

God Is...

Immutable

Worthy of Worship

This thought brings comfort as we enter into the perplexities of each day: amid all the changes and uncertainties of life, God and His Christ remain the same — almighty to save. *J. I. Packer*

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God Never Changes

Read your Bible: [Psalm 36](#)

Spotlight Verse:

Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. [Psalm 36:5](#)

Ever worry about whether you're going to heaven? Wonder if you are "still saved"?

When we first moved to Santa Cruz, my daughter Elisabeth was just eighteen months old. We took her one day to a beachside amusement park, and rode on the Sky Ride, which is something like a chair lift: You sit on a bench which hangs from a cable 20 or 30 feet in the air as you glide over the park, your legs dangling.

And right after we reached the middle of the ride, Elisabeth started freaking out.

She was one car behind me with my wife Laurie, and as I looked back to find out why Elisabeth was screaming I saw her squirm away from Laurie, trying to get out of the gondola, slipping under the safety bar...

Laurie says she's never felt an adrenaline rush like that before! She grabbed Elisabeth and held on for dear life — Elisabeth's life! As I watched helplessly, Elisabeth pushed Laurie away, letting go of her several times. Her sandals came off and spiraled to the sand 30 feet below.

But Laurie never let go of Elisabeth. I watched my wife in true mama-bear mode, straining with all her might to prevent that child from slipping away. Why? Well, because my wife loves her daughter! Fiercely!

There are times in your life when you squirm and twist and want to get away from God. And you may in fact let go of Him. *But God does not let go of you.* Why? Because He loves you. Fiercely.

Jesus said of His followers:

"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand."
John 10:28–29 (NLT)

God's faithfulness to you is just one implication of the unchanging nature of God.

God Is Rock Solid

Theologians refer to this as *immutability* of God. This means He is unchangeable, consistent, rock solid, always reliable. What He was, He always will be. He *never* changes.

Everything else I see in my world changes. My house needs paint. My car is rusting. I'm aging. Even the 2,000-year-old redwood trees in the hills near my house change.

Everything changes. Except God.

I used to wonder — how can that be true? After all, God is not inactive; God did create the universe. The Word did become flesh. So doesn't that mean God changes?

Of course, God is *active*. God *responds*. God *creates*. In that sense God *does* change because He changes His *activity*. (Or I should say, *from our perspective* He changes His activity. If God is outside of time and space, then He is "always active and always at rest", as Augustine pointed out).

But immutability means God's *attributes* don't change. God's *character* doesn't change. He will *always be* all the things we have seen in this study:

*Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. **He never changes** or casts a shifting shadow.* James 1:17 (NLT)

*He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for **he is not a human being, that he should change his mind.*** 1 Samuel 15:29

*Jesus Christ is **the same yesterday and today and forever.*** Hebrews 13:8

God Is Faithful

It's one of the most "other" attributes of God: *He never changes!*

What else can you really count on in life to *never* change?

You can't count on your employer. Companies get bought, and workers laid off, all the time.

You can't count on your stock portfolio.

You can't count on the government.

You can't count on the economy.

You can't count on the weather.

Maybe other people have proven to you just how changeable human loyalties can be. Someone said "I love you." Then changed their mind. Someone promised you forever. But didn't mean it.

Know this:

God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Numbers 23:19 (NIV, 1984)

The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. Psalm 145:13b

Note that phrase: "Trustworthy in all He promises." There are over 7,000 promises in the Bible. God is faithful and trustworthy to fulfill them *all*. Like this:

*He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. **God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says...*** 1 Corinthians 1:8–9a (NLT)

Next time you feel insecure in your standing with God, remind yourself: God is faithful to all His promises, including His promise to save those who trust in Him. He will never let you go.

God is... immutable.

Questions For Reflection

In what way are you struggling with feeling insecure in your relationship with God?

What difference does it make to you to believe God is totally reliable, faithful, steady, and unchangeable?

The Lord Will Provide

Read your Bible: [Psalm 100](#)

Spotlight Verse:

For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. [Psalm 100:5](#)

After my dad died, our family lived beneath the poverty line for about eight years. Many times my single mother said to my little sister and me in her heavily Swiss-German accented English, “Ve haff no money for food! Ve must pray!”

I remember holding hands in our kitchen, a little circle of three, asking God, quite literally, for our daily bread. And God always provided — though not always in the way I would have preferred.

For instance, once we specifically asked for milk, and the very next morning we found a box of powdered milk on our doorstep. *Which I couldn't stand.* But it did provide what we needed. To this day I have no idea how it got there, or who donated it.

