

God: The Living God

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Date: 12 September 2013

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[0 : 00] Okay, boy do I feel overwhelmed today. I was on the way here and Zach said well if you're not overwhelmed by this then something would be wrong with your spirit.

So over the holiday we just had I had a chance to go on a five and a half hour car ride with my brother, my sister-in-law and my three nieces all in the same car and that's their seven, six and eleven months and the oldest one Addison she really talks a lot about God and always talks about what God is teaching her and telling me new memory verses.

And on the way down there to South Georgia she said where does God come from Uncle Clay? Who made God? And I was like whoa man.

And I just kind of didn't expect that to come from her and I kind of just said I tried to sound all theological and tried to let me come down to your level little girl kind of thing.

And I was just tongue tied. I couldn't even spit it out. But I basically said no one made God like you were made. God made you but no one made God.

[1 : 17] And that's the best I could come up with. She went okay. And like in that moment while my head is still spinning it made me realize that the very person of God is so simple that a seven year old can understand it.

And so absolutely complex that it's made the greatest theologians just go crazy because they can't really fully grasp who God is. And so how we think about God will determine every other thing in life. Most all the men in the past who have taught the word of God said that you have to start at the very beginning you have to start with who God is. And then after that who man is in light of in light of that.

So how do you think of the living God? And A.W. Tozer, he wrote, When we are able to extract from any man a complete answer to the question, what comes into your mind when you think about God, we might predict with certainty the spiritual future of that man.

Without doubt, the mightiest thought the mind can entertain is his thoughts of God. And the weightiest word in the language is its word for God. And so why is that true?

[2 : 43] Because our thoughts and beliefs about God Almighty will affect every single area of our life, public, private, who we are in front of people, who we are behind closed doors, how we treat other people around us, those we love as well as those that we tend to hate.

It will affect not just our actions, but our motives behind actions. It will impact every area of our life. And how big or how little God is to you will determine the outcome of your life in a lot of ways.

So I definitely feel overwhelmed at this. So my goal tonight is you're going to be lost. Because I was lost all day and all day yesterday.

But I just hope you're not utterly lost. I hope that you're able to grab a few things. Because this is not the kind of stuff that you talk about typically with your friends. I hope you do after this.

So Moses is called the greatest servant of God in the whole Bible. He really is. He's called that. He had so much entrusted to him by God.

[3 : 51] And on the mountain here, he experienced God's covenant faithfulness. God is saying that, I remember my covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And I'm going to come down to deliver my people from slavery.

And it's a divine human interaction where it leaves Moses just shocked with the sheer reality of who God is.

He's terrified, in fact. And the reality of God is so huge that no human terms can really grasp it. And so a point where thinkers like me are forced to just say, Oh well, you know, that when all our reason fails and our intellectual powers can't go any higher, we just have to bow and humble adoration and worship of who God is.

John Calvin, definitely one of the greatest theologians for sure. He wrote, It is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God and come down after such contemplation to look into himself.

Very powerful. You have to first understand who you are after looking at God. Because you think that you're awesome, and you think that you're a good person, and in the light of everybody else, but then when you actually approach God, you see that you're not.

[5 : 20] And that's true for everybody, and those in Scripture as well. So, names are important in the Bible. They don't just, names always have intention in Scripture.

I don't know why your parents named you what they did. I really do think the only reason my parents named me Clay was they thought it was a cool Southern name. That was really the only reason.

So, my brother's name is Lee, so that also ties in with that idea. So, but still, in Scripture, someone's name signifies their character, their ability, or their mission, typically.

And especially when they're named by God Himself. Adam named his wife Eve because she was the mother of all life. That's what her name means. Abraham was, Abram was named that because he would be the father of all nations, or many nations.

And Jesus named that definitely an intentional name, meaning that He would save His people. He'd be the Savior. So, names are given for a reason.

[6 : 27] And the name that we read here, that God actually tells Moses, I was thinking, probably pretty soon, I want to show my niece, the oldest two, the Prince of Egypt movie, so they could actually start to kind of understand some of this stuff.

