

A Christian Worldview

God, Man and Sin

Book 1

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FOREWORD

You are opening the pages of the first book of our series, *A Christian Worldview*. Learning to know God is a faith journey, forward and prayerfully, with our eyes fixed on the race in front of us. The Bible does tell us “Forgetting those things which are behind and pressing on to those things that are before.” What a challenge! Not what I have already attained; not that I am already perfected, but I press on. I press on as the Bible teaches me, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold for me.

As we learn the God of creation, we discover that we are pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12-14 NKJV). We certainly want to celebrate every good memory and learn from every difficult and trying experience and commit, with God’s help, to make the positive changes necessary in our lives. God has a purpose and a plan for you and, may I add, a mission for you if you will, as the scriptures say, “. . . draw near to Him, He will draw near to you.”

May this written effort, gifted you and written by the staff at First Baptist Church Leander, build you up in faith, reveal the truth of God’s word, edify the body of Christ, and challenge you past your present comfort or failure and move you forward in greater trust and obedience in following and taking the God of all glory at His word.

Graciously Under His Wings,
Pastor Tim Moore

INTRODUCTION

This book is the beginning study of the realization of an all-powerful and mighty God who wants us to understand of His love for us. As you go through this study, prayerfully, you will encounter God in a way that you have never done before.

God is not necessarily to be understood; He is to be embraced by the power of His Word, as well as His providence, in the lives of Believers.

It is by faith alone that we can fully embrace God. Many try to fully understand God, but that is an impossibility. If God can be entirely understood, He is not God. It is only through our trust in Him that we can follow Him in obedience and live the life He has planned for us.

The life He has for you is much greater than the life you have planned for yourself. God's plan includes the abundance of salvation as well as an eternal impact that you cannot experience without Him.

As you continually seek Him daily, you will experience life like you have never had. He will guide you to places you have never been and experiences you would otherwise not have experienced. As you trust Him, your journey will grow daily.

Blessings,

Rick Hertless, DMin.

1 WHO MADE YOU

By Glenn Beard

Genesis 1:26-27

26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (*Bold emphasis mine*)

1.1 THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE.

God unambiguously communicated to us in the first and second chapters of Genesis that He made man and woman on the sixth day of creation after creating the other land creatures. Genesis 2:7 clearly declares, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” And, unlike all the other creatures God made during creation week, He created man in His own image and gave him “...dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing...” (Genesis 1:26).

After the Creator placed man, whom He called Adam, in the Garden of Eden, He saw that he needed a companion. So, He

created the first woman, Eve, to be Adam's wife (Genesis 2:21-24).

Adam and Eve lived together in peace, walking with the Lord in the Garden. They fully understood Who made them and recognized His authority and lordship over them. The first Adam and his wife lived happily in Eden tending the garden until the serpent tempted them, and they disobeyed God.

1.2 BUT MAN IS DECEIVED?

Since the Fall of Man, as described in the third chapter of Genesis, Man has had a tendency to turn away from God and deny the truth of His word. In spite of the undeniably clear account of man's creation proclaimed in the first and second chapters of Genesis, man still asks, "Where did we come from?" As did the serpent in the Garden of Eden, humanity continues to ask, "Did God really say (Genesis 3)?"

In his attempt to free himself from his Creator and become his own god, mankind has sought another explanation for his origin. According to the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History:

Human evolution is the lengthy process of change by which people originated from apelike ancestors... all people originated from apelike ancestors and evolved over a period of approximately six million years.

This is sheer speculation; the evidence does not support this as truth. Secular scientists consistently claim to find the missing link, but all fossils eventually prove to be ape or human. Although

secular scientists have been searching for “transitional fossils” for over 150 years, no intermediate fossils of apelike ancestors of humans have been discovered.

Charles Lyell, a well-known nineteenth century geologist who advocated for separating science from biblical authority, wrote in a letter to George Scrope (fellow uniformitarian) on 14 June 1830 (before Charles Darwin’s voyage on the Beagle):

I am sure you may get into Q.R. [Quarterly Review] what will free the science [of geology] from Moses, for if treated seriously, the [church] party are quite prepared for it.

Later Lyell proclaimed, “the physical part of Geological inquiry ought to be conducted as if the Scriptures were not in existence.”

Since Adam’s fall, mankind has been denying truth and the authority of God’s word, trying to be his own god. Man has sought ways to explain his existence without God, so he would not have to answer to his Creator, and he could live according to his own fleshly desires. Julian Huxley, (Descendent of Thomas Huxley, often referred to as Darwin’s Bulldog) readily admitted on a talk show, “I suppose the reason we leaped at The Origin of Species was because the idea of God interfered with our sexual mores.”

This perception is to be expected; man rebels against his Creator; surrenders to the flesh; and denies the Spirit of God. However, openly admitting it in a public forum like this seems unashamedly brazen. Consequently, God turns them over to

their desires and allows them to be deceived through their own pride.

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12:

11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

In addition to the secular worldview's rebellion against God as our Creator, this worldview has also bred confusion about the roles of the creature He created in His Own image. The first institution ever established on this earth was marriage. God clearly established it as a covenant relationship between one man and one woman for life. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (Genesis 1:24)." However, man has corrupted this concept; today, throughout much of the world, governments allow people of the same sex to "marry." In 2015 the Supreme Court narrowly sided with proponents of same-sex marriage and forced all States, territories, and DC to perform and recognize these "marriages" on the same terms and conditions as traditional marriage.

Throughout western society homosexuality is being not only accepted but praised. Cities have "pride" parades and celebrations, and our Nation has even declared June, "Pride Month." The wise King Solomon expressed the appropriate perspective for this phenomenon: "Pride goes before destruction,

and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18).” Humanity is rapidly devolving into a society much like that of Sodom and Gamora or the antediluvian world of Noah’s time.

On top of the abomination of men putting away women for other men and women for women, we have had an explosion of men and women, boys and girls believing they are born in the wrong bodies. This is often pushed on them by people with an agenda.

Society has attempted to separate biological sex from gender suggesting they are independent of each other. However, a good way to ponder this concept is to remember sex is how humans and animals are distinguished, but gender refers to pronouns and grammar. Man thinks he knows better than God, and as he strays farther and farther away from his Creator, he becomes more and more depraved, but man has no excuse.

Romans 1:20-22:

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,

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

1.3 GOD DID MAKE YOU AND THERE IS HOPE

However, there is hope. In His Word, our Creator told you from where you came. Jesus Himself tell us, "...from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female (Mark 10:6).'"

Throughout the Bible, the Spirit inspired the authors to encourage us through providing a clear understanding of who made us and why we are here.

The author of Ecclesiastes, the "Preacher," (a son of King David, traditionally taken to be Solomon) proclaimed wisdom and riches to be empty without God and recognized the futility of living without following God. The Preacher declared that he had attained "greatness, and ...more wisdom than all who were before" him. He had "great wisdom and knowledge (Ecclesiastes 1:16)," built houses, planted great gardens, orchards, and vineyards, obtained numerous servants, great herds, and flocks, and acquired vast wealth. Nevertheless, despite untold riches and wisdom beyond all others, Solomon could never find satisfaction in the earthly pursuits. He encouraged his readers to recognize this while they were young and not seek fulfillment in the world. He shared the wisdom of his learning in Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them.'"

As Solomon recognized his need to seek fulfillment in his Heavenly Father, so should we. The Lord God made all

mankind, and they know in their being that they should worship Him.

What is Your Hope?

Acts 17:24-29

“God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

“Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.

“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, “so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; “for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’

“Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.

Isaiah 43:21:

You were created by Him to worship him and bought with a Price “This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise . . .”

Fortunately for us, God did not just make us and leave us to our own devices. He had a plan; from the beginning of creation, He was preparing the world for the salvation of Man. Just as sin entered the world through one man, the first Adam, sin would be defeated by one man, the last Adam, Jesus Christ, and the means for man to fellowship with his Creator would be restored.

Romans 5:19 & 21:

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 6:20:

For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

God made you. He loves you. He sent His son to die for you. If you accept the salvation provided by His son, you will live with Him and be loved by Him, forever.

