

THE JOURNEY

DISCOVERING *the* INVISIBLE PATH

Kenneth L. Birks

FOREWORD BY FRANCIS ANFUSO



*The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.
Give careful thought to the paths of your feet and be
steadfast in all your ways. Do not turn to the right
or the left; keep your foot from evil.
Proverbs 4:18,26-27*

The Journey: Discovering the Invisible Path

The Pathway to Authentic Christianity

By Kenneth L. Birks

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In acknowledgement of these special people who have invested in this book by their life-changing contribution through being an integral part of my life over the years:

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Foreword

By Francis Anfuso

For many people, a journey into the Bible is like flying into the Bermuda Triangle, tackling an unsolved mystery, or hopelessly laboring over a puzzling paradox. They throw up their hands in futility, believing the massive book is too big, too old, and too complex to be understood.

But reality is far less scary.

The Bible is not just the most published book of all time; it is the clearest path to understanding the riddle of life. I remember the days before smart phones when I'd be driving around a city trying to find a person to ask directions; with my hope for getting to the desired location resting on the perceptions of a stranger. I'm so grateful for GPS, Global Positioning Systems. I'd probably be lost every day of my life without its guidance. But with this simple tool, I now drive with confidence and even enjoy the ride.

I believe *The Journey* by Ken Birks is your GPS for the Bible. The problem is solved. The riddle is deciphered. Like a trusted guide Ken, makes complex concepts simple and masterfully unpacks the Bible's greatest mysteries. He provides a sure foundation upon which to build a lifetime of insight.

Ken has been a trusted friend and leader in our church for nearly two decades, and beyond our relationship, he has been a pastor and gifted Bible teacher for over 30 years. When I need a scripture explained, I often ask Ken for his wisdom, and frankly have never been disappointed.

If I were building a house, I'd hire a master builder. If I didn't understand the Bible and wanted a solid foundation for my Christian life, I'd study this book, *The Journey*, and let a master teacher like Ken Birks guide me down the path of life.

Francis Anfuso
Co-Senior Pastor, The Rock of Roseville
January 2016

The Journey

Discovering the Invisible Path

By Kenneth L. Birks

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The Journey

Discovering the Invisible Path

Introduction

We live in a world that was created in the beauty and wonder of what was originally intended to give us glimpses into the eternal treasures God has stored up for all those who have come to believe in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Just as each of us has been born of a natural birth that brought us into this world, there is a spiritual birth God desires for us, a birth that is designed to bring us into the unseen beauty and wonder of the eternal realm where God resides—the kingdom of heaven.

Once we are spiritually born or born again, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us to reveal to our natural senses the great mystery of the eternal Godhead in all of the glory of the Father. We are given the mind of Christ, or the divine nature of God, to see into this invisible realm, and thus, our journey into the unforeseen begins.¹

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Luke 17:20-21 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; ²¹ nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

As Christians, our calling is that of a pilgrimage or journey. Peter, one of the disciples of Jesus, refers to us as pilgrims in his first epistle.² We have been called to be like our father Abraham, who traveled through this world by faith, not knowing where he was going. He was a pilgrim looking for a city unknown to his natural eyes—a city whose builder and maker was God, which he could only see through his spiritual eyes.³ If we are to be like Abraham, we too, must focus on those things that are above and not seen. By focusing on that which is above—the invisible realm of God's kingdom, we become faithful sojourners or pilgrims.

2Corinthians 4:18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

¹ 1Corinthians 2:16, 2Peter 1:4

² 1Peter 1:1, 2:11

³ Hebrews 11:8-10

The Christian life is a journey into this invisible kingdom realm that has the potential of either being the most exciting and adventurous journey you will ever experience or the most boring and miserable experience. Unfortunately, many have defaulted to the latter—not because they wanted or desired to, but they lacked the faith and vision to enter into a path that is invisible to their natural eyes.

Jesus said, *“Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life, and few find it.”*⁴

When we default to the latter experience, we do not gain a compelling experience of authentic Christianity.

Ask yourself, “Which path has my journey taken me on?”