Pretty good movie to start off short with, for sure. But, God's name, the most common, the most important name in the Old Testament, is what we read here.

I am who I am. And, it is a Hebrew verb for, to be, or to exist.

And, so simply put, this is the simplest thing I could say. We're going to talk about how complex it is the rest of the night. But, the simplest way I could say it is that God was saying, I will be who I will be.

That's what He was telling Moses in the simplest sense, I believe. And, that, in our English translations of the Bible, whenever you see, like a capital, all capitals, L-O-R-D, it's a substitute word, a lot of the time, for, a four letter name, in Hebrew, Y-H-W-H, and when you read it, it sounds like, Yahweh.

[7 : 46] That's what it sounds like. So, we think it would be pronounced that way. And, the Hebrews regarded this name with such reverence and awe, they didn't even speak it out loud, because they were afraid that they would use it in a vain way, and, break the commandment.

So, they only, and usually they didn't really even write it either. they had such fear and reverence for it. And so, so, translators would actually, write, Adonai, Lord, my Lord.

And, the English translations follow the same pattern. that's why it's the capital L-O-R-D. And, it's really not a satisfactory, when you really look at it, way of interpreting that, because, it's very general.

Like, names are supposed to be specific. So, not quite that satisfactory, but the importance of this name, that can't be underestimated, it's used, 6,828 times in the Old Testament.

That's more than three times, for the name Elohim, which God has also called, that's three times greater than that. And, it shows that, that God does have a certain character, a mission, and aim, for what he, for who he is.

[8 : 59] And, even the word Jehovah, originated as an attempt to pronounce, you know, um, pronounce the consonants of Yahweh. It, where you hear the word Jehovah, it was a, they would say the vowels from the word Adonai, and there really are no, no, uh, no vowels in the Old Hebrew.

So, like, it, so it comes out that way, Jehovah. So, that's where they get that from. So, you can kind of like, tell the witnesses that, if they show up at your door, that really, that's not God's original, original name.

That was a made up, substitute name for who God was. Um, so, really not. Uh, so when we think about this, we're going to, try to, man, everything we're going to talk about, is all, connected to the previous point, okay?

Like, it really is, you know, it's going to sound like I might even go over some of the same, ground, but, that's not my intention. So, what is God trying to communicate to us, through his name?

And, I think I have five things, but the first one is, is that God is one. God is one. And, I'll give you some ways to kind of explain this, but, it basically, it means that God is unified in his being.

[10:13] Like, he is unified. Unified. And, the old, older theologians would say, this is, call it the simplicity of God. Um, they say unified today, because simple, sounds like, duh, kind of, kind of thing, but it doesn't mean, quite that.

And, but in the truest sense, it means that God is without, parts or sections. Um, at the same time, we can see different parts of God's character, emphasized at different times.

God is not chopped up and divided up. He is one in his being, at all times. God is without, like, components.

He's not, um, he's completely God, at all times. And there is no potential in God. God couldn't change anything about himself. He couldn't improve anything about himself.

We all, we all could have better potential, or hopefully most of us, could really work on who we are. But, God couldn't change or improve anything. He simply is. He simply is God.

[11:16] And he reveals himself, in all his fullness, in such a simple way. Just saying, like, this is me. This is who I am. And it's supposed to be, kind of an overwhelming thought.

And that, um, God is, all that he is, at all times. At all times. He doesn't cease to be, good.

He doesn't cease to be, loving at any moment. He's always, fully God, at all times. All of who he is. And so, it's supposed to be, it's supposed to be a stunning idea, that overwhelms the mind, of like, I can see, the depth of this, canyon, but I can't reach the bottom, kind of feeling, when you actually, ponder who God is.

So, in relation to, God's attributes, okay, um, in relation to God's attributes, when we say that, how that relates to the simplicity of God, or the unity of God, um, some of you may know, but, most people kind of divide God's attributes, into like, two different categories.

They say that he has, communicable, attributes, which mean like, love, goodness, kindness, those kind of things, mercy, and they're communicable, because we, as humans, can, somewhat understand them, and somewhat experience them.

