

# About God

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## Introduction

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Job 22:21**

**Jeremiah 9:23, 24**

A spiritual and a saving knowledge of God is our greatest need. God alone is the greatest need of every human being ever created.

All true knowledge of God begins with realizing how little we can grasp of His perfection and holiness as revealed in the Holy Scripture. Who would trust a God they don't know? Who would want to serve Him? And how can we worship Him if we don't understand Him? This is an effort to discover some of what the Bible teaches about His divine character. In order to benefit from the pages that follow pray, turning again and again to God asking for a blessing in Himself, for His help in applying these truths to one's mind and heart, and for spiritual change.

We need more than head knowledge. We cannot know God until we submit to who He is, to His authority, and until every detail of our lives is given over to His words and commands.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Hosea 6:3**

**John 7:17**

**Daniel 11:32**

**Write a prayer asking God to help you see Him clearly, submitting to His authority and giving up your own:**

## **Chapter 1 The Solitariness of God**

The word “solitary” is not the best word, but this is a difficult idea to explain because many of us don’t spend time meditating on God’s personal perfection. Most Christians would agree that God is full of wisdom, great in power, and full of mercy, but to look closely in wonder at His being, His nature, and His character as He reveals Himself in Scripture is something very, very few people have discovered. Those who read the Bible without serious thought miss out on this description of God. He is alone in His excellency.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Exodus 15:11**

## **Before All Else**

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Genesis 1:1**

Have you ever thought about the fact that time didn’t start until “the beginning” (Genesis 1:1)? Where was God before the beginning of time? There was no heaven as we think of it, where He lived in glory and splendor. There was no earth for Him to oversee. There were no angels singing His praise; there was no universe to hold together by His power. There was nothing, no one, but God for all of eternity past—not just for a day, year, or century. In eternity past, God was alone and without need. He was self-sufficient, satisfied, glorified, whole, and perfect. If He had needed a universe, angels or humans to be who He is, they would have been there all along. The fact that He created them did not make Him “more” God. He already was.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Malachi 3:6**

Because God does not change, nothing will or can ever affect His glory. He does not have more or less. He is fully glorious and complete in and of Himself.

### **His Sovereign (Absolute) Will**

God did not have to create. He did not have to create anything at all. The fact that He chose to is an act of His sovereign will. He did it because He wanted to. Creation wasn't caused by anything or anyone outside of Himself. It was for no reason other than His own pleasure.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Ephesians 1:11**

By creating the heavens and the earth, God made known, or manifested, His glory.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Nehemiah 9:5**

God does not benefit from our worship. He does not need anything outside of Himself to be complete, full, satisfied and glorified. He does not need our praise. Why did He create us for adoption and predestination?

**Look up and write out the following verse and circle the reason:**

**Ephesians 1:5**

This may seem strange and new, so we will move slowly and study Scripture carefully.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Romans 11:34, 35**

**Job 35:7-8**

**Luke 17:10**

The message is this: God is not obligated to us. He gains nothing from us. Even our obedience does not profit Him.

Here is another difficult thought: our Lord Jesus added nothing to God's character, being, or glory by what He did or what He suffered. Yes, He made known (or manifested) the glory of God to us, but He did not add to who God is.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Psalm 16:2**

This was a Psalm of the Messiah, or Christ. The next verse (vs. 3) says that Christ's goodness (or righteousness) reached His saints on earth, but God is high above and beyond it all. Only God is the Blessed One (Mark 14:61).

It is true that people honor God or dishonor Him. Their opinion does not affect who He is. It only reveals how much or how little they know Him. It is also true that God is "glorified" by creation, by His provision, and redemption of His people. What we know, however, is that God is not made more or less by our recognition of Him. Although it is His way of showing Himself to us, it doesn't change who He is. If God wanted to, He could have gone on for all eternity without making Himself known to His creation. It was His choice. He was perfectly blessed and whole in Himself before making anyone or anything. And what does the Bible say about His creation?

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Isaiah 40:15-18**

**Isaiah 40:22, 23**

God is very different than many of us know! The New Testament agrees with the Old Testament because it has the same Author.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**1 Timothy 6:15, 16**

This God is worthy of our worship, respect, and adoration. He alone, or solitary, in His majesty, He is one-of-a-kind in His excellency, single in His perfections. He keeps all, but is independent of it He gives to all, but needs none.

**By Revelation**

This God cannot be found by searching. He can only be known as He reveals Himself to our hearts by the Holy Spirit through the Word. Although creation tells of a Creator and “men are without excuse,” we must be careful not to limit God to what we see, hear, and experience.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Job 26:14**

When we limit God by creation, believing we can understand Him by what He has made, we bring down the great God to a place of our own understanding and lose awe of His solitary, eternal excellence. The God of Scripture can only be known by those to whom He makes Himself known.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**John 4:24**

God cannot be known in our thinking. He is Spirit, and is known spiritually. But fallen, sinful man is not spiritual. He is dead to spiritual truth. Unless we are born again, brought to life supernaturally and taken from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, we cannot see the things of God or understand them.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**John 3:3**

**1 Corinthians 2:14**

**2 Corinthians 4:6**

**2 Peter 3:18**

The Holy Spirit has to shine in our hearts in order for us to see Christ. And even that is incomplete. Once new, the new soul must grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our prayer and aim should be this:

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Colossians 1:10**

**Rewrite Colossians 1:10 as a personal prayer request to God:**

## **Chapter 2 The Decrees (or Will) of God**

The will of God is His purpose for the future. In Scripture it is one word, “God’s will,” meaning that it happened once. It is the same. It doesn’t change. It doesn’t start as one thing and end as many different things. God’s will is one complete, single act.