It may be that you come to the conclusion that you have been pushing the default button rather than walking in true faith. If so, don’t lose heart because God is with you and delights in revealing what authentic faith is!

2Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

It is a constant battle to ignore what the natural man sees and hears because it’s what comes naturally to us. We are human beings made up of carnal (natural) desires and dreams. It requires faith to see beyond the natural into the kingdom realm that has the potential of leading us into a life filled with adventure and the abundant life Jesus promised—a life filled with righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Spirit.⁵

Just as Adam and Eve were originally destined to live as eternal beings and not experience death, so are we. When we’re born again, the Holy Spirit, who is eternal, comes to live with us, and death loses its sting.⁶ It is in this eternal realm that God has intended us to live. He has put eternity in the hearts of humanity.⁷ The problem is, we have an enemy who does whatever it takes to keep us from experiencing all that God has intended for our lives.⁸ He knows, once we break past the barrier of unbelief, there is no stopping us from fulfilling the purpose for which we were created. We become a threat to him and his domain.

One of the great challenges of our faith is the ability to see into this invisible kingdom realm that gives us the capacity to be led by the Spirit with the eyes of our understanding opened to the heavenly realm as His Spirit reveals all that God has prepared for us.⁹

⁴ Matthew 7:13-14

⁵ Romans 14:17

⁶ 1Corinthians 15:55-56

⁷ Ecclesiastes 3:11

⁸ James 4:7

⁹ Ephesians 1:17-21

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1 Corinthians 2:9-10 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." ¹⁰But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

We must be courageous and ask ourselves with honesty, "Are our steps ordered by the heavenly realm or our natural understanding?"

It is as we set our affections on that which is above (the kingdom realm) that the Lord orders our steps.¹⁰ The question is, are our affections set on the heavenly realm or the natural, temporal realm?"

We must continually resist the devil and his influences while submitting our souls to God if we are to be kingdom-minded people who live and reign on this invisible path. Because God yearns jealously towards us, He gives us more grace or supernatural ability for the journey when we humble ourselves by submitting to Him.¹¹

The story of God's purpose for humanity has been unfolding throughout eternity. The story began with the creation of the world with Adam and Eve placed in the Garden God created for them to dwell in. With the fall of Adam and Eve, the story has continued through the annals of time with many patriarchs, prophets, kings, shepherds, fishermen, tax collectors and ordinary people like you and me who have all had and are having our roles defined to us by our creator.

Each one of us has been created to play a particular role that has been uniquely designed according to our personality, gifting, innate abilities and talents we possess as well as the many experiences, whether good or bad, we've picked up along the way. It is only as we willingly enter into the role God has designed for us that we are fully able to enter into the discovery of all He has created us to be. It's when we willingly embrace this role that we experience the abundant life He promised to us.¹²

Everything God creates is with a purpose. When He created you, He had a definite purpose in mind that is related to His purposes in the earth as we see in the following Scripture.

Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

We may not be called to be prophets to the nations, but just as God knew Jeremiah before He formed him in the womb, He knew you and me as well. He had a role already ordained for Jeremiah just as He does for you and me.

¹⁰ Colossians 3:2

¹¹ James 4:5-7

¹² John 10:10

The question is, are we living the role that God designed for us in particular or are we lost and wandering souls who are still looking and searching for what life is all about and coming up empty?

It may be that you have caught glimpses of His purpose for your life at times, but you have never been able to capture them before they slip away. If so, it's time to seize God's purpose for your life. We have many defining (*or kairos*) moments during our lifetime that are for the purpose of helping us discover our destiny and purpose.¹³ The key is to learn how to interpret these moments and see them as signposts that point towards what God has in store for us.

The goal of this book is to give you, as a Christian, a glimpse into the path God has purposed for your life and to help you seize your destiny and purpose. In doing so, you will be able to live the role created for you. Whether you are just starting out on your journey, anywhere in the middle, or have become detoured and lost your way, this practical guidebook will help shine the light on the invisible path that not only leads to God's goodness and experiencing His kingdom within, but also to the greatest adventure of your life. Is this something you desire for your life or are you content to live in the ruts of life?

