

## **“What Are You Like, Lord?”**

I remember our (my wife’s and my) search: “Is there a God? Can we know Him?” When that search concluded with a supernatural encounter with God through Jesus Christ, our next question was: “What are You like, Lord?”

Saul of Tarsus met Jesus in a post resurrection appearance; and his first response was, “Who are You, Lord?” It may surprise you to learn that it is theology that attempts to answer this question by compiling all that God has revealed about Himself in Scripture for the purpose of furthering our relationship with Him.

Jesus initiated the Church by asking “the question”: “Who are you saying that I am?” The implication of Matthew 16:18 is that it is as we rightly recognize who He is and confess Him as such that He builds His Church and advances His Kingdom.

We do not have faith in faith; rather, we have faith in God according to Who He says He is. Our goal is not mere understanding; our goal is to glorify God by trusting Him to be Who He says He is. Included in this goal is our desire to know Him more intimately, and to become more like Him. Theology is merely a tool to help us think biblical thoughts about God so that our faith in Him may be rightly fed.

In Romans 1:21, Paul focused upon the critical importance of honoring God as God. This process of honoring Him as He truly is lies at the heart of both faith and worship; but it prompts the question that is theological in nature: what is God like so that we may honor Him appropriately?

Idolatry is to have the wrong view of God, and thus to trust an idea which is not true. Don’t we all know people who are wrongly trusting that God’s nature is other than what He has revealed? Their theology and thus their thinking have not been corrected by the whole testimony of Scripture.

This month, let’s examine some of the ways in which we are different from God. In doing this, we will also learn more about ourselves.

## Lesson 1

Jesus alone knew the whole truth about God, and this knowledge of God set Him apart from all other men. So it is not surprising to hear Him praying for us with these words: “Sanctify them in/by/through the truth; Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)

He taught His people to pray, “Hallowed be Your name”; for it is in setting God aside as the Holy One to be revered, loved, and honored above all others that we are freed! (Matthew 6:9)

He also taught that it is what we treasure that defines our lives. (Matthew 6:20) He treasured His Father above all other things, which demonstrated the meaning of the first two commandments.

Scripture Study: Read part of Jesus’ prayer in John 17:16-20. (*5 minutes*)  
How might knowing the truth about God set you apart from the world?

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Scripture Study: Read Jesus’ opening sentence in the Lord’s Prayer found in Matthew 6:9. (*5 minutes*)

Why do you think Jesus would put this request at the beginning of His model prayer?

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Scripture Study: Read Matthew 6:18 in order to notice Jesus’ reference to His Father before He addresses the critical issue of what you treasure most in your heart. Then read Matthew 6:19-21. (*5 minutes*)

What do you think will help you treasure God in your heart above all other things?

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Confess out loud some of the things you know about who God is.

Honor Him as God by worshipping Him!

Give Him thanks for being all that He is to you.

Call upon Him for His help in your life.

## Lesson 2

The Independence of God is a doctrine that describes God as not needing anything or anyone beyond Himself in order to be happy, complete, and satisfied. He is altogether self-sufficient.

He exists as uncreated, Almighty God in three Persons who is independently happy within the mutual joys and delights of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

He delights in His creation, which He created for His own glory and pleasure; but He has never needed our love, fellowship, or worship. He alone in all of creation is independent.

Scripture Study: Read Paul's description of God as he attempts to introduce heathens to the nature of God in Acts 17:24-25. (*10 minutes*)

How would you say that Paul has defined the doctrine of the independence of God?

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Why do you think it was important for Paul to declare this to the Athenians?

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Why do you think it is important for you to understand this about God?

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Scripture Study: Read Psalm 50:10-12. (*5 minutes*)

List the three things God says about Himself. \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Be still before the greatness of God Almighty!

Express to Him some of the marvelous things you know about Him.

Delight yourself in His Person.

Such a great God takes pleasure in answering your prayers, so ask for His blessings to meet your needs.

### Lesson 3

Only God exists by virtue of His own nature. Everything else was created originally as an expression of His nature and for His honor. Everything else is dependent upon Him for its existence. Although God does not need us, He created us for His own pleasure and glory; and His love for us and His purpose in us give us the greatest possible value and meaning. We exist for the highest of all purposes: i.e. to bring Him glory and honor; and this purpose gives to us the most meaningful significance.

Originally created in His image, humans have the greatest potential to reflect His glory; but we exist in a way that is totally different from God. He has no beginning and no end. He has no needs, whereas we are defined by our needs. He is wholly other in His being.