**Look up, write out the following verses and circle the word “will:”**

**Romans 8:28**

**Ephesians 3:11**

The will of God is singular because there is only one act of His eternal mind about future things. You and I think of God’s will as one thing after another—many different things—because that’s the way we think, live and make decisions. For us, things happen in order of time based on past events and predictions of what we think might happen. Our decisions are based on many different objects, people and situations. But God is infinite, eternal, and everywhere all at the same time. He does not think or act in “steps.”

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Acts 15:18**

### **The will of God**

Scripture talks about God’s will in many places using different words or terms.

**Look up the following verses and write the word (or words) that describe God's will:**

**Psalm 2:7** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ephesians 3:11** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:23** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ephesians 1:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Romans 8:29** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ephesians 1:11** \_\_\_\_\_

The will of God is always about the future. Whatever happened (or happens) was determined before time began. God's purpose acts on everything, great or small, good or evil. We must be careful to say that while God uses and controls sin, He is not the creator of evil in the same way He is the Creator of good. Sin cannot, and does not, come from a holy God but He allows it and chooses when and where to work against it to accomplish what He has determined.

God's will, or decree, is just as complete as His governing or ruling: it applies to all creatures and all events. God's will determines our life and death, where we are, when we are, and where we will be for eternity. Because He works *all* things according to the counsel of His will, we can look at what He has done and learn about Him, just as we can learn about an architect by studying his buildings.

God did not just make man, put him on earth, then leave. Instead, He fixed all the circumstances for every individual at every point in time. He set details that make up the history of the human race from beginning to end. He not only decided which governments would have power when and where, but how their laws would be applied in each and every case.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Psalm 139:16**

**Matthew 10:29-30**

We learn God's will studying how He has worked it out in our lives. Whatever happened is by the will of God. His care reaches the most unimportant creatures and the smallest events—the death of a sparrow, the fall of a hair.

### **Characteristics of God's will/decrees**

How can we describe God's will? First, it is *eternal*. If we think God makes decisions in a moment of time we limit Him to our way of thinking and living. His will is not still being decided. It is not dependent on events, people, or any combination of things. If that is true then God is not all-wise, He is learning as He goes—which is a wicked way of thinking. God's will does not change because of unseen or future events because He sees, controls, and knows the past, present, and future all at the same time. He is not surprised by what people will do years from now or what will happen in the future. In fact, He has recorded future people and events in the Bible as a way of showing His eternal will.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Ephesians 1:4**

**2 Timothy 1:9**

Secondly, the will of God is *wise*. Perfect wisdom provides the best result in the best way. That is the way God works. His will is the best from start to finish.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Psalm 104:24**

**Romans 11:33**

We see that God's plan turns out perfectly—and even when we live it, we can't explain how it happened! The truth is that we see very little of His works, but we know that He does all things well. When doubts come, we can remind ourselves of what we've seen and known. The wise, perfect will of God does not change. He will continue to work out His decrees, or purpose, in perfect wisdom.

Third, the will of God is *free*. God was not influenced by anyone or anything outside Himself when He made His decrees. He was free to choose or not choose; to make one decision or another. We acknowledge that He has the liberty to do what He wants. He is the Only, Supreme, Independent, Absolute Ruler of all things.

**Look up and write out the following verse:**

**Isaiah 40:13-14**

Fourth, the will of God is *absolute and unconditional*. Working out His will does not depend on other events or circumstances. He has decided what is best and determined how to make it happen. He does not make a plan without providing for it to be completed. For example, He decrees salvation for His elect then gives them the faith they need to be saved.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**2 Thessalonians 2:13**

**Isaiah 46:10**

**Ephesians 1:11**

### **Man's Responsibility**

Along with Gods unchanging, unshakeable decrees, Scripture also teaches that man is responsible and accountable for his actions. By accepting the Word of God as true, we can believe in both God's will and man's responsibility. It is difficult to understand because we cannot know where one ends and the other begins. That is always the case when our human minds come into contact with God. For instance, God commands us to pray in the Spirit, but we cry out of human need and desperation. The Scripture is the inspired Word of God, but it was written by men who were used by the Spirit. Jesus Christ is both God and man. He is omniscient (knows all), but he "increased in wisdom" (Luke 2:52). He was Almighty, but He was "crucified through weakness" (2 Corinthians 13:4). He was the Prince of life, but He died. These are great mysteries, but faith receives them without question.

God's will and foreknowledge are one and the same. We cannot have one without the other. What would happen if God was not eternal? Or if He did not have a purpose and will? What if He was bound by time? To deny God's will is to believe in chance or blind fate. Does that provide peace, comfort and assurance? If God did not have a good, perfect will, why turn to Him in our hour of need and trial? He would be no help at all. In that case, the dark hole and horror of atheism would be just as much help as a God who does not know or rule His creation.