You will be able to say at the end of your life just as the apostle Paul said, "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith.*"¹⁴

Are you ready to enter the path that is unseen with your carnal eyes to the excitement there? If so, fasten your seatbelt for you are about to be launched into the ride of your life on a path that will lead you into great adventures of faith—a path filled with joy and anticipation of what God is going to do next.

Keep in mind, God's thoughts towards you are beautiful, wonderful and full of peace as you travel towards your destiny. He desires to give you a future that is full of hope.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Psalms 16:11 You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is the fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

My prayer for you is *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the*

¹³ Definitions of Kairos and Defining Moments: Kairos is an ancient Greek word meaning the right or opportune moment (the supreme moment). A defining moment is a point in your life when you made a very important decision or had an experience that changed you forever—an event that typifies or determines all subsequent related occurrences. (Sources: Wikipedia and Oxford Dictionary)

¹⁴ 2Timothy 4:7-8

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knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.¹⁵

¹⁵ Ephesians 1:17-21

Exploring the Beauty and Majesty of God

Chapter 1

Great is the LORD! He is most worthy of praise! His greatness is beyond discovery—Psalm 145:3 (NLT)

One of life's greatest pursuits is that of discovering God in all of His glory and majesty, a discovery that enables you to come to a deeper understanding and revelation of who God is. It will allow you to experience His wonderful attributes coming alive in your heart, resulting in a greater level of intimacy with Him. You will be able to see with the eyes of your understanding the wonders He has prepared for you as you partake of all that He has for you on this great journey.

Genuine and False Perceptions of Who God is

Many of us have grown up with misconceptions of who God is. As a result, we have been afraid of getting too close to Him. Many of our false perceptions of God have been based on how we may have viewed authority figures in our lives, including our fathers or mothers. We have a tendency to project onto God the unloving characteristics of the people who have influenced our lives to some degree.

For example, if we viewed our fathers or other authority figures as mean and cruel, we would most likely see God in the same way. If we viewed them as being distant, uncaring, and uninvolved, that's how we would view God. You may have had a pushy father who was inconsiderate or who may have violated you in some way. Or maybe your father was like a drill sergeant who made unreasonable demands from you without any expression of satisfaction. You would most likely feel that God wouldn't accept you unless you measured up to His standard of perfection. Maybe your father or other authority figures were overly critical and didn't believe in you or your capabilities. The list goes on.

We must also consider that the world in which we live is under the sway and the influence of the enemy of our faith—Satan.¹⁶ His goal is to give us an immensely distorted view of who God is so that we will have no affection or desire towards Him. No wonder so many people have a distaste for God.

¹⁶ 1John 5:19

The truth is, how you perceive God will affect how you relate to Him. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we have a correct Biblical view of who God is. It is important to see and perceive God in the way in which He has revealed Himself through His Word because every aspect of His Word is pure and equips us to be complete in Him.¹⁷ A correct Biblical view allows us to see and perceive God as a person who likes us and loves us no matter what we have done. The following Scripture reveals the bottom line of how God genuinely thinks about each one of us as individuals.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

When we begin to perceive God in the same way in which He perceives us, there is an agreement in the Spirit that brings us to a deeper level of intimacy and understanding with Him. This new level of intimacy causes us to seek Him with a full heart of assurance, coming boldly into His presence rather than shrinking back in fear and intimidation. The next two verses from Jeremiah reveal this:

Jeremiah 29:12-13 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

A true revelation of God in His transcendent and personal attributes will help us appreciate and place a greater value on our new relationship with our Father in heaven. It will enable us to embrace, willingly, the mind and attitudes of Christ—the divine nature of God.

We ultimately become a reflection of who we believe God to be. Many Christians misrepresent God because they lack a true revelation and understanding of who He is. Jesus came as the perfect representation of the Father because He knew Him in all of His transcendent and personal attributes. He came to reveal the true heart of the Father.¹⁸

The world lacks an understanding of who the Father is because they only see what the enemy of our faith is showing them—a false perception. We are to be a city set on a hill that allows the world to see the reflection of the Father as He shines forth through our lives.