He alone is Life Itself; and only He gives life. That He delights to share His life and joy with us is the good news of the gospel.

Scripture Study: Reflect upon John 1:3-4. (*5 minutes*)

How do these words of God affect you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Paul discusses idols in 1 Corinthians 8:1-5 in order to state his conclusion in 1 Corinthians 8:6. Reflect upon 1 Corinthians 8:6. (*10 minutes*)

What is the difference between you and God? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does this affect your ability to trust Him? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read a rather complex pair of verses in Ephesians 1:11-12. (*10 minutes*)

What have you obtained? \_\_\_\_\_

Whose purpose is being worked out in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

How is God described in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does the phrase, "to the praise of His glory," mean? What is Paul's thought here?

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

"Be still and know that I am God."

Drink in His life-giving grace, which He is freely bestowing on you.

Declare Who He is over every difficulty you are facing.

Specifically trust His promises this morning to meet your needs.

## Lesson 4

No human father ever enjoys or delights in his child without it reflecting the smallest portion of how the Father rejoices over His children with exuberant joy!

The God who does not need anything has chosen to create you, to call you to Himself (if you know Him), and to utterly delight in you.

He is altogether independent, whereas you are entirely dependent; and He takes pleasure in being all that He is to you! You may shout now!

Scripture Study: Read Psalm 35:27-28. (*5 minutes*)

Are you His servant? \_\_\_\_\_ Who does David say delights in the prosperity of His servant? \_\_\_\_\_

What do we call your response to this described in Psalm 35:28?

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Scripture Study: Read the words God caused to be written by His servant, David, in Psalm 36:7-9. (*5 minutes*)

What is David's confession in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is your response to these bold declarations? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read Micah 7:18. (*5 minutes*)

Read this verse slowly several times, and let these words soak into your being.

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Read Micah 7:18 before the Lord and respond to Him.

Love Him back as a child might love his parent.

Hide yourself in Him who has chosen you for Himself.

Pray for His glory to appear in the situations surrounding your life.

## Lesson 5

God is independent and needs nothing. Man, on the other hand, is totally dependent. How is a human to find security, love, provision, guidance, comfort, meaning, joy, purpose, and ability in this life?

Jesus humbled Himself to experience the dependency of humanity; and He demonstrated the utter joy and life-giving satisfaction that He found in His Father.

He revealed the greatness of God by using His needs as the way to experience God. And He is our pattern for dependent living, which is called “faith.”

Scripture Study: Marvel at Jesus’ words as He describes how He was living and accomplishing His mission on this earth. Read John 5:19-20. (*5 minutes*)

What limitations does Jesus describe in His life while living as a man?

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Are you confessing the Father’s love for you today the way Jesus did in this text?

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Scripture Study: Continue to marvel as your Savior models life as dependency upon Him who is independent. Read John 5:30. (*10 minutes*)

What limitations does Jesus describe as normal for creatures? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did Jesus use His limitation to take full advantage of being a human?

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What lessons are you learning from thinking about God’s independence versus your dependence? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Raise your hands to your Father the way a child does who wishes to love a parent.

Just be with Him.

Be still and let Him supply His affection to your soul.

Pray for His glory to be applied to your needs.

## Lesson 6

Man was created to be dependent upon God in a total way and upon other people in some respects.

Our fallen nature leads us away from the blessings of depending upon God for all our ultimate needs as well as for the ability to properly fit into the lives of others.

Thus we wrongly look for freedom in being independent from God, which only results in tragedy; and we fear healthy interdependence with people.

Scripture Study: Quickly scan the familiar verses in Ephesians 5:22 - 6:4.  
(10 minutes)

How is God correcting man's wrong desire for the kind of independence that destroys his primary relationships? \_\_\_\_\_

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What damages do you observe in today's families that are occurring because men want a type of independence that God has not given to them?

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Scripture Study: Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-27. (5 minutes)

Why do you think people rarely live in this reality? \_\_\_\_\_

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How will living this way glorify God? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

If you see the wrong type of independence in yourself, come to God to be forgiven and set free.

Tell God that you welcome your need to be dependent upon Him and to properly relate to those people He has put in your life.

Pray for the goodness of God to be released into the lives of those around you.

Thank Him for supplying all your needs according to His own faithfulness.

## Lesson 7

God is unchangeable in His person, nature, being, purposes, and promises. He is infinite perfection in His being; therefore He cannot change with respect to His Person.

We humans are not like Him in that we do change. It is good that God cannot change; and it is good that man can change since we need to be restored.