[12:37] Uh, we can relate to them, to some degree, but not perfectly, but we can. And then, the other category, they put as attributes in, are called, incommunicable, meaning that we have no idea, what this is.

Um, there are attributes like, omnipotence, God is all powerful, omnipresence, he can be at, presently at all places, at all time, we have no idea, what that's like. So, God in his attributes, and so, how does this relate, to God's unity, okay, this is a big deal.

It basically means, that, the being of God, and the attributes of God, are one and the same. And that, they're so closely, tied together, that they act, all at once.

And that, um, man, even just to think about this, just blows my mind, that his character, is one with his being, in such a way, that, um, he is his attributes.

Okay, I'm going to give you, an example of this. Okay, um, it doesn't just mean, that God, has justice, it means that he is, just.

[13:53] Like, he is the very definition, of these things. Not that he has goodness, it's that he is, goodness. See the difference? Like, we can, we can do those things, we can have those things, but God fully is, the definition, of those things.

And, that, um, at the end of the day, you could almost just say, uh, that God's attributes, are not chopped up, into single little things. They're not held together, by some sort of, divine glue.

He's all one. And, that, the truth is, why do we balance, the attributes? Why do we try, to chop him up? You ever done that?

When you read the Bible, you said, oh man, God is being like, wrathful right here. He's being so just, he's like, pouring out his wrath, on sin, and evil. And then you read, a little later, like, oh man, God is being so loving here.

You ever do that, when you read the Word? Like, you see like, that's what he's doing here, and that's what he's doing here. And, it's okay to, to do that, to a degree, but you need to understand, when it comes to, God is not thinking that way, about himself at all.

[15:01] He's not. And, in truth, like, we balance the attributes of God, because we can't really, understand who God is. We, we try to, we have to chop him up, to understand him.

And that's why we do that. That's what we do, when we read the Word. We think that he's being, good here, and, and just and wrathful here. But, why? Because it's, it's not possible, for human

beings, like you and I, to really bear, on our souls, the full weight, of who God is. We can't do it. So we have to, divide him up, to like, take him in, if you want to, think about it that way. And, and we can't take the full blast, of who God is, all at one time. Later on, in Exodus 33, Moses says, he's on the mountain, and he says, God, show me, your glory. And, some of you might remember, but, but God says, Moses, you know, I will make my goodness, pass before you. And, he hit him in like, the cleft of the rock, and he said, I'll make my goodness, pass before you. He says, but my face, you cannot see, because no man, can see me, and live. He'll die, if he sees me. [16:16] And, as if he was saying, to Moses, like, you are a creature, and yet a sinful creature. And if you encounter me, for all who I am, you'll be utterly destroyed. Like that's, just think about, the way of that. That God said, I'll allow you, I'll allow my goodness, to pass before you, but you fully cannot, encounter, who I am. It's just not, possible. And if that happens, you would be, utterly consumed. So, throughout, the whole scripture, we see God, accommodating us. Like all the revelation of God, is, is accommodating, to us, as humans. As humans. Like, like a ray of light, light, you know, that we see, come through the window, or, or the light that just comes from the sun, in general. We, we cannot bear it, unless it goes through that prism, right? And it breaks it down, into colors, and things for us to like, see, and comprehend. And, God is that way, similarly. [17:19] He, he, he comes down, after Mount Sinai, Moses does, and his face is lit up. Remember that? Like, so lit up, that the people can't even look at Moses' face. And that was just for God showing him his goodness. And they couldn't even look at Moses. How much less could they really, like, encounter God? It's, uh, we are creatures, we are created things, and we're, we're sinful. We can't bear, on our souls, the full weight of the person of God. It would just wipe us out. So, it's a consistent thing, that God is, like, graciously, accommodating us, breaking himself down, in ways that we can understand. Uh, the tabernacle was a great example of that. God said, I'm going to come here, I'm going to show you what this is like. He kind of, stepped down in a way, to show us, who he was. So, our finite minds, with its limitations, cannot grasp the full intensity of, the person and character of God. It's just not, possible. But I want to, I just have a couple places for you to turn, turn to Deuteronomy, just a little lower from Exodus. Deuteronomy, uh, chapter 29, and go to verse 29. [18:37] So the temple, the tabernacle, all these things, were like a prism, of God's accommodating revelation, to us. He was stepping down, to show us who he was. So, should this discourage us, could I, if I ask you the question, can God be known? Because you know how, some of you are going to say that, well, God must just can't be known. He's so grand, and he's so, out there, we just can't understand anything about God. Not true. We can know God. It's a true statement. Okay? But at the same time, it is also true to say that we cannot fully, or exhaustively, know God. It's not possible. We don't even know ourselves, or, or our best friend, or maybe a future spouse. Like, you would never, you can't fully even know them. So, we just can't contain him. But he can be known. And so, let this verse encourage us. This is Deuteronomy 29, verse 29. It says, The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us, and to our children forever, and we may do all the words of this law. [19:44] So, there are some things that God has decided not to show us, and at the same time, we just can't. Like, we're not capable of comprehending certain things of God. But don't be discouraged. God has revealed all we need to know. To know him, to know about salvation, to know about our need. So, do you get that? It's like this, this idea of how we can't fully, exhaustively know God, but he has given us all we need to know to walk with him, and to glorify him again. Job, who had a pretty crazy encounter with God, this is something that he said, after thinking about God, he said, Behold, these are but the outskirts of his ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of him, but the thunder of his power, who can understand?