How thankful we should be that everything is determined by His eternal wisdom and goodness! Our hearts should be full of gratitude and praise for God's divine will!

**Look up and write out and pray the following verse as the cry of your heart and life:**

**Romans 11:36**

## **Chapter 3 The Knowledge of God**

### **God's Omnipotence**

God is omniscient. He knows everything: everything that could be, everything that is. He knows all events, all creatures, He knows the past, the present and the future. He is in—and has been in—every detail in the life of every being in heaven, in earth, and in hell.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Daniel 2:22**

**Psalm 139:6**

**Hebrews 4:13**

Nothing happens without His knowledge. Nothing is hidden from Him or forgotten by Him. His knowledge is perfect. He never sins, never changes, never overlooks or loses track of anything.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Psalm 139:2-4**

What an amazing God He is! No matter how we begin to describe Him, He is beyond anything we can imagine. Just the idea of His omniscience should cause us to bow down on our faces before Him, but we seldom stop to think about it. Could it be that we are uncomfortable with the thought of His great knowledge?

**Look up and write out the following verses**

**Ezekiel 11:5**

**Numbers 32:23**

We cannot see Him, but He sees us. He sees through the darkness of night, through closed curtains, even into the deepest dungeon. No sinner can hide from the eyes of the Omniscient One. The trees in the garden did not hide Adam and Eve. No human eye saw Cain murder his brother, but his Maker witnessed his crime. Sarah laughed in the secrecy of her tent, but it was heard by Jehovah. Achan stole a bar of gold, carefully hid it in the ground, but God brought it to light. David went to great lengths to hide his wickedness, but God sent the prophet Nathan to say, “You are the man!”

Man would take away God’s omniscience if he could—because the flesh is at war with God and does not want to be known. If God didn’t exist sin would remain personal and secret instead of seen for what it is! Mankind does not want a Witness of his sin, a Searcher of his heart, a Judge of his deeds. For this reason, mankind seeks to get rid of God.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Hosea 7:2**

**Psalm 90:8**

On the other hand, those who have experienced God’s forgiveness in Jesus Christ find comfort in God’s omniscience. When a believer is confused and uncertain which way to go,

**Job 23:10**

When a believer is weary and weak,

**Psalm 103:14**

In times of doubt, when he is searching for truth he can pray

**Psalm 139:23, 24**

In times of failure, when he has betrayed His Lord and wonders if God knows his heart,

**John 21:17**

Because God knows everything, we are encouraged to pray. He will hear us. He sees our tears and knows our anxious thoughts. He knows our desires before we ask. We do not have to wonder if He hears our prayers among the millions of prayers being offered each hour of every day because an infinite Mind (God) can pay the same attention to one prayer as all of them. We don't have to worry about using the right words or saying exactly what we mean because God already knows.

**Look up and write out Isaiah 65:24:**

## **Past and Future**

God not only knows what has happened in the past—all of it, from the least to the greatest, every moment, every person, every circumstance—He is aware of everything that is happening even now, around the world, in the universe, in every atom of creation. He has just as much knowledge of what has not happened—or the future—as He does of the past and the present because it is absolutely dependent on who He is. If something happened apart from His permission or being, then it would be independent of God. If anything happened without God, He would no longer be the Supreme Ruler and Sovereign of All.

### **Look up and write out Psalm 147:5**

God's complete knowledge of the future is not a "could be." God Himself has perfectly designed whatever is to come, and what He has designed must happen.

Look up and write out the following verses:

### **Daniel 4:35**

### **Proverbs 19:21**

The wisdom and power of God are infinite—from eternity past to eternity future. What He has purposed is absolutely guaranteed. His plan will not fail any more than the "holy, holy, holy" God is able to lie.

The future is not uncertain as far as God is concerned. None of His plans or purposes depend on people, circumstances or natural causes. There is not future event that is just "possible." Every part of God's plan will occur exactly as He said.

**Look up and write out the following verses:**

**Acts 15:18**

**James 1:17**

**Revelation 1:1**

God's perfect knowledge can be seen in Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled to the smallest detail, centuries after they were made. They told of the coming of Christ and each prophecy was fulfilled practically and literally. The only One who could have known is the One who knows the end from the beginning, the One who can work all things to accomplish His will. Even prophecies that have not been fulfilled are guaranteed.

**Look up and write out Luke 24:44**

It is important to understand that things don't happen because God knew it. He caused, or made, them happen. God's knowledge doesn't result from things because of the way they are. Things are the way they are because God has caused them to be that way. He knew and foretold the crucifixion of His Son hundreds of years before He became a man, by God's plan and purpose. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

**Look up and write out**

**Genesis 8:22**

**Acts 2:23**

God's infinite knowledge should fill us with amazement! We do not know what a day will hold, but God knows each moment of every day before it happens. This should fill us with holy awe. Nothing we think, do, or say escapes His attention. If we were more aware of God's infinite knowledge, it would change the way we live.

**Look up and write out**

**Proverbs 15:3**

**Genesis 16:13**

To understand the infinite knowledge of God would fill our hearts with adoration. My whole life has been open to His view from the beginning. He saw my every fall, my every sin, my every backsliding. Still, He fixed His heart on me. Oh, how this would bow my heart in wonder and worship before Him!

