people are so obstinate, (Romans 10:21) But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE."

We are overly critical of the Israelites but are we that much better? All day long God extends His hand offering redemption to a lost and dying world only to be rejected by most. CAUTION - The Burger King principle [have it your way] is alive and well today. Careful read Romans 10:1-3 It is trending today that many preachers are watering down the gospel that they are establishing their own righteousness. WARNING- Rom 10:3

and pardon our iniquity and our sin, God promised forgiveness to the Israelites and to you and me today also.

and take us as Your own possession." (1 Peter 2:9) But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; The obedient belong to God because He created us, we sinned, He redeemed us, God the Son paid the ransom price. 1Cor. 6:20

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Take time to study Luke 1:66-80.

Vs. 67- God the Holy Spirit visited Zacharias, father of John, prophesy the purpose of John his son. He was to prepare the way for God the Son.

Vs. 68- Redemption for His people

Vs. 69- Horn of salvation

Vs-74- Rescue His people to serve Him[God the father]

Vs-75- without fear all the days of their lives.

Vs-77- Knowledge of salvation would come by forgiveness of sins.

Vs-80- WHY? Tender mercy of God the Father completed by God the Son.

This was God's plan from the beginning and was implemented on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:38.

(Acts 13:38) "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,

(Acts 26:18) to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me. Eph 1:7, Mt. 26:28—Redemption -Psa. 130:7, Gal 4:4-5, Col 1:12-14

God the Father has promised unqualified forgiveness us our sins as we repent and bring fruits worthy of repentance, and let our lives demonstrate the change of heart. [Lk 3:8 TCNT] This is a demanding thing for a great many believers to forgive our brethren. Have you not read--- Mark 11:25-26, Col. 3:13, Eph. 4:32

We cannot produce fruits worthy of repentance IF we fail to forgive anyone who asks.

"Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. "And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." (Luke 17:3-4)

(Matthew 18:21) Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

*(Matthew 18:22) Jesus *said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Do not start doing the math, it just means to forgive as often as it is requested, just like God does. Now do the math- How many times has God forgiven you and me?*

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)

God will forgive our sins and when we open our hearts to Him, He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness, then we will be clean and pure to worship Him in Spirit And truth.

Seek the LORD while He may be found.

Call upon Him while He is near.

Let the wicked forsake his way

And the unrighteous man his thoughts.

And let him return to the LORD,

And He will have compassion on him,

And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

(Isaiah 55:6-7)

Forgiveness is an attribute of God, communicated to mankind to imitate.

Just

(Acts 24:15) *"I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. (NKJV)*

(Acts 24:15) *having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. (NAS95)*

The terms JUST and RIGHTEOUS come from the same in the original.

(Psalms 97:2) *Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. (Psalms 89:14) Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You.*

Righteousness, the principle that acts according to justice and equality; that gives to all their due, and ever holds in all things an even balance.

Judgment- the principle that discerns, orders, directs, and determines everything according to truth and justice: these form the habitation of his throne; that is, his government and management of the world are according to these; and though we cannot see the springs, the secret counsels, and the times, which this omniscient and almighty FATHER must ever have in his own power, yet we may rest assured that all his administration is wise, just, holy, good, and kind. For, although his counsels be inscrutable, and the dispensations of his providence be sometimes apparently unequal, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Adam Clarke

Everything God does for mankind streams from His righteousness, including His judgment. It will be accomplished in a wise, holy, and righteous manner.

(Psalms 94:12) *Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O LORD, And whom You teach out of Your law;* (Psalms 94:15) *For judgment will again be righteous, And all the upright in heart will follow it.*

(Job 5:17) *"Behold, how happy is the man whom God **reproves**, So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.*

(Proverbs 3:11) *My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe His reproof.*

(1 Corinthians 11:32) *But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.*

(Hebrews 12:5) *and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; (Hebrews 12:6-7) FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? God will train, discipline, and scourge His children to bring them into obedience to His word.*

(1 Kings 3:6) *Then Solomon said, "You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.*

(Zechariah 8:8) *and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.*

“God’s compassion flows out of His goodness, and goodness without justice is not goodness. God spares us because He is good, but He could not be good if He were not just” A.W. Tozer

(Zechariah 8:8) *and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.* The righteous judgment of God had sentenced the Israelites to 70 years of captivity for the sin of idolatry. He was right and just in this judgment. Through the mouth of Zechariah, He promised to bring them back [restore] them to their former place [without idolatry] and He will be their God in TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. Why are believers fearful of standing before the judgment seat of Christ? Has He not promised to forgive us of our sins, trespasses, and shortcomings? Have we placed our faith in ourselves instead of in the truth and righteousness of God through the sacrifice of Christ?

Careful consider 2 Peter chapter 2- Judgment for the unrighteous is a fearful thing.

VS. 3- Judgment is not idle-VS 4- sinful angels were cast into hell-VS 5- Saved righteous Noah but destroyed the wicked- VS 6-7- Saved righteous Lot but destroyed wicked cities.

(2 Peter 2:9) *then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.* God knows how, is willing able, and ready to rescue every penitent believer from destruction!