Like, even when we fully, we think that we know a lot about God, we can just at the end of the day, just say, these are just the outskirts of who he is. We don't, we can't fully dive into that.

So, God is one. You know the greatest commandment, the love of the Lord your God, the heart, soul, mind, and strength. That was quoted out of Deuteronomy 6, and right before that, Moses says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one.

[21 : 03] That's what he was trying to say. So, secondly, God is eternal. The second thing from, back from Exodus, God is eternal.

He is forever. I am who I am. And in one sense, he's saying that God is eternal. That he always has been, and that he always will be.

That God had no beginning, no origin, like we did. So, on the island of Patmos, the apostle John, when he wrote the book of Revelation, at the very beginning of the book, it says that God said, I'm the Alpha, and the Omega, says the Lord God, who was, or excuse me, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Was, is, is to come, the Almighty. and, you sorority, fraternity people in here, you know, Alpha, Omega, the beginning, and the end, and, the alphabet, and Greek, and that's, so he encompasses all things.

So, John is, saying that the living, living God encompasses all things. He has no beginning, and he will have no end. Just, pfff, in your mind.

[22 : 25] It means that, also, there are no successions of time with God. You ever thought about that? Like, God is not limited to time, like we are. Time is something that finite creatures deal with, and, he's not bound by time, and that he sees, the past, present, and future, equally.

Like, no. Like, we can only, like, comprehend the present, somewhat. It's kind of like, if you go, like, to outer space, you can, like, see a lot of the earth, kind of like, right before you, but just here, we can just see this room.

It's, that's a lame analogy. Now, all analogies fall short of this, but all, everything, of time, is presently before God, vividly, like he sees it, all, at all times.

So, there are no successions of moments with God. So, without understanding, though, we can rest and trust in him about where we are in life.

He's struggling with your past. He knows about it. And he's, he's, he's dealing with it. He knows about your present. Whether you come here and you're stressed out about something, or you're just having a hard time, he knows.

[23 : 37] He knows what's going to happen to you in the future. And if you belong to him, you shouldn't have anything to fear. Nothing catches God off guard, right? He's eternal. And, so, when he answers, I am who I am, that nobody created me.

I, I tried to tell my niece that, or no one had the power to bring me into existence. No one shaped who I was, my personality. I had, I had no beginning.

So, Psalm 90, you can just make a note of this, but Psalm 90, verse 2, says, before the mountains were brought forth, this is actually Moses, same guy, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth, and the world, from everlasting, to everlasting, you are God.

From everlasting, to everlasting, you are God. God is eternal in his being. So, all these things, couldn't be true if the other wasn't true.

