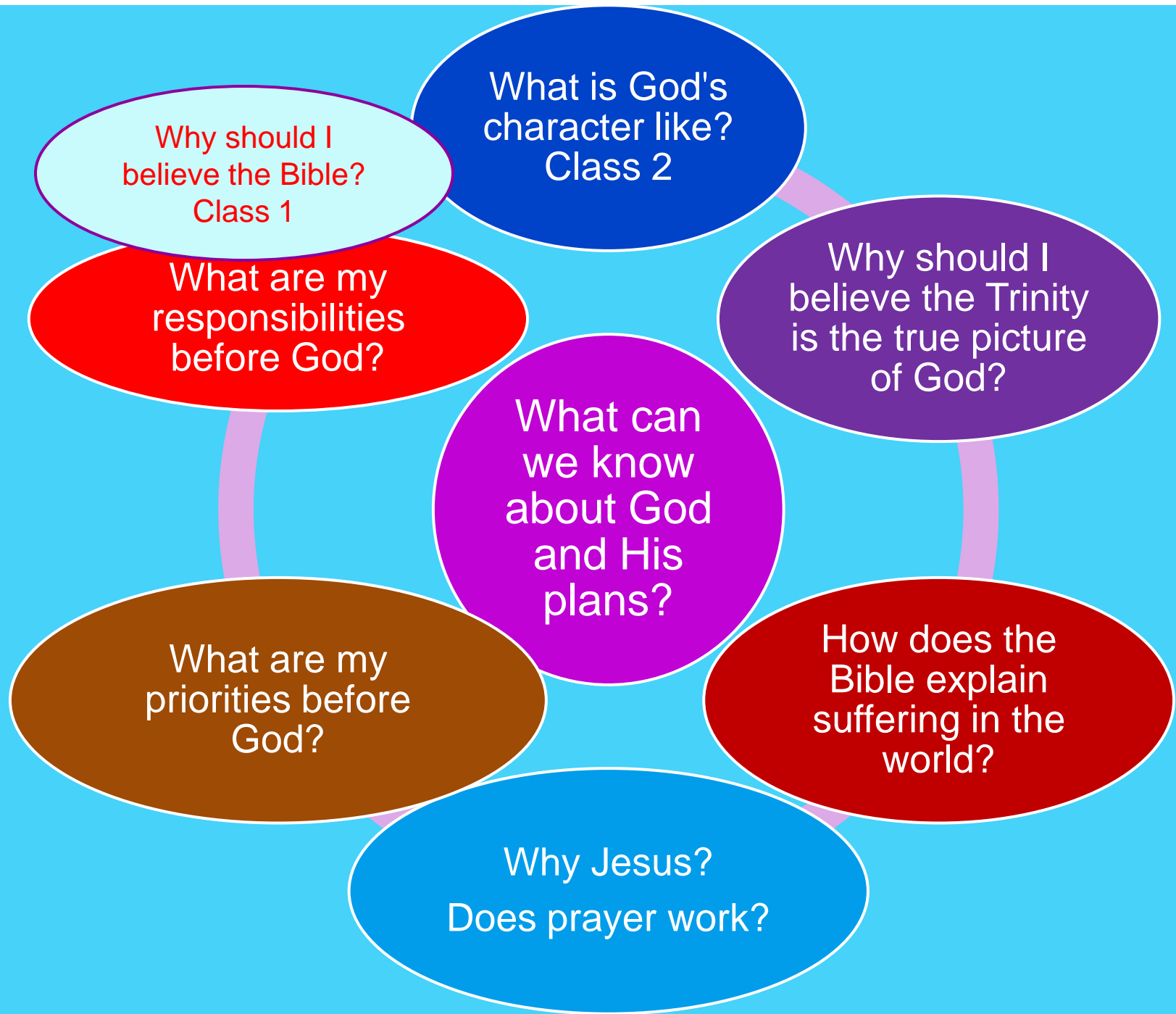


*WitnessKit Bible Study:
Bible Doctrines as a
System of Thought*

Class 2

"The Goodness Of God"



Today's Big Questions

What is God's character like?

Why should God's character matter to me?

Some people claim God is so far above us, we cannot know what He is like. The Bible says we cannot know **EVERYTHING** for that reason, but we can know many important things about God—because He tells us. The most important thing to know—He is totally **GOOD**.

We can see the importance of God's goodness by applying His goodness to

Important Questions

These important questions:

1. **Which belief system should we choose?**
2. How can we avoid evil now and forever?
3. Why does death occur if God is good?

Week Two Lesson 1

The Goodness of God

The Bible claims **God is perfect in goodness.**

This includes being Holy, Righteous, Just, Merciful, Honest, Loving, and all the other character qualities that we describe as good.

The Bible demands that we believe God is **totally good.**

The Bible demands that we **love** God because He is **totally good.**

Perfection means GOODNESS.

- A less than good god would be less than worthy of our worship and love.
- A god who was merely powerful without being good would be horrifying.
- To describe the true and living God in such a manner would be a travesty of the truth.
- Every decision God makes is a reflection of His inherent goodness.

Which belief system should we choose?

- **It is RIGHT to choose the belief system whose God is the MOST GOOD.** Of every imaginable belief system, THAT one is the morally right one to choose.
- It is RIGHT to choose the belief system which holds people responsible for their decisions, because their decisions are REAL. Any belief system that describes people as puppets on strings or pre-programmed machines is false to the reality of human life. Any belief system that describes human decisions as illusion is UNREAL.
- The GOODNESS OF GOD is the ultimate foundation for finding truth.

The GOODNESS of God

Is also the foundation for finding reason to believe God actually IS good. If such a God did not exist, it would still be the most morally correct idea of God to worship. We have that knowledge within our own sense of right and wrong. God wrote that knowledge there. He gave us inside knowledge about Himself. He gave us that knowledge because He loves us, and because He is good.

- The earliest portions of the Bible tell us important things about God in Genesis chapters 1 through 3. Take time to read those chapters now.