Another day we asked for shoes, and the next day shoes just my size were left in a bag on the porch — and they were the ugliest puke-green shoes I have ever seen in my life. I told Mom, “There is no way I am wearing those to school!” And she explained to me in her patient, logical way, “YOU VILL WEAR ZEM!!!”

So I did. And everyone at school thought they were so cool — the one and only time they ever thought that of me at school!

But incidents like that made an impression on me.

Recently I was preparing to speak at the funeral of a man who died at about the same age as my father, leaving two young children and a widow, just like our family, many years ago. I asked my mother what words of wisdom she had for this woman who was about to walk the same path she had walked.

She stopped and thought for a moment and then said one phrase. Four words.

“The Lord will provide.”

Talk about an antidote to discouragement.

“The Lord will provide.” She told me, “I’ve seen it again and again.” And then together we remembered more of the ways God literally put food on our table.

God is Faithful to Provide

Here’s a verse that was written by the Apostle Paul after he’d been in prison, beaten for his faith, shipwrecked, sick, homeless, laughed at, slandered, taken to court... whatever you can go through in life, he’d been there. And he says, guess what I’ve learned?

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

The Lord will provide.

I love the true story of George Müller. He was a remarkable man who lived in the 1800s.

By his own admission he was a rotten kid. Started stealing at age 10... from his own family! Ended up in prison, an alcoholic.

But then he totally changed. Became a Christian. And decided God was calling him to reach out to kids just like him.

He started Christian homes for London's street children. This was way before his time. No one in the world was doing this then. He ended up housing 10,000 street kids, mostly orphans, in his homes.

Think of how stressed you get making ends meet for yourself, or for a family of two or three kids. He had *thousands* of kids to worry about.

But the really amazing thing is this: He never asked for funds. Not one time. He said it was a grand experiment to see if God really was faithful. I don't recommend this for everyone, but it sure worked out for George Müller. Not one child ever went without a meal. Not one person ever had to settle for an I.O.U.

George Müller's favorite saying: *"God is faithful still and hears prayers still!"*

The Lord will provide.

Great is God's Faithfulness

There will be dark times in all of our lives. You may be in a dark time right now. But I love the saying:

"Never doubt in the dark what God has taught you in the light."

In the past few weeks you've learned about God's holiness, love, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, sovereignty...

And now know this: None of that will ever change.

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (See Hebrews 13:8)

Those truths about Him never shift, no matter what you are going through! Cling to them. Focus on them, instead of the problems around you.

The grayer I get, the more I sing *"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"* with gusto. Because I have more and more memories of God's provision. I know this: The Lord will provide!

God is... faithful.

Questions For Reflection

What specific situations or memories in your life reinforce God's immutability and faithfulness?

Write a brief statement specifically about immutability and what it means to you: "Because God never changes..."

God Never Changes, But What I Believe Changes Me

Read your Bible: [Psalm 46](#)

Spotlight Verse:

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...[Psalm 46:1–2a](#)

I started this study by stating that how you define God changes everything about how you respond to life.

So consider these differing definitions of God:

“The eternal mind” — Plato

“God is the absolute Spirit, yet a spirit without consciousness until it becomes conscious in the reason and the thoughts of man.” — Hegel

“Pure mathematical mind...” — Einstein

“The ground of all being.” — Aristotle

As brilliant as they all were, these men were all attempting to define God, to pin Him down. And again, being humans, they tend to fashion a god in their own image. Is it any surprise to you that Plato the philosopher defines God as a “mind,” or Einstein the mathematician describes God as “mathematical”?

Meanwhile the Bible speaks of God as beyond imagining — and yet knowable! It describes Him in all the ways we’ve seen and more: “God is... Love... All-Powerful... All-Knowing... Always Present... Sovereign... Faithful... Unchanging...”

The Difference This Makes

Okay, now imagine yourself in various life situations.

You’re alone on a business trip tempted to compromise your integrity.

You’ve been rejected by someone you love.

You’re facing the death of a loved one.

How would the various definitions above change the way you handle each situation?

Try praying, “The Lord is my eternal mind, I shall not want...” Just not quite the same inspirational ring as the familiar verse in Psalm 23, is it?

In today’s verses the Psalmist declares that *because* he believes the Lord to be a refuge, to be strong, “**therefore** we will not fear.”