## Chapter 4 The Foreknowledge of God

The idea of God's foreknowledge has created a lot of discussion and disagreement, but that's the way God is—everything about Him is different. Everything He does is supernatural:

- Jesus is God, He was born of a virgin, He died for our sin, He will return;
- Christ saves sinful man (justification), He makes us like Christ (sanctification), He keeps us forever (security);
- He created the Church, gives spiritual gifts, provides leadership and discipline;
- God calls us to baptism and the Lord's supper....

Every truth and teaching in Scripture goes against our human nature and has come under attack, but God continues to show His faithfulness and provide for His servants. Why, then would we avoid the question of God's foreknowledge? Others may argue against it, but we will use the Word of God to give witness of its truth.

### What Does Foreknowledge Mean?

First, we must understand what the word, "foreknowledge," means. Many Bible teachers, even people of God, do not understand it properly and misuse it to deny God's sovereignty and rule. It would seem that when we begin to think about God's eternal choice for some to be conformed to the image of Jesus, that even Satan sends individuals to confuse us. The wrong idea is that God knew ahead of time who would respond to the gospel of Christ and the work of the Spirit, that He could see into the future and since He knew they would believe, He chose (or predestined) them to salvation. But this is wrong. It does not agree with the rest of the Bible.

The argument that God chose people based on their future response ignores the complete wickedness of man (total depravity). Instead, it says that there is something good in some men and not in others. This is false. This argument also takes away from God's independence; it says that God chose people based on their choice, not His. It turns everything upside down—both man and God.

Scripture clearly teaches that God chose individuals to receive His grace.

**Look up and write out:**

**Acts 13:48**

A false understanding of God says that God's foreknowledge depends on people—who will decide to believe. Instead, individuals believe in Christ as a result of God's choosing (election).

What does the word, "foreknowledge" mean? We might think it means to know something before it happens. But that is not necessarily true. We will not understand it by asking others or looking in the dictionary. If we are going to define the word foreknowledge, we need to look at how God uses it in Scripture. The Holy Spirit gives us the true definition of words—what they mean and how to apply them. If we don't follow the simple rule of letting God define what His Word means, we will misuse and misunderstand common biblical words.

For example, we might think the word, "flesh," refers to our physical body. But if we look at how the Bible uses the word, "flesh," we find that isn't always the case. To understand what God means by the word, "flesh," we must study every use of it and the passage around it. The same is true of the word, "world," and so many others. They simply do not mean what we think, they mean what God thinks—and He has given us His Word so we might know exactly what He has in mind.

Let's start by looking at the word, "know," in the Old Testament. It is not the word we would use for an acquaintance or fact, but God uses it as a way of showing His favor or affection.

**Look up and write out the part of each verse that uses the word, "know:"**

**Exodus 33:17**

**Deuteronomy 9:24**

**Jeremiah 1:5**

**Hosea 8:4**

**Amos 3:2**

**Matthew 7:23**

**John 10:14**

**1 Corinthians 8:3**

**2 Timothy 2:19**

As you look at the word “foreknowledge,” you will discover that it is never used to refer to events or actions. It always refers to people. It is people that God “foreknows,” not the actions of the person.

**Look up and write out the part of each verse that uses the word, “foreknowledge:”**

**Acts 2:23**

(Notice that this verse does not use the word foreknowledge to talk about the act of crucifixion, but the *Person* who was crucified.”

**Romans 8:29-30**

Again, it is not *what* God foreknew, but *whom* He foreknew. It isn't that they surrendered their will or believed, but God knew the individuals themselves.

**Romans 11:2**

**1 Peter 1:1-2**

These are the *only* verses that use the word "foreknowledge." Where does it say that God knew certain individuals would repent and believe, causing God to choose them for salvation? It doesn't. Scripture never talks about repentance and faith being foreseen or foreknown by God. He knew that—He knows all things—but knowing what a person will do is not the same as God's foreknowledge, according to Scripture. God foreknows *people* not *events or actions*.

### **Where Does God's Foreknowledge Come From?**

The next question is, where does foreknowledge start? If you look at Acts 2:23 you will notice that there are 2 things mentioned 1) God's predetermined plan and 2) God's foreknowledge. Romans 8:29 begins with the word, "for," meaning something came before this verse. What? "...all things work together for good to them...who are the called according to his purpose." These verses tell us that God's foreknowledge is based on His plan (His purpose or decree). God is the one who puts it in motion.

God foreknows what will happen because He has decreed it. If we say it is the other way around, we misunderstand God and disagree with His Word. He "foreknows" because He has decided, or chosen, what will happen. This takes the choosing away from the creature and puts it back on God and His sovereign will. He did not choose people because of anything good in them or from them, but simply for His own pleasure.

**Look up and write out**

**Deuteronomy 7:7**

**2 Thessalonians 2:13**

We can see from Romans 8:29 and 2 Thessalonians 2:13 that, before the foundation of the world, God singled out certain sinners and appointed them to salvation. God did not predestine (or choose) those He knew were already like Jesus. To the opposite, those He foreknew (loved and elected), He predestined to be conformed—or like—Jesus. Their Christlikeness is not the cause of God's foreknowledge, but the result of it.