Notes

2 WHAT ELSE DID GOD MAKE?

By Glenn Beard

Genesis 1:1-3

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

2.1 THE FOUNDATIONS

These three verses are extremely powerful, and the first verse illuminates God’s character. This revelation shared by Moses is far more revealing than one might think. Even though the Bible is not a science book, wherever scientific information is communicated in God’s word, it is eventually proven accurate. Genesis 1:1 reveals the very foundation and origin of everything that exists throughout the entire universe.

Miller said:

“For over a century, scientists have recognized that all natural phenomena in the Universe can ultimately be divided into interactions between five basic, fundamental ‘manifestations.’ In 1882, staunch evolutionist Herbert Spencer, an English philosopher... recognized ... phenomena... segregated into manifestations..., and then into **space** and **time**, **matter** and **motion** and **force**. These fundamental principles were articulated in the very first verse of the Bible millennia ago. ‘In the beginning

[time], God [force] created [action] the heavens [space] and the Earth [matter].’ It is truly amazing that a renowned apostle of agnosticism would be the one to verbally articulate this discovery from science—a discovery which gives significant weight to the contention that one can know there is a God and that the Bible is His inspired Word¹ (*emphasis mine*)

Acts 14:17a clearly tells us, “Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness...”

Ironically, even an agnostic evolutionist is unable to avoid the facts. Ultimately, everything that exists must have come into existence and therefore had a beginning. The beginning must have had a cause, a Creator; that Creator is God. The prophet Isaiah wrote:

For thus says the Lord, **Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain**, Who formed it to be inhabited: “I am the Lord, and there is no other. **I have not spoken in secret**, In a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘Seek Me in vain’ . . . (Isaiah 45:18-19a)” (*emphasis mine*)

2.2 NOTHING CREATED EVERYTHING?

Without God, that “cause” is unavoidably nothing. Today, atheists attempt to explain creation with only “natural” causes.

¹ Miller, J. (2011, May 15) The Five Manifestations of Natural Phenomena. Apologetics Press. <https://apologeticspress.org/the-five-manifestations-of-natural-phenomena-751/>

This leads to the conclusion that nothing created everything. Someone once accurately described the secular origin idea, from the so-called “big bang” through chemical, stellar, and planetary evolution, organic and biological evolution, in this simplistic manner.

The belief that there was nothing and nothing happened to nothing and then nothing magically exploded for no reason, creating everything and then a bunch of everything magically rearranged itself for no reason whatsoever into self-replicating bits which then turned into dinosaurs.

This may sound ridiculous; that is because it is. However, as preposterous as this seems, it is an accurate description of what is taught today by atheistic scientists in their attempts to rid “science of Moses.” Because they want to be able live their lives without any responsibility for their actions (sin), they must deny the existence of the Creator. However, we know that there is a Creator. Paul clearly proclaims in his letter to the church in Rome:

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. (Romans 1:20)

They have no excuse for denying His existence. Furthermore, Psalm 14:1 tells us that only a fool denies God in his heart.

Is Evolution valid?

2.3 EVERYTHING

Since God's word unambiguously declares that there is a Creator, and He is the Maker of everything, we can use His word to discover what else He had made. In the first chapter of Genesis God plainly communicates what He made during the Creation Week.

Genesis 1:1 begins: "In the beginning God created..." On the first day He created Heaven and the earth and light. On day two He made a firmament to divide the waters from the waters. On the third day God created dry land and seas and filled the earth with plants of all kinds. On day four he created the sun, the moon, the stars, and all celestial bodies. On the fifth day the Creator filled the waters with creatures that swim, including with creatures that swim, and the heavens with those that fly; this includes flying insects and flying reptiles. Then, on the last day of creation God created all land animals. Lastly, on that sixth day, He made a creature that was different; God made man in His Own image, and He made them male and female.

Clearly, during the six days of creation everything that exists was included in the Creator's work. The Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write about the totality of God's creative work. The Apostle John

shares in his Gospel: “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made (John 1:3).” Paul was also inspired to write the following in his letter to the Colossians. Chapter one verse sixteen tells us:

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

The Scriptures are undeniable; the Bible clearly proclaims that God made everything. Since all scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, we can be confident that it is true. Therefore, we can know that along with you, God made everything else. This seems simple enough. However, all of creation is massive and this is a much more amazing statement than it may seem on the surface.

How long did it take to create the universe?

2.4 BEYOND COMPREHENSION

It is notable that the entire creation week is described in the thirty-one verses of the first chapter of Genesis. In this account Moses was inspired by the Holy Spirit to illustrate in detail the formation of the earth and all of creation. He used a substantial

majority of the chapter to describe the place our Creator established for us to live, the earth, along with the sun and the moon to support our planet. However, astonishingly enough, the Spirit inspired Moses to use only five words to describe the entire rest of the universe. Genesis 1:16b tells us, "...He made the stars also." Like the first verse of this chapter, this is an astonishingly profound statement about the majesty of our Lord. When Moses recorded the book of Genesis, he could likely count only around 3,000 stars that are visible to the naked eye. So, to write simply, "...He made the stars also..." may not have seemed to exhibit the awesome supremacy of the Creator that it clearly shows today.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork (Psalm 19:1)." Hubble and James Webb Space Telescopes have shown us that there are at least 10 to the power of 22 (numerically 100,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 or 100 sextillion) stars in the known universe; that is over twelve trillion (12,000,000,000,000 or 1.2×10 to the power of 12) stars for each and every man, woman and child alive today. Yet, God "...counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name ... (Psalm 147:4)."

In spite of this, the Holy Spirit chose to direct Moses to use only five words to describe the formation of the mind-boggling vastness of the created cosmos. Our God is that magnificent; He just spoke and the entire universe, that is at least tens of billions

of light years across, was there. (A light-year is a measure of distance, the distance that light travels in one year, traveling at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. It is 5.879×10 to the power of 12 or 5,789,000,000,000 miles)

2.5 HE IS MINDFUL OF US

In recognition of the Creator's majesty, David raised the question in Psalm 8:3-4 "

“3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,

4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?”

Even though God, through His Son, is the Creator of all things, God is mindful of us. He loves us so much Jesus tells us, “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered... (Luke 12:7a).” Ultimately, we know that He is mindful of us because, God loved us so much that He sent His only Son Jesus to die for us, to pay for our sins and to be raised from the grave that we might have eternal life. Despite the vastness of His creation, the Creator prepared a special place and made us in His Own image, and He loves us so much that He will return one day to create a new place for us to spend eternity with Him if we will only trust in Him.

Notes

3 WHY DID GOD MAKE YOU AND ALL THINGS?

By Rick Hertless

Psalms 19:1 – To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork.

3.1 NOT AN EASY QUESTION

I do not believe this is an easy question to answer with our finite way of thinking. There are many mysteries about God that we are not prepared to have answered in our mortal bodies. But 1 John 3:2 says, “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

So, we know that there will come a day when we will understand everything. But for today, let us make an attempt to understand the majesty that we behold through a “dim glass mirror.”

3.2 GOD’S GLORY

God’s Kingdom is for His glory. I believe that in the fleshly mind, the previous statement can be misconstrued as arrogant, self-serving, or narcissistic. If we were talking about a human being I could agree. BUT WE ARE NOT! We are talking about Almighty

God who knows that the best thing He has for us is Himself. Without Him, we are bound for eternal despair. Without Him, we are in total darkness with no hope of salvation. Therefore, His glory is paramount in understanding why He made everything.

Everything that has been made has been made for His glory. But it is not self-serving. It is “love” serving. John 1:1-5 says:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 1:14 says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

His glory came to us in the form of Jesus. His glory is His love for His Creation. Not only the Creation of Mankind, but all His Creation. I do not believe that the only thing in heaven will be humans. Isaiah 65:25 says:

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
The lion shall eat straw like the ox,
And dust shall be the serpent’s food.
They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,”
Says the LORD.

These are all His Creation; they are all His glory.

3.3 THE HEAVENS DECLARE HIS GLORY

The Heavens declare His glory to who? To His Creation. All His Creation enjoys the Heavens. We receive sustenance from the heavens. We receive air to breathe and life-giving rain from the heavens directly above us.