This does not mean that God does not respond differently to different situations. He is the source of our emotional capacity, thus His emotions change in response to people's behavior; but His character is forever the same: perfection!

Scripture Study: Read Psalm 102:25-27. Then read Malachi 3:6 and James 1:17.  
(15 minutes)

What does God say about Himself in reference to changing? \_\_\_\_\_

What might happen to your life if God did change? What if He changed for evil? If He were to change for the better, what would that say about His being now? Think through these questions as you absorb the impact of this doctrine.

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Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Contemplate the infinite God whose being never changes.

Honor Him as God this morning by declaring Who He is!

Pray His will on the earth.

Pray for the eyes of those around you to be opened to see Him as He is.

## Lesson 8

From ancient times, which one star does not appear to change its position so that men can determine their position and thus navigate successfully?

And on cloudy nights, before compasses and satellites, what happened to mariners?

The doctrine of God's unchangeableness (His immutability) defines one way in which God is not like man; and because God does not change, we can have absolutes: i.e. truths which never vary.

Scripture Study: Read how this doctrine affected David's soul and prayer life in Psalm 18:2-3. (*5 minutes*)

What do you think David means when he calls God his "rock"? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think David means when he speaks of taking refuge in God who is his "rock"? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read David's understanding of this doctrine in Psalm 71:3. (*5 minutes*)

What effect do you think this revelation had on David's life? \_\_\_\_\_

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What happens to your life when you lose sight of this truth? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read Psalm 95:1-7. (*5 minutes*)

How does this doctrine affect the worship of God? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Come to God, Who delights to be "your rock."

Like David, make God your fortress.

Recount to God some of the ways you are depending on Him to be faithful to you.

Today, exercise your faith in Him who has promised to keep you and guide you as your personal Shepherd King.

## Lesson 9

God does not change with respect to His Person or with respect to His purposes.

But God does change His mind about a person or city or nation when they change. This is not the same as God changing who He is. His relationships change because people change, though He does not.

Sometimes we grieve Him while at other times we make Him glad; but He is the same.

Scripture Study: Read Exodus 32:9-14 where God did change His mind. (10 minutes)  
Who put this ability in Moses to intercede for Israel? \_\_\_\_\_

Who instructed Moses about God's nature so that Moses could have the faith in Him to pray such a prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

What about God Himself did not change? \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Study: Read Hebrews 13:8. (5 minutes)

Since this statement cannot be made of any created being, what is this verse implying about Jesus Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

How does the unchangeableness of Jesus Christ affect your life? \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Read Hebrews 13:8 and worship your Savior!

Declare His saving power over every part of your body, mind, and spirit.

Use this doctrine to fight the good fight of faith so that you can lay hold of eternal life for your needs today.

## Lesson 10

Scripture was being written over a period of nearly two thousand years. Layer upon layer of progressive revelation was added without ever presenting a contradictory picture of who God is. Incredible.

Because God's nature does not change, there can exist absolutes such as absolute rights and wrongs and thus absolute values. The final judgment will be based upon God's character being the eternal, unchanging standard.

Our society, on the other hand, believes that everything is evolving and that "truth" is relative. The gods of this world do change; and these gods produce insecure people whose fluid moral values often destroy their relationships.

Scripture Study: Read this amazing confession which God caused to be spoken by unstable Balaam in Numbers 23:19. (5 minutes)

How did this revelation affect Balaam? \_\_\_\_\_

How does God say that He is different from man? \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Study: Read about the final judgment in Romans 2:4-16. (5 minutes)

How does the truth about the unchangeableness of God's character and purposes qualify God to be the just Judge? Reference Romans 2:11 to answer.

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Scripture Study: Read Colossians 3:25. (5 minutes)

What kind of worldview does this produce? \_\_\_\_\_

If a person wants to determine his own values, how might this change his view of God?

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Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Confess out loud that whatever God says is right.

Acknowledge God in all your thoughts this morning.

Come under His authority.

Worship the unchanging God as the Source of everything you need as a dependent creature.

## Lesson 11

The curse on Cain caused him to be driven from all security. He was condemned to wander and to feel vulnerable, subject to the changing whims of people and the unfaithfulness of human nature.

God establishes order and predictability based upon who He is.

He alone is forever permanent, unchanging, dependable, and faithful. Only in God Himself will a person never be disappointed, for He is the definition of what is good, and He is faithful to all that He is.