(Acts 24:15-16) *having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. "In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.* This is Paul’s approach to judgment -BE BLAMELESS (Philippians 2:15) *so that you will **prove** yourselves to be **blameless and innocent**, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.* Justice always requires PROOF of the BLAMELESS INNOCENCE which comes ONLY through the continual attachment to God the Father by Jesus the Son.

IF we are busy showing ourselves as light-----ponder- “this little light of mine I am going to let it shine” WHERE-WHEN-WHY-

AM I holding forth the word of life to a lost and dying world?

DOES my life look like a child of God proving myself to be blameless and innocent eagerly awaiting the coming day of the Lord?

(Colossians 1:22-23) *yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-- if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.*

IS Christ abiding in us? John 15 (Count N.L. von Zinzendorf)

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head

Bold shall I stand in thy great day
For who aught to charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am-
From sin and fear, guilt and shame.

Holiness

"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory." (Isaiah 6:3) (NAS95)

The basic idea of the word holiness expresses the thought of separation. When God is declared to be HOLY, the thought is of all that separates Him and sets Him apart and makes Him different from His creation: His greatness(majesty in heaven) Heb. 1:3, 8:1 and his purity (your eyes are too pure to look at evil; you cannot tolerate wrong-Hab. 1:13-J.J. Packer

God is the source of all holiness, He is separated from all created things because of His purity, His character, and His infinite wisdom.

Holy is the way of God is. To be holy, He does not conform to a standard, He is the standard. He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than He is . A. W. Tozar

"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 14:2) God considered all the inhabitants of the earth and chose the nation of Israel to be His people and to be their God. The design was to separate them from all other people, set them apart to BE HIS PEOPLE, different, peculiar to all others BECAUSE they were His people.

They were to be holy as He is holy.

God has separated the things that are his for a purpose. Holy assembly-Ex.12:16, Holy sabbath-Ex 20:11, Holy Men-Ex. 22:31, Holy garment-Ex 28:2- Holy place and Holy of Holies-Ex. 26:33. All of these things, places, and people belong to God and are separated for His service.

We cannot genuinely appreciate the holiness of God which embodies moral excellence, perfect righteousness, and complete purity which is His incomprehensible holiness.

We live in a world of ugly unholiness, it is all around us, and we have learned to live with it. God was **grieved** by the ugly ungodliness [Gen 6:6]. (2 Peter 2:7) and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the **sensual conduct** of unprincipled men. This is the same conduct that is being celebrated in our nation today.

Are we vexed, sorely distressed?

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had **made purification of sins**, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (Hebrews 1:1-3)

This is how God SEPARATED believers from the world, from the ugly world of ungodliness! (1 Thessalonians 4:7) For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

God separated the nation of Israel from the rest of the world, He has **called** us to be separated from the world, through sanctification by the blood of God the Son. (2 Thessalonians 2:13) But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through **sanctification** by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (1 Peter 2:9)

Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son gave His precious life to redeem the believers from the bondage of sin and paid an awful price to purchase every believer. [1Cor. 6:20, 7:23] **IF we are His**, we belong to Him, His own possession, we do not belong to ourselves, we belong to the ONE who purchased us from the jaws of death.

(1 Peter 2:9) But you are A CHOSEN RACE, - The gospel of Christ is available to all, some chose to accept the invitation of Christ and some reject God's offer.

A royal PRIESTHOOD- concreated to His spiritual service.

A HOLY NATION, -not a country but all the obedient believers

A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, -all those that belong to God, who are set apart for HIS purpose.

so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; This is the occupation of those who belong to God.

Our mission is to proclaim HIM! His excellencies, Holiness, Glory, Greatness, Majesty, and His love which called all obedient believers from the ugly darkness of sin INTO His marvelous light, a place of beauty and peace because of the presence of God. We must present [proclaim] the holiness of God by our words and our daily deeds, living a life that reflects the love of God Himself.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1) separated from the worldly things, we must live in the physical world but not partake of the worldly things.

Remember- the things that belong to God are holy- the things that belong to the world are defiled. Mt. 6:21

(Ephesians 4:24) and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. *This is a new beginning.*

(2 Corinthians 5:17-20) Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature.

the old things passed away; - the old sinful life was dead and buried in baptism.

behold, new things have come. A new purpose in life, new desires of the heart, and a new direction for our actions.

Now all these things are from God, -holy things because they belong to Him.

who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. -A clean heart prepared to serve God.

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. The mission for every believer is to be an ambassador, representing Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. Because of sin man was separated from God and must returned [reconciled] to God. This is the responsibility of EVERY believer.

(Titus 2:14) Who gave himself for us, so that he might make us free from all wrongdoing and make for himself a people clean in heart and on fire with good works.

“YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

Goodness

The goodness of God the Father causes Him to be tenderhearted, benevolent, and gracious to mankind even though we are sinners. "The goodness of God is the drive behind all the blessings He daily bestows upon us. God created us because He felt good in His heart, and He redeemed us for the same reason. Divine goodness as one of God's attributes, is self-caused, infinite, perfect, and eternal. [A. Tozer]

The goodness of God is displayed by His lovingkindness and compassion. There are 175 verses using the term loving-kindness and ninety-two using the term compassion all to show us the attribute of God called goodness and its effects on the life of a believer. Psa. 86:5, 145:7-8

(Isaiah 63:7) I shall make mention of the loving kindnesses of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, According to all that the LORD has granted us, And the great goodness toward the house of Israel, Which He has granted them according to His compassion And according to the abundance of His loving kindnesses.

(Exodus 33:18-20) Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" (NAS95)

(Psalms 36:7-10) How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light. O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart.

From God's goodness and lovingkindness, He provides refuge [a place of safety and protection] constantly filled from the abundance of His house and restored by the fountain of life while guided by the light from God.

As great and powerful as the goodness and lovingkindness remain, we must look at (Romans 11:22) *Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.* The severity of God is quick to fall on the disobedient. [Adam and Eve, Cain, Ananias, and Sapphira] Simon{ Acts 8} saw the severity of God and quickly repented. The goodness and mercy of God provide the avenue for repentance and pardon.

*(Isaiah 66:2) "For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and **who trembles at My word.***

Why should we **tremble** at the word of God?

1. Reverence for His goodness,
2. sense of awe of His power,
3. desire to praise Him for His wisdom,
4. gratitude for His patience with our disobedience,
5. extolling honor for His greatness,
6. thanksgiving for being created by Him.

There are multiple reasons why God should be the focus of our thoughts. We should exalt, love, respect, esteem, magnify, glorify, and worship Him, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. All the attributes should make HIM the center of our affection!

The world we live in does NOT tremble at the word of God because most have lost respect for the authority of God's word, show little reverence for God Himself, and do not show Him honor.

God Himself asks the question "Where is my honor? Where is my respect? Mal. 1:6

It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:31)

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12) Remember ---God knows our thoughts and our intentions.

Old time saying—The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

(Colossians 3:12) So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

1. Chosen by the method God selected to restore mankind from his fallen position because of sin and be reconciled to God.
2. Holy and beloved- *(1 Peter 1:15) but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.*
3. Put on a heart- Col 3:8-9 put off the old life of sin- adorn a new self, new life.
4. God-like attributes- A. compassion -Jesus was moved by compassion Mk. 1:41- cause Him to take action and we should be moved with compassion for the lost.
B. Kindness-warmth, concern desire to care for-2Pet 1:7.

C. Humility- *(Philippians 2:3) Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit,*

but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.

D. Gentleness-Patience *(Ephesians 4:2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love.*

God has revealed through His word a glimpse of Himself, showing His goodness that we can make every effort to imitate.

(Hebrews 6:5) and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

Jesus tasted death, He fully experienced it totally and completely. Have we as believers fully experienced tasting the good word of God? Do we have an appetite for it? Do we contemplate the excitement and joy of the sweet taste of His word? *(Psalms 119:103) How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!* Is this a true statement of my feelings?

(Psalms 19:10) They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold, Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. This must be a state of mind for every sincere believer!

(Romans 15:14) And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. Because they were FILL UP with goodness and knowledge, they were able, capable, and willing to admonish one another.

"The LORD has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments; and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the LORD your God, as He has spoken." (Deuteronomy 26:18-19)

God made the promises to His chosen people IF they would keep His commandments.

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, -God has declared believers to be His own possession, belong to Him, bought with a price.

so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (1 Peter 2:9)—Here is our purpose in life –to proclaim His goodness, His greatness, His great and precious promises---holding forth the word of life[Phil 2:16] to a lost and dying world.

We must show our compassion for the lost, our lovingkindness for the weak, and be filled up with goodness as we imitate God.

How great is Your goodness,
Which You have stored up for those who fear You,
Which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You, Before the
sons of men!

(Psalms 31:19)

LOVE

One of the attributes of God is love. (1 John 4:8) *The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.* (NAS95) John's statement is true that God is love however that is just one of His many attributes which all work together for His purpose. Neither I or any other can fully describe the love of God in it is fullest but we can draw attention to it and show how God chose to reveal it to us in His word.

God's love is amazing, awesome, and overwhelming. (Romans 5:5) *and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5:5) a hope which never disappoints us. For through the Holy Spirit who has given to us, the "brimming river of the love of God" has overflowed in our hearts.* (MNT) Not recommending this translation, but this is a fitting description of God's wonderful love.

God in His infinite wisdom has chosen to reveal some of the very nature of His divine love to us, the created through His word.

(1 John 3:1) *See how great a love-*The fruits of this great love and His unending mercy lead to the salvation of all mankind who are willing to submit to His will.

-the Father has bestowed on us, --adopted us into His family, allowing us to call Him Father

that we would be called children of God; and such we are. – all the privileges of adoption as His, belonging to Him, Rom. 8:15

*For this reason, the world does not know us,-*The world does not recognize the principles we live by, the nature of our conduct or the joys of the Christian life.