As we come to know the Father in all of His wonderful attributes, we discover He desires to share His attributes with us by allowing us to be partakers of His divine nature. He encourages us to do so by giving us the many promises in His Word as seen in the following Scripture. As a result, we reflect His glory just as Jesus did.

2Peter1:4 "by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature..."

¹⁷ Psalm 119:140, Proverbs 30:5, 2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁸ Hebrews 1:3

As we begin to embrace and walk in the wonderful promises God has given to us through His Word, His divine nature begins to take root with His characteristics showing forth as new fruit. As we continue in our pilgrimage, we are changed into His image from glory to glory.¹⁹

The kingdom life we experience has the power to transform our lives. There is a whole new level of freedom and deliverance that comes from each paradigm shift.²⁰ Not only do we receive the motivation to change, but we also gain the power to change. We realize we are no longer slaves to sin but now renewed from the power of the kingdom within.²¹

Ephesians 1:19 "...and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power."

The Transcendent Attributes of God

With this in mind, let's take a look at the transcendent attributes of God—meaning God is above all, and distinct from all He has made. God has revealed all of His transcendent attributes through His Word. The transcendent and personal attributes of God help us to see the reality of who He is and His ability to transform our lives from our mundane carnal limitations to who He has created us to be in Christ.²²

Without the transcendent and personal attributes of God taking root in our lives, we will have a hard time getting started. It will be difficult to see the beauty and wonder of the path that lies before us. We will lack the motivation, wisdom, and understanding to tackle some of the most challenging aspects of this journey. It will be a dull and mundane existence on a path that only leads to being saved so as by fire.²³ Frankly, I'm not quite sure what that means; but I'm quite certain I don't want to find out.

The Holy Spirit of God, the third person of the Godhead, lives and resides within us. It is He who enables us to have the mind of Christ or the divine nature of God. He continually searches out the heart of the Father to reveal the deep things of the Father.²⁴

As we take a few moments to focus on what God's transcendent and personal attributes are, we will see how they affect us. It is as we meditate on the beauty of who God is that all of our misconceptions of Him begin to fade away.

¹⁹ 2Corinthians 3:17-18

²⁰ 2Corinthians 3:17

²¹ Romans 6:19-20

²² This section was adapted from "The Knowledge of the Holy" by A.W. Tozer

²³ 1Corinthians 3:14-16

²⁴ 1Corinthians 2:9-11

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Psalm 27:4 One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.

God is Self-Existent. What does this mean and how does it affect our lives? In reality, it means God has life in Himself.²⁵ God is not a created being. He has no beginning nor ending. God's self-existence can be hard to grasp, as our lives have both a beginning and an end as far as life here on earth is concerned. As created beings, we have life because God created us, but God solely exists because of Himself. We draw our energy from God and owe our lives to Him, but He has infinite power from Himself and owes His life to no one.

Psalm 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

The fact that God has endless energy in Himself is what separates Him from His creation. He is the Supreme Being and the source of all other beings. Because of this, He is only one we are to worship.

To live life to its fullest, we must depend upon His power and His self-existence; for it is in Him that we live and move. Just as God breathed breath into Adam and he became a living being, so we have our life. Without God, we wouldn't exist.

Acts. 17:28 "For in him we live, and move, and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

Our lives are affected by God's self-existence to a greater degree when we willingly acknowledge and make Him our sufficiency. As a result, we enter into all that He has provided and prepared for us as we journey forward. He will continually supply the grace that is needed as we navigate through life's great mysteries. In fact, God, our Father, will abundantly pour into our lives as we are faithful to adhere to the path before us.

2Corinthians 5:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

God is Spirit. God exists on a different plane from us and is not subject to the limitations of a physical body in the way that we are. Because God is Spirit, He is not physical or material, but is intensely personal and can be worshiped only at an individual level—from our spirit to His.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

It is as we worship God in spirit and truth that He pours into our spirit and souls through the Holy Spirit. We then receive all that He has prepared for us. As we journey forward, we will come to many places in which we

²⁵ John 5:26

will need His provision and divine enablement to make it from one location to another. It is as we open our hearts and minds to Him through worship that He freely pours into us what we need.