God did not elect any sinner because he foresaw that he would believe because *no* sinner ever believes until God gives Him faith. No man sees until God gives him sight. Sight is God's gift, seeing is the result of using His gift. In the same way, faith is God's gift.

**Look up and write out**

**Ephesians 2:9**

**Acts 18:27**

We believe "through grace." If there is any effort on our part, then faith is not a gift of God's grace. God's grace is given independent of our work or effort. If we cannot do anything to earn God's grace, then God could not choose us based on our decision or choice—it is all His.

**Look up and write out**

**Romans 11:5**

God's choice is not based on our goodness or belief in Him. It is a result of His good pleasure. God's grace is His favor, something we cannot claim or demand. It is His to give.

When we misunderstand the foreknowledge of God, we dishonor His character and make too much of ourselves. God not only knew the end from the beginning, but He planned, fixed, and predestinated everything from the beginning. God's purpose and plan determines what will happen.

**Look up and write out**

**Ephesians 1:4**

If you are a Christian, it is because God chose you in Christ before the foundation of the world, and chose you not because He saw you would believe, but because it pleased Him to choose you. He chose you *in spite of* your natural unbelief. Because of that, all the glory and praise belongs to Him alone. You can take no credit for your salvation. You have "believed *through grace*" (Acts 18:27) because your very election (or choosing) was "of grace" (Romans 11:5).

## Chapter 5 The Supremacy of God

In a letter to Erasmus, Luther said, “Your thoughts of God are too human.” Erasmus, a well-known scholar, was probably offended, especially since Luther was a miner’s son, but he is not the only one guilty of such thinking. Although few of us, if any, are famous religious leaders, we can see that same truth in pastors, ministers, and those who lazily follow them. God is thought of and spoken of as common. He is dishonored and degraded in word and thought. To most, even Christians, the God of Scripture is unknown and unlooked-for.

God is very aware of our ignorance.

### **Look up and write out**

Psalm 50:21

Too often we think God is motivated by emotion instead of His character. We suppose His omnipotence is nothing more than fiction; that Satan is able to deceive or cause God Himself to change. If God has a plan or purpose, it must be like ours—constantly changing. We have a sense that God’s power must make way for our “free will;” that we are more than “machines” and God’s plan must make way for ours. We limit the all-effective Atonement of Christ to nothing more than a preference, option, or topical remedy for sin-sick souls. In our minds, we weaken the invincible work of the Holy Spirit to an “offer” of the Gospel for sinner to accept or reject as they please.

The “god” of our day is a dim flickering candle when compared to the glory of the midday sun. This “god”—preached from the pulpit, taught in Bible studies, mentioned in pamphlets, and preached in conferences—is a figment of our imagination we seek to manipulate and control. We may make fun of people whose gods are made of wood and stone, but we have made an idol of our own: a “god” in our mind. In this way, we are atheists because a god who is not absolutely supreme is no God at all. A god whose will can be resisted, whose purpose is overcome, who is not Deity, who is so far from being an object of worship is worthy of contempt.

We argue we know the true, living God without a thought to the infinite distance that separates us, His creatures, from the almighty Creator.

### **Look up and write out**

Psalm 2:9

Psalm 2:4

He is the Potter, we are the clay, molded and made for His Divine purpose. If all the powers of heaven and earth rebelled together, it would change nothing. God would not experience anxiety or unease. Their efforts would have less effect on His throne and power than the spray of the Mediterranean's waves on the towering rocks of Gibraltar. We are so powerless, so small, that the plotting of kings brings laughter from His mouth.

His supremacy is absolute and universal.

**Look up and write out**

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

2 Chronicles 20:6

Before Him presidents and popes, kings and emperors, are less than grasshoppers.

**Look up and write out**

Job 23:13

Job 42:2

Psalm 115:3

Proverbs. 21:30

There is nothing in heaven or on earth that does not obey God. His creation, with or without life, with or without human intellect, performs His will.

**Read the following passages and make note of what/who obeyed God's will:**

Exodus 14

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Numbers 16

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Joshua 10

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Isaiah 38:8

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1 Kings 17

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2 Kings 6:5

**Look up and write out**

Psalm 135:6

God's supremacy is seen in more than creation itself. It is evident in the will of men. In ancient times God commanded His people to leave their homes and travel to Jerusalem three times a year. They lived among hostile nations who hated them for conquering their nations and taking their land. What confidence did God give His people?

**Look up and write out**

Exodus 34:24

Proverbs 21:1

Isn't it true that men have rebelled against God, resisted His will, broken His commandments, and ignored His warnings? Does the Bible contradict itself? Is God untrue? That cannot be. When we consider God's written Word, we understand that sinful people disregard God's external word while walking in God's eternal purpose. No one can perfectly obey and follow the Word of God. No one can keep His standard of conduct, but even our sin and failure has a place in God's will and purpose.

**Look up and write out**

Ephesians 1:11

Romans 11:36

James 4:13, 15

Proverbs 16:9

This is our confidence: our lives are not a result of fate or chance. Every detail from eternity past to eternity future was ordained by the living, reigning God. This gives the child of God great strength, comfort, and assurance. What, then, is our response?