*because it did not know Him. -*The world NEVER understood who or what Jesus Christ was, the Son of God, the Messiah, Savior of the world, they regarded Him as an impostor, a fake and a fraud. Had they come to know His character they would never have crucified Him.

Hastings Bible Dictionary of the Bible definition-“ Love is that principle which leads one moral being to desire and delight in another and reaches the highest form in that personal fellowship in which each lives in the life of the other And finds his joy in imparting himself to the other, and in receiving the back the outflow of that other's affection to himself”. This is man's attempt to define God love.

In J.J. Packer's book *Knowing God* he gives a great illustration of “How God's love is manifest” is extremely helpful to better understand the working of His love.

1. God's love is an exercise of His goodness- His kindness is given to those he created. Psalms 145 is a catalog of His marvelous wonders- (Psalms 145:7-9) *They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness And will shout joyfully of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. The LORD is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works. (VS17) The LORD is righteous in all His ways And kind in all His deeds.* Luke 6:36, Acts 14:17
2. God's love is an exercise of His goodness toward sinners- Why would an all-wise all-knowing God chose to even acknowledge a sinner who has rebelled against His laws, let alone shower him with love? It is beyond our comprehension however it was part of His plan before the creation- He purposed to create us and then love us as His, belonging to Him. Romans the 5th chapter reveals God's purpose- (Romans 5:6) *For while we were still helpless, at the **right time** Christ died for the ungodly.* It was planned by the mind of God. Vs.8) *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
3. God's love is an exercise of His goodness toward individual sinners- (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) *But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because*

God has **chosen you** from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. His plan, His purpose and His method are all in place to save the individual sinner. *Vs. 14-It was for **this[His plan]** He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The calling through the gospel is to all not some number like 144,000 as some false doctrine proclaims. (Ephesians 1:4) *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, **that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love.*** Here is the real purpose--- Holy and Blameless in HIS sight and all because of His love for us!

4. God's love for sinners is expressed by the gift of His son- (1 John 4:9-10) *By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. -(1 Peter 3:18) For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;* 1 Cor. 15:3- God the Son left heaven, came to earth for the purpose of dying a horrible physical death and bearing the sins of the world for me and you.
5. God's love for sinners reached its objective to bring them to know Him- to have fellowship with Him, to have a relationship with God the Father, Creator and Sovereign through God the Son and communicated by the Holy Spirit.

“The love of God is one of the great realities of the universe, a pillar upon which the hope of the world rests. But it is a personal, intimate thing, too. God does not love populations, He loves people. He does not love masses, He love men. He loves us all with a mighty love that has no beginning and can have no end.” A. W. Tozar

The love of God is an attribute that He intends for us to copy, imitate, and strive to have this god-like quality.

(John 15:12) *"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. (John 15:17) "This I command you, that you love one another.*

(Romans 12:10) *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.*

(Galatians 5:13) For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. John 13

(Hebrews 10:24) and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

(1 John 4:7) Beloved, let us love **one another**, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

(1 John 3:16) We **know love** by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Study God's instructions about love in 1Corinthians 13

Love is always	NOT	Never
Patient	Jealous	Self-seeking
Kind	Arrogant	Provoked
Fair	Rude	Unseemly
Truthful	Selfish	Unjust
Beareth all things	Resentful	

Believeth all things
Hopeth all things
Endureth all things

LOVE NEVER FAILS

Today is the day to demonstrate the attribute of love, revealed in His word, sealed with the sacrifice of His son, and commanded by God Himself.

Patience

Christian virtue

Patience is the ability to endure difficult circumstances. Patience may involve perseverance in the face of delay; tolerance of provocation without responding in disrespect/anger; or forbearance when ...

I. The means of unity: Lowliness and meekness, long-suffering, and forbearing one another in love, Eph 4:2. By lowliness we are to understand humility, entertaining mean thoughts of ourselves, which is opposed to pride. By meekness, that excellent disposition of soul which makes men unwilling to provoke others, and not easily to be provoked or offended with their infirmities; and it is opposed to angry resentments and peevishness. Long-suffering implies a patient bearing injuries, without seeking revenge. Forbearing one another in love signifies bearing their infirmities out of a principle of love, and so as not to cease to love them on the account of these. The best Christians have need to bear one with another, and to make the best one of another, to provoke one another's graces and not their passions. We find much in ourselves which it is hard to forgive ourselves; and therefore, we must not think it much if we find that in others which we think hard to forgive them, and yet we must forgive them as we forgive ourselves. Now without these things unity cannot be preserved. The first step towards unity is humility; without this there will be no meekness, no patience, or forbearance; and without these no unity. Pride and passion break the peace and make all the mischief. Humility and meekness restore the peace and keep it. Only by pride comes contention; only by humility comes love. The more lowly mindedness the more like mindedness. We do not walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called if we be not meek and lowly of heart: for he by whom we are called, he to whom we are called, was eminent for meekness and lowliness of heart, and has commanded us therein to learn of him.

Giver

(Genesis 1:29-30) Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so. (NAS95)

God **gave** Adam and Eve everything they could need to live in paradise, including a complete relationship with God the Creator. They were completely without fear, anxiety, or anything unpleasant because God had given them PEACE, a state of ultimate tranquility.