When we fail to worship God and acknowledge His greatness in our lives, we begin to walk in our sufficiency and get stuck on the path to the degree that it disappears before us. We then wander around from place to place without any direction and become somewhat disengaged and lost. We wonder, “Why am I not being daily loaded with His benefits and going without rather than enjoying the abundant life He promised?”

The beautiful thing about God is, once we recognize we have lost our way, all we have to do is repent. As we turn to Him, we allow His sufficiency to be our guide. He is always gracious and full of mercy towards us.

God is One. What does this mean and how does God being One affect our lives? There is only One God; however, He exists in three different persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not three separate gods, but rather three manifestations of the same God—equally important. For example, in our relationship with God, we need all three personalities of the Godhead to complete us. Our access to God the Father is through Jesus Christ, the Son, by the Holy Spirit.²⁶ When Jesus went to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to live within us. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit always work together with purpose.

The Godhead is evidenced by references to all three persons such as in Matthew 28:19 where it says we are to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God also refers to Himself as plural in Genesis 1:26 where it says, “*Let Us make man in Our image.*”²⁷

The Hebrew word for “One” in relationship to “One God” is “*Echad.*” It is a compound word meaning *united, altogether, together*, such as one body with many members. The Godhead has one will with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit working together in complete oneness, harmony and unity with each other. Though aspects of God’s work are often attributed more to one than the other, in every case the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are working in agreement, whether in creation, redemption, or regeneration.

²⁶ Ephesians 2:18

²⁷ Note: I have chosen to use the word “Godhead” instead of Trinity because the word “Trinity” even though a good word in describing the Godhead, is not in the Bible.

The Tri-Unity of God or the Godhead is clearly seen through His creation as the apostle Paul expresses in the first chapter of Romans. We see the sun, moon and stars as representatives of the Godhead.²⁸

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

How is the Godhead clearly seen in creation? Let's think about this for a moment. What is it about the sun that so clearly represents Father God? Just as all light and energy emanate from the Father, so it is with the sun. We have already seen that God has life in Himself and draws His endless energy from Himself. We also know from the book of Revelation, in Heaven, there will be no need for the sun as all light will emanate from Him.²⁹ What about the moon? How does the moon represent Jesus, the Son of God? Just as the moon reflects the glory of the sun, so Jesus reflects the glory of the Father. He is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being.³⁰ What is it about the stars that represent the Holy Spirit? It's the Holy Spirit who represents the omnipresence of God. Just as the stars of heaven are everywhere, the Holy Spirit is everywhere.³¹

When we connect with Jesus Christ, the Son, we connect to the fullness of the Godhead bodily. As a result, we receive all that God has made available to us through His Son.

Colossians 2:9-10 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power.

God is Eternal. God, in His infinite wisdom, chose to reveal Himself to humanity as an eternal God. He is a being without beginning or ending, an uncreated, infinite Creator. He has also set eternity in our hearts.

Psalms 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Ecclesiastes 3:11(NIV) He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart, yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

It's difficult to grasp the concept of God being eternal at times because we have a beginning and an ending on earth. God sees everything from His eternal perspective. As He imparts His divine nature into our spirits, we catch glimpses of His eternal life and the destiny He has for us.

As we adjust our thoughts to God's whose are much higher and loftier than anything we can imagine, the mind of Christ allows us to see our lives

²⁸ For more information on the godhead see <http://kenbirks.com/godhead.html>

²⁹ Revelation 21:23

³⁰ Hebrews 1:1-4 (NIV), John 14:9

³¹ Psalm 139:7-10

from the eternal perspective. The Holy Spirit continually searches the heart of the Father to reveal this eternal perspective into our spirits.

Eternity is a part of God's character and who He is rather than a state of being. The Biblical concept of "eternal life" is more than immortality and involves not only the soul but also the body. From creation, humanity was made for never-ending life, not for death.