Taking notes on Genesis 1-3

- In Genesis chapter 1, what adjective did God use over and over to describe the world and each category of creation? What words did He use to describe the total creation near the end of chapter 1?
- If what God created had that characteristic, does that imply Him as the source of that characteristic?
- Would you say the world still meets that description?

Answer: God said each thing was

GOOD. He said the total creation was VERY GOOD! He said that after creating human beings in His image. His GOODNESS is the source of the goodness in the world.

- However, the world is no longer perfectly good. Instead we see suffering all around us—senseless suffering, malicious suffering due to evil human actions, and indifferent suffering due to the decay of the world and life over time. We read the news and grieve because of so MUCH suffering in this world.
- How could a God who is PERFECT in GOODNESS be the source of suffering?

The answer of Genesis 2 and 3—

God is NOT the source of suffering in this world.

Suffering is due to the entrance of evil into this world when the first humans chose to go against God's goodness. Malicious suffering is evil, a violation of God's character. Senseless and indifferent suffering are due to the consequence of death as an operating principle—the shortness of life and the decay process that chips away at perfection, inexorably.

- The good news out of all that—evil does NOT have to be permanent. God wants to fix the problem. He promised a “Seed of the woman” to fix the problem.

God is not the Source of evil.

God never wants evil to win. The consequences of evil in the world are designed to prevent evil from being permanent and to motivate us to seek God's help. God and goodness are permanent—eternal. He has to change us to make us that good, so we can be eternal, too.

What IS and what God wants are not identical.

Death was not what God wanted in Genesis 3. God does not like death. Death is the final enemy that will be conquered, according to 1 Corinthians 15:25-26.

Here in Genesis 1-3 we see that God makes the best choice, even though it is a hard choice. God in His goodness was faced with optimizing the situation *in the reality of human wrong choices*. He optimizes for eternity—for our ultimate good. Death is the entrance to eternity. Death is a temporary evil.

For the “Seed of the Woman”

To crush the Serpent, the “Seed of the Woman” has to do something about death. That is one task of Jesus “the Son of the Virgin.” This title used by early Christians to designate Jesus was exactly parallel to Genesis 3.

Everything God Made Was Good— Even Very Good!

Why? Because God is totally good, and everything from Him is good.

The entrance of evil into the world took place because of the **freely chosen decisions** of the Serpent—a personified disguise of Satan—and of the **first people** who chose to disobey God's rule.

People can make REAL DECISIONS **because** God created them in His image.

Does Evil Win?

NO! These chapters end with the cryptic promise—

that the Seed of the woman will be wounded in the heel by the Serpent, yet the Seed of the woman will crush the Serpent's head.

The Seed of the Woman is the first reference to the Virgin Birth.

The wounded heel is the first reference to crucifixion—long before crucifixion was invented.



God's Patient Goodness

We can see that God's goodness is a patient form of goodness, waiting for that time when the Serpent will be crushed—

and in one way that has already happened, in that Jesus rose from the dead, defeating Satan.

In another way, He is patient with each individual, as described in I Timothy 1:15-17, until the influence of Satan is defeated in those willing to receive God's salvation.

I Timothy 1:15-17

The Apostle Paul wrote:

This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

¹⁶ However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

¹⁷ Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim 1:15-17 (NKJV)

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Some Applications of Genesis 1-3:

God wants us to know what is good, and to live consistently with what is objectively good.

God does **not** want us to know evil by experience. It is best for us to accept God's boundaries around evil and avoid it.

- The original command in the Garden of Eden was a command to **avoid tasting of the knowledge** of good and evil. We do not have to experience evil in order to know it is evil.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (ESV)

“³ For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,”

Where is the battle?

How do we win it?

How is that related to refusing to know evil by experience?

Why is Genesis 1-3 Important?

- The description of God who is **TOTALLY GOOD** allows for **objective right and wrong** to exist.
- Humans are not lost in a sea of subjectivity.
- God's goodness is our guide to help us live consistently with what is **objectively right**.
- God's goodness is expressed for us in the **good rules** He gave us.

Why is Genesis 1-3 Important?

The evil that exists in the world is also **objectively** real. It acts as a fog to blind our eyes to God's goodness.

The first chapters of Genesis show that God continues to allow humans to make real choices, even though they choose to do wrong.

Every choice has consequences.

The first humans' wrong choice resulted in a fallen world.

The sum of all humans' wrong choices produces a continually fallen world.

How can we avoid evil now and forever?

- We are not going to answer this question completely at this stage of our studies, except to say that we should TRY to obey God's good rules. That answer alone will not be enough, though, because we will sometimes fail, at least within our own hearts.
- God's rules apply to the heart as well as the external actions. God sees the heart. Read Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7 to see how thoroughly His rules apply.

How can we avoid evil now and forever?

- We should avoid participating in something if we know it is evil—and we can define those things in relation to the 10 commandments, and the rule of loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves, and in relation to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, 6, and 7.
- These rules are the same for everyone. They are universal moral rules. God WILL hold every individual accountable for obeying these rules.

Notice what these rules are not.

- These rules are not detailed things like dress codes. These rules are not regulations like dietary laws. These rules are not cultural customs like which fork to use for the salad, and how to hold knife and fork to cut meat. They are not even rituals like how often to pray. All those things have room for variability from place to place, while meeting God's purposes for fitting in with society. No, these rules are basic **PRINCIPLES** for right living.

Here is what Deuteronomy said about the basic, universal rules.

God's law for Israel included detailed regulations, but the universal principles are described a bit differently. Read Deuteronomy chapter 30 and especially notice verses 11-18. The basic issues are choosing to follow God, and NOT turning away from Him. Those universal rules are not too high or far or difficult, but are near and clear and definite.

His detailed rules are good for people as well—good for health and well-being and long life—but they are not a moral issue so much as a wisdom issue.

Trying to keep God's rules

Is only a partial answer. He always wants us to win at doing right, so He is always on our side when we try to obey.

He also wants to fix the problem when we fail. He has a way to fix the problem that is costly to HIM and free to us, but that requires us to be humble before Him.

- We will discuss that more later.