Scripture Study: God's nature is the basis upon which we find our security in His covenant attributes. Read Psalm 89:1-5 where you will encounter two "covenant terms":

"lovingkindness" (covenant or loyal love) and "faithfulness" (God's truthfulness which makes Him forever faithful to His word). *(10 minutes)*

How does God's faithfulness affect David's life? \_\_\_\_\_

How does God's faithfulness affect your life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read from a beloved Psalm of David, Psalm 91:1-5. *(5 minutes)*

Read these verses out loud! Make them a solemn declaration.

How does God's unchanging faithfulness become your security? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Entrust yourself into the faithful hands of God, your Father.

Declare His goodness and faithfulness over your loved ones!

Call upon Him who loves to vindicate those who trust in His promises.

Rejoice in Who God has promised to be to you.

## Lesson 12

People do get disappointed in God, so what are we to think when this happens?

People get disappointed because they laid their own expectations about how and when something was to happen on God. In other words, they confused their will and their understanding with that of God, and when He did something else, they felt betrayed.

It is impossible to be disappointed in God Himself when you have truly trusted in Him; but it is easy to become jaded and cynical when you have wrongly believed that God was promising to work something out in a certain way, which then does not happen.

Scripture Study: Read about John the Baptist's struggle with failed expectations in Matthew 11:2-6. (*10 minutes*)

How do you think John's expectations of the Messiah were not being fulfilled?

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When John's disciples returned and quoted Jesus' words in Matthew 11:6, how do you think this helped rescue John? \_\_\_\_\_

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Finish this sentence: "There are times when I will be tempted to be disappointed in God and to become bitter unless I \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read Romans 10:11. (*5 minutes*)

What do you think Paul meant by this promise? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you have ever recovered from nearly being offended with God, what did He teach you?

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Bow your will before the Lord of Glory and submit your mind to Him.

Declare God to be righteous and good and just and faithful!

Pour out your soul to Him. Surrender to Him your sorrows, for He cares for you.

Thank Him for His mercies and for His tender patience with you.

## Lesson 13

The Eternity of God draws from the whole of Scripture to declare that God has no beginning and no end, and that He exists outside of time, for time is part of His creation. He sees the past, the present, and the future equally; but He exists apart from and above all that He has created.

God is timeless in His own being; and in this He is different from us who were created in time and have many limitations placed upon us by time.

Even in heaven we will continue to exist in the measurable succession of moments that we call, time. God, however, is not bound by such. He is infinite, and He is eternal!

Scripture Study: Consider what God is saying about His nature in Revelation 1:8. What is Jesus saying about Himself in this compact sentence? (*5 minutes*)

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Scripture Study: Consider how God created matter out of nothing as you read Hebrews 11:3. (*5 minutes*)

Finish this sentence: "God always existed, whereas everything else was \_\_\_\_\_."

Finish this sentence: "Behind the creation which we see is \_\_\_\_\_."

Scripture Study: Read Jude's strong declaration in Jude 25. (*5 minutes*)

What does this verse tell about time? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Become still before God and wonder at Who He is!

Discern some of His greatness, and honor Him for it.

Take pleasure in being His child, created in time for His joy.

Put all your trust in Him regarding your needs and struggles.

## Lesson 14

God does not age. Neither does He learn, for He knows all things.

We exist in time, and it defines who we are. We are bound by time, and it is part of our fallen nature that resists the limitations placed upon us as creatures.

God exists above time, and He sees all things equally in the past, the present, and the future.

Scripture Study: Read Moses' penetrating insights into the things given to him by God in Psalm 90:4, 12. (*10 minutes*)

How does a thousand years differ in our sight from God's sight? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think that obtaining wisdom is related to having God teach you how to think about your days? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: While God declares the end from the beginning, it is not just because He can see it. He can, of course; but He actively governs and says, "I will accomplish all My good pleasure." Read Isaiah 46:9-10. (*5 minutes*)

If you believe that God is good, that He loves you, and that He is in control, then it should be very satisfying to put all your trust in Him, regardless of what you see or feel.

As you read this passage, what do you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Wait upon God. Ponder His Person and His rule over all.

Let Him minister to you.

Let your great thoughts of Him spill over into believing prayer for those who need His help.

Honor Him with thankful worship at the beginning of this day.

## Lesson 15

Omniscience is the doctrine that describes God's complete knowledge of Himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act.

Not only does God know all things; He alone is the source of all power and authority. Thus He is able to do all His holy will; and He rules the universe actively.

The One who created you knew you personally before He created the world, and He chose you to be His child (I am assuming that you know Him). Therefore you can rely utterly upon Him. You can live in the rest that His Son earned for you.