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

A heart of humility will bring spiritual awakening and revival to those who are in a relationship with the God of eternity. He will continually revive our hearts as the above Scripture says. With it comes the proper ordering of our lives during our pilgrimage. As we move forward, a right perspective of God takes root in our lives. It is as we embrace this new kingdom perspective that our spiritual beings are being transformed from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His Son in every aspect of our lives.³²

God is eternal and not bound by time. Having always existed, He sees the past and the future as clearly as the present. With this perspective, God has a better understanding of what is best for our lives. Knowing this, we should willingly trust Him because He knows every aspect of our journey. Even though the path may seem mysterious and unseen to us, God always sees it clearly and is there to guide us through every twist and turn as we navigate through the dangers and pitfalls that come our way.

God is Immutable, which means He is unchangeable in nature, meaning we can fully trust in Him. He is totally reliable. Think about someone in your life you can depend on who is entirely reliable as a person. It gives you a sense of peace and security knowing they will always be there for you. Magnify this by an infinite number and you will begin to understand what God's Immutability means to you in your relationship with Him.

Malachi 3:6 "For I am the Lord, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

As members of the human race, we all have our good moments and bad moments, but with God, this is not true. He continually remains the same. He doesn't go through times of being stronger or weaker but consistently remains constant, never losing or gaining power. His character is unchanging, with His truth and plans remaining constant as well.

Psalms 33:11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.

³² Colossians 1:9-13

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Psalms 89:34 My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips.

God has established His ways by His perfect character with His purposes remaining unchangeable. What God does in time is already settled in eternity based upon the counsel of His wisdom and will. We can take great security in the fact that what God has stated in His Word concerning the end of the age and other futuristic events will come to pass just as He has proclaimed it. It doesn't matter what kind of plans the nations of the world come up with; they are all under the immutability of a God who cannot lie nor alter the word that has gone forth from His lips.³³

Hebrews 6:17-18 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, ¹⁸that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before us.

Even more than this, His immutability should bring peace and security to our hearts as we realize God never differs from Himself. How many times have you wanted to share something important with a loved one or a friend, but shirked back from doing so because you weren't sure of their mood? We don't need to wonder whether God will be in a good mood or not. His attitude never changes. He is always receptive to whatever we are going through whether it's misery or need. He's always there full of love, patience, and mercy towards us because His attitude never changes. He gives us the freedom and liberty to come boldly into His presence. No matter what it may have been that caused us to think we may have offended Him in some way, His thoughts towards us remain constant. King David is a great example of someone who would often come to God pouring out his complaints, knowing God was unchangeable in His attitude.³⁴

God's attitude towards us as sinners has never changed since the fall of Adam and Eve. Just as the blood of goats and lambs was used to make atonement for sins in the Old Testament, Jesus became the sacrificial Lamb for our souls by covering our sins.³⁵ Jesus, the Lamb of God, had to shed His blood for the atonement of our souls. And now, today, He is continually stretching forth His hands and crying, "*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.*"³⁶

There are times in our journey when we fall hard and even injure ourselves through our sin and stubbornness. As a result, we often wonder if we have the strength to get up and continue the journey. Many go astray and

³³ Psalm 89:34

³⁴ Psalm 55:2, 142:2

³⁵ John 1:29

³⁶ Matthew 11:28

fall away because they feel condemned and full of shame because of the false concepts they have of God. However, it is through our understanding of the beauty and wonder of who God is that we keep our feet firmly on the path. We can run boldly towards Him rather than shrink back in condemnation, guilt, and shame.³⁷

We continually discover Jesus is there with His arms held wide open to us saying, “*Come to Me, and I will give you rest.*”

God is Omnipotent, which means He is all powerful. Although God places limitations on His power to give us free will, He possesses what no person or creation possess. He alone is incomprehensible and inexhaustible in power. There is absolutely nothing that is too difficult for Him.

Revelation 19:6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"

The above declaration of unlimited power is proclaimed by those who are standing before God in eternity with a clear view of His magnitude, majesty, and glory. They have seen and experienced God in all of His glory and power are now proclaiming it unto us so that we are convinced as well.

Jeremiah 32:17 Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.

Knowing and understanding God’s omnipotence gives us faith to believe in the miraculous. There is nothing too difficult for God to perform on our behalf or through us as we believe in His omnipotence.