You know, God is one, God is eternal, like, it's going to keep going. So, the third one, third thing from this text is, God is, big word, immutable. I-M-M-U-T-A-B-L-E.

[24 : 54] Immutable. And, simple terms, it means that God is unchanging. He's unchangeable. I am who I am. In another sense, God is saying that, I will not change.

I will never change. God forever remains the same. He remains the same in his nature, in his attributes, the same in his purposes, and the same in his promises, at all times.

Like, nothing changes about God. And, I've heard someone say that, man, God changes his mind. like, when they're reading the Bible, I'm like, whoa, really? God changes his mind about this?

You think this thing caught him off guard? If he is, he's not really a God worth worshipping. If that's true, he really does take away who God is. So, God cannot be anything other than he is.

In Malachi, chapter 3, verse 6, God says, for I am the Lord, and I do not change. In 2 Samuel, I think it's David that says this, or it might be the prophet Samuel, he says that God is not a man that he should change his mind, or the son of man that he should repent.

[26 : 02] Like, God doesn't ever do that. He doesn't have a need to. There is no force or influence upon the person of God to change who he is. He controls all things.

Psalms 102, verse 27, says, you are the same, and your years have no end. So, God is immutable, unchangeable.

So, how unlike, unlike us completely, right? Man, I think I've changed about four or five times a day, at least.

So, we often wake up on the wrong side of the bed, and, we have mood swings, you know, like we're really loving one minute, very hateful the next minute. And, and think about, in relationship to the attributes of God, when we say that God is immutable, it means that, like, you and I can, can be good, and be loving, but God is loving, or he is love, and he is good.

He is his attributes. I'm like us. We change all the time. You ever want someone to say, like, she used to be such a loving woman, but then when her husband died, she just turned into, like, a really cruel, cold lady.

[27 : 24] You see that? Like, something happens to us, and we change, but, but God is not like that. He doesn't have these, these shifts in his character, and who he is, at all. So, and like I was saying just previously, it's tied to the, the previous thing we talked about, is that in God's attributes, it's not that he just, ceases to be one, and he's something else.

Like, how many of you would look at, some passages in the Old Testament, or in Revelation, in the New Testament, where God is coming back to, to judge, and make war, and he's going to destroy people? How many of you would say, that's, that's the wrath of God, like, that is the just wrath of God?

Most of us would probably think of that, and that's true, but at the same time, that is the act of a loving, good God. At the same time. Why? Because, like, to allow evil to thrive, and destroy, is not loving.

God is love. He will destroy what's evil. A good definition of, perfect love, is hatred of all evil. So, God doesn't cease to be, one thing. He's fully himself, at all times.

So, a crazy idea, he's unchanging. He doesn't get depressed, and get angry, and like, we're having like a thunder, you know, and a storm in our world, because God's upset, you know, like, he, he is, completely who he is, at all times.

[28 : 47] So, we have no reason to fear that, right? That God is going to change. How many of you have, broken your word, or had someone break their word, to you? Like, it's not going to happen, with God. God finishes, what he starts.

So, when you, we're here reading the New Testament, I'm confident, that he who began a good work in you, will complete it. God's not going to change. Like, he's going to finish, the work he began, in you.

So, James, chapter 1, verse 7, says this, every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or changed, or shadow due to change.

He doesn't, doesn't shift, he doesn't change, he's the same, at all times. God is, immutable.

Fourthly, we've got two more, hang in there, if your mind's not sparing already.

God is, independent. God is, independent. And, another term we can say, is that God is, self-existing.

[29 : 54] Self-existing. That, it means that God doesn't, need us, or any of the rest of his creation, at all. But, yet at the same time, we can glorify him, and bring him joy.

Okay? So, I am who I am. Nothing, that God, when he said that to Moses, there's nothing, he was in the burning, the idea of the burning bush.

That was probably like, the best analogy, that, God could probably give us, of who he is. It's, it's a, pure fire. A fire that's not made out of, components, right?

God is one. It's not dependent, on the bush, for his existence. It's just there. It's just a fire. A fire, of, fires.