Scripture Study: Delight yourself in God as you read Jeremiah 23:23-24. (*5 minutes*)  
How might this shape your thinking and your responses to life's situations?

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If you think God's thoughts, how might this affect how you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Try reading Psalm 139:1-12 with a strong, declarative voice!  
(*10 minutes*)

What did you experience in the reading of this portion? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does this passage teach you about God? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Raise your arms to the Great God and surrender to Him!

Declare His sovereign rule over your life.

Express your admiration and reverence for Him who rules.

Pray His will into the places He has assigned you to represent Him.

## Lesson 16

Omnipresence is the doctrine that states that God is fully and actively present everywhere at the same time.

God is fully present in hell, for His holy presence and wrath make hell what it is: the place of eternal torment.

God has no size, no dimensions, nor can He be contained by space. He is present everywhere in His creation, but He is not a part of creation.

Scripture Study: God is present in different ways in different places. Read Amos 9:1-4. (*5 minutes*)

Why is God's presence, as described in Amos, a terrible experience?

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Scripture Study: As God's children, we normally think of God's presence the same way that David experienced it in Psalm 16:11. (*5 minutes*)

When you think of God's presence, what thoughts and feelings come to you?

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Scripture Study: Read Luke 4:24-29, and think of how God's presence in the person of Jesus Christ brought about this horrible reaction. (*5 minutes*)

What do you think they experienced of God's presence that provoked them to such uncontrollable rage? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Ask God, the Holy Spirit, to teach you to have great respect and awe of God.

Worship Him as God by fully trusting Him.

Yield your mind and your emotions to Him for His will.

Pray His promises into your life situations.

## Lesson 17

Our culture is presently elevating the emotions above the mind. It is popular to insist that you cannot find truth with your mind, whereas you can experience truth with your feelings. Actually, both the emotions and the mind need to be freed and restored.

God is Spirit, and man's spirit is above his intellect; but if you have tried to know a person deeply without speaking his language, you have realized the critical role played by the mind.

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your Mind" - Matthew 22:37.

Scripture Study: Read Hebrews 8:10. (*5 minutes*)

How closely related does this verse make the mind and heart? \_\_\_\_\_

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Judging from what the new covenant accomplished, what value and significance do you think God puts on the human mind? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Notice the status of the mind prior to the Holy Spirit's regenerating influence. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4. (*10 minutes*)

Satan seems to consider it very important to blind the ability of the mind to function the way in which God intended.

What do you think is God's will for you in regard to the use of your mind?

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Read Romans 12:2. What is the role described here for your mind?

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Yield your mind to the Lord as the worship of surrender.

Ask the Holy Spirit to restore your mind so that you can think, reason, and agree with all that God thinks.

Ask the Holy Spirit to bless your memory so that you can obey the Lord's commands to remember what He has said and done.

Ask the Lord to bless your mind for His creative purposes.

## Lesson 18

You are constantly influenced by the unbelief that refuses to honor God as God, because this is the nature of the world system. And this system rewards those with approval who “go along in order to get along.”

The tonic for the mind-numbing, heart-hardening influence of these lies about God is the considering of Jesus and what He has done, which is the author of Hebrews’ prescription.

The more you feed your mind with thoughts about who Jesus is and the more you freely talk about His power, the more your faith in Him will grow.

Scripture Study: Discover the spiritual condition of these Hebrew “Christians” by reading Hebrews 2:1-3, Hebrews 3:12-13, and Hebrews 5:11-12. (*5 minutes*)

Describe their spiritual condition. \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Quickly scan Hebrews 1:1-4, Hebrews 3:1, and Hebrews 12:2-3. (*10 minutes*)

Hebrews 3:1 - “Consider Jesus” can be translated, “think about Jesus,” or “reflect upon Jesus.” The Greek word has the root word for “mind” in it.

Why do you think the author used this method to bring wandering Christians around so as to restore their faith? \_\_\_\_\_

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What might be the application to your own life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Become still before your Savior King this morning.

Reflect upon His greatness.

Worship Him; be ascribing to Him beauty, power, grace, wisdom, mercy, compassion, love, authority, purity, knowledge...

Submit yourself and all that is related to your life unto Him!

## Lesson 19

Paul speaks of using both his spirit and his mind in slightly different ways. His own testimony was that he prayed in a tongue and allowed his mind to not be active at some moments; but then he would pray and sing using his mind. (1 Corinthians 14:14-15)

There may be those who devalue spiritual expressions that cannot be scrutinized by the mind, and there may be those who devalue the spiritual role God gives to the mind; but it is hoped that both may be fully appreciated and utilized in loving and serving God.