**Look up and write out**

Psalm 31:15

Psalm 37:7

Close your time of study with a prayer of repentance for your limited view of God, asking Him to replace human thoughts with His Word and human insecurity with a heart of trust and obedience.

## **Chapter 6 The Sovereignty of God**

## **Chapter 7 The Immutability of God**

## **Chapter 8 The Holiness of God**

## **Chapter 9 The Power of God**

## **Chapter 10 The Faithfulness of God**

## **Chapter 11 The Goodness of God**

Because God is complete in all His attributes, His goodness cannot be added to. Nothing is missing or wrong in any way, nothing can make God's goodness more or less good.

**Look up and write out**

**Psalm 52:1**

**1 John 1:5**

One man wrote that any goodness in God's creatures is a result of their participation and communication with Him. He is all goodness—not because He chooses to be good, but because

He is good. And because He is both eternal and unchanging, nothing can be added to or subtracted from his absolute goodness.<sup>1</sup>

God is the greatest. He is also the best. Before there was anyone or anything to benefit from His goodness, He was good. We see His goodness in the creation account. He has enough, and is good enough, to fill all things with goodness. Everything that comes from God is blameless and full of goodness: His Word, His commands, His creation, His law, His provision.

**Look up and write out**

**Psalm 119:68**

**Genesis 1:31**

**Psalm 139:14**

**Psalm 145:15-16**

God not only created our bodies with hands to complete easy and difficult tasks, eyelids that close, and feet that walk, He has made provision for each and every creature that brings pleasure and enjoyment. We eat food for nourishment, but we also find joy and satisfaction in

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Manton, p. 73, *The Attributes of God*, by A.W. Pink

tastes and textures. We take joy in observing flowers and animals, the feel of a cool breeze, and the smell of beautiful fragrances.

**Look up and write out**

**Psalm 136:25**

**Psalm 33:5**

**Psalm 145:9**

Even when we break God's law and deserve His wrath, He does not demand justice immediately and all at once. He could withdraw all beauty, comfort, and pleasure. Instead, He combines mercy and judgment, working to accomplish His good and perfect will. When we consider the potential for evil in our world—the sin nature of man and our fallen world, Satan and his angels—we are amazed that we experience more good than bad. With few exceptions, people experience more days of good health than sickness and pain. We have more happiness than misery. Even when we experience sorrow and loss, there is hope for healing and peace. God has created our minds to form and reform themselves with the passing of time, by His Word and Spirit, and through new experiences.

God is not to blame for sorrow and suffering. If a person sins against the goodness of God, hardens his heart and refuses to repent, is God to blame? Would God be good if He did not give man a choice? Or if He did not punish evil? Would God be good if He excused the ungrateful or rewarded the unrepentant? No. It is God's goodness that judges sinful man. It is God's goodness that judges those who break His law, rebel against His authority, mock His messengers, scorn His Son, and persecute those He died for.

**Look up and write out**

**Romans 2:4-8**

Our greatest example of God's goodness is Jesus Himself.

**Look up and write out**

**Galatians 4:4-5**

**Luke 2:14**

**Titus 2:11**

God does not force sinful creatures to accept His grace. This does not mean He is not good. In fact, if God had left every sinful creature to perish, it would not change His goodness. He does as He pleases within His sovereign will. There is nothing in fallen man that adds to or subtracts from God's goodness.

**Look up and write out**

**Matthew 20:15**

What is our response? Most of the time, we don't even acknowledge the goodness of God. It is so constant, so generous, so expected that we do nothing. It is part of every moment of every day. For this reason, many people take His goodness for granted and it hardens their hearts against Him. Instead of humility and gratitude, they believe they deserve goodness and forget God altogether. We should be a thankful people.

**Look up and write out**

**Psalm 107:8**

**Romans 2:4**

As believers, this is our hope and trust. We count on God's eternal, unchanging goodness, proven in Jesus Christ.

**Look up and write out**

**Nahum 1:7**

"When others treat us badly, we must remember God's goodness and thank Him. He is good. When we fail and fall short again and again, we should praise the Lord. He is good. No matter what we experience, we can be sure that the LORD, He is good. His provision may vary and change, but His nature is always the same." (adaptation of C.H. Spurgeon, p. 77)

**Chapter 12 The Patience of God**

**Chapter 13 The Grace of God**

**Chapter 14 The Mercy of God**

**Chapter 15 The Lovingkindness of God**

**Chapter 16 The Love of God**

Scripture gives three very clear descriptions of God. First, “God is spirit” (John 4:24). He is not “a spirit,” as if He could only be one place at one time. He is spirit—all places at all times. He fills heaven and earth. Secondly, “God is light” (1 John 1:5). Light is the opposite of darkness: sin, evil, death. In Scripture, light represents holiness, goodness, and life. God is all of these without measure—totally and completely. Thirdly, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). God does not simply “love,” as a verb. He is love. Love is His nature.

We most often think of love as a response to someone or something that pleases us. But as we consider God and His nature, which is love, we must let Him define it. Even as Christians, our love is incomplete and childish toward God, not because He does not deserve our love and devotion, but because we don’t fully understand the fullness of love in God Himself.

1. God’s love is not influenced by anyone or anything. Nothing draws, creates, or stirs it. His love is free, natural, and independent. The only reason He love is because He chooses to.