And so, huh, well, I just keep thinking, about all this. It's not dependent, on anything. And that, if that's true, that, God has his own power, and source, in himself, and that God is all his other things, what happened?

[31 : 05] Like, Moses, couldn't fully take in who he was. He was overwhelmed. He was terrified, and looking at this, it's like, it shocked him, made him tremble. He said, take the, the sandals off

your feet, you're on holy ground.

So, people are, very man-centered, and not really thinking, clearly about God. I mean, I used to say this, so I'm guilty, but don't ever say, I used to say this, a long time ago, I will say, but, is that, man, God created you, because he really wanted you, and really needed you, to be with him.

And that he was lonely, and he'd rather have you, in his life, and so he made you, for that reason, like lovey-dovey, fuzzy kind of stuff. Not true.

Not true at all. God did not make us, because he needed us, at all. He was perfectly satisfied, and joyful, in who he was, for all eternity. And, turn here, Acts 17, real quick.

God is telling Moses, only I can fully know, who I am. And I didn't create you, because I was lonely, and bored. So, this is the Apostle Paul, in Greece, Athens, verse 24, Acts 17, verse 24, Acts 17, verse 24, The God, who made the world, and everything in it, being Lord of heaven, and earth, does not live, in temples, made by man, nor is he served, by human hands, as though he needed, anything, since he himself, gives to all mankind, life, breath, and everything.

[32 : 55] Let that verse, just blow your mind, he doesn't need anything. We need so much, we do, every day, we need a lot. We're dependent, on so many things, but God is completely, solitarily, independent.

He doesn't need, anything. So, you may ask the question then, like, why did God make us then?

So, I'm going to let somebody else, answer that.

So, for all eternity, the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, complete, joyful union, as one, the Godhead. In John 17, Jesus said, Father, I pray that, those whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, may be with me where I am, in heaven, he's talking about, to see my glory, the glory that I had with you, before the world existed.

See that? The Father, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, before the world was made, complete union, and joy, and satisfaction. So, God didn't create us, because he lacked anything, but rather, his creation was an expression, of his glory, and his excellence.

Okay? So, I'll let, St. Augustine, speak on that. He says, when we have been, excuse me, he's talking to God, he says, what would have been lacking, in your goodness, which you yourself are, if even these things, of creation, had never been made, or never, or had remained unformed.

[34 : 30] You didn't create them, out of any lack, but out of the abundance, of your goodness. You ordered them, and turned them toward, you, but not because, your joy had to be, perfected by them.

Hear that? That's really good. You didn't create them, out of any lack, lack, but out of the abundance, of your goodness. And you ordered them, and turned them, turned them into form, but not because, your joy had to be, perfected by them.

Really powerful light. So God created, as an expression, an overflow, of his greatness, and glory. That's why you're here. Why I'm here. So fifthly, and lastly, God is, from this text, back in Exodus, I learned that God, is the creator, and the sustainer, of all things.

I am, who I am. God is, an inexhaustible, source of power. Remember, like the flame, wasn't dependent, on anything. Not a combustion, of other energy sources, like a lot of fire is.

It was just him. He wasn't dependent, on anything. He's, all powerful. Like he has a, a never ending, source of energy, and power, within himself. And it never ends.

[35 : 43] So any power, that you and I have, like even me, just doing this, and, to you actually, breathing right now, that's all like, delegated, by God.

Even Satan's power. And at any moment, he could take it. Like he, you would cease to be, without him, completely. Turn to, Isaiah 40, real fast.

And if God is all powerful, it means he is not threatened, by anything, at all. Nothing gives him power. power. He's the source, of all power, in existence.

So, Isaiah 40, verse 28. This whole chapter, is kind of about, the subject we're on. But Isaiah 40, verse 28, says, have you not known, have you not heard, Yahweh, it's that word, see it, is the everlasting God, the creator, the creator, of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint, or grow weary. His understanding, is unsearchable. He gives power, to the faint. And to him, who has no might, he increases strength.

[37 : 03] See all that? It's everything, we've talked about tonight, in this one verse. Is that God is eternal, he's everlasting, he's the creator, of all things. He is, he is, a never ending power, source in himself, he doesn't grow weary.