Scripture Study: Read Luke 24:45 to see what Jesus' first act was with these early disciples. (*5 minutes*)

Since you were once included in the 2 Corinthians 4:4 category, and your mind was blinded, would you now say that Jesus has likewise opened your mind to understand the Scriptures? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read in Luke 2:51 what Mary did after she had experienced many things with the Lord. (*10 minutes*)

What is the connection between Mary's heart and her mind that is probably taken for granted in this text? \_\_\_\_\_

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Can you express how your mind and heart may sometimes operate as one entity and at other times seem to act like two separate things? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Try praying just with your spirit and then with your mind.

Sing spiritual songs to the Lord. (Ephesians 5:19)

Be still and let Him minister to you.

Honor Him by believing His word about the situations that you face.

## Lesson 20

Omnipotence is the doctrine that states that God has all power, and uses it to accomplish all His holy will. He is the Sovereign Lord, which means that He actively governs His creation.

God is not a force; He is a Person. But He has and uses all the force (power) necessary to completely accomplish all His will and purposes.

There are things that God cannot do, in that He cannot contemplate or do anything that would violate His holy nature; thus He cannot lie. (Titus 1:2) He cannot tempt or be tempted to do evil. (James 1:13) He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:13)

Scripture Study: Read Genesis 18:14 and Jeremiah 32:17, 27. (5 minutes)

What are the limits on God's power stated here? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: It's interesting to get the angel's perspective in Luke 1:37.

(10 minutes)

How do you think this statement affected Mary? See Luke 1:38.

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How impressed do you think Jesus was with this doctrine? \_\_\_\_\_

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What effect do you think this doctrine has on your ability to believe the promises of God even when there is a delay or fierce opposition? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Remember some of the times when God's power has delivered you and rescued you.

Give Him thanks for all that He has done and for all that He will do.

Call upon God to accomplish His holy will in your life.

Believe Him to pour His blessings through you to others.

## Lesson 21

We know in part and we prophesy in part. (1 Corinthians 13:9) This should constantly minister humility and a dependency upon God for our understanding. We should not expect to understand life without having to live by an active faith in God. (Hebrews 11:3)

God, on the other hand, is omniscient or all-knowing. He knows everything actual and possible without forgetting, reasoning, thinking, or remembering. He always knows all things at once. He is God.

To honor God as God has the powerful effect of reversing the impact of the curse upon our minds that came when Adam and Eve first refused God His honor.

Scripture Study: Let Hebrews 4:13 deeply affect your thinking. (5 minutes)

Read this verse several times, letting it impact you.

As you do this, what do you feel in your soul? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Jesus knew what would have happened if His miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon. Read Matthew 11:21. (10 minutes)

Have you ever thought how your life would have been if you had done such and such?

You don't have to go very far with this line of thought to realize that only God could possibly know all the possibilities, allow people to choose, and still actively govern so that all His holy purposes are fulfilled.

Finish this sentence: "If I want to understand, I must \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_."

Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Humble yourself before the Lord and honor Him with worship!

Extol the Lord, using whatever means seem best to you.

Submit your cares and worries to Him, for this honors Him.

By faith enter into His divine rest that He won for you.

## Lesson 22

One of the most delightful discoveries from studying Scripture with the help of systematic theology is the realization that God is happy! This is remarkable, for often people think of God as being angry or stern.

God exists in three Persons, and He is completely self-sufficient, satisfied within His own Being, and delighted with His creation, which exists for His glory.

Listen to God the Father express His joy over His Son even as the Spirit was coming upon Him: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased” – Matthew 3:17.

Scripture Study: It is the purpose of Jesus to bring His people into sharing in the Father’s blessedness and happiness. Read Ephesians 1:3. (*10 minutes*)

What has God done in you in order to open the door for you to experience all the spiritual blessings that exist? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think is the way for you to experience these blessings? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are the things that hinder you from experiencing these blessings? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Study: Read 1 Timothy 1:11 and 1 Timothy 6:15. (*5 minutes*)

What do you learn about God in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God intends to bless His people and make them a blessing for others on the earth. How does this relate to the fact that He is Himself “the blessed God”?

\_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Enact Ephesians 1:3 by praising God for giving you every spiritual blessing.

See yourself as the one God has blessed.

Receive His blessings into your life.

Pray His blessings into the lives of others.

## Lesson 23

God is infinitely beautiful, for He is the sum of all desirable qualities.