We know the rest of the story. Satan introduced sin and death entered the world by causing Adam and Eve to DOUBT the word spoken to them God the Creator. Perhaps, just perhaps they were distracted for a moment and failed to remember that it was the all-powerful Sovereign of the universe that created them from dirt, or since we don't know how long they were in the perfect garden and being human maybe they forgot that God is all-knowing, then thinking with their "NEW" wisdom tried to hide from God. Satan robbed them of everything- peace, tranquility, relationship with God, and their very lives. The same thing happens today!

God has promised to restore that peace with Him. *(Psalms 25:8-10) Good and upright is the LORD; Therefore, He instructs sinners in **the way**. He leads the humble in justice, And He teaches the humble **His way**. All the **paths of the LORD** are lovingkindness and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.*

Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth springs from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven. Indeed, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its produce. Righteousness will go before Him And will make His footsteps into a way. (Psalms 85:10-13)

In Luke 1 the Holy Spirit spoke through Zacharias, the father of John the baptizer, (Luke 1:76-79) *"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go on **BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS**; To give to His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high will visit us, **TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH**, To guide our feet into the way of peace."* John's mission was to prepare THE WAY for God the Son to GIVE the knowledge of salvation to His people by forgiveness of sins. He was to testify about the LIGHT that was of come [Jn 1:4-5] and the LIGHT would shine in a dark world caused by sin and ignorance. The LIGHT would illuminate the path of peace.

*seeing that his divine power has **granted** to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. (2 Peter 1:3)*

*(2 Peter 1:3) as His divine power has **given** to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, (NKJV)*

Because of His lovingkindness, God the Father has chosen to GIVE us, His children everything that pertains to life! We have so many physical blessings they are innumerable and beyond our comprehension.

*(Matthew 7:11) "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is **good** to those who ask Him!"*

We are blessed with so much we must be incredibly careful to avoid letting God's good gifts replace Him in our lives.

*Then He said to them, "Beware and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an **abundance** does his life consist of his possessions." (Luke 12:15)*

Jesus illustrates this critical lesson with a parable of the rich man who would "build bigger barns" (Luke 12:20) *"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'"*

(1 Timothy 6:17) Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

We are blessed with the ability to think, reason, determine, and discern which path we will take.

***given** to us all things that pertain to godliness-[2pet 1:3] the opportunity to taste the good words of God [Heb 6:4] How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (Psalms 119:103)*

He has given us salvation from our sins and promised to forgive us as we repent. He has given us brethren to comfort and support us in times of need. [1Pet 4:7-11]

We have opportunities to visit the sick, care for the needy, and be good neighbors. Mt 25:35-36, Lk 10:33]

Our greatest gift from God is the light of the gospel of Christ which we MUST share with those in darkness.

(Acts 8:4) Now those who were scattered in different directions went from place to place proclaiming the Good News. (TCNT) These were just us common believers who were zealously ANNOUNCING the good news of the way of salvation.

(Philippians 2:15-16) so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God—It is personal, notice the YOU in the passage.

above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, it should not be hard to see a blameless, innocent child of God in the darkness of this generation.

among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, --Where are we letting our light shine? Just inside the church building?

so that in the day of Christ, I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

Will we bury our talent [Mt. 25:18] or will we be useful in service to our master? [2Tim. 2:21]

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-8) Peter gives us the proper instructions to keep the GODILNESS that is available to us by the power of the resurrection. Phil 3:10

*Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let **us** show gratitude, by which **we** may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:28-29)*

Remember that one of the gifts from God is the ability to reason, think, and discern what we hear, read, and see and determine IF we will serve the Lord. It is a personal decision every time!

"If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD,

choose for yourselves today whom you will serve:

whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house,

we will serve the LORD."

(Joshua 24:15)

Peace

Think of the peacefulness of the Garden of Eden that God created for Adam and Eve. There was no chaos, turmoil, or anything that disturbed the tranquility of the presence of God. And then BAM-- Satan destroyed the tranquility by introducing sin into the world by deception and a lying tongue. Remember – if Satan is talking, he is the father of lies.

The definition of peace to most people means the absence of war or fighting. Real peace comes from God, who is the source of genuine, lasting peace. It is an attribute of God because of His nature, no chaos, no division, He is ONE. He is the God of peace-(2 Thessalonians 3:18) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. (NAS95)- Rom. 16:20, Gal. 1:3, Heb. 13:20

Peace with God is a tranquil state of mind that comes from our relationship with God the Father, God the Son, and revealed by the Holy Spirit. God the Son will guide our feet into **the way of peace.**[Lk 1:79]

(Ephesians 2:14-17) For **He Himself is our peace**, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus **establishing peace**, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; (NAS95)
Col. 1:20

The death of Christ on the cross established the **peace of God** when mankind was reconciled to God through the blood of Christ. His sacrifice removed the ugliness of sin and rebellion from the sight of God.

(John 14:27) "**Peace** I leave with you; **My peace** I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

(John 16:33) "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have **peace**. In the world you have tribulation but take courage; I have overcome the world."

