

Biblical Perspectives from God's Word

Discovering the Majesty of Who God Is

Ken Birks, Pastor/Teacher

I. Introductory Remarks.

One of life's greatest pursuits is that of discovering who God is and how that discovery affects our lives. As we begin to discover who God is in all of His glory and majesty, it enables us to come into a deeper understanding and revelation that enhances our relationship with Him as our creator.

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

In order to begin to get a glimpse into God's greatness we must begin to see Him as He views Himself. Instead of allowing our lives to be conformed to our limited view of who we think God to be, we must humble ourselves and see Him as He has revealed Himself to us through Scripture and the revelation of His Spirit. His ways and thoughts are so much higher than our ways.¹

Hebrews 8:11 (NLT) *And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their family, saying, 'You should know the Lord.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will already know me.*

One of God's greatest desires towards us as His people is for us to know Him as He reveals Himself throughout the Scriptures, culminating in the ultimate revelation of Himself in His son Jesus Christ.

In this lesson our purpose will be to pursue the call to know God and discover who He is and what His special divine characteristics are that make Him the majestic and the glorious God that He is.

We will see God as being both personal and transcendent, meaning that He exists above the material universe and has qualities in His being that we can only approach in our imagination. As created beings we are made in His image, which enables us to personally experience His divine attributes. The difference is that our experiences in His attributes are always incomplete and inconsistent because of our imperfections. But they do give us a glimpse into God and His nature as we look to Him.²

¹ Isaiah 55:9

² This quote among many others in this study are taken from the CEI Booklet "The Knowledge of God" by Terry Edwards

II. The Transcendent Attributes of God.

As we continue in this lesson and the lessons to follow, it will be helpful to have a more complete understanding of Who God is and what His attributes are. The revelation of His attributes come through three major sources:

- **Creation** – *Romans 1:19-20*
- **Scriptures** – *2 Timothy 3:16*
- **Jesus Christ** – *John 1:18*

We must keep in mind that these are the attributes that are least understood through our intellect, and best known through faith.

1. God is **Self-Existent** – His life is in Himself.

The Hebrews called Him Jehovah – One who exists of Himself and who gives being and existence to others. God has no origin, no beginning and no end. He is uncreated and self-existent, owing His life and being to on one or no thing.

Psalms 90:2³ *Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.*

Psalms 36:9 *For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.*

2. God is **Spirit** – As Spirit He is invisible to the human eye.

Exodus 33:20 *But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."*

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

God is spirit, not physical or material. He exists on a different plane from us and is not subject to the limitations of a physical body. God is deeply personal and can be worshiped only at the most intensely personal level, from our spirit to God as spirit. Worship is not offered to a physical object or in a mechanical way. True worship of God must be in a personal relationship.

³ All Scripture references are from the (NKJV) unless otherwise noted.

1 Timothy 1:17 *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

3. God is One, Yet Three – The Father, Son & Holy Spirit.

Deuteronomy 6:4 *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!"*

- **One - Hebrew 'echad'** – The word One is a compound word meaning united, altogether, together, e.g. one body, many members.

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....*

The Godhead has one will and each works together incomplete oneness, harmony and unity. 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.⁴

4. God is Eternal – He is unlimited by time – "From everlasting to everlasting." Neither beginning nor ending.

God in His infinite wisdom has chosen to reveal Himself to mankind as an eternal God, a being without beginning or end, an uncreated infinite Creator. 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 it involves not only the soul but also the body. From creation man was made for never-ending life, not for death.

Psalms 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 dimension of power, sovereignty, creativity, infinite knowledge and wisdom we see in God witness to His power of eternal, divine life.

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.*

⁴ For more information and teaching on the godhead see <http://kenbirks.com/godhead.html>

A heart of humility linked with the God of eternity brings spiritual renewal and proper ordering of our lives during our allotted time on this earth. It gives us a true perspective as we walk out His principles in this life. We see this in the Patriarchs of the Old Testament.

Hebrews 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

1 Peter 2:11-12 *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

5. God is Immutable – Unchangeable in nature, or purpose. His Word and plan may not be changed.

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

God does not change. He is not like us who grow stronger or weaker, or older or younger. He remains constant never losing or gaining power. His character, truth and plans never change.

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

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

His ways are established by His perfect character and His purposes do not change. What God does in time He has settled in eternity past based upon the counsel of His own wisdom and will.