As Revivalist Winkie Pratney says, “*Make things hard on God and easy on you.*” In other words, don’t be afraid to ask God to do hard things while making it easy on you to follow through with what His desires are towards you.

Ephesians 1:19-20 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

Satan underestimated God’s power and authority, which resulted in his loss of position and influence after God cast him to the earth like lightning.³⁸ Let us not underestimate the power and influence we have through our relationship with Him. The journey ahead demands that His power and authority are active in us. There is nothing too hard for God. Because we are His sons and daughters, we are linked with His ability and omnipotence and can draw from it as needed.

³⁷ Romans 8:1

³⁸ Luke 10:18

God is Omnipresent, which means He's unlimited by space and time. He's everywhere at all times and is available to every believer and non-believers when they call upon the Lord.

Psalm 139:7-10 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? ⁸If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. ⁹If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, ¹⁰even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

The Holy Spirit has been eternally present with the Father and the Son throughout eternity. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes to reside within us. As a result, we encounter His presence at particular times to minister in various gifts and carry out specific God-ordained tasks. The Holy Spirit is everywhere as He brings God's presence to every part of creation. Escaping God's presence is impossible. When you need Him, He's already with you.

God is Omniscient, which means He knows all things, past present and future and delights in imparting His knowledge unto His people.

Years ago, I was sharing with one of my Bible teachers that I wasn't sure what God was calling me to do or be. His response was, "It's not in God's best interest to keep things a secret from you." This simple statement changed how I looked at God and His ability to reveal things to me.

Keep in mind; God delights in opening the eyes of our understanding so that we can perceive how He wants to work on our behalf. Because of His omniscience, He will show us all things including things to come. The Holy Spirit within us is always searching the heart of the Father to reveal these things to us.³⁹

God knows the past, present, and future. It was through foreknowledge that God saw the fall of Adam, resulting in humanity's reconciliation through Jesus, the Lamb of God. The crucifixion and resurrection were predestinated events set in motion by God's foreknowledge or omniscience.

1Peter 1:18-20 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ²⁰He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times for you.

Just as God had a plan for humanity, He also sets things in motion for us based on His ability to see our lives as we move forward in Him. We simply need to open our eyes to the wonder and mystery of how He is working in our lives. He is Omniscient and knows all things.

The Personal Attributes of God

³⁹ Ephesians 1:17, 1Corinthians 2:9-10, Hebrews 4:13

God is Love. It's important for us to be rooted and grounded in God's love with an understanding of the width, length, depth and height of His great love for us.⁴⁰ That's a lot to grasp, but the rewards are worth what we will experience in the process.

1John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

God based His love on the fact that He loved us in our most unlovable condition—when we were still in rebellion towards Him. He sought us out while we were doing everything we could to hide from Him.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Knowing God's great love should cause us to have an overwhelming sense of love and gratitude towards Him by loving Him with all of our heart, soul, and minds.⁴¹ He who is forgiven much loves much.⁴²

God is Holy with a perfection of purity that fills us with awe. He reveals His holiness in the fact that when Adam and Eve sinned, He expelled them from the Garden and were cursed to live outside of it. They now had to work and toil. Even though God could not tolerate sin, He provided atonement for their sin by shedding the blood of an animal and covering them with its skin. Thus began the story of redemption and atonement through spilled blood.⁴³ In God's holiness, He has always provided a way for His children to come to Him in spite of their sin.

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

If it weren't for the beauty of God's grace accomplished through Jesus Christ, we would not be able to approach God. In His mercy, He made a way for us to approach Him without shame or guilt.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The blood shed by Jesus as a result of His crucifixion on the cross presents us before the Father as righteous and perfect in that He has perfected forever those who are sanctified.⁴⁴ It is because of this that we can stand in His presence with an imputed righteousness and holiness we could never have accomplished on our own.

⁴⁰ Ephesians 3:17-19

⁴¹ Matthew 22:37 (God's love dealt with in greater detail in Chapter six)

⁴² Luke 7:47

⁴³ Leviticus 17:11

⁴⁴ Hebrews 10:14

Exploring the Beauty and the Majesty of God

2Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

We will never be any more holy and righteous than we are in God's eyes right now. As a result, you don't have to stay on a performance treadmill to please God. You're already perfect because of His imputed righteousness towards you. *Performance* is nothing more than your own righteousness trying to please God.