The stars proclaim His magnificence. None can fathom the magnitude of His greatness. The vastness of the stars is beyond comprehension. There can be no doubt of His handiwork. About the time Man has decided he has found the end of the universe, more is discovered. There is no end to the greatness of God.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 says:

Thus says the LORD:

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,
Let not the mighty man glory in his might,
Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;
But let him who glories glory in this,
That he understands and knows Me,
That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment,
and righteousness in the earth.
For in these I delight,” says the LORD.

Therefore, if we glory, we must glory in the Lord. It is only through His lovingkindness that we can exist. So, I go back to my original statement. For God to say that He deserves glory is a true statement. He is the only one who can glory in Himself. Man has no right to “glory.” What is Man that he should think that he should have glory.

Psalm 144:3-4 says:

LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him?
Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him?
Man is like a breath;
His days are like a passing shadow.

Without God, Man is fleeting. Man is but temporary dust on the Earth that dies and lives in darkness and despair. But with God, Man is eternal; his life given to him through the glory of God. What glory? The glory of Jesus Christ. I restate John 1:14 once again, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."
God's true glory is His love for us. His true glory resides in the hearts of His Creation.

Why were we created?

3.4 AND THE FIRMAMENT SHOWS HIS HANDIWORK.

What is the firmament? It is all the other spaces. Everything that can be seen and studied; observed and contemplated is the firmament. Once again John 1 says, "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." All Things! Even the space between, was made by Him; the firmament.

3.5 EVERYTHING THAT WE EXPERIENCE POINTS TO GOD.

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 . . .”

The above Scripture in context is a warning to everyone about denying God, but in this discussion, it is further proof of the glory of God through His Creation. Everyone can see the glory of God through His Creation whether they want to admit it or not; one day they will be forced to.

God’s glory is for us. As I stated earlier, His love for us is His glory. He has done everything He has done for us. He is self-existing; He has always existed. But we, on the other hand, rely totally on Him for our existence. Without Him, we are not even vapor. Therefore, we give Him glory because He deserves glory. There is nothing self-serving about it. The glory we give Him comes back as a blessing for us. Because of the glory we give Him, we will be able to live in eternity with Him. Those who refuse to give Him glory will be separated from Him for eternity.

Revelation 4:11

“You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created.”

Another word for “will” in this context is “pleasure.” And for your pleasure they were created. We are God’s pleasure. We are His

workmanship, created to do good works in Christ (Ephesians 2:10). Why were we created to do good works in Christ? Because He loves all His Creation and it is not His will that any should perish (John3:16). It is His desire for all to come to Him and live with Him in eternity. Therefore, He calls on the ones who know Him to proclaim His name; proclaim His glory; proclaim the Gospel.

Revelation 5:13

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

God is Everlasting and Deserves Glory. Those who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior are His glory. Declare Him to the world today. Whatever God has given for you to do, do it with all your might.

Notes

4 HOW CAN YOU GLORIFY GOD?

By Rick Hertless

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

The authorship of Ecclesiastes has been debated by some who do not believe in the total inerrancy of Scripture. The debate stems from the beginning of the book when the author refers to himself as *qōheleṭ* (pronounced *ko-heh'-leth*), translated as “the preacher.” However, he does say that he was king of Jerusalem. Therefore, Solomon is attributed authorship and uses a “pseudo title” as author of the book. He wrote the book late in his reign and, for much of the book, he laments the way he had led his life. He wasted his relationships; he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. He misused his wealth and put undue hardship on the people.

The book outlines the useless life without God. It reminds of the emptiness there is in material and physical wealth and the only thing that has meaning is God Himself. It is important to realize that God used different writers of the Bible for the reader to experience the emotion and culture of the time-period. By doing this, one can understand better the heart of God and His willingness to allow for the short comings of everyday believers.

For example, part of the debate over authorship stems from Ecclesiastes 1:12. It says, “I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem.” In this verse, Solomon was simply looking back on his life, lamenting the fact that he could have made it better, but did not. Just as anyone would look back on their life and reflect what had been done.

4.1 SO, WHAT DOES THE VERSE MEAN?

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter . . .” This is the end of the book and Solomon is summing up what has declared throughout his writing. He has stated throughout the book that life is vanity and meaningless. He now wants the reader to understand exactly what he has been seeking to explain and focus on. This is the conclusion of what he has been trying to get the reader to understand.

4.2 FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, FOR THIS IS MAN’S ALL.

“Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all.” Solomon was a harsh king. He required great sacrifice for his subjects and put them under duress. After Solomon died, he was succeeded by Rehoboam. The elders came to Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12:4 and said, “Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.” Instead, Rehoboam placed an even heavier burden on them so, the

kingdom rebelled. So, Rehoboam became the first king of Judah and Israel split away, which is a topic for another study; another time.

The point is, Solomon had forgotten God's most important commandment.

What does "Fear God" mean?

Mark 12:29-31 says:

Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. "And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Even though Solomon was the wisest man to have ever lived, he did not follow God's commandments. He did not love his neighbor. He did not love the Lord with all his strength.

Ecclesiastes is a lament of that fact. He is looking back on his life and imparting wisdom to all who will listen to his words. Even though he had not followed the word of Lord, he is imploring the reader to do so. He is trying to get the reader to escape the mistakes he had made and follow God instead.

4.3 FOR GOD WILL BRING EVERY WORK INTO JUDGMENT . . .

God sees all that is done in the universe. There is no place to hide. Your life is an open book to Him. I have been around many who will make a crude joke, or speak a cursing only to find out that I am a pastor. Many will then say, "I'm sorry, I didn't know you were a pastor." My response is always, "It makes no difference what you say around me, God hears everything you say every day." I do not know if that strikes a chord with them or not, but the point is, God wants us to live for Him every day. He knows and sees everything you do. He will bring every work under judgement.

For the Christian, the judgement of our works will declare the amount of reward in Heaven. But for the unbeliever, the judgement will be in the form of the depths of Hell he will reside in for eternity.

4.4 . . . INCLUDING EVERY SECRET THING, WHETHER GOOD OR EVIL.

I reiterate once again. There are no secrets from God. He sees all and knows all; whether good or evil.

Matthew 6:1-4 says:

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. "But when you do a

charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, “that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

Our Father cares about our heart and our heart is revealed to Him in secret. It is the secret place that God sees the love you have for Him. However, if you only live for God in secret, you cannot be a witness for Him daily.

In other words, do you live like a Christian at Church and like the world when in the world? Understand, the secret place has nothing to do with physical positioning. It has to do with the secret place of the heart. God knows the secrets of your heart whether in the world or in church. There is no place that can be hidden from Him. Therefore, it is with the heart that God wants you to come to Him. When you truly come to Him in your heart, it is easy to live for Him in public.

Solomon’s lament is that he did not live his life for the glory of God. He squandered his relationships and wealth. He spent it only on his lustful desires.

It would seem, his desire in writing this book is for you to see how to live for God; to see the pitfalls before you and avoid them. Know that without God, everything is meaningless. There is only one way to live the abundant life, that is with God as your guide, in the Name of Jesus.

Notes

5 WHY OUGHT YOU TO GLORIFY GOD?

By Rick Hertless

Matthew 6:1-4

“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

“Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men.”

Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. “But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, “that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”

It would seem the answer to the title question is obvious, but it seems to elude Christians. Why ought you to glorify God? God has given us 100% of everything we see, experience, own or conceive. We are nothing without God. Therefore, the question be, “Why shouldn’t you give glory to God?”

5.1 “TAKE HEED THAT YOU DO NOT DO YOUR CHARITABLE DEEDS BEFORE MEN, TO BE SEEN BY THEM. OTHERWISE YOU HAVE NO REWARD FROM YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.”

First, recognize that this is a warning. “Take heed . . .” This is something God is saying that is important. This is something He wants the reader to understand. Why? So He can Zap you when

you do wrong? No! God's desire is to bless His children. He wants you to contribute to your heavenly "savings account" daily. God's first priority in His relationship with Man is that we receive all that He has for us. His main thoughts are on His children.

The above Scripture refers to "charitable deeds." This includes money, prayer, works and possessions. But it has much more meaning than merely the physical aspects of our life. The rewards of God are eternal. They come in the form of material blessing, relationships and spiritual growth that helps to mature in knowledge and communication with The Father.