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God Makes Decisions in Response to Our Decisions

- God had to make a hard decision at the end of Genesis 3. For **if** life were to go on forever in a fallen world, with people living forever in rebellion against all that is good, **then** wicked people would create a hell on earth.
- The passage does not spell out that reason, but history tells us it is so, and the time of Noah's flood and **another reduction in life span** implies that reason—Genesis 6:1-5—“**God will not always strive with man.**” People had become violently wicked, and God chose to shorten human lifetimes in consequence.

God Makes Decisions in Response to Our Decisions

Often wicked people come close to creating a hell on earth even with mere 70 year life spans—as the twentieth and twenty-first century forms of aggression abundantly teach us.

God chose to limit the span of human life in a fallen world as a consequence of the evil in the world and for our good. All of us must come to grips with our own mortality. Facing the facts about our own mortality helps us face our need for God's help.

That helps us find Him for eternity.

God Makes Decisions in Response to Our Decisions (even knowing ahead of time that He will make those decisions.)

God does **not** like death.

In fact, He hates death.

Death is the **final enemy** that will be
conquered, according to 1 Corinthians
15:25-26.

He wants us to hate death and love life—
and to love life so much that we search for
eternal life in His kingdom like searching
for treasure. It is the very best treasure
we can find in this life—Matthew 13:44-46.

We can see in the first 3 chapters of the Bible

- That hugely important ideas are revealed. Even though the words are simple, the ideas are profound.
- The Bible proceeds to build on these ideas. If you read it from beginning to end, you will not see these ideas contradicted. Instead, you will see more ideas that build upon them as a foundation.
- The Bible describes God's goodness in a number of categories.

We can trust God and depend upon Him

Because He is totally GOOD. We can love Him for the same reason.

So we can and should learn more about Him by seeing what the Bible says about His character. We will not cover everything in these categories, or even all the categories. We would need a lifetime of study to do that—and maybe even eternity. We will just make a good start.

We can worship God better by reveling in His Moral Attributes

God's Moral Characteristics

1. **Righteousness,**
2. **Justice,**
3. **Love,**
4. **Mercy,**
5. **Truthfulness,**
6. **Immutableness**

Reveling in God's Righteousness

¹ “You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ² You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit. ⁴ “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. ⁵ If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.

Exodus 23:1-9. What gives God the right to demand these things of us? Are these things fair to everyone?

God's righteousness is impartial.

- He expects us to be impartially righteous.
- God's righteousness is honest.
- He expects us to be honest.
- God's righteousness is kind.
- He expects us to be kind.
- God's righteousness rejects rioting.
- He expects us to reject rioting.
- God's righteousness helps enemies.
- He expects us to help anyone in need—even someone who is our enemy—within the bounds of righteousness. (Not to help them do wrong.)

Reveling in God's Righteousness

⁶ “You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. ⁷ Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. ⁸ And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right. ⁹ “You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. (ESV)

Exodus 23:1-9. What gives God the right to demand these things of us? Are these things fair to everyone?

God's righteousness is fair.

- He expects us to be fair.
- God's righteousness rejects bribes and oppression.
- He expects us to reject bribes and oppression.
- God's righteousness is kind to refugees.
- He expects us to be kind to refugees.

Reveling in God's Righteousness

Deuteronomy 4:4-8

⁴ But you who held fast to the LORD your God are all alive today. ⁵ See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' ⁷ For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸ And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today? (ESV)

What did God want to accomplish with His law?

The purpose of God's laws is

To reveal His righteousness—and not just to Israel, but to everyone who noticed.

- That means His laws are not arbitrary. They are not capricious. They are good laws. If we cannot see His goodness in His laws, we have failed to understand them.
- If someone claims a law from God that is an arbitrary, capricious, cruel law, the claim is false. The one making the claim is mistaken.

Reveling in God's Righteousness

Deuteronomy 5:28-29

- **28 “And the LORD heard your words, when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. 29 Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever! (ESV)**
- What was God's purpose for people who keep His law?

Reveling in God's Righteousness

Deuteronomy 32:4

3 For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;
ascribe greatness to our God!

4 “The Rock, his work is perfect,
for all his ways are justice.

A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
just and upright is he. (ESV)

Reveling in God's Righteousness

⁴ For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you.

⁵ The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers.

⁶ You destroy those who speak lies;

the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

⁷ But I, through the abundance of your **steadfast love**, will enter your house.

I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you.

⁸ Lead me, O LORD, in your **righteousness** because of my enemies; make your way straight before me.

Psalms 5:4-8 (ESV)

The Bible is clear about God's love



As an expression of His righteousness. Therefore, He also hates the wicked, and this Psalm defines them. They are the people who are bloodthirsty and deceitful: People who love violence.

But two chapters in Ezekiel show that God wants to **CHANGE** the wicked. He loves their potential to become righteous through His goodness. So God's love reaches even to the wicked who are willing to repent of their wickedness.

But evil people cannot dwell with God in eternity—so they **MUST** change to have eternal life.

Reveling in God's Righteousness

Psalm 7:8-11,17

- 8** The LORD judges the peoples; judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me.
- 9** Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an end, and may you **establish the righteous**— you who test the minds and hearts, O **righteous God!**
- 10** My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart.
- 11** **God is a righteous judge**, and a God who feels indignation every day.
- 17** I will give to the LORD the thanks **due to his righteousness**, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High. (ESV)

Reveling in God's Righteousness

I John 1:5-10

- ⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that **God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.** ⁶ If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, **he is faithful and just** to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.
(ESV)

Reveling in God's Righteousness

I John 3:1-3

- ¹ See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.
- ² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as He is pure. (ESV)

Reveling in God's Righteousness

Psalm 18:30-32

³¹ For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?— ³² the God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. (ESV)

Psalm 31:19 ¹⁹ Oh, how abundant is your **goodness**, which you have stored up for those who fear you and worked for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of the children of mankind! (ESV)

Reveling in God's Righteousness

Jeremiah 23:5-6

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David **a righteous Branch**, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely,

and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely.

And this is the name by which he will be called:
‘The LORD is our righteousness.’ (ESV)

Look back through the previous 5 slides.