LIVING A GODLY LIFE IS NOT WITHOUT ITS DIFFICULTY, BUT IT IS OFTEN SIMPLER THAN WE SUPPOSE. The natural simplicity of godliness is that it amounts to the peaceful management of the individual moments that come to us, one at a time. Gary Henry

ONLY WHEN WE PURSUE GOD WITH SINGLENESS OF HEART DO WE FIND THE PEACE THAT COMES FROM INTEGRITY. If we seek with less than the whole heart, the result will be less than total joy.

If you had any idea how much inward peace you would gain for yourself, and how much joy you would bring to others, by devoting yourself single-heartedly to God, you would certainly pay more attention to your spiritual progress” (Thomas à Kempis).

“Father, I know now, if I never knew it before, that only in Thee can my restless human heart find any peace. For I began life without knowledge, but full of needs. And the turmoil of my mind, the dissatisfaction of my life all stem from trying to meet those needs with the wrong things and in the wrong places” (Peter Marshall).

It is in Jesus Christ that God is working toward this grand resolution. “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross” (Colossians 1:19,20)

(Psalms 85:10) Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. This is peace from God which makes us have peace WITH God. These are all attributes of God the Father.

(Philippians 4:6-7) 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 comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. The source of peace is **allowing** God to guard our hearts and minds, it is our choice to submit to Him in order to have His peace.

(Colossians 3:15) Let the **peace of Christ** rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Does He rule in your heart?

(Psalms 34:12-14) Who is the man who desires life and loves length of days that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; **Seek peace and pursue it.**

Desire peace as a thing of value, pursue it diligently because sometimes it is hard to embrace, like hugging a porcupine. If peace with an individual is broken, make every effort to recover and repair the damage.

Avoid--- quarrels, dissensions, and squabbles. Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God **not to wrangle about words**, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers. (2 Timothy 2:14) not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. (NKJV)

To maintain our peaceful relationship with God, we have a grave responsibility.

1. Get away from evil-(1 Thess. 5:22) abstain from every form of evil.
2. Do good- Gal. 6:10 Matt 25
3. Seek peace- our relationship with God and man.
4. Pursue peace- (Romans 8:6) For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

(Matthew 5:9) "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

(James 3:17) But the wisdom from above is first pure, then **peaceable**, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

(Hebrews 12:14) Pursue peace with all men and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. It is our responsibility to make every effort to be at peace with all men, sometimes that is difficult because Satan often stirs the pot, and causes conflict and division, even among God's people.

(Romans 12:18) If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. (Romans 14:19) So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. Our peacemaking should include edification and building one another up in God's kingdom. 1 Thess. 5:13

(2 Peter 3:14) Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.

This is the position we want to be in when Christ comes again to bring judgment, blameless-spotless which is the peace of God.

Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Psa. 85:10

This is peace from God which makes us have peace WITH God.

Righteous

Righteous are You, O LORD, and upright are Your judgments.

(Psalms 119:137) NAS95

Righteous art thou, O LORD-- Essentially, originally, and of himself; naturally, immutably and universally, in all his ways and works of nature and grace; in his thoughts, purposes, counsels, and decrees; in all the dispensations of his providence; in redemption, in the justification of a sinner, in the pardon of sin, and in the gift of eternal life through Christ. "And upright are thy judgments." They are according to the rules of justice and equity. He refers to the precepts of the word, the doctrines of the gospel, as well as the judgments of God inflicted on wicked men, and all the providential dealings of God with his people, and also the final judgment. --John Gill.

Some seculars do not consider righteousness as an attribute of God but are the result or action of God's goodness, perfection, and moral character. (Psalms 145:17) The LORD is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds. His words, His counsel, and His actions are totally and completely right and just.

(Psalms 119:144) Your testimonies are righteous forever; Give me understanding that I may live.

God's everlasting righteousness is the foundation of salvation for all of mankind through all generations from beginning to the end. We too, should be constantly praying for understanding to love His word more, to delight in your will [Psa. 40:8] Your statutes [Psa. 119:16] your commandments [Psa. 119:47] without understanding of God's we will die. (Psalms 119:92) If Your law had not been my delight, Then I would have perished in my affliction. Without understanding we will never abide in Christ or have a relationship with Him. (John 15:4) "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. (Colossians 1:23) if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

In Eph. 6:14, Paul instructs us to "put on" the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate protected the soldier's vital organs from damage in battle [1 Kgs. 22:34] The breastplate of righteousness is the practice of righteousness, integrity, pure living, and holiness, which protects our vital *spiritual* organs from the fiery darts of Satan. If we fail to practice righteousness or maintain our integrity, we are open to attack by Satan. David's sinful behavior, Peter denied the Lord or Judas who betrayed the Son of God, are examples of a failure of integrity, a lapse in right judgement and a failure of character.

(Isaiah 64:6) For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. This is what we look like to God when we sin and fail to maintain the practice of righteousness.

By contrast, when we carefully maintain our practice of righteousness and remain faithful to the Lord, we look vastly different. (Isaiah 61:10) I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness.