When you boast about what you do for others, you have received your reward. You have received everything that you can receive for eternity. But when you are charitable because of the love you have for God and others, your reward is eternal. The knowledge you have within your heart is reward enough for the day and God will reward it for eternity.

How do we glorify God?

- 5.2 "THEREFORE, WHEN YOU DO A CHARITABLE DEED, DO NOT SOUND A TRUMPET BEFORE YOU AS THE HYPOCRITES DO IN THE SYNAGOGUES AND IN THE STREETS, THAT THEY MAY HAVE GLORY FROM MEN."

Notice, His warning classifies those who want to receive praise from men as “hypocrites.” This is not a casual warning. This warning shows the condition of the heart. It shows the type of relationship one has with The Father. In fact, the word “hypocrites” indicates the spiritual standing that those in question have for eternity. In other words, it means they are not real, they are posers, actors who do not truly know God.

If you are seeking glory from men rather than The Father, you should look at your heart. You should examine yourself as to whether you are in the faith.

Romans 11:33-36:

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

“For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?”

“Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?” For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

God deserves our praise. Notice the above Scripture says, “Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?” In other words, God does not need our offerings, because He has them first. We do not get our offerings first and then give to God. He owns everything and gives us 100%. He simply asks for us to recognize the fact that He has allowed us to have what we have and give Him the glory through our deeds and possessions.

5.3 ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD. “BUT WHEN YOU DO A CHARITABLE DEED, DO NOT LET YOUR LEFT HAND KNOW WHAT YOUR RIGHT HAND IS DOING, “THAT YOUR CHARITABLE DEED MAY BE IN SECRET; AND YOUR FATHER WHO SEES IN SECRET WILL HIMSELF REWARD YOU OPENLY.”

The above Scripture does not say, “But if you do a charitable deed.” It says, “When you do a charitable deed. If you know Jesus and have a relationship, charitable deeds become part of your life; they become part of your pattern. Once we recognize that we can do nothing without Christ, our lives open to the possibilities God gives us for the many blessings He has in store for us.

Revelation 4:11:

“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.”

Everything was created by the will of God. His “Will” includes what He wants to do for His children. As children of God, our very actions either give Him glory or disgrace. If you declare yourself to be a Christian, yet you get drunk, does that bring glory or disgrace to God?

We exist by His will. It is only through His grace the Mankind exists at all. Unfortunately, most do not believe, do not recognize nor do they honor God for His grace and mercy. Quite the contrary, most think they are owed what they have. However, we are owed nothing.

Nevertheless, when we do charitable deeds privately, God declares He will reward us publicly. That reward may come in this life or the next. But rest assured, His rewards will far outweigh your imagine.

Furthermore, it is extremely important to understand that God sees your secrets. Nothing is hidden from an All-Mighty God. Many believe that their sin is hidden, but God sees all.

God loves His children. He is not a gray bearded God waiting for you to make a mistake so that He can discipline you. He is a loving and longsuffering God who wants you to come to Him daily. He seeks a relationship with His children. He wants us to talk to Him. As a father and grandfather, I look forward to my children talking to me. I am disappointed and hurt, at times, because they do not want to talk to me or include me in their life. It is the same with God. He seeks a relationship with His children. He seeks a relationship with you. Do not assume, "Me and God are good." God wants to tell you what pleases Him. The only way to know for sure is to converse with Him and then allow Him to talk to you. He will!

Notes

6 ARE THERE MORE GODS THAN ONE?

By Rick Hertless

Deuteronomy 6:4

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

6.1 HEAR, O ISRAEL

Moses is harkening Israel to Listen. He begins, “Hear, O Israel ...” Many times in my life I feel like God is telling me to “shut up and listen.” I realize the phrase “Shut Up” is no longer a politically correct phrase. I am not sure at what point in time, but somewhere someone decided it was impolite, or even derogatory, to say, “Shut Up!” But this phrase always seems to get attention when it is spoken with authority.

Early in my ministry, I was sitting with the pastor. I was associate pastor at the time. The pastor was trying to talk to me and in my haste to please I kept putting in my “two cents.” Out of frustration he yelled, “WOULD YOU JUST SHUT UP?” Then he said calmly, “You need to work on your listening skills.” I have never forgotten that lesson.

Moses writes the same thing. Hear O Israel! WOULD YOU JUST SHUT UP AND LISTEN?” These are words that are important. These are commanding words not only to Israel, but to all believers in Yahweh.

He makes the point that God is One! There is only one God. All the other gods of the world are fictitious. They are made up in the minds of men and built with the hands of humans. They are nothing to be worshipped.

Jeremiah 10:8-12 says:

But they are altogether dull-hearted and foolish; A wooden idol is a worthless doctrine. Silver is beaten into plates; It is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the craftsman and of the hands of the metalsmith; Blue and purple are their clothing; They are all the work of skillful men. But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King.

At His wrath the earth will tremble, and the nations will not be able to endure His indignation. Thus you shall say to them: "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens." He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens at His discretion.

Yahweh is the only God of the universe.

Mark 12:29-30:

Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

"And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mark reiterates what Moses has proclaimed. The first commandment is to understand the power of God. Within this commandment is the need to understand the love of God and practice His love by sharing it with others. Notice, Jesus said, “And the second, like it, is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Therefore, the love of God for us is expressed in the commandment to know that God is one and only one. There are no others.

His commandment to us shows His love for us, because without Him, we will spend an eternity separated from Him.

Can the Trinity be explained?

6.2 THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE!

Acts 17:22-31:

Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; “for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

“Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.

“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, “so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; “for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’

“Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.

“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, “because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

The “Unknown God” still seems to be a sentiment today. We are a polytheistic society; we worship many gods. We worship money, celebrities, fame, entertainment, material possessions, health, as well as, many of the other religions of the world. I have even heard one man who said, “I leave a place in my heart for some god that I might not know.” Why? Because America has forgotten who brought them to the Land and blessed them with the freedoms we have in this Country. Since we have forgotten the God who gave us our freedoms, our freedoms are being systematically stripped away.

In the above Scripture Paul said:

“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, “so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; “for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’

God has given us “preappointed times and the boundaries . . .” of our dwellings. God Himself has set America for us, but we squander her in the name of freedom. Isn’t it ironic that many have been convinced to give up freedom to obtain freedom?

There is only one God to worship. He is the God of the Bible; The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. Through His power we can face the trials of the day. Through His power, we can discern the way in which we should go for His glory.

Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we have the power to walk in peace and joy in a turbulent world. We can share His peace with others and be assured that they can receive the same peace.

Hear, O Israel! God is pleading for all to come to Him. God is pleading with Christians to take up their cross daily. God is pleading with all who will listen. If you are always talking, you cannot hear. In this Scripture, God is saying to me, “WILL YOU JUST SHUT UP AND LISTEN?” He wants me to hear His voice.

He wants me to be still enough to know that He is talking to me. Have you ever driven down the road with no radio on? Can you sit on the porch without looking at your phone? Can you be quiet before the Lord so you can hear His still small voice? If you will try it, you will hear Him. He will speak and guide you to a life that you could not previously have imagined. God will speak if you will listen.

Notes

7 IN HOW MANY PERSONS DOES THIS ONE GOD EXIST?

By Robert Lederman

Matthew 3:16-17

16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

7.1 MYSTERIES OF GOD

When we look at Scripture, we must always look under the knowledge that God is God. He cannot be fully understood. If He can be fully understood by finite man, He is not God. From the beginning, Man has tried to fully understand, and even be like, God. Man's first sin was the pride of life, wanting to be like God.

John 5:23

"... that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him"

John 10:30

"I and My Father are one."

John 14:9-10

“9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.”

Revelation 1:4-5

“4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood”

7.2 IS GOD THE TRINITY?

Yes, he is. I have heard many describe the Trinity as, “A man can be a grandfather, father and a son. Then it is stated, “See, three in one!” But this is not an adequate explanation of a godhead that is three persons, but yet is one. A grandfather, father and son are only one person.

Jesus is one person of the Trinity. He is the Son.