What he believed about God changed his response to his crisis. And what you believe to be true about God really changes you too — down to the core of your being. When you really believe God is as powerful, as present, as full of pardon as you’ve seen in this study, you will be changed — forever!

Practical and Powerful Prayers

I recently went on a trip to Mexico with my son’s 7th grade class to work in an orphanage there. One evening we went to a very poor Tecate neighborhood built next to a sewage treatment plant. The smell of human waste permeated the place, so intense that my eyes stung.

But then we joined with a local church's midweek service. This church burned no incense, but their intense and authentic worship of God quickly overpowered all other distractions. I was caught up in the fresh enthusiasm of it all! It was so inspiring to hear praise songs I knew in English sung in another language. I enjoyed listening to the sermon, even though I speak absolutely no Spanish. I loved how the pastor ended the message with an altar call, a time for people to come forward for prayer. In fact, I felt like I was just glowing with joy through the entire experience — until one of the pastors asked me to walk up and pray with people during the altar call — and I went pale!

"But!" I objected, "I don't speak the language!"

"Is okay! Is okay!" the pastor smiled as she took me by the arm to the front of the church, gesturing toward crying people who needed prayer.

So I walked up nervously, put my arms around people who whispered their stories, and thought: "What can I possibly pray that is relevant to their situations, since I can't understand what they were saying?"

Then I prayed, in English, "God... you are omniscient, and that means you are multilingual! And you know this need better than I could ever hope to know it — even if I spoke the language! You are omnipresent. That means You're right here with us now, crossing every border. You're omnipotent. That means You have the power to meet this need. You are faithful and sovereign, so You know exactly the right course of action for this situation. You are love. That means You love this person so much. And we both love You. So we lift this need to You now in full assurance that You know and You care and You will work."

I was able to pray again and again with power and with passion as the altar call continued. Those who clearly needed further guidance I steered toward Spanish speakers after the service ended. But through that experience I learned firsthand just how an appreciation of God's attributes can help as life throws you unexpected challenges.

Praying the Attributes

Try *praying* through the attributes of God you've learned in the last seven weeks. Notice how it makes an immediate impact to affirm these truths. Actually address God and pray through these next sentences:

*You are the **omnipotent** God.*

You are bigger than any problem. Nothing is too difficult for You. And I can do all things through You.

*You are the **omniscient** God.*

You know all things. You know my needs. You know my challenges. You know the needs of those around me.

*You are the **omnipresent** God.*

You are right here, right now. With me. With my loved ones. The Lord is in this place. And I know it.

*You are the **sovereign** God.*

You are in control. You guarantee that all things work together for good for those called according to Your purpose.

*You are **love**.*

As infinitely powerful as You are, God, You are just as loving. The matchless power that it took to make the universe is matched by the power of love You have for me, and for my loved ones, and for my enemies. Help me to love them all as You love them. You loved us all so much that you came to this earth to make a way to You.

*You are **immutable** and **faithful**.*

You never change. You will keep every promise You have made. You are faithful to keep me secure in Your salvation. You are faithful to provide. You are faithful to reward.

Thank you, God, for these glimpses into the amazing reality that is far beyond any earthly imagination! Help my mind to reel, my soul to be comforted, my heart to soar as I think of your wonders!

When I consider the infinite nature of all these attributes, Lord, I realize anew:

God is... enough!

Questions For Reflection

What difference do you think it would make if you strengthened your understanding of the “enoughness” of God? What difference has it made?

Do you know anyone who needs to have their faith in such a God strengthened? How can you help?

Christian Atheists

Read your Bible: [Isaiah 29:13,14](#)

Spotlight Verse:

They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. [Titus 1:16a](#)

There's a danger in Christianity today, a little different than what I called "pagan Christians" earlier. It's a danger you could fall into after this study. A danger I need to warn you about.

Christian atheism.

Craig Groeschel is a pastor who wrote a book called *Christian Atheist*. He starts by talking about a time he was on a flight that had two segments.

On the first leg of the flight, he was sitting next to a guy named Travis who asked him what he did for a living, and when Craig replied that he was a pastor, Travis immediately responded, "Oh, I don't believe in God." And went on to defend his atheism.

When the plane landed at the first stop, Travis got off and a young woman named Michelle took his place. She instantly started talking about everything she was anxious about in her life— how she felt nervous about flying, was having problems with a boyfriend she lived with, felt upset about her finances.

Then when she asked Craig what he did for a living, and he said, "I'm a pastor," Michelle exclaimed, "I believe in God too!" In fact, she said, she had received Jesus a long time ago. But then she broke down in tears and admitted, "I believe in God, but I know my life doesn't look like what a Christian's life is supposed to look like."