And that he knows, all things, he's, his understanding, is unsearchable, his knowledge, is infinite. Right? And he gives power, to us, weak, feeble, creatures.

And so, if God is that way, he's the creator, of all things, visible, and invisible, that's, what a lot of people, would say, it encompasses all things, really.

Then, as John Piper said, everything in the universe, plugs into him, and if he ever shuts down, there would be, absolute nothingness. Like everything, comes out of him, he's the creator, and sustainer, of all things.

He is an, an absolute reality. Okay? So, I could go on about that, but we'll move on. So, some quick application, quick, quick, application.

[38 : 12] Right? Tying this back into the beginning, when I said that your thoughts about God, are going to determine, a lot of your life, there's going to be a time in your life, where you're going to really wish, that God was big.

Like, you're going to wish that, a little puny, tiny God, is not going to help you at all. Like, you're going to be saying, like, I wish, there was, a huge God, in my situation, right now.

And, in 2006, I was in the hospital, in Atlanta, and I, I just received, word, that I was like, a lot sicker, than I thought it was.

They had been doing some of my tests wrong. And, I was definitely, like, like, devastated. And, I realized that, that death, and, lung transplant, and things like that, were like, very close, very close. A lot closer than I thought. And, and in that moment, I needed, like a big, glorious, sovereign God. I didn't need a little, pansy, man-like God.

[39 : 17] And, Martin Luther, told one of his opponents, in the Reformation, Roman, Roman theologian, he, he told him, your thoughts of God, are too human.

That's what he said. That was like, his whole argument. Like, you think of God, too much in a man-centered way, you try to, pack him in, into your pocket. And, in those moments, you're going to really want, like a big God.

And what's really, the good news is, that God is, far bigger than you could, ever imagine. And far greater than you could, want him to be. So, so, two things real fast.

Strive to know God. Strive to know God. Unless I'm mistaken, our pastor here, if any of you are going to do this, he's going to, we're possibly, we're going to do this, on the attributes?

No. On the attributes? Okay, stop in the air. Okay, well, I won't talk about it then. But, you should, you should study the attributes of God.

[40 : 20] Okay? We've, we've thought about doing, that here, but, two very good books, Our Great God and Savior. You can come look at these later. And then, the attributes of God, Arthur Pink, really good books.

They'll kind of, blow your mind, and increase your, view of who God is, biblically. So, strive to know God. Okay? Strive to know God for who He is.

Who He is, and who He says He is, through the Word. God is an objective, living reality. Okay? Like, He's, He's, our personal thoughts, and opinions, and feelings, don't really matter, at all, when it comes to God.

And that should be a good thing. God is who He is. And so, it causes us to, like, humbly, we need to strive to, like, conform our views of God, to what God says about Himself. You have to really, really fight for that.

And, to meditate on the person of God. And I think, yep, the last thing I wanted you to look at, was Isaiah 6, real quick.

[41 : 26] So, strive to know God. Isaiah 6. I could have tied this in anywhere, really, tonight.

Verse 1. The psalm that Wes sang earlier, holy, holy, holy, is kind of a, a picture of what this passage is, but, this is the prophet Isaiah, he says, in the year that the king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

And above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings. With two they covered their face, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. Seraphim, I think, literally means, like, flaming ones, like, almost like so bright, flaming, majestic beings.

And they were flying with two, they were covering their face, so they couldn't actually look upon God, when they came toward God. Very reverent.

And it says that, one called to another, saying, holy, holy, holy, holy, there's the Trinitarian idea, is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory.

[42 : 48] And the foundation of a threshold shook, and the voice of Him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said, Isaiah, woe is me, for I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

So after this intense encounter with God, for the rest of the book of Isaiah, there's a name that really comes out a lot, that Isaiah brings up. He calls Him the Holy One of Israel, as a result of this encounter.

He says this over and over. And the experience was so intense, that it nearly killed Him. It nearly killed Him. But it transformed Him, right? Into a humble, faithful servant.