So, do we have three Gods in one?? No, God is three persons who exist eternally as the godhead. It is truly impossible to

understand the Trinity of God and even harder to try to explain it. Why? Because we serve a miraculous God.

How many gods do we serve?

You see, all doctrine is from the Bible. What does that mean? Any belief about the Trinity must come from the Bible and the Bible alone, not from any other source or person.

There are enough false prophets that want to tell you who Jesus is or have you believed that there are many levels of heaven to get to God and he is not a person. All these are false doctrines.

As I have said, church leaders or authorities will make up what they think the Trinity is. But, Scripture is our guide, nothing more, why would they do this? Because many scholars believe that they must have all the answers. Anything less and they look like fools. However, there is nothing wrong with admitting that there are mysteries in the Word that cannot be understood.

Do not follow false leaders, follow Scripture; it is God inspired and written. The Trinity is a doctrine that God has revealed to us all through the Scriptures. It is not the result of human reasoning.

I do think that it is amazing that our Lord is all we should ever need, not other gods. As Jesus said in John 10:30, "I and My Father are one."

7.3 THERE ARE NOT MULTIPLE GODS ONLY ONE.

I read where someone asked if GOD and Jesus are the same; The Bible says Jesus is unique in both. He was not just some spiritual person walking around during His time on earth; He was both God's Son (John 3:16) and God Himself—God in human flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). Yes, He was fully man, but He was also fully God (Colossians 2:9).

The Bible teaches that there is one eternal God who exists. He is the Creator of the universe. However, within the nature of this one God are three Persons, or three centers of consciousness.

They are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three Persons are co-equal, and co-eternal. They are also distinguishable, or distinct from one another. These three distinct Persons are the one God. Everything that is true about God is true about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, God is one in essence but three in Persons.

While the Bible teaches that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God, it is wrong to say that God is the Father, God is the Son, or God is the Holy Spirit. God's nature consists of three distinct Persons. Therefore, it is incorrect to limit God to one member of the Trinity.

Let's revisit Revelation 1:4-6:

John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

God is all in one and when Christ comes back, he will show the world that he is the one that was talked about in Isaiah 9:6-7:

6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Jesus is God in the godhead of the Father. Revelation 1:5 states Jesus' authority as the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and refers to His coming rule on earth.

Jesus will rule over all the affairs of mankind, and that His ultimate authority over the kings of the earth will most certainly be challenged by others, but we know He is the authority in

heaven and earth. "Kings of the earth" mean politicians, governments, presidents, nobles, and those in human authority.

If you look at The Greek word for "prince," it is archegos, which can also mean "chief leader," "author," "captain," or "one who stands at the head" of a list or rank. In the Bible, Jesus is referred to as "The Prince" in Acts 3:13-15, where the word is capitalized to denote that he is the Head or Chief Prince.

As we go about our day, how much do we talk with Jesus as the Chief Prince? You see, we must ask ourselves; do we trust that Jesus is part of the Trinity? Why are we questioning this?

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

We must remember Matthew 28:1-7

1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone [a]from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

6 He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

Jesus is Lord and He is God, part of the Trinity; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Notes

8 WHO ARE THEY?

By Rick Hertless

Matthew 28:19-20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

We have discussed the Trinity in the previous chapter. Once again it must be stated, THE TRINITY CANNOT BE EXPLAINED OR UNDERSTOOD BY OUR FINITE MINDS.

God has mysteries that cannot be explained, nor does He want them explained until we see Him.

Daniel 12:4:

“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Revelation 10:4:

Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.”

Our God is huge. He is more than we can comprehend. But He still gives us the truths that we can understand. Matthew 28:18-20 gives a picture of the Trinity.

The purpose of this chapter is not to explain God. Rather it is to help you understand the magnitude of God.

8.1 So, WHO ARE THEY?

8.1.1 The Father

Interestingly, the word for father in Matthew 28:18-20 is the name used for a common earthly father. The delineation resides within “the” as the definite article. “The Father” in this passage shows that this Scripture is referencing God the Father. The word “the” indicates the readers understanding of who The Father is.

God is the first person in the Trinity; the godhead.

8.1.2 The Son

Jesus is “The Son;” the second person of the Trinity. He sits at the right hand of The Father (Mark 16:19). Once again, it is important to delineate from the two. Jesus and God are one, but they are two distinct personalities.

Notice, Jesus sits at the right hand of The Father in Mark 16:19. This denotes two distinct persons, yet they are one. I must reiterate, the Trinity cannot be understood. It is one of those mysteries that must be taken on faith.

1 John 3:2:

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when

He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

8.1.3 The Holy Spirit

The third person of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit. His job is to point us to Christ.

Acts 1:4-8:

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; “for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

This is another example of the Trinity. Jesus is speaking, He says to wait for the promise of The Father. What was the promise? The power of the Holy Spirit indwelling the Believer.

Jesus said we will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Notice that baptism here is “baptizō” in the Greek. It does not mean water baptism. It means “immersed.” You will be immersed in the Holy Spirit with the Spirit of Jesus which is the Spirit of God.

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

Romans 8:11

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Who is the “Him” referred to in the above Scripture? It is the Spirit of God.

Matthew 3:16:

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

The Spirit of God indwelt Jesus. Galatians 4:6 says, “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”

Do you see the correlation? Do you see the Three in One?

8.2 GOD IS NOT TO BE EXPLAINED

God is not to be explained. God is to be trusted. God gives us many mysteries in His Word. But these mysteries are to be embraced and accepted as an all-powerful God. If we can explain everything about God, He is not God.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

2 Corinthians 13:14:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
Amen.

1 Peter 1:1-2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia,
Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the
foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the
Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus
Christ:

Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

Jude 20-21

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most
holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in
the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus
Christ unto eternal life.

The Trinity is spoken of throughout the entire Bible. Yet, He is still a mystery. So, after our study, can you understand the Trinity More? I think not. Can you trust Him more? I pray so.

Notes

9 WHO IS GOD?

By Glenn Beard

John 4:24

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

9.1 SPIRIT

When Jesus confronted the “woman at the well,” she was surprised knowing the contempt the Jews had for Samaritans, that He would ask her for water. She must have quickly recognized that there was something different about this Jew; He knew her history, yet, in spite of her Samaritan heritage and her disreputable background, He didn’t condemn her.

The Samaritan woman knew that her ancestors had worshipped on a particular mountain, and the Jews worshipped in Jerusalem. However, Jesus explained to her that the time had come when it was no longer necessary to go to a specific place to worship. He revealed to her that “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24).” She was aware of the coming Messiah, Jesus revealed to her that He was the One. She told the Samaritans of Him, and many heard Him and believed.

When Moses was exposed to glory of God while receiving the Ten Commandments, he covered his face with a veil to hide the radiance from the children of Israel. But there is still a veil over their faces, because they are blinded:

2 Corinthians 3:14-17

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Now we know that in Christ we have freedom, because the Spirit of God is in us. The veil is removed, and we can behold Him.

God is Spirit.

9.2 I AM

The complete answer to the question of “Who is God?” is far beyond the comprehension of our mere human minds. When God spoke to Moses through the burning bush, Moses asked God how to answer when the children of Israel ask Who sent him.

Exodus 3:14:

And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

The Hebrew word used in the passage for “I Am” is “haya.” It is a primitive root which means: “to be, become, come to pass, exist. It implies ultimate self-sufficiency.” The word is used throughout the creation account in the first chapter of Genesis; in the second verse it is translated as “was” when referring to the state of the earth, “was without form...” It is also translated “let there be” in numerous places in the Old Testament referring to creation “Let there be light,” “Let there be a firmament,” in Genesis 1, and “Let there be no strife between...” Abram and God in Genesis 13. It is also translated “there was” and “it was” and “it came to pass.” The wide usage of this root to describe existence clearly demonstrates the self-sufficiency God demonstrated when He used this phrase to identify Himself. Therefore, if we ask, “Who is God?” He distinctly tells us, “I Am.”

9.3 ALPHA AND OMEGA

In His Revelation to the Apostle John in the first chapter eighth verse, Jesus declares in His greeting to the seven churches, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty’.”