- What actions do you see that these verses encourage people to take?
- Make a chart with two columns. In one column put actions that may be involved in becoming righteous, and in the other column put actions that describe someone who IS righteous.
- What do you think the name of *Messiah—The LORD Our Righteousness*—has to do with becoming righteous?

We can worship God better by reveling in His Moral Attributes

God's Moral Characteristics

1. **Righteousness,**
2. **Justice,**
3. **Love,**
4. **Mercy,**
5. **Truthfulness,**
6. **Immutableness**

God's Justice

Is an absolutely necessary attribute for Him to be called GOOD. Justice protects the weak. Justice punishes the guilty. A society without justice would be an evil society.

God's justice is revealed by the way He dealt with such a society.



Considering God's Justice

Genesis 18:17-25. ¹⁷ The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸ seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

- ¹⁹ For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD **by doing righteousness and justice**, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."

Considering God's Justice

- **20** Then the LORD said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, **21** I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know.”
- **22** So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.



Who was crying out to God against Sodom?

The answer is their victims. God heard the cries of the people they were harming—and possibly murdering—because in the rest of the story, those people were not rescued.

Considering God's Justice

- **23 Then Abraham drew near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"**

Does God object to Abraham's

statement that a righteous Judge
would not sweep away the righteous
with the wicked?

Considering God's Justice

- **26** And the LORD said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.” ...
- **32** Then he (Abraham) said, “Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.” **33** And the LORD went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place. (ESV)

Considering God's Justice

Notice that this passage teaches INDIVIDUAL justice, not group justice—even though God destroyed cities. Abraham was correct to insist that true justice does not sweep away the righteous with the wicked. God did not contradict that principle.

Abraham assumed that there would be at least ten righteous people in the city. Instead, God sent angels to pull Abraham's relatives out before disaster struck.

Considering God's Justice

Job Chapter 24

Job complains that justice is NOT always served in this life. In verse 19-20, Job explains that true justice must be served in eternity.

Abraham's principle of **individual justice** is true—and extends into eternity—whereas in a fallen world, we do not always see justice working here.

Another point in Job—we cannot assume trouble in this world is due to justice. Other factors apply in a fallen world.

Considering God's Justice

Deuteronomy 24:14-17

- ¹⁴ “You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. ¹⁵ You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin.
- **True justice is totally impartial and fair.**

Considering God's Justice

Deuteronomy 24:14-17

- ¹⁶ “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin. ¹⁷ “You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow’s garment in pledge, ¹⁸ but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this. (ESV)
- **True justice is totally impartial and fair and INDIVIDUAL—not tribal, not familial.**

Considering God's Justice

Isaiah 40:12-14.

- ¹² Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? ¹³ Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel? ¹⁴ Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? (ESV)
- Justice is in God's NATURE.

Considering God's Justice

Romans 2: 1-16

¹ Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. ² But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. ³ And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Human justice is flawed.

- Human justice can be hypocritical. The human judge can be just as bad as the person he condemns. If power has corrupted the judge, he may give very flawed sentences. Pontius Pilate was an example in the Bible.
- God's justice is perfect.
- God delays justice to make mercy available—to lead people toward repentance.
- God will judge every individual—even those in power on earth.

Every Individual

Acts as judge in some ways—by criticizing others, for example. When we criticize, we admit a standard exists by which we judge others. The standard we recognize will be the standard God will use to judge us.

- Everyone has God's law written on his heart. It is not written to exact perfection on every heart—some are more sensitive to right and wrong than others. But God will judge with perfect fairness by the standard each person used, that he knew was right, and that he failed to keep.

Considering God's Justice

Romans 2: 1-16

⁵ But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶ who *"will render to each one according to his deeds"*: ⁷ eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; ⁸ but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, ⁹ tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; ¹⁰ but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Considering God's Justice

Romans 2: 1-16

11 For there is no partiality with God. 12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law 13 (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; 14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. Romans 2:1-16 (NKJV)

This passage clarifies God's bases for judgment.

- Each individual will be impartially judged by God's law—either as learned from His Book, the Bible,
- OR as placed on his conscience by God.

Perfect fairness in judgment is seen, in that each one will KNOW the law he has failed to obey AND the Judge will be Messiah, who has both faced temptation and suffered in our place. The One who paid for each individual's sins will judge those sins.

Every facet of God's judgment will be perfectly fair.

Considering God's Justice

Ezekiel 18: 23, 30-32

- ²³ Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?
- ³⁰ “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live.” (ESV)

God takes pleasure in giving us eternal life.

He takes NO pleasure in justice that calls for death.

- He does justice. He delights in mercy.
- So what is one requirement that must be met before He can extend mercy?
- The person must turn from his wicked way.

What does the tenth commandment tell us about God's justice?

- The tenth commandment is “You shall not covet.”
- This commandment tells us God's justice will be totally thorough. This tells us that we must repent of sins of the heart as well as external action sins.
- Temptation is not sin. Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, but He never sinned.
- As often as anyone crosses the line from temptation to a sin of the heart, he can immediately repent and be forgiven. This process will ensure that the sin does not become action.

So when should someone
repent?

As soon as he realizes he has done
wrong.

Considering God's Justice

Matthew 5:17-20

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. **18** For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. **19** Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **20** For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (ESV)

This brings us back to the Title of Messiah “The LORD Our Righteousness.”

The scribes and Pharisees were very obedient to the law and the traditions. Jesus said our righteousness has to be better than theirs.

The only way for that to be possible is for God to make our way blameless by taking away our sins, as described in Psalm 18:32 “³¹ For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?— ³² the God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless.”

If we have our hearts purified moment by moment, our righteousness will be His righteousness.

Considering God's Justice

The theme of God's justice is woven through the entire Bible. We begin to see the complexity of His perfect goodness as we study this theme. His justice makes one over-arching demand upon us.

For our own good, we must be obedient to Him because He is good. And we must seek His forgiveness when we fail. We must seek His forgiveness on HIS terms. His terms will not negate His justice.