(John 12:32) "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

Jesus, during His life on earth drew men first by the miracles, then through His teachings and finally through His resurrection. God's righteousness was displayed by providing a sinless offering for OUR sins and His justice was demonstrated by the power of the resurrection. (John 14:6) Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. Putting God's perfect plan into action, drawing mankind to God the Father through God the Son that provided salvation to all who will allow the power of God to draw them close to Him. He has done His part, now it is man's part draw near to Him. Examine Hebrews 4:16, 7:19, 7:25, 10:1, 10:22, these verses call on US to move from

our sinful state and join God by agreeing to His will, following His word, which He revealed to us by the Holy Spirit that provide salvation to all mankind for all ages.

(James 4:8-10) Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. NOTICE- all the instructions are changes for us to make. Cleanse, purify, HUMBLE, yourselves before the Lord.

(Romans 10:2-3) For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the **righteousness of God.**

(Philippians 3:9-10) and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the **righteousness which comes from God** on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

(2 Corinthians 5:17) Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. (WEB) This new creation is a clean heart with a new purpose in life, God's purpose of saving the souls of men.

(2 Corinthians 5:18) Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, (NAS95) -Man was an enemy [Rom5:10] because of rebellion against God, man changes his lifestyle to agree with God's will and is united with Him again. Because of the grace, mercy and righteousness of God displayed by the sacrifice of Christ man was reconciled back to God the Creator. Rom. 3:25-26

(2 Corinthians 5:19) namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. There are TWO great thoughts in this verse-

1. Reconciliation was possible because God did not "count their trespass against them" because of the sanctifying blood of Jesus Christ, this explains "how" we as sinners can have a relationship with God, "how" we can abide in Him, because we are in agreement with Him. He did move or change, man moved to Him by changing [new creation] to His will.
2. He [God] has charged us with the responsibility of sharing this soul saving message with the world.

(2 Corinthians 5:20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. The urgency of this commitment is emphasized by Paul -**we beg you** on behalf of Christ be reconciled before it is too late. Sadly, it is difficult to see any urgency on display in sharing this critical message of salvation today!

(2 Corinthians 5:21) He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the **righteousness of God in Him.**

This verse reveals the purpose of God's will- to make man righteous so we can abide with Him, have fellowship with Him and spend eternity with Him.

(Colossians 1:22-23) yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him **holy and blameless and beyond reproach**-- if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

Trustworthy

*(Isaiah 50:10) Who is among you that fears the LORD, that obeys the voice of His servant, that walks in darkness and has no light? Let him **trust** in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. (NAS95)*

Our trust in God grows and develops ONLY when we fear the Lord, when we stand in awe of His majesty, tremble at His word [Isa.66:2], and fear displeasing Him.[Psa. 119:120] We learn to trust as we are willing to submit to the will of God, be ruled by Him, and yield to the terms of the agreement He made with us. [Heb 5:9]

*Those who **trust** in the LORD Are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and forever. For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest upon the land of the righteous, so that the righteous will not put forth their hands to do wrong. Psa. 125:1-3*

The permanency of Mt. Zion is a symbol of God's trustworthiness. It is fixed as the mountain, dependable, reliable, and provides full assurance of God's plan and purpose to save the righteous.

Who are righteous (Ps 125:3), righteous before God, and righteous to all men, because of being justified and sanctified to the glory of God.

The righteous trust in the Lord, are devoted to Him and depend on Him for protection from the evil one. Verse two- *So the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and forever. He is there, He is around-* (Hebrews 4:16) *Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

(James 4:8) *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Only those who trust in God will have the confidence to draw near to Him, to seek His protection and loving care.*

SIN IS A LACK OF TRUST IN GOD! Beginning with Adam and Eve until today, Satan works feverishly to cast doubt on God, and drive a wedge of doubt between us and God.

Satan to Eve- "You don't think God really meant that you were going to die if you ate the fruit,"

God was profoundly serious –

1. Became aware of their sin.
2. Cast out of the Garden.
3. Do not work -will not eat.
4. Pain in childbirth.
5. The biggie separated from God.

God keeps all His promises. God is trustworthy!

When we make a rational, deliberate choice to trust God, it can only be with our whole heart. We will become devoted to Him.

*"Let your heart therefore be **wholly devoted** to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day." [1Kgs 8:61] This is a very plain and easy-to-understand passage- Heart is dedicated to God, to walk steadfastly in His statutes and devoutly keep His commandments. [Jn. 15:10, 2John 1:6]*

What does being wholly devoted to God look like today? It looks like the command to be blameless! Many times, Christians say “Oh, that is just for elders” REALLY.

Blameless-- to be without reproach means to live so that no charges of guilt can be proven against you. It requires each one to examine their lives, compared to the scriptures, and there is no evidence to assess blame.

To remain blameless, we must make a constant inventory of our lives by God’s standards. Blameless is not “perfect” as man puts it, but we are forgiven for all errors we have committed. (Ephesians 1:4) *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him, In love.*

Because God is trustworthy and faithful to complete His promises, we have HOPE that is sure and steadfast, as fixed [1 John 3:3] as Mt. Zion and cannot be moved. (Hebrews 6:19) *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil.* The anchor [HOPE] is secure in the veil, the dwelling place of God, a place of safety and peace.