God is outside of time. He is the beginning: The very first verse in the Bible tells us, “In the beginning God...” God was there in the beginning. Conversely, He will be there in the end. He created the entire universe for His glory. Man corrupted it, and Jesus came to earth as a Man to redeem us. The Savior, just before He returned to His Father gave us Great Commission and the promise to be with us always. Matthew 28:19-20 says, “Go therefore ...and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age (emphasis mine).”

God is outside of time; He is the Beginning and the End. He was, and is, and forever will be. **God is the Alpha and Omega.**

9.4 FATHER, SON, HOLY SPIRIT

God is One God, but He exists in a Trinity of distinct persons. He has revealed Himself as God the Father, the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In the creation account, the Hebrew term “Elohim” is used for God whenever reference is made to Him as the Creator. This word is the plural of the masculine noun for God, “eloha,” introducing the concept of the Trinity. Some people misunderstand this and conflate this to three different characteristics of God, referred to as modalism. However, this is easily refuted in Scripture. Matthew 3:16-17 clearly represents the three Persons of the Godhead,

“16 When He had been baptized, **Jesus** (God the Son) came up immediately from the water; and behold, the

heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the **Spirit of God** (God the Spirit) descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is **My** beloved Son, in whom I (God the Father) am well pleased (emphasis mine).”

God is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9.5 CREATOR

The very first verse in the Bible tells us, “In the beginning God created...” The law of cause-and-effect states: “For every material effect we see, there is a cause that came before it, or was simultaneous to it, and greater than it.” The universe is a material effect; it is nearly universally accepted that it had a beginning. Therefore, there must have been a cause, and that there was a Supernatural Creator that produced the entire universe.

In last verse of the first chapter of Genesis Moses wrote, “Then God saw everything that He had made...” In the Gospel of John 1:3 he wrote, “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” **God is the Creator.**

9.6 LOVE

The Bible also tells us that God is love, and if we do not love we do not know Him. “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love (1 John 4:8).” Likewise, He demonstrated His love

for us, because while we were still living in our sin, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).” **God is love.**

9.7 SAVIOR

The English word Savior is used twelve times in the New King James Version of the Old Testament; it refers to the Deliverer of Israel. Isaiah 43:11 tells us, “I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior.” In the New Testament the word Savior is used twenty-four times. In this context it is referring to the Savior of man or the world.

John 4:42

Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

God saved Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gamora; He saved Israel from Egypt; He saved Rahab from Jericho; He saved Daniel from the lions and Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were their Babylonian names) from the flames of the furnace. Then Jesus came to save man from his sins. **God is our Savior.**

9.8 JUDGE

God judged the devil in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:14-15). He judged nations that went against Israel (Ezekiel 25-28, Joel 1:1-2 & 3:2, Jeremiah 30:11-17, Zechariah 9). God judged the

Nation of Israel when they were disobedient and rejected Him (Deuteronomy 33, Jeremiah 7, Ezekiel 20). In the future He will judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28).

Finally, God will judge every person according to his deeds, and those whose names are not written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). **God is the Judge.**

9.9 LIVING GOD AND KING

He is living and He is King of all. He will reign forever on His throne.

Jeremiah 10:10

“But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

Psalms 45:6

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

God is the Living God and King.

Who is God?

9.10 “WHO IS GOD?”

He is far beyond our ability to understand, but He has revealed some facets of Himself to us and unveiled numerous aspects of

His character. He is holy; He is righteous; He is immutable; He is omnipotent; and He is just. However, God merciful to those who surrender to Him and faithful to save us if we trust in Him.

Notes

10 WHERE IS GOD?

By Glenn Beard

Psalm 139:7-12

7 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.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me;

12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

10.1 EVERYWHERE

In Psalm 139, King David clearly tells us that there is nowhere we can go to escape His Spirit. The psalmist fully recognized the omniscience and omnipresence of the Creator; He is all knowing and everywhere all at once. If we ascend into the heavens or into the depths of hell, if we soar with the eagles or plunge to the bottom of the oceans, He is with us. God leads us, and He maintains us. He gives us light when we are shrouded by the darkness of this world.

In this Psalm, David addresses God's absolute awareness and complete understanding of him. He acknowledges his Lord's capacity to search his innermost being. David declares God's capacity to see him when he sits or rises, and when he walks or lies down. Likewise, Israel's second king expressed the Lord's ability to know his thoughts and his words before they are even spoken. David fully recognized God's omnipresence, confessing wonder at the Creator's hand of protection.

Awestruck by God's majesty, David asks these questions in the seventh verse, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" But the second king of Israel already knew the answer: There is nowhere we can escape from the Spirit and nowhere we can flee to elude His presence. But God is far beyond the confines of the earth.

1 Kings 8:27

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!"

Solomon assembled the elders, heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel in Jerusalem to "...bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the City of David..." to dedicate the Temple of the Lord (1 Kings 8:1). As he stood before the altar and prayed, King Solomon proclaimed that our God is not contained by the confines of this earth. The entirety of the universe, "the heaven and the heaven of heavens" are

unable to encompass the immensity of El Shaddai (Hebrew word for God meaning “Almighty God). **God is everywhere.**

10.2 IN HEAVEN

We know the earth and the created universe cannot contain the immensity of Eloah (Hebrew word meaning Mighty, Powerful One). His power is beyond our comprehension. Psalm 36:5 proclaims, “Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens...” In the book of Jeremiah, as Elohim (Plural version of the Hebrew word El, or possibly Eloah, meaning Might, Strength, Power) continued to admonish Israel:

Jeremiah 23:23-24

23 “Am I a God near at hand,” says the Lord, “And not a God afar off?

24 Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?” says the Lord; “Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the Lord.

The Lord God indeed fills heaven and the earth, but God is not limited to the heavens around us. We recognize that God also inhabits the Heaven beyond. He is seated on His throne in the holy temple. Psalm 11:4 says, “The Lord is in His holy temple, The Lord’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men.” Adonai (Hebrew word for God meaning Master, Ruler, Lord) reigns from His throne in majesty and power demonstrating His Supreme authority (Hebrews 8:1).

The Apostle John tells us, “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven (John 3:13).” So, we know that God the Son descended from Heaven to fulfill His purpose on this earth; He died and rose again to be the propitiation for our sins (Hebrew 2:17, 1 John 2:2, 4:10). Once His mission on this earth was complete, Jesus Christ returned to Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father where He will remain until He returns to claim His church (Luke 24:51, Acts 1:9-11). **God is in Heaven.**

10.3 IN EARTHLY MANIFESTATIONS

Although we know that God cannot be contained, Yahweh (also YHWH, the transliteration of the Hebrew word, meaning Source of Being, Life) chose to manifest himself in physical form for His purposes.

In Exodus 3, God called out to Moses while he was tending the flock of his father-in-law on Horeb, the mountain of God, from a bush that burned but was not consumed. God came to Moses to direct him to go to Egypt and lead His people from bondage. This is where God introduced Himself as “I AM WHO I AM” or simply “I AM” as He instructed Mose to tell the children of Israel when they asked who had sent him.

After God freed His people from Egyptian bondage, He led them through the wilderness of the Red Sea, but He did not leave them alone.

Exodus 13:21-22

21 And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.

22 He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

I AM manifested Himself as a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire by the night. He stayed with them day and night manifesting Himself in a very visual form to give comfort and security to the children of Israel. Upon discovering that they had fled, Pharoah was angry and God hardened his heart so he would chase after them. Being trapped between Pharoah's army and the Red Sea the Israelites were afraid and began to complain, but Moses rebuked them telling them not to be afraid for the Lord will fight for them.

So, God parted the Red Sea, sent an angel to go behind them between His people and the Egyptians. The pillar of cloud, likewise, moved behind them to protect them from Pharoah's army. The children of Israel walked across the seabed on dry ground with walls of water to either side. The Egyptians chased after the Israelites; at dawn God caused the sea to return to its regular state; and every Egyptian chasing God's people was killed. **God is in earthly manifestations.**

10.4 INDWELLING US

Jesus, God the Son, in physical form spent over thirty years living on this earth away from His home in Heaven. Before He left the earth, Christ promised “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— ... for He dwells with you and will be in you (John 14:16,17b).”