The Scriptures speak of God as splendid or glorious or radiant; and these descriptions seem to be related to His personal holiness and glory. There are references to His majesty; and when humans are given the smallest glimpse of something associated with Him, such as an angel, they are overwhelmed.

Scripture Study: Read the encounter which Jesus gave to the Apostle John in Revelation 1:12-20, and notice the descriptions of Christ's beauty. (*5 minutes*)

Without getting caught up in the specific descriptions, what is John trying to convey?

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What was the effect of this meeting upon John? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think God placed the second commandment where He did? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read Psalm 27:4 and Psalm 96:6. (*10 minutes*)

Though you have never seen the Lord with your eyes, do you have a spiritual sense of having beheld the beauty of the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

Notice the context of these two verses and comment on what happens to us when we begin to "see" or sense some of the beauty of the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Wait patiently upon Him who is all-glorious.

Let God be with you on His terms and do whatever He wills.

Now cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.

Ascribe to the Lord the beauty, the power, and the radiant splendor, which are His.

## Lesson 24

Theology helps us to contemplate the infinite glory and power of the Almighty God.

By collecting all that God has revealed in His Holy Scriptures about Himself and putting all the pieces together which describe God's nature, our minds are humbled and expanded at the same time!

God means for us to go to school on the experiences of those whose stories are in the Bible. They are for our instruction; and thinking through them powerfully affects us.

Scripture Study: Quickly scan Job's encounter with God and the effects upon Job's questions, anger, and accusations. Just get the big picture in Job 38-40. *(5 minutes)*  
Describe the effects of reading these verses upon your own soul. \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Psalm 73 describes a man who has lost his perspective on life and he has considered not following the Lord, until he begins to pray and has an encounter with God. *(5 minutes)*

Can you relate to this? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you struggled with disappointments and resentments? \_\_\_\_\_

When you are questioning God's goodness, what happens to you? \_\_\_\_\_

What should you do when you find yourself in such a bad place? \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Time: *(15 – 30 minutes)*

Pour out your struggles at Jesus' feet.

Wait on Him until you become more aware of God than your problems.

Worship the Lord with all your heart, mind, and strength!

Make declarations of His goodness over your struggles.

## Lesson 25

Prior to my own saving encounter with God in the person of Jesus Christ, my mind was prepared by J.B. Philips' book "Your God is Too Small."

Now I find that after knowing Him for 37 years, my thoughts of Him are still plagued by small thoughts of such an infinite God. I also believe that we will have the joy of learning of His greatness for eternity!

God's jealousy for His own glory is also His jealousy for our welfare, for knowing Him as He truly is has the powerful consequences of expanding our freedom!

Scripture Study: Read Jesus' words in John 17:3. (5 minutes)

What is Jesus' message to you in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_

How might theology help you to experience God? \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Study: Absorb the profound truth stated in 2 Peter 1:3. (10 minutes)

What is God offering you in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_

How are you to receive everything you need that relates to life and your need to be like Him? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the effect of His glory and His excellence upon you in this process? \_\_\_\_\_

So, if you were Satan, what would you attempt to do to prevent your receiving all that you need for life and godliness? \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Time: (15 – 30 minutes)

Ask the Holy Spirit to make you more aware of God than your problems.

State what God says about Himself in reference to your needs.

Honor God as God by trusting Him to be all that He is to you.

Pray for His honor and glory to be revealed to others.

## Lesson 26

Theology provides categories of thought that describe aspects of God's Person. Thus we have: (1) the Knowability of God, (2) the Independence of God, (3) the Beauty of God, (4) the Immutability (unchangeableness) of God, (5) the Infinity of God, (6) the Eternity of God, (7) the Omnipotence of God, (8) the Omnipresence of God, (9) the Blessedness of God (His happiness), (9) the Beauty of God, (10) the Timelessness of God, (11) the Spirituality of God, etc.

The more you know about these categories, the more you will notice in Scripture when you read what God says about Himself. He wants you to know Him.

Scripture Study: As you think about the categories of thought provided by theology, read 2 Timothy 2:15. (*10 minutes*)

Why do you think Paul would call you, "a workman"? \_\_\_\_\_

As a child of God, you are approved by God because of your union with Christ; but here Paul is speaking of your desire to be approved by God in some other sense. What do you think Paul means by wanting you to be approved by God in relationship to your being "a workman"? \_\_\_\_\_

What importance does "accurately handling the word of truth" have in your not being ashamed and therefore hearing His, "well done"? \_\_\_\_\_

Journal: Write out some of your thoughts about God. Speak to Him. You can ask Him questions also. (*5 minutes*) \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Thank God this morning for giving you His Scriptures so that you can be taught by Him. Apply to Him to be His student.