God is merciful and full of grace. Jesus came to reveal the glory of the Father in grace, truth, and mercy. Through His mercy we obtain mercy.⁴⁵

A great example of God's mercy is the story of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery.⁴⁶ Rather than condemn her, He reached out in perfect love, compassion, and mercy, which allowed the goodness of God to lead her to repentance.

No matter what we have done, we can always come boldly to the Throne of Grace to receive mercy from God, who sympathizes with our weaknesses.⁴⁷ He leads us to repentance in whatever area we are struggling when we allow His goodness to fill our hearts. He is full of love, mercy, and grace flowing from His goodness. In the very fiber of His being, God is tender-hearted, sympathetic and delights in pouring blessings into our lives.⁴⁸

God takes great pleasure in your happiness and well-being. As you dwell on His goodness and mercy, the invisible path becomes visible. You can see without doubt and unbelief the plans He has for your life. You can now step out in faith, knowing that God is for you and nothing is against you.⁴⁹

There is nothing about our lives that surprises Him. He has seen our lives from beginning to end and still demonstrates His great love towards us.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

It is this act of love from God that gives us the confidence we need to stay on the path that leads to fulfilling our destiny and purpose in Him. When we fully grasp the significance of how much God loves and likes us, even in our most darkened and corrupt states, we receive the confidence and assurance to find forgiveness and move forward in His grace and mercy with a lightness in our steps.

Francis Anfusio writes in his book, "Perfectly Positioned,"⁵⁰ *How can we who are not only guilty but morally filthy possibly be holy in the sight of God, Who knows our every motive and thought as well as our words and*

⁴⁵ Romans 11:31

⁴⁶ John 8:10-11

⁴⁷ Hebrews 4:14-16

⁴⁸ Psalm 68:19

⁴⁹ Romans 8:31

⁵⁰ francisanfusio.com

actions? The answer is that because of our union with Christ, God sees His holiness as our holiness. When God the Father looks at us, He doesn't see our miserable performance. Instead, He sees the perfect performance of Jesus. And because of the perfect holiness of Jesus, He sees us as holy and without blemish."

God is Wisdom. A.W. Tozer writes, *"God realizes the best designs by the best possible means. He cannot make a mistake. He is all wise."* He then goes on to define wisdom as *"the ability to devise perfect ends and to achieve those ends by the most perfect means."*

Psalm 104:24 O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom, You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions;

Another quote from A.W. Tozer says, *"All of God's acts are done in wisdom because of the integration of these attributes of His being. He is not tainted by sin or selfishness; His actions are motivated by the awareness of ultimate good; He sees and knows all that can be seen and known. Because His understanding is infinite, His wisdom is boundless."*

In conclusion, everything we have seen in the heart of the Father has been revealed to us through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. He came to reveal the heart of the Father. Jesus manifested all of these characteristics through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in His life. He was given the Holy Spirit without measure.

Jesus said to one of His disciples when asked to show us the Father, *"You've been with me all this time, Philip, and you still don't understand? To see Me is to see the Father. So how can you ask, 'Where is the Father?' Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me?"*⁵¹

As created beings, we were created in the image of God which allows us to experience His divine attributes as well. All that is revealed by the Father has to pass through our unperfected state of being, giving us glimpses into unfathomable depths of God. It is His Word working with the Spirit of God that allows us to see Him as He is.

Ask the Father to reveal His heart to you as you search the Scriptures to discover His greatness and divine nature. It is as we discover who God is through the Scriptures that we come to know Him as He has revealed Himself to us.

As we have seen, God's greatness is beyond discovery. His desire is for us to discover His creative beauty in each of our lives, which helps to point us towards our destiny and keeps us on track as we journey along the path

⁵¹ John 14:8-10 MSG

that holds the keys to our future. May the beauty and the fascination of the Lord be with us as we journey towards our destiny in Him!⁵²

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⁵² Psalm 90:17