Jesus explained to them the events that were about to transpire. After the Savior washed the feet of His disciples, He shared a special meal with them in the upper room that had been prepared for them. During the meal He explained the significance of the act of taking the bread and wine, identified His betrayer, and foretold Peter’s betrayal. He revealed the significance of the imminent hardships He would endure and communicated a new commandment (John 13, Matthew 26). However, Jesus did not leave them hopeless; He explained that He was going to prepare a place for those who believed in Him. The Christ, the Son of the Living God, as Peter had identified Him, also promised that He will be with us always, living inside us.

John 14:19-20

“19 A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”

The Holy Spirit, through Paul's letters, is persistent; **the Spirit of God lives in us.**

Romans 8:9a says, "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God **dwells in you...**"

1 Corinthians 6:19a says, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the **Holy Spirit who is in you...**"

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

(Emphasis Mine)

10.5 GOD IS IN US!

Even though it impossible for our feeble human minds to understand the question, "Where is God?" He has allowed us to get a glimpse into the whereabouts of our Creator. God is everywhere, God is in Heaven, God has manifested Himself in physical forms, and, finally, the most important location of our Savior is indwelling in us; if we know Him.

Where is God?

Notes

11 CAN YOU SEE GOD?

By Rick Hertless

Exodus 33:20-23

But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."

And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock.

"So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.

"Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

11.1 WE CANNOT WITHSTAND GOD'S GLORY

It would appear that our finite bodies cannot withstand the glory of the Lord. Moses could not be permitted to see God's glory.

Once again, it is not God "being mean." It is God's protection.

There will come a day when we will stand before God in all His glory. We will see Him face-to-face. 1 John 3:2 says:

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Even though Moses could not see the full glory of God, he still radiated from His presence; so much so that he had to wear a veil after he came down from the mountain.

Even so, there is more to this Scripture than the ability to see God's glory. He places us in the cleft of the rock for our protection. And if we will be open to Him, we will feel His glory. In our times of struggle, He is there. Sometimes, you might ask, "Is God really there?" Emphatically I can say, yes.

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.

I have had some interesting experiences these past few years. But God has always proven to me that He was there. Through death of a family member, Tornado, Covid or falling down stairs, God has proven that I am in His hands.

11.2 SEEK GOD'S FACE

Though not physically, I have truly seen His face. His eyes are loving, His touch is comforting, His tears show His love. There have been many times I have felt His hand on my shoulder. He has sent messengers to comfort men and family to show me His love. I am truly blessed.

It is His will to bless you in the same way. Do not forget to seek His face, even in the good times. Too many wait for adversity to seek Him. But He is always there, waiting patiently to hear your voice.

Psalm 139:1-5:

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.
O LORD, You have searched me and known me.
You know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought afar off.
You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.
You have hedged me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.

God knows everything about you. Nothing is hidden. If you are not clothed in righteousness, you stand before Him naked. The nakedness of sin will be seen by Him. There is no reason to try to mask or hide your deepest secrets. They are not hidden.

However, He is not seeing your exposure to condemn you. He wants you to see your own sin. When you seek Him, He will be found. He loves you, even in your sin, but you cannot fellowship with Him without repentance. You cannot spend eternity with Him without repentance.

Proverbs 5:21:

For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD,
And He ponders all his paths.

Moses wanted to see God's glory, perhaps not understanding that His true glory is His love for His children. We generally seek God in a physical way. If we do not see physical, material blessings we do not believe God is hearing us or is with us.

But seeking God's face is so much more than His physical presence. Seeking God's face will lead you in His will for your life.

11.3 WHAT DOES "SEEK GOD'S FACE MEAN?"

Seeking God's face means to seek His very heart. Seeking His face is to allow Him to lead and guide you into all righteousness.

Most want to be "Christians" on their own terms. They want God when it is convenient to them, otherwise they want to live "their own" lives. But God is not a Sunday God. He is an everyday God. He wants to commune with His children every day.

Hebrews 4:12-13:

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 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.

Seeking God's face is being willing to open your heart to Him. Maybe you are thinking, "I thought you said He can see everything about me whether I want Him to or not." Yes, but He wants you to come to Him willingly. Freely confessing that you know that you cannot live on your own. Freely admitting that you cannot live for Him without His help.

Notice in Exodus 33 above it says, “So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.” God placed Moses in the rock. He left nothing to chance. He wanted to be sure that Moses was safe. God covered him with His hand. Again, He left nothing to chance and Moses willingly allowed God to place Him where he needed to be.

God wants us to do the same thing. He wants to guide our every step; our every thought. It is only then that He know that we are safely within His will. It is only when we step out on our own that we experience trouble.

11.4 So, CAN YOU SEE GOD OR NOT?

The answer to that question is an emphatic “Yes!” Wait a minute, I thought you said we could not see God. “Yes Again!” In this physical body we cannot see All-Mighty God, but we can see Him in His Creation. We can see Him in the miraculousness of His love.

We can see God in the answers to our prayers. We can see God in His Word. We can see God in those in whom He has given us to serve.

There are many ways to see God. As Christians, it is important to get less in the physical realm and more in the spiritual. God wants to show Himself to us. He wants to be a part of our lives. He is not the Old Man with a white beard, sitting on His throne

waiting for us to “mess up” so He can punish us. No! He is the loving God of all Creation.

He is the God who wants a daily relationship with you. He is the God who wants to show himself to you through blessings that cannot be imagined.

If you will allow Him to, He will place you in the cleft of the rock so you can see Him passing by. He will cover you with His hand to keep you safe. He will speak to you and give you guidance in good times and bad. He is an everyday God who seeks to have a close relationship with His children. All you have to do is say “Yes!”

Can God be seen?

Notes

12 DOES GOD KNOW ALL THINGS?

By Rick Hertless

1Chronicles 28:9

“As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

It is important to know that the book of Chronicles is the synopsis of the Old Testament, much like the book of Acts is the synopsis of the Church. If you want to get an overview of the Old Testament, a good place to start is Chronicles.

12.1 . . . SERVE HIM WITH A LOYAL HEART AND WILLING MIND . . .

This commandment is paramount in serving God and receiving His total blessings. God is not going to force anyone to serve Him. If that were the case, He would force everyone to serve Him. God is looking for willing hearts; hearts that love Him. Not hearts that are focused on another god or another agenda.

We have discussed many times the need to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all soul, all your mind and all your strength (Mark 12:30).” But, is that what you do? 2 Corinthians 13:5 tells us to examine ourselves daily to ensure that we are in the faith. Is your heart loyal? Is your mind willing to hear? God will speak if we will listen.

This lesson is about the ability of God to know everything. It is the goal of this lesson to settle that dispute. However, realistically, you must settle it for yourself. We can discuss it, but you must make your own determination as to whether God knows everything you do and trust Him to show you more than you think you know. That is a very important fact to be aware of. If you do not realize in your own heart that God knows you better than you know yourself, you will not be willing to be loyal nor have a willing mind.

The question of loyalty only comes to fruition to those who trust the ones they are loyal to. The question of the willingness of the mind to want to follow must be answered by acknowledging that same trust.

2 Chronicles 16:9

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him . . .”

Notice in the above Scripture it says, He shows “Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him . . .” That does not mean that He is not strong for the unloyal. It means, those who are not loyal to Him do not recognize His strength so they do not trust. Instead, they trust in their own understanding. Therefore, they do not get the benefits of His strength in their lives.

Luke 12:6-7

“Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Romans 2:16

. . . in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

There are no secrets that are held from God. To Him, your life is an open book. Your very thoughts are exposed to Him. Your heart is read by Him minute by minute. So, what does that mean? Does it mean that if you were to have a bad thought and then die you would be excluded from eternity with Him? God forbid! No, it means, you cannot hide your secrets from God. He wants you to share everything with Him; willingly. He wants to be a part of your life and help you to become more like Christ each and every day.

Paul said, “Pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17).” That simply means to have God on your mind always. Always be willing to hear the voice of God and be guided by Him. If you focus on Him, you will know His voice. You will be focused on His Word.

12.2 . . . FOR THE LORD SEARCHES ALL HEARTS AND UNDERSTANDS ALL THE INTENT OF THE THOUGHTS.