Receive the Holy Spirit as the down payment on your inheritance.

Rejoice in His promises to meet your needs and to glorify Himself through your prayers.

## Lesson 27

Only God is good; and all that God does is good. He alone is the standard of good; and everything He is and does is worthy of our approval. When we approve of Who He is and what He does, we experience His goodness.

When men disapprove of God's ways, they do not realize that they are placing themselves above God; sadly, they bring curses rather than blessings into their lives.

God Himself declares that no human is good, and no human does what is good. This is our starting point; but Christ in us changes all that. He causes "good works" to flow from our lives!

Scripture Study: Read Jesus' words on the subject in Luke 18:19. (*5 minutes*)

Jesus was "good" in distinction from the rest of mankind.

So what conclusion do you think Jesus wanted them to draw from their casual choice of words, "Good Teacher," in the verse before? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think it is important for us to realize that mankind, in his natural state, is not good? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: God loves to give His good things to His beloved children. Read Matthew 7:11. (*10 minutes*)

What does this tell you about how Jesus related to His Father? \_\_\_\_\_

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How might this reality change the way you are currently living? \_\_\_\_\_

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What happens to your life when you approve or disapprove of something God says or does? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Be still. Meditate upon God's goodness.

Use your voice to agree with God about everything He is doing in your life.

Ask Him, according to Matthew 7:11, for His good things.

Ask for His good things in those who live around you.

## Lesson 28

God's very nature is love whereas our nature has been severely damaged. We crave love, and we are easily deceived into wrong ways of finding it.

Jesus lived continually in the experience of His Father's love, and this is the pattern for your freedom. You need it.

Freely receiving His love and freely extending it to others describes the life for which you were created.

Scripture Study: Read John 5:20 and then John 5:19. (*10 minutes*)

What would you conclude is the key to the freedom Jesus modeled? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you confess that you don't really know much about love unless God teaches you? \_\_\_\_\_

How are you doing in this area? Are you walking in the awareness that God absolutely loves you? \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Study: Read Paul's prayer for Christians in Ephesians 3:14-19. (*5 minutes*)

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in enabling you to daily experience God's love? \_\_\_\_\_

What would help you to experience this love on a daily basis? \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you this morning.

Be still. Receive. Let Him...

If you discern blocks in your ability to love others, surrender them to Jesus.

Pray God's love into those who have troubled your life.

## Lesson 29

We are different from God in that He is all-wise, whereas “foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child...” - Proverbs 22:15. Our wisdom begins with knowing that He alone is the source.

He is the all-wise God, and He always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals.

God imparts His life-giving wisdom to you through His Son and through His word. He continually offers you Himself as Wisdom. Isn't this grand?

Scripture Study: Read Romans 8:28-29. (*5 minutes*)

Do you believe this for your life? \_\_\_\_\_

How does this define God's wisdom for life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read James 1:2-8. (*10 minutes*)

What is God offering to you? \_\_\_\_\_

What if you don't count it all joy when you encounter various trials? What happens in your life then? \_\_\_\_\_

So how is God trying to set you up to receive His wisdom by telling you to look at your problems and interpret your situation as a joy? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: (*15 – 30 minutes*)

Deliberately count it all joy that you are facing your challenges.

Ask your Father for His wisdom.

Pray His will into your situations.

Having done that, worship Him!

## Lesson 30

God is different from us in that He is infinitely holy. This means two things: (1) There is no evil in Him, and (2) He is devoted to His own glory.

Interestingly, it is precisely these two things that bring our happiness and satisfaction; and amazingly, it is these two things that God offers to us in Christ!

His Spirit is called the Holy Spirit and is sometimes referred to as the Spirit of Holiness, for He inhabits us in order to make us like our heavenly Father. Good news!

Scripture Study: Read Revelation 4:4-11. *(5 minutes)*

What do you think John wants you to experience as he struggles to express in mere words what he experienced? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Read Hebrews 2:10. *(5 minutes)*

Since you know that God is working to make you like Himself, how does this make you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

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Scripture Study: Delight yourself in the profound truths expressed in Romans 8:28-30. *(5 minutes)*

What effect do these verses have upon you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Time: *(15 - 30 minutes)*

By faith, take your place in Christ.

Receive His righteousness into your soul.

Worship Him Who is infinitely Holy.

Receive His promises to make you like Himself.