**Look up and write out**  
**Deuteronomy 7:7-8**

**2 Timothy 1:9**

**1 John 4:19**

The point is that there is nothing in any of us to merit His love. Quite the opposite. We are rebellious, sinful, creatures deserving wrath and eternal condemnation. We are completely corrupted.

**Look up and write out**  
**Romans 3:10-12**

2. God’s love is eternal. Because God is eternal and God is love, His love is an eternal attribute. God had no beginning; therefore His love has no beginning. Even though we

struggle to understand it, and never fully will, we can praise and adore Him for His eternal love.

**Look up and write out**

**Jeremiah 31:3**

**Ephesians 1:4-5**

Since God's love has no beginning, based on the definition for eternal, it also has no end! "From everlasting to everlasting" God loves His own.

3. God's love is sovereign. Because God is sovereign—He is not ruled by anyone or anything—His love is always according to His pleasure. No one can force or obligate Him to love.

**Look up and write**

**Romans 9:13**

**Ephesians 1:4-5**

Think about the opposite of God's sovereign love. What if creatures could manipulate God into loving them? If that was possible, God would not be sovereign in His affection. If He was not sovereign in His choosing and loving, He would no longer be sovereign at all.

4. God's love is infinite. As created beings, we live with limits: limited time, presence, energy, physical boundaries. But God fills heaven and earth. His wisdom is unlimited—He knows everything, past, present, and future. His power is unconstrained; nothing is too hard for Him. In the same way, God's love is without limit. We will never find the end of God's love—not its depth, width, or breadth. The words, "great love," and "so loved" express the infinite measure of His love.

**Look up and write out**  
**Ephesians 2:4**

**Ephesians 3:19**

**John 3:16**

5. God's love is immutable. It doesn't change. There is no dark corner or shadow in God that allows His love to be less one moment and more at another. It is constant.

**Look up and write out**  
**James 1:17**

**John 13:1**

**Song of Solomon 8:6-7**

**Romans 8:35-39**

6. God's love is holy. God's attributes and nature do not contradict each other. That means His love is set apart, distinct, and sin-free. It does not excuse or wink at sin, but is pure and unselfish.

**Look up and write out**

**1 John 1:5**

**1 John 4:8**

**Hebrews 12:6**

7. God's love is gracious. His love and favor cannot be separated. Jesus did not die so God would love us. Jesus died in our place because God loved us already. Jesus is the demonstration, or proof, of God's pre-existent love.

Jesus Himself was loved by God; His only, one-of-a-kind Son, but He did not escape poverty, disgrace, or persecution. He experienced hunger and thirst. In Jesus, we see that God's love cannot be measured by our suffering or lack of suffering. His love is independent of our human experiences. God loved His Son even when men cursed Him, spat on Him, and struck Him. How, then, can we question God's love when we endure trials and persecution?

Jesus did not have earthly ease or wealth, but He was given the Spirit, "without measure" (John 3:34). Just think of the spiritual blessings we have in Christ! How comforting to know that, in spite of what the world does to us, God loves us!

**Look up and write out**

**Romans 5:8**

**Romans 8:32-39**

## **Chapter 17 The Love of God to Us**

## **Chapter 18 The Wrath of God**

It is sad that so many people who call themselves Christians think of God's wrath as something bad. They are embarrassed by God's anger and wish it didn't exist. Even if they won't say it aloud, they don't want to think about it. At times, they are angry with God because of His wrath, thinking it is undeserved or unnecessary. Even those who believe God is a God of wrath struggle to think about it for long. Many believe God is either good or just; He cannot be both, so they don't think of it at all.

### **God Does Not Hide the Facts**

Instead of leaning on our own understanding, it is important to turn to Scripture. God does not hide the truth. He is not ashamed that He is a God of vengeance and fury. This is what He says:

#### **Look up and write out**

**Deuteronomy 32:39-41**

**Psalm 7:11**

There are actually more references in Scripture to the anger, fury, and wrath of God than His love and tenderness. Because God is holy, He hates all sin; and because He hates all sin, His anger burns against the sinner.

We must remember that God's wrath is just as perfect and complete (without fault) as His faithfulness, power, and mercy. It must be, because He is Light; there is no darkness or shadow in Him. Therefore, God has no flaw or defect, but He would if He had no anger. Isn't it wrong to

call sin holy and right? What if sin was ignored altogether? God, who is excellent and perfect in every way, cannot consider good evil and evil good. How could the One who is eternally holy overlook sin and refuse to judge justly?

**Look up and write out**

**Romans 11:22**

What if God, who only delights in what is pure and lovely, accepted that which is impure and revolting? Then He would no longer be perfect, loving, and just. God's very nature makes Hell just as necessary as Heaven. Because nothing about Him is less perfect or full than any other quality, holiness describes both His love and His wrath. His perfection means that no characteristic affects another negatively. God is completely balanced in each and every part of who He is.

The wrath of God is the result of His eternal hatred for everything unrighteous. It is His disapproval, anger, and divine justice of evil. God's wrath is holiness against sin. It moves Him to justice against evildoers. God is angry against sin because it is rebellion, or defiance, against His divine rule and sovereignty. All who rise against Him will experience His rule and, one day, each one will confess that He, God, is the Lord. They will experience His great Majesty—the power and might of the One they despised. In that day, they will dread the wrath they so easily ignored.