We can worship God better by reveling in His Moral Attributes

God's Moral Characteristics

1. **Righteousness,**
2. **Justice,**
3. **Love,**
4. **Mercy,**
5. **Truthfulness,**
6. **Immutableness**

Trusting in God's Love

Deuteronomy 7:9-14⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,¹⁰ and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face.

Trusting in God's Love

Deuteronomy 7:9-14⁹

11 You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment and the statutes and the rules that I command you today. **12** “And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the **steadfast love** that he swore to your fathers.

Trusting in God's Love

13 He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock, in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you.

14 You shall be blessed above all peoples. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your livestock. (ESV)

Is God's love conditional as expressed this way?

Yes—because hating Him is equal to loving evil.

Loving Him is loving what is GOOD.

Trusting in God's Love

Psalm 25:8-10

- ⁸ Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. ⁹ He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. ¹⁰ All the paths of the LORD are **steadfast love and faithfulness**, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies. Psalms 25:8-10 (ESV)

Trusting in God's Love

John 3: 16-21

16 “For God so **loved** the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did **not** send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. **18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Trusting in God's Love

John 3: 16-21

¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people **loved** the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.” John 3:16-21 (ESV)

Loving what is true, trying to do what is true

These matters are preliminary to finding out that Jesus really is the Savior. We have to love the truth enough to face our own sins—to accept God's right to make the rules—and to seek His forgiveness for our failures. Not caring about truth, not caring about what is just and right and good—these barriers lock people into their sins.

Trusting in God's Love

Romans 8:35-39

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors **through him who loved us.** ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the **love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.** (ESV)

Trusting in God's Love

I John 4:16-19

¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. **God is love**, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ **We love because He first loved us.** (ESV)

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Depending on God's Mercy

- Luke 13:1-5¹ There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.
- ² And He answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way?”

Depending on God's Mercy

- ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.
- ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?
- ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” (ESV)
- We can avoid senselessly perishing by repenting and receiving God's mercy.

Depending on God's Mercy

Job 9:1-15

- ¹ Then Job answered and said:
 - ² **“Truly I know that it is so: But how can a man be in the right before God?”**
- ³ If one wished to contend with him, one could not answer him once in a thousand times. ⁴ He is wise in heart and mighty in strength —who has hardened himself against him, and succeeded?—

Depending on God's Mercy

Job 9:1-15

- ⁵ he who removes mountains, and they know it not, when he overturns them in his anger, ⁶ who shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble; ⁷ who commands the sun, and it does not rise; who seals up the stars; ⁸ who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea;
- ⁹ who made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the chambers of the south; ¹⁰ who does great things beyond searching out, and marvelous things beyond number.

Depending on God's Mercy

Job 9:1-15

- ¹¹ Behold, he passes by me, and I see him not; he moves on, but I do not perceive him.
- ¹² Behold, he snatches away; who can turn him back?
- Who will say to him, 'What are you doing?'
- ...¹⁴ How then can I answer him, choosing my words with him? ¹⁵ Though I am in the right, I cannot answer him;
- **I must appeal for mercy to my accuser.**

Job was a good man, a righteous man.

- Job claimed in Job chapter 23 verse 10 that when he was tried, he would come forth as gold, because he had lived a very good life. Yet he faced the fact that He could not be perfect before God. God knew Job's heart. God knew everything about Job. Nobody but Jesus ever got ALL of it right. All the rest of us need God's mercy.
- The good news is that GOD IS MERCIFUL. He wants to forgive us and make us new creatures.

Depending on God's Mercy

Isaiah 63:9

- 9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them; **in His love and in His pity he redeemed them;** He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. (ESV)
- God's mercy means that He suffers **WITH** us when we suffer. He suffered **with** all of us on the cross, and **He is present with us when we are suffering.**
- Just as **He was present in the fiery furnace** with the 3 friends of Daniel, He is present with us in our suffering.

Depending on God's Mercy

Luke 18:9-14

- ⁹ He (Jesus) also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

Depending on God's Mercy

Luke 18:9-14

- ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 18:9-14 (ESV)

Depending on God's Mercy

Ephesians 2:4

- ⁴ But God, **who is rich in mercy**, because of **His great love** with which He loved us, ⁵ 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. (NKJV)

Depending on God's Mercy

Titus 3:4-6

- ⁴ But when the **kindness and the love of God our Savior** toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but **according to His mercy** He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, (NKJV)

Depending on God's Mercy

James 2:13

¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**
(NKJV)

□ I Peter 1:3-4 ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who **according to His abundant mercy** has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:3-5 (NKJV)

Depending on God's Mercy

Psalm 106:1

- ¹ Praise the LORD! Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is good!* **For His mercy endures forever.** Psalms 106:1 (NKJV)

Depending on God's Mercy

Micah 7:18-20

¹⁸ Who *is* a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. ¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. ²⁰ You will give truth to Jacob *And* mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old. (NKJV)

To have God's mercy

We must ask for it.

Jesus paid the price of justice for all sins for all people for all time.

Because He satisfied justice for us, we can repent and ask for mercy.

God delights in giving mercy. God delights in that kind of prayer.

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6. **Immutableness**

Gratitude for God's Truthfulness

- Psalm 12:6-7⁶ The words of the LORD *are* pure words, *Like* silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. ⁷ You shall keep them, O LORD. (NKJV)
- Psalm 117:1-2 ¹ Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples! ² For His merciful kindness is great toward us, And **the truth of the LORD *endures forever***. Praise the LORD! (NKJV)

Gratitude for God's Truthfulness

Hebrews 6:18

- ¹⁷ Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, 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*. ¹⁹ *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,* Hebrews 6:17-19 (NKJV)

Gratitude for God's Truthfulness

Isaiah 40:6-8

- ⁶ The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh *is* grass, And all its loveliness *is* like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people *are* grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, **But the word of our God stands forever.**" Isaiah 40:6-8 (NKJV)

Gratitude for God's Truthfulness Psalm 119:129-130, 140-144, 160, 163

129 Your testimonies are wonderful;

Therefore my soul keeps them.

130 The entrance of Your words gives light;

It gives understanding to the simple.

Psalms 119:129-130 (NKJV)

140 Your word *is* very pure;

Therefore Your servant loves it.