A bold man who spoke the Word of God, in a broken, sinful world. And then He later, the same prophet, foretold of the Messiah coming, Jesus. So, there's a lot of things, that we all like to boast about, right?

Most of us in here, could boast, or we like to boast, in one of these areas. You would like to probably boast in, your strength, like if you really, go to the gym, like you're at the school, kind of pumping iron, and you just want to, look in the mirror like, every angle, guys do that all the time.

[44 : 12] Flexing in every way. You think you're, awesome, you're really not. Those of you, you don't like the gym, those of you, you don't like the gym, you like to kind of, work out your brain, like, I'm smart, I'm really intelligent.

Sit in the library, and read books all day. Then, another area is like, wealth, you know, that's the other area, people are like, man, I got a lot of, if I got money, I got power, and I got pleasure.

So, they boast about that. So, intelligence, strength, and wealth. I'll, I'll read this to you, just really quick, Jeremiah 9, verse 23, says this, let not, the wise man, boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man, boast in his might, let not the rich man, boast in his riches, but let him who boasts, boast in this, that he understands, and knows me, that I am the Lord, Yahweh, the same, same word.

So, like, the true boast, is like, I know who God is, I know God. Like, that's the greatest boast, you could have. So, so, what is the greatest way, that God has accommodated, us?

Remember that? God has to break himself down, for us to understand, come down to our level, well, it's in the person of Christ. So, strive to know Christ.

[45 : 36] One day, Jesus encountered that, hostile crowd, in Jerusalem, and this is, you can write this down, John 8, verse 57, but it says, the Jews said to him, you are not 50 years old, and you have claimed to seen Abraham, their forefather.

And Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. Like, he says, that's me. Like, I am Yahweh.

He says the name right there, like, before Abraham ever existed, that was me, like, way back before. He says, he claims to be God, and as a result, they try to stone him, right?

They try to stone him, but it's not yet, it's not yet his time, so he's kind of smoking mirrors, off the scene, you know, like how he tends to do that. So, he claims to be God, so, Jesus says, I am Yahweh, Jesus, the God man, like he says that, God was made flesh, right?

And he walked among us, that's John chapter 1, chapter 2. And so, in the best sense, John said in chapter 1, we have seen his glory, right?

[46 : 52] In Jesus, in the person of Jesus, and that, when we say to God, you know, when we sing these songs, like these praise and worship songs, and songs in general, like, you ever heard, like, anything say, show me your glory, show me your glory, like when we, we cry out for God to reveal himself to us, we kind of do it in like a flippant kind of way, that is not, at all, like the testimony of scripture, at all, at all, like, to, to see the glory of God is so overpowering that it leaves you in utter terror, like, that's what it does.

So, when we say that, we have to stop and think, Matthew, Mark, or excuse me, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who wrote in the Gospels, they wrote about this, remember the transfiguration where they're on the mountain with Jesus, and Jesus all of a sudden lights up, and, and in great glory, and Moses and Elijah kind of appear and they're having a conversation, and, there are several things that happen, but it all, they all say, well, Matthew and Mark say it, they were terrified when that happened.

Not like, ooh, that's cool. They weren't, wow, that's cool, Jesus, that's a cool dude, man, that's our bro. They don't, they're terrified. And then Luke actually says they fell into deep sleep.

When you really look at the language there, it really kind of ties in to this idea that they were terrified. They were terrified to such exhaustion that they were overtaken and they lost all their strength.

You see that? They were just like, they, they couldn't even take it, so they were, they fell asleep. They passed out. You know, so, the sheer exhaustion of that, and so, before the crucifixion, in John 17, Jesus comforts himself with the very reality that he is one with the Father, doesn't he?

[48 : 50] Like he, like that's how he, he's afraid. He's like, nervous, fearful, and he comforts himself by saying, I am one with the Father. The Father is not going to desert me.

So strive to know Christ. And, in the very end of the Gospel in Matthew, he calls them to go out, you know, and he says, the power of Yahweh, the power of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

So, so strive to know Christ. So let's just, I'll pray for us, and Wes, if you want to come on up, and we'll have some discussion after this.