Unlike man, God's anger is not unjust, unfair, or mean-spirited. He does not cause injury for the sake of hurting or causing damage. Although He is the sovereign authority as Governor of the universe, He is not cruel in His judgment.

**Look up and write out**

**Romans 1:18-21**

*God's wrath against sin was first seen when sin entered the world: He announced death, the earth was cursed, and mankind was driven out of earthly paradise. Later examples of God's wrath on sin are the flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the reign of death throughout the world. The curse of the law is on each and every transgression. Sin's weight is seen in the institution of sacrifices and all that the law required. Creation itself suffers and groans, longing for relief. This same creation declares there is a God, it shows His glory, and proves He is the Enemy of Sin and Avenger of the crimes of men...*

*More than anything else, God's wrath was revealed when Jesus Christ came to Earth to make the eternal Godhead known to man. His death and suffering displayed the wrath of God in a way mankind has never, nor will ever, see again. Because of Jesus' willing payment for sin, man has two choices: wrath or grace. Man will experience eternal punishment or eternal reward. In either case, God's wrath will be fulfilled. (paraphrase of Robert Haldane, p, 37)*

God has also shown the perfection of His wrath when He swears by it. God's willingness to make an oath based on His character gives us confidence that He will do what He says.

### **Look up and write out**

#### **Psalm 89:35**

#### **Psalm 95:11**

Notice that God swears by both His wrath and His holiness. They are equal in power. It is God's holiness and wrath that give us confidence in who He is and what He will do. God's wrath is not opposite to holiness; they are in perfect balance.

Jesus Christ represented God the Father in every way: loving, compassionate, forgiving and perfect. Someday, the world will experience His wrath as well.

**Look up and write out**

**Colossians 2:9**

**John 1:18**

**Revelation 6:16-17**

### **The Importance of Thinking About God's Wrath**

We need to think about and meditate on the perfect wrath of God often. First, our hearts need reminders of God's hatred for sin. As sinners, we don't think about sin the way we should. We take it lightly, make excuses, or ignore it altogether. But the more we study and think about God's hatred of sin and His punishment of it, the more we realize how incredibly detestable it is.

Secondly, we need to grow in fear of God. We cannot serve Him properly until we worship and properly fear His awesome Majesty and righteous anger.

**Look up and write out**

**Hebrews 12:28-29**

Thirdly, understanding and leaning on the wrath of God will naturally result in greater praise for being delivered from His wrath.

**Look up and write out**

**1 Thessalonians 1:10**

Our willingness or refusal to meditate on the wrath of God is a test of our attitude toward Him. If we do not truly rejoice in God for who He is, for His perfections of each and every part of His character, how will His love live in and through us? We must prayerfully guard against creating an image of God in our thoughts that is untrue and wicked.

**Look up and write out:**

**Psalm 50:21**

**Psalm 97:12**

If we fail to rejoice in God's holiness and wrath, it reveals a rebellious heart. To push back against God's wrath means we are not submitting, but are still in sin. Those who oppose Him will experience His wrath in the everlasting flames.

**God's Justice is the Result of His Wrath**

There will be great rejoicing in Heaven when God exercises His wrath on the ungodly, rules in majesty and dominion, and overthrows proud rebels who challenged His authority and goodness.

**Look up and write out:**

**Deuteronomy 32:43**

**Revelation 19:1-3**

The price of our iniquity, our sin, is great. We cannot begin to understand its weight until we think of Jesus Christ, who righteously and completely bore God's wrath against it.

**Look up and write out:**

**Psalm 130:3**

**Psalm 1:5**

**Mark 14:33-34**

**Mark 15:34**

**Hebrews 5:7**

*When I think how good God is, and how patient, I am amazed at the miracle of His grace to an ungrateful world. An earthly ruler who was treated so disrespectfully would not send provisions but would starve out and destroy his enemy. Instead God, who could kill us all in the blink of an eye, continues to bless and do good to the evil and unthankful. Don't be fooled. No one will escape His wrath. "God's mill goes slow, but grinds small..." There is nothing as sweet as the patience and goodness of God, and nothing as terrible as His wrath when it is lit on fire.*  
*(paraphrase of quote by William Gurnall, 1660).*

If you have not already, run to Christ and “flee from the wrath to come” (Matthew 3:7) before it is too late. Do not, please, do not assume this message is for someone else. It is *for you!* Do not rest in thinking you have already come to Christ. Be certain! Beg the Lord to search your heart and show you yourself.

### **A Word to Preachers**

Preacher, in speaking and teaching the Word of God, is this subject given the time and weight it deserves? Old Testament prophets were known for preaching God’s coming judgement against the wicked. They were quick to point out those who provoked the Holy One of Israel, treasuring up condemnation in the day of wrath. Conditions are no better today than they were then! Nothing stirs the careless, carnal heart as much as the reminder that “God is angry with the wicked every day” (Ps. 7:11). Faithful service demands we speak as plainly about hell as heaven.

### **Look up and write out**

#### **Matthew 3:7**

#### **Luke 12:5**

#### **2 Corinthians 5:11**

## **Chapter 19 The Contemplation of God**