6. God is Omnipotent – All powerful. Nothing in the truest sense is impossible.

God possess what no person or creation can possess, only He alone: incomprehensible and inexhaustible power, a potency and might that is absolute.

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 thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"

The above declaration of the unlimited power of God is being joyfully proclaimed by those who are standing before Him in eternity with a clear view of His magnitude, majesty and glory.

Genesis 18:14 *"Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."*

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 that God is all powerful and is unlimited in power should give us faith to believe for the miraculous in each one of our lives. There is nothing too difficult for God to perform on our behalf. We simply need to believe in His omnipotence towards us.

Ephesians 1:17-21 *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being 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, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ 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.*

7. God is Omnipresent – Unlimited by space. He is everywhere.

Genesis 28:15 *"Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."*

To be omnipresent is to be universally present. God is present, next to everyone, close to everything. Our five senses limit our experience of reality to the material world, but when we are born again by God's Spirit His omnipresence becomes available to us in manifestations of His personal presence.

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

The Bible usually describes the Spirit of God as coming to an individual at a specific time to give a specific gift and to carry out a specific task. This does not limit the Spirit to certain times and certain people. The Spirit may be found everywhere. The Spirit of God brings the presence of God to every part of creation, even in Sheol (NIV footnote), the abode of the dead. The Spirit is not a creation of God, but rather is the divine Presence within which human beings always live. You can never escape God's presence. When you need Him, He is already with you. The Spirit is God's presence in His world aware of all that occurs in the world.⁵

Galatians 4:6 *And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

8. God is Omniscient – He Knows all Things.

Hebrews 4:13 *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

God knows past, present and future. e.g. through foreknowledge God saw that man would fall and as a result predestinated man's reconciliation through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ were predestinated events that could not be changed, but were set in motion by God's foreknowledge or omniscience.

1 Peter 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, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20 He indeed was foreordained⁶ before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.*

⁵ Note from the Disciple's Bible on Psalm 139:7-10

⁶For more information on the foreknowledge of God, see <http://kenbirks.com/predestination.html>

III. The Personal Attributes of God

Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...."*

The Bible reveals a personal God reaching out to His creation, demonstrating all of the characteristics of personhood that we experience as human beings, except without sin.

- **God revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son.**

John 1:18 *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*

Prior to the coming of Christ, God revealed Himself through isolated manifestations of His glory and presence, through His law and prophets, and in His dealings with His people. Now in the fullness of time He has sent forth His Son in the person of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 1:3 *who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high....*

Jesus, in His character, His heart, and the other qualities of His personhood perfectly declared the person of the Father to us.

1. God is Love – Showing unfathomable affection for all created beings.

1 John 4:8 *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

God's love desires our everlasting welfare and all of His acts are done to secure it. His Love is consistent, unfailing and pure because "God is love" in the core of His nature.

Both heavenly and human beings were created with a free will in order that we could enjoy and fellowship the love of God forever. When sin entered the world, God already had a means for reconciliation in place in His heart.

1 Peter 1:20 *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

This well-known verse speaks of the divine love which moved God to provide salvation for the world through His Son.

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

God's love continually shows itself in infinite and unwavering good will towards us. His love continually wills the good of all and never wills harm or evil to anyone.

2. God is Holy – Absolute Purity – Can not sin nor tolerate sin.

God is absolutely holy with a perfection of purity in His uncreated being that can fill us with awe and worship but cannot be fully grasped by anything created. He is holy with an infinite fullness of purity that is incomprehensible.

Isaiah 6:3 *And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"*

Revelation 15:4 *Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested."*

If it weren't for the beauty of God's grace that was accomplished through Jesus Christ, we would not be able to approach God in His Holiness. But in His mercy He has made a way for us to approach Him.

Hebrews 4:13-16 *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. ¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 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 of Christ presents us before the Father as righteous and sanctified, able to stand in His presence with an imputed holiness we could never

accomplish on our own.

2 Corinthians 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.*

2. God is Wisdom: God realizes the best designs by the best possible means. He cannot make a mistake. His is all wise.

A.W. Tozer defines wisdom as “the ability to devise perfect ends and to achieve those ends by the most perfect means.”⁷

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

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 acts 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.