141 I *am* small and despised,

Yet I do not forget Your precepts.

Gratitude for God's Truthfulness Psalm 119:129-130, 140-144, 160, 163

142 Your righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness,
And Your law *is* truth.

143 Trouble and anguish have overtaken me,
Yet Your commandments *are* my delights.

144 The righteousness of Your testimonies *is* everlasting;
Give me understanding,
and I shall live.

Psalms 119:140-144 (NKJV)

Psalm 119:129-130, 140-144, 160, 163

**¹⁶⁰ The entirety of Your word *is* truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments
endures forever.**

Psalms 119:160 (NKJV)

**¹⁶² I rejoice at Your word
As one who finds great treasure.**

**¹⁶³ I hate and abhor lying,
But I love Your law.**

Psalms 119:162-163 (NKJV)

Gratitude for God's Truthfulness

John 1:17

- ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17 (NKJV)
- John 8:31-32 ³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32 (NKJV)

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Understanding God's Immutableness

Immutableness: Numbers 23:19¹⁹ "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? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (NKJV)

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

Understanding God's Immutableness

- This is a character quality rather than a power attribute.
- Thus God can change direction in response to human repentance, as long as that change of direction is consistent with His unchanging perfection of character.

2 Peter 3:8-9

- ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
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. (NKJV)

I Samuel 15:29

- ²⁹ And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He *is* not a man, that He should relent.“ (NKJV)

Immutableness

- God's character does not change. God's eternal good purpose does not change. He is immutable.
- God does sometimes change His mind—particularly when people repent of sins. In His omniscience, He already KNOWS when He will change His mind, of course.
- Jonah was upset with God for this very reason. Jonah knew that, if Nineveh repented, God would relent from judging them, and they would survive to fight against Israel at a future date. Jonah 3:10-4:2.

Micah 7:18

- **18** Who *is* a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights *in* mercy. **19** He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. (NKJV)

How does God's IMMUTABLE

GOODNESS apply in our everyday lives?

Galatians 5:22-23.

- 22 But the fruit of **the Spirit** is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**
23 **gentleness, self-control.** Against such there is no law. Gal 5:22-23 (NKJV)
- These are some of God's immutable characteristics which He wants to build into our lives.
- He also wants judgments within human legal systems to match His immutable character.

2 Chronicles 19:5-7

- ⁵ Then he set judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, ⁶ and said to the judges, "Take heed to what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.
- ⁷ Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do *it*, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes." (NKJV)

God's Immutability is Dependable: Galatians 6:7-10

- ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.
⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.
- ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. (NKJV)

A worthy table to create on a blank page in your Bible.

Things God LOVES

Homework Verses

From the end of
Homework Class 2
Set 2

Things God Detests

□ Homework verses

We can fear and trust God more realistically for our own good by meditating on

Characteristics of God's Power

His POWER attributes.

1. His Sovereignty,
2. His Omniscience,
3. His Omnipresence,
4. His Omnipotence,
5. His Eternal Nature,
6. His Infinite Being,
7. His Wisdom, and
8. His Creativity.

Sometimes

People take a deterministic view of God's kingly authority because His power attributes are so great. His power attributes are very important to understand and trust. They are a great help toward confidence in prayer.

His perfectly righteous character is the immutable foundation for everything—even MORE foundational than His power.

His power attributes are marvelous and comforting BECAUSE His character is perfect and filled with steadfast love.

The first 2 sets of homework for Class 2

Will review and allow you to answer questions about the topic on the previous slides. The 3rd set of questions will be **new material** over God's **power** attributes.

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- Read Genesis chapters 1 through 3. What was the consequence of the choice of the first humans to know both good and evil by experience?
- Where does 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 describe a spiritual battle taking place, and what is involved in winning the battle? How is that related to refusing to know evil by experience?

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- God does not like death. In fact, He hates death. He wants us to hate death and love life—and to love life so much that we search for eternal life in His kingdom like searching for treasure. It is the very best treasure we can find in this life—Read Matthew 13:44-46. What level of commitment to that search does God commend?

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- **God wants us to find His eternal life for us—See Psalm 21:3-6, and Psalm 133:3.**
- In King David's time, the Bible was not divided into chapters and verses, so he used the event in Deuteronomy 4:48 to indicate where to find Deuteronomy 5:29 that he was quoting.
- Isaiah 55:3 refers to this concept as “***the sure mercies of David.***” Please read these verses before going on and write down what “the sure mercies of David” are.

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- Death was not what God wanted in Genesis 3. God does not like death. Death is the final enemy that will be conquered, according to 1 Corinthians 15:25-26. Here in Genesis 1-3 we see that God makes the best choice, even though it is a hard choice. God in His goodness was faced with optimizing the situation *in the reality of human wrong choices*. He optimizes for eternity—for our ultimate good.

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- This complex description of our beginning rules out the idea of a deterministic God. It focuses on a God who is totally good, and who is grieved by our sins which go against His wishes for us. It tells us our choices are real and they produce enormous results. The way things are and the way God wants things to be are not identical, even though His power is complete.

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- This complex description of our beginning tells us that our relationship vertically, with our Creator, is the most important thing in our lives.
- Every portion of later Scripture confirms that conclusion—that we are supposed to turn to God with ALL our heart and soul—Deuteronomy 30:10.
- That *“the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His,”*—2 Chronicles 16:9.

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- God takes no pleasure in death—not even the death of the wicked. Read Ezekiel 18:23-32. What does God want instead, for the wicked?
- What does Revelation 21:8 say happens eventually to the wicked who do not repent?
- Read Deuteronomy 30:8-20. What are we supposed to choose, and how do we choose it?

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- Read Deuteronomy 32:3—4. How do these verses describe God?
- How does God feel toward those who choose Him to be their God according to Deuteronomy 26:17-19? Is this consistent with a God who is totally good?
- According to Joel 2:28-29, is anyone prevented from choosing the Lord to be their God?
- Read 1 John 1:1-5. What does this passage say about God?