Peter tells us we are born again to a **living hope** [1Pet. 1:3-5] it is based on our trust in God because He demonstrated His power by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This living hope adds tremendous value to our lives.

1. GPS toward heaven
2. Makes burdens light.
3. Strength to overcome Satan.
4. Vision to see the goal before us.
5. Leads onward to the inheritance.

*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness** in the fear of God. (2 Cor.7:1)*

God has completed His promises completely, providing us with everything we need to successfully live life and godliness. [2 Pet. 1:3] Now it is our time to cleanse ourselves, stay clean and diligently focus on perfecting holiness- working at it all the time-pressing toward the goal- striving to reach it motivated by the **hope** of eternal life.

**Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord
direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase
and abound in love for one another, and for all people,
just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts
without blame in holiness before our God and Father
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.**

(1 Thessalonians 3:11-13)

WISE

*(Daniel 2:20-21) Daniel said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For **wisdom** and power belong to Him. "It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding. (nas95)*

“All God’s acts are done in perfect wisdom, first for His own glory and then for the highest good of the greatest number for the longest time. And all His acts are as pure as they are wise, and as good as they are wise and pure.” A. W. Tozar

*(Psalms 104:24) O LORD, how many are Your works! In **wisdom** You have made them all; The earth is full of Your possessions.*

*(Psalms 40:5) Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders which You have done, And Your thoughts toward us; There is none to compare with You. If I would declare and speak of them, They would be too numerous to count. (Proverbs 3:19) The LORD by **wisdom** founded the earth, By understanding He established the heavens.*

*(Jeremiah 51:15) It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His **wisdom**, And by His understanding He stretched out the heavens.*

The scriptures reveal the wisdom of God is infinite, His power unlimited, and were used to create everything. The created world is managed and sustained by His power and controlled by His wisdom.

His infinite wisdom is the foundation of all truth.

*"For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one, I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who **trembles at My word**. (Isaiah 66:2) For all these things my hand has made, and they are mine, says the Lord; but to this man only will I give attention, to him who is poor and broken in spirit, fearing my word. (Isaiah 66:2) (BBE)*

Observe what God states in this verse-He will give attention ONLY to the humble one, has a contrite spirit, and TREMBLES at His word. **This is the KEY to gaining wisdom!** It is our attitude- God is a willing giver of all things including wisdom, but only to those who are ready to humbly receive His word in truth and wisdom. *(James 1:5) But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

(Job 28:20) "Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding? The answer is (Daniel 2:22) "It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him.

*(1 Corinthians 2:10) For to us **God revealed** them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.*

(Ephesians 1:7-9) In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight, He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him. The wisdom of God can be seen in these verses.

1. He purposed in Christ-
2. His intention to reconcile mankind back to Himself.
3. All wisdom and insight- The basic definition of wisdom is being able to see the end from the beginning- the outcome.

(Luke 2:52) And Jesus kept **increasing in wisdom** and stature, and in favor with God and men. This is our challenge, to increase in wisdom. God has shared His infinite wisdom with mankind, made it available to us IF we are willing. (Proverbs 2:6) *For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

(John 6:68) Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.

(Proverbs 9:10) *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (Proverbs 15:33) The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.*

Take time to analyze 1Cor. 1:19-25.

For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, The world. The men of the world; particularly the philosophers of the world.

My wisdom. By their own wisdom, or by the united investigations of the works of nature.

Knew not God. Obtained not a true knowledge of him. Some denied his existence; some represented him under the false and abominable forms of idol worship; some ascribed to him horrid attributes; all showed that they had no true acquaintance with a God of purity, with a God who could pardon sin, or whose worship conduced to holiness of life. Barnes Notes.

God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)

In 2 Corinthians 2:1-4, Paul states the source of his preaching,

NOT WITH

1. Superiority of speech or wisdom
2. Persuasive words
3. Wisdom of men

BUT WITH

God's wisdom
Hidden Wisdom
Revealed wisdom

(1 Corinthians 2:12) *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,*

(Colossians 1:28) *We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.*

Here is the purpose and intention of God's wisdom- MAKE EVERY MAN COMPLETE!

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. (Col.4:5)

Get busy using EVERY opportunity--- *so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,[GO TO WORK] holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. (Phil. 2:15-16)*

(Ephesians 5:15-16) *Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.*

Walk honestly, always upright, and with complete integrity as an example of God's wisdom in our daily lives visible for all to see Him in us. Make the most of your time, snatching every moment from Satan's hands by wise use of your time. Do not squander it on useless things- Time has great value because there

is a limited amount [(Psalms 90:12) *So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom.*

(Romans 12:11) not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

(Hebrews 5:14) But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. The mature Christian has a spiritual perception from their long use, practice, and experience and can see the beauty and value of God's wisdom and use their experience to distinguish truth from error.

(Philippians 1:9-11) And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.