God constantly searches hearts. Why? So He can look for a reason to zap you and make your life miserable? No! It is His

intent to bless you. As He searches your heart, He can guide you to the way that will bless you most. If you read the above Scripture, it tells you why He searches your heart; so He can understand the intent of your heart. Again, not so He can discipline you. Rather, so He can guide you to the blessing of walking with Him rather than the world.

The intent of the world is to lead you to the path of destruction. The intent of God is to lead you to the pathway of eternal blessing. God's love reaches further than any of us can understand or imagine.

12.3 IF YOU SEEK HIM, HE WILL BE FOUND BY YOU . . .

Seek God; you will find Him. Allow Him to be a part of your life every day. God is not a Sunday God. In fact, I will be so bold as to say, if you seek Him Sundays only, you do not know God. It is time to repent and come to Him. God is an every day God. He will not lead you to blessings one day a week while you live for the world for the rest of the week. His guidance must be sought each day. That is the only way to live the abundant life of John 10:10.

Revelation 3:19:

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”

God is calling you every day. Seek and you will find. His promise to you is that He will always be there. But He will not force Himself on you.

12.4 THE WARNING

“. . . but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.” What does it mean to “forsake” God? It means your rejection of Him; He will continue to call until you reject Him. He will not wait forever. He will call and His patience is longsuffering. But it will end. When that is, is between the person and God. Each is on a case-by-case basis.

Matthew 7:21 says:

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

Notice, He says, “Many will say . . .” This is a stern warning. There will be those who are deceived or have deceived themselves. Is this warning given to scare you? No! It is given for you to ensure that you are in a relationship with Jesus. True Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship. It is actual communication between you and the Father through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Religions of the world simply try to be as good as they can be to codify God. It is about placating to ensure that your “ticket to Heaven” has been stamped. But they do not know Jesus; they do not know God. There is no relationship.

There is a religion of Christianity, but it is not that of the true Believer. Like the other religions of the world, they are trying to get their “ticket punched” and live their life the way THEY want to live it. God says we must live our life the way He wants us to. How does He want us to live our life? In a continuous relationship with Him.

God handles each one of us differently. There is no formula. But for you, if you call yourself a Believer, He expects you to come to Him daily. He expects you to focus on Him and allow Him to speak to you. You cannot ignore what He says. But if you are a true Believer, if you truly know Jesus, there will be a change in your life that is evident not only to you, but the others as well.

Can God be found?

Notes

13 CAN GOD DO ALL THINGS?

By Rick Hertless

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.

According to Josephus, Baruch was the scribe of Jeremiah. Maybe your asking, “Who then is Josephus?” Josephus was a secular historian in the 4th century A.D. who gave excellent account of Jewish history. His accurate accounts have given credibility to Biblical text to the secular world. While most Christians need no validation of the Bible, the secular world does not consider it as an accurate historical account. Josephus has vanquished many arguments against the validity of the Word of God.

The Lord told Jeremiah to buy the Field of Hanamel, who was a cousin of Jeremiah. The Field was located in Benjamin, near Jerusalem. The purpose was to encourage the Jews to know that they will once again possess Israel.

From this purchase, Jeremiah states the greatness of God.

13.1 ‘AH, LORD GOD!

He begins by giving God praise and proclaiming Him to be the Lord of Jeremiah. In other words, Jeremiah is saying, “You are in

charge.” Christians tend to forget that Jesus is Lord. And if they do proclaim that He is Lord, it is evident that He is Lord over everything except what is most important to them. In other words, Christians want to be in charge of their own lives. But as for me, every time I try to take charge of my life, everything goes awry.

13.2 YOU HAVE MADE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH BY YOUR GREAT POWER AND OUTSTRETCHED ARM.

God is all-powerful; He is omnipotent. There is nothing that has been made that was not made by Him. Jeremiah wants it to be understood that, no matter the circumstances, we are not governed by circumstances. Our lives are not guided by circumstance. If we know Jesus as Lord and Savior, we are guided by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In Jeremiah 32:25 he says to God:

And You have said to me, O Lord GOD, “Buy the field for money, and take witnesses”—yet the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.’ ” God’s response was, “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?”

When you look at your circumstances, do you declare yourself to be in a problem or are you allowing God to be the solution? He says He has the hairs on our heads numbered (Matthew 10:30). That means, He cares deeply for you. He knows everything about you. He knows your needs, desires, struggles, and calamities. He is there with the solution, but He wants you to

communicate with Him. Why? So, when the solution happens, it will be God who gets the glory. You will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is He that you can turn to with needs and celebrations as well.

God wants you to come to Him with celebration and adulation. He is not the genie in the bottle that you rub only when you need something. He is All-Mighty God who loves you and wants to be part of your everyday life.

Psalm 147:5 says:

Praise the LORD!
For it is good to sing praises to our God;
For it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.

Daniel 4:34-35:

And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever . . .

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

God wants to be part of our daily lives. He wants to share our joys and sorrows. It is His grace that brings us through both.

13.3 THERE IS NOTHING TOO HARD FOR YOU (MEANING GOD).
What are your struggles today? Have you brought them to the Lord or are you waiting until all else fails? God wants to be first in

our lives. Jesus being Lord of your life means that He guides your steps. It is not up to us to take a step and then ask if we did right. It is up to us to ask God when and where we place our steps.

Jeremiah was a great prophet in the Bible, yet he had to learn to trust God as well. God told him to buy the land near Jerusalem, yet he questioned God. Even he did not realize the total power of God.

Maybe you are the same. I realize that I do not fully comprehend the power of God and what He will accomplish in my life if I will allow Him to. It is up to me to act.

Jeremiah had the decision to buy the land God had given him or decide to trust in his own understanding. You have the same decision. Will you trust God or lean into your own understanding?

Ephesians 3:20-21:

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

He will do “exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think . . .” What an awesome promise. Why would you want to trust yourself? Why would you want to lean into your own understanding? He will do above what you ask or think. In other words, your imagination cannot outdo God.

He will do for us “according to the power that works in us.” That power is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God. We are indwelt with the power of God. “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (1 Corinthians 3:16)? In the Temple, God dwelled in the Holy of Holies. That means that His Spirit indwells that which is holy. The Scripture says that you are indwelt by the power of the Holy Spirit. You were made holy by accepting the sacrifice of Jesus. Because of His sacrifice, He sent you a Comforter, a Holy Spirit to guide you through the cumbersome tasks of this Earth. If you will trust His Holy Spirit, He will take you on a journey you have never imagined. He will show you things and bless you in ways you could not have imagined.

The power within you wants to lead your life. Unfortunately, most Christians are afraid of that power. They are afraid to ask for the blessings of that power. They are afraid to step out and believe they can achieve more than they have ever imagined for the Kingdom of God.

Make no mistake, I am not talking about blessings of the flesh. I am referring to blessings for the Kingdom. These are eternal blessings; eternal rewards. Strangely, when I begin to discuss eternal rewards with Christians, they seem to be disappointed. It seems as though they would prefer to have houses or cars or material possessions right now rather than the eternal. They do not understand the eternal. I must confess, neither do I fully

comprehend them, but I recognize that they are ETERNAL! That means forever.

The more I grow in Christ, and perhaps the more I grow in age, I look at the eternal rather than the present. I would have to admit, it is more difficult to look at the eternal when you are 20 than it is when you are in your 60's. Nevertheless, that is the reason for this lesson. It is my prayer that no matter your age, you will squander no longer the power that is within you to reach new heights for Christ; for the Kingdom.

I squandered most of my youth. God has allowed me to understand more now. He has given me another opportunity to experience and share His power with others.

I implore you, do not squander what God has given you. Do not wait until you are older. Start today! God wants to give you the abundant life of eternity now. Do not get me wrong. It is nice to drive nice cars and live in houses. But if that is where your goals lie, you are missing the greatest blessing of all. You are missing the exceeding abundance that God has for you today. God may decide to give you material blessings if He knows you can handle them, but your goals should reside in the furtherance of the Kingdom.

We are here by and for His pleasure. It is best to remember that. He wants what is best for us and what is best for us is God.

Is there anything God cannot do?

Notes