Homework Class 2 Set 1

- Read Psalm 11:7. What does this verse say about God?
- Read Psalm 5:4 and write what it tells us about God.
- Read Isaiah 55:1-11. What does this passage tell us about God?
- Read Psalm 18:30-32. What does this passage say about God?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Because God is totally good, studying His moral attributes or characteristics can help us understand objective goodness. We will look at a few of His moral attributes, including **righteousness, justice, love, mercy, truthfulness**, and the **immutableness** or the unchanging nature of His goodness.
- God's Righteousness:
- Read Exodus 23:1-7. What gives God the moral authority to demand these things?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Read Deuteronomy 4:1-8. What were the good laws designed to show?
- Deuteronomy 5:28-29 What do these verses reveal about God's righteousness?
- Deuteronomy 32:4 List words describing God in this verse.
- Psalm 5:4-8 How is God's righteousness described here?
- Psalm 7:8-11,17 How do these verses describe God's righteousness?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- I John 1:5-10 What do these verses reveal about God's righteousness?
- I John 2:15-17 What do these verses reveal about God's righteousness?
- I John 3:1-3 What do these verses reveal about God's righteousness?
- Psalm 18:30-32 What do these verses tell us about God's righteousness?
- Psalm 31:19 What does this verse tell about God's righteousness?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Jeremiah 23:5-6 What do these verse tell us about God's righteousness? Who is the righteous Branch? If God's purpose is expressed in the phrase "and He shall be called _____," what is God's purpose?
- God's Justice:
- Genesis 18:17-25. If keeping the way of the LORD results in righteousness and justice, What does that imply about God? What was Abraham's reason for believing God would never sweep away the righteous with the wicked?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Deuteronomy 10:12-18 What do these verses tell us about God's justice?
- Deuteronomy 24:14-17 What do these verses tell us about God's justice?
- Deuteronomy 32:4 What does this verse tell us about God?
- Read Isaiah 40:12-14. What does this imply about God's justice?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Romans 2: 1-11 What do these verses tell us about God's justice?
- Ezekiel 18: 23, 30-32 What do these verses tell us about God's justice?
- What does the tenth commandment tell us about God's justice?
- What does Matthew 5:17-19 tell us about God's justice?
- John 5:22-30 What do these verses tell us about God's justice?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- The theme of God's justice is woven through the entire Bible. We begin to see the complexity of His perfect goodness as we study this theme. His justice makes one overarching demand upon us. For our own good, we must be obedient to Him because He is good. And we must seek His forgiveness when we fail. We must seek His forgiveness on HIS terms. His terms will not negate His justice.

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- God's Love:
- Deuteronomy 7:9-14, Psalm 115:9-15, Psalm 11:7, Psalm 25:8-10, John 3: 16-21, Romans 8:26-39, and I John 4:16-17: What do these verses tell us about God's love?
- Mercy:
- Luke 13:1-5, Deuteronomy 13:17, Job 9:1-15, Isaiah 63:9, Jeremiah 33:14-26, Luke 18:9-14, Ephesians 2:4, Titus 3:4-7, What do these verses tell us about God's mercy?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- James 2:13 Which is stronger, mercy or judgment?
- I Peter 1:3-4, and Micah 7:18-20: What does this say about God's mercy?
- Truthfulness:
- Psalm 12:6-7, Psalm 117:1-2, Hebrews 6:18, Isaiah 40:6-8, Psalm 119:129-130, Psalm 119:140-144, Psalm 119: 160, Psalm 119:163, John 1:17, John 8:31-32: What does each verse tell us about God's honesty?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Immutableness:
- Numbers 23:19 What does this say about God's unchangeable character?
- Psalm 55:19 Note that this verse contains a parenthetical expression that is unmarked as such. What does it say about God?
- Malachi 3:6 What does God's immutableness have to do with "not consuming" sinful individuals?
- 2 Peter 3:8-9 How is God's immutableness expressed in these verses?
- Hebrews 6:17-18 What are the unchangeable things in this passage?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- I Samuel 15:29 Is this the character quality of immutability in view here or something else?
- God's character does not change. God's eternal good purpose does not change. He is immutable. God does sometimes change His mind—particularly when people repent of sins. In His omniscience, He already KNOWS when He will change His mind, of course. Jonah was upset with God for this very reason. Jonah knew that, if Nineveh repented, God would relent from judging them, and they would survive to fight against Israel at a future date. Jonah 3:10-4:2.

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Micah 7:18 What aspects of God's character are revealed as unchanging here?
- Psalm 106:1 Why is God described as worthy of praise and thanks here? What character quality of God is described as everlasting, and therefore immutable?

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- God wants to make His good qualities visible in our finite lives. One list of such qualities is called the fruits of the Holy Spirit, found in Galatians 5:22-23. List those moral attributes of God here which He wants to reveal through us:
- Read 2 Chronicles 19:5-7. What do these verses tell us about God?
- Read Galatians 6:7-10. What do these verses imply about God?
- Read Hebrews 6:18 and explain why the fact that God cannot lie does not negate His power.

Homework Class 2 Set 2

- Make 2 COLUMNS: one of things God loves or delights in, and one of things God detests.
- Place ideas from these verses in the appropriate column. Luke 12:32, Psalm 16:3, Proverbs 8:30, Proverbs 11:1, Proverbs 11:20, Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 12:22, Isaiah 62:1-4, Hosea 6:6, Hebrews 11:6, Psalm 37:23, Proverbs 6:16-19, Psalm 15:1-5, Psalm 5:1-7.

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- We will look at God's power according to the Bible: His Sovereignty, His Omniscience, His Omnipresence, His Omnipotence, His Eternal Nature, His Infinite Being, His Wisdom, and His Creativity. The verses listed are NOT comprehensive. These themes are woven throughout the Scriptures. The selected verses just give an outline of the multidimensional view of God available through His word.