Isaiah 28:29 *This also comes from the LORD of hosts, Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance.*

4. God is a Just God or a God of Love – He Demands Righteousness of His creatures and deals righteously with them.

Isaiah 45:21 *(NLT) Consult together, argue your case, and state your proofs that idol worship pays. Who made these things known long ago? What idol ever told you they would happen? Was it not I, the LORD? For there is no other God but me--a just God and a Savior – no, not one!*

Justice is moral equity, the sense of what is right and ultimately good for all of created life. Judgment is the application of equity and fairness to moral situations. God acts justly from that which is inherent to His nature not according to any external law or reasoning. Because He is all knowing, His sense of justice never lacks necessary information. Because He is infinitely wise, His judgments are perfectly integrated with His purposes.

The perfect justice of God was revealed in Jesus Christ when He magnificently

⁷ The knowledge of the Holy, p.60

displayed His dealings with the sin of mankind. God's love and goodness culminated in Christ taking the full brunt of divine justice in His perfect humanity.

Psalms 33:5 *He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.*

Psalms 89:14 *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.*

Revelation 16:7 *And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."*

We must be careful about expecting God to move in reference to our limited sense of justice. He will always act justly but His reasons come from within Himself, and with the best and highest purposes in mind.

5. God is full of Goodness - Which includes Love, Benevolence, Mercy and Grace.

The goodness of God is that which enables Him to be kind, benevolent, and full of good will toward all men. In this core of His being God is tenderhearted, sympathetic and inclined to give blessings. He takes great pleasure in the happiness and well being of His people.

- **It is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance.**

God's goodness is seen most clearly in His forbearance, His willingness to express extreme levels of patience, kindness and longsuffering in order to bring humanity to repentance and restoration.

Romans 2:4 *Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?*

Genesis 19:16 *And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.*

Joel 2:13 *So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.*

Ephesians 2:4-7 *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

6. God is Faithful – Absolutely trustworthy. His Word will Never Fail.

God is faithful in the core of His being. Since He is immutable (unchangeable), His faithfulness can never change.

Hebrews 13:5 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

The Divine Constancy or the faithfulness of God was proven over and over with His people.

Nehemiah 9:19 *Yet in Your manifold mercies You did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day, To lead them on the road; Nor the pillar of fire by night, To show them light, And the way they should go.*

Psalms 94:14 *For the LORD will not cast off His people, Nor will He forsake His inheritance.*

Isaiah 49:15 *"Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.*

God's covenant with Israel is again renewed in the most poignant terms. Could ever a mother forget her nursing child? Even if that unlikely event transpired, God would be found more faithful, never forgetting Israel.

Hebrews 6:18 *that 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 set before us.*

Psalms 105:8 *He remembers His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,*

7. God is Merciful.

Whether in the Garden of Eden or the Garden of Gethsemane, God is seen as both merciful and just. All of His dealings with mankind are in mercy and love. He deals in justice when His mercy has been rejected.

Mercy is an attribute of God that is a deep and inexhaustible energy within His nature which rises out of His love and disposes Him to show compassion, kindness and forgiveness. A perfect example of this is the story of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery.

John 8:10-11 *When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" She said no one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.*

God's immeasurable love is always seeking for places where justice and mercy can kiss and sinner can go free.

8. God is full of Grace.

John 1:16 *And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.*

The Christian's experience of grace begins with the reception of the riches of His grace ("fullness") and is progressive and limitless. Its source is Christ's abundant Person (cf. Phil. 4:19). Indeed there was grace in the Law which came through Moses, but the grace of God which appeared at the incarnation overwhelms all previous manifestations.

God's mercy and grace arise from His goodness and love. Grace and mercy are related but not identical. The mercy of God is His goodness confronting human sin, guilt and misery. His grace is His goodness directed at our inability and our debt. Grace is the good pleasure of God that enables Him to give favor to the undeserving.

Romans 5:17 *For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

We are called into full partnership with God as His children and members of the Body and Bride of Christ. It is His grace that enables us to receive revelation, stand in truth and be enabled by the Holy Spirit to be transformed into the image of Christ

VI. Concluding Remarks.

As you can see, a true revelation of God in His transcendent and personal attributes will liberate the human soul. We ultimately become what we believe God to Be. The right concept of God is very critical to our spiritual maturity.

Once we know God in some Degree of accuracy, He becomes an anchor to our soul. We are truly liberated when we break through the discouragements and confusion of our circumstances and embrace the unchanging, loving, all wise, omnipotent King of glory.