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- **Sovereignty: God is King.**
- 1 Timothy 6:15-16 How is God's Sovereignty described here, and what matters are associated with it?
- 1 Samuel 8:7-8 Why was God offended when the people requested a human king?
- Psalm 2:6 Who is the King in this verse?
- Psalm 5:2 Who is the King in this verse? Psalm 10:16 How does this describe the LORD?
- Psalm 29:10 Who is Sovereign over disasters? How long is He Sovereign?
- Psalm 24:1-10 Who is King in this Psalm?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Psalm 47:7, Psalm 103:19 How much of earth is His dominion?
- Psalm 98: 1-9 How does this Psalm describe the King?
- Psalm 99:4 What does the King love? Isaiah 6:1-5 How is the King described?
- Zechariah 14:9-12 How does this passage describe the King?
- Psalm 119:90-91 What extent does God's Sovereignty reach?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Jeremiah 19:4-5 In this passage, does God's Sovereignty mean that He caused everything that happened? Does God cause sin? Is God's Sovereignty the same as determinism? Are we puppets on strings?
- Luke 7:30 Does God's Sovereignty allow people to go against His purpose?
- Job 42:1-2 How do you reconcile Luke 7:30 and Job 42:1-2?
- Are human choices real? Does God's Sovereignty allow people to make real choices?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- God commands us to love Him with all our hearts and souls and minds and strength. Would puppets on strings be able to love God with all their heart and soul and mind and strength? If I programmed a computer screen to type out “I love you” every time I turned on the machine, would that be love?
- Job 1: 1-12 How is God’s Sovereignty described regarding Satan’s attempts to usurp His good authority?
- Genesis 3:15, 1 John 3: 8, 1 John 4:4, Hebrews 1:14-18 What is God’s purpose regarding those attempts of Satan?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- **Omniscience: God knows everything.**
- Psalm 139:1-24 List things God knows about you, according to this passage.
- Isaiah 46:9-10 Is God limited by time in His knowledge?
- Matthew 10:30, Luke 12:7 What else does God know about you?
- Isaiah 40:26 What is something else God knows?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Luke 12:6 What is something else God knows and does not forget?
- Psalm 147:5 How is God's understanding described?
- Colossians 2:2-3,9 What is hidden in Messiah?
- I Corinthians 13:1-3 Is omniscience—all knowledge—reason enough by itself for worship? What is better than omniscience? What is the source of that characteristic?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- If you had to decide between worshipping a deterministic god who had all the power attributes and whose character could not be known, or worshipping the God described in the Bible, with all the power attributes and **TOTAL GOODNESS**, which would be the right choice?
- Joshua 24:14-15, Genesis 28:12-22, 48:15-16
Can we make such a choice and are we responsible to choose well?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- **Omnipresence: This word means that God is everywhere at once.**
- Psalm 139:7-12 Where can a person go that God is not?
- 1 Kings 8:27-30 Can God be contained in space? Jeremiah 23:24 Where is God located? 1 Timothy 6:16 How is God's location described?
- Psalm 88:1-18 I believe this Psalm describes the emotional side of Hell. What is different about God's omnipresence there compared to this life?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Psalm 5:4 We often describe heaven as a place where no evil is allowed. In what way is God's dwelling place different from His omnipresence?
- Materialist atheists often claim that the physical universe is all that exists. They then have difficulty believing that human beings have souls, attributing all our mental processes to brain activity alone—electrical signals and chemical reactions. The Bible makes a totally different claim—that God is Spirit, and we were created in His image, and that our souls are real and eternal. We cannot see God. We cannot see each other's souls. Yet both are real. In fact, our souls are MORE enduringly real than the physical universe.

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- The fact that God is everywhere at once lends support to the idea of ONE God, rather than multiple limited gods. One Infinite Eternally existing God fills heaven and earth and time and eternity. This does not negate the Trinity, which implies that He is a complicated One. Because God Himself is infinite, His power is also infinite. Creation reinforces this idea, with the vast domains of the universe and the intricate details of the microscopic world. Logic itself extends validity to the truths expressed in Scripture describing the power attributes of God.

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- **Omnipotence: God is All-Powerful.**
- Psalm 115:3 What does this say God does? What are the boundaries on that?
- Job 42:1-2 What can God do? Luke 1:37 What is impossible with God?
- **Eternal Nature: God is the Ultimate Beginning, having always been alive. God always will be alive. His life extends from eternity past through eternity future.**
Deuteronomy 34:26-27 How is God described and how is God's power described?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Psalm 41:12-13, Psalm 106:47-48 Did God's eternal nature have a beginning?
- Proverbs 8:22-36 Does the word "everlasting" include eternity past when talking about God's attributes?
- Isaiah 40:27-31 What promise does God's everlasting nature carry with it?
- Isaiah 55:3 What other promise does His everlasting nature carry with it?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Isaiah 51:6-8 What else is eternal?
- Psalm 119:89,142,160 What does this say are eternal things?
- Jeremiah 31:3, John 17:24 What else is everlasting?
- I Timothy 6:15-16 How is God's eternal nature described?
- **Infinite Being: God is not subject to limitedness.** Psalm 147:5 What is described as infinite in this verse?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- 2 Chronicles 16:9 What territory does God's infinite nature allow Him to cover, and for what purpose?
- Matthew 25:40 What does Christ's infinite nature allow Him to do?
- How does this compare to the description of God in Isaiah 63:7-9?
- Psalm 74: 16-17 How does God's infinite nature relate to the boundaries of the earth?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Jeremiah 23:23-24 These verses summarize the power attributes we have studied. “Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD, “And not a God far off? Can a man hide himself in hiding places so I cannot see him? Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?”
- **Wisdom:**
- Proverbs 8:22-36 How is God’s wisdom related to delight?
- Isaiah 55: 6-11 How does God’s wisdom compare to human wisdom?

Homework Class 2 Set 3

- Daniel 2:20 Who owns wisdom?
- Job 38:36 Where does human wisdom come from?
- **Creativity:** Genesis 1 What is the order of God's creativity described here?
- Psalm 33:6-9 What additional insight does this give us about God's creativity?
- Hebrews 11:3 What additional insight does this verse give us?
- Job 38 What are some of the processes God's creativity designed?

Micah 7:18

- ¹⁸ Who *is* a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights *in* mercy.
¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.
(NKJV)

Romans 8:1-2

- There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.