Craig says he was struck in that moment by the realization that there's more than one kind of atheist:

There's the traditional, philosophical atheist, who does not believe in God at all, like Travis.

But then there's the *Christian atheist*. Like Michelle. And maybe like you and me, at times. [58](#)

I can say I believe in God, and yet for all practical purposes *live* as if the God I say I believe in *does not exist*.

Am I a Practical Atheist?

Ask yourself: *Does my life look like I am a person who believes in the God of the Bible?*

My biggest fear is that you will have merely learned terminology in this study: That your mind has been filled with facts, but those facts haven't trickled down the 12 inches from your brain to your heart.

We've been studying God's omnipotence, omnipresence, immutability, graciousness, sovereignty, grace...

Do most Christians believe these things are true of God? Maybe theoretically.

But how would you finish this sentence: "I believe in God, but..."

"I believe in God, but I worry all the time."

"I believe in God, but I constantly feel lonely and abandoned."

"I believe in God, but I'm burned out spiritually."

"I believe in God but I have continual anxiety about the future."

"I believe in God but I figure I can live my life however I want to."

I think these are all signs of *Christian atheism*.

They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him.

I'm not suggesting you'll never have *times* when you feel lonely or anxious — that's just part of the human experience (and those are all emotions even Christ felt at times) — but the *core* of your being can be peaceful, serene, and confident when what the Bible says about God is truly internalized.

Achievement or Astonishment

Don't get me wrong: I'm not saying you must *try harder* to internalize these truths. I'm asking if you are beholding the wonders of God so that *your imagination is captured* and you are changed. I'm not talking about *achievement*. I'm talking about *astonishment*.

In today's reading from Isaiah 29, the Lord says that His cure for the practical atheism of the people is this:

"I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder." Isaiah 29:14

Their hearts have grown stale — and so He will let them witness the wonder of the rocket blast-off!

I pray that the same thing has happened with you as you've studied God's attributes in nature and Scripture.

I pray that you haven't just studied, but that God has put Himself on display and blown you away.

I pray that these amazing truths make a difference in you.

I pray that you keep your eyes wide open for traces of God all around you.

And I pray that if you feel yourself drifting from God in the future you don't try harder to "feel" Him again through the addition of rigorous rules or disciplines. That way lies spiritual dryness, and a bondage to a kind of legalism.

God without Additives

God observes in Isaiah 29 one result of not really knowing Him: Adding human religious rules to worship. "Their worship of me is based on merely human rules..."

The people were essentially building an idol.

Not a *statue*. But a *system*.

This is exactly what happens to me, too, when I don't pay attention to what the Bible really says about the identity of God: I complicate and trivialize my faith with all sorts of extra teachings and rules.

Margaret Feinberg, in her book *The Organic God*, uses a food analogy to explain this. As she puts it, the real God of the Bible is *organic*, while the false god we often concoct is a result of putting too many religious additives, preservatives, flavorings, and colorings into the mix.[59](#)

The solution: Getting back to the 100% natural God. Relaxing, and letting God once again capture your imagination. And all the rest of you too!

I pray that you gaze in wonder at the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and live in gratitude for God's grace to you in every moment of every day.

May you enjoy the richness of the organic God for the rest of your life!

Questions For Reflection

Does your life look like you are a person who believes in the God of the Bible?

Which attribute of God do you struggle with the most? Why?

Awe-Full Worship

Read your Bible: [Isaiah 40:27–31](#)

Spotlight Verse:

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe. [Hebrews 12:28](#)

Two words that should always be seen as a contradiction: *Boring worship*.

Yet that's exactly how many people see church. In Mark Twain's classic *Tom Sawyer*, Tom goes to church at the demand of his Aunt Polly.

The boring announcements are made from a "list that would stretch out to the crack of doom." The prayer is "generous" in its details. Tom "did not enjoy it but only endured it — if he did that much." The only thing in the whole service that holds his attention is a fly that lands in front of him, to which Tom is hypnotically drawn, taking in every detail, finding the pest far more compelling than the preacher. The sermon, meanwhile, "droned along monotonously through an argument that was so prosy that many a head by and by began to nod." [62](#)

In a word? Boring.

Wide World of Worship

Here's a contrast to that image of church:

I recently returned from speaking at a conference for missionaries in Africa. The first morning, everyone gathered for a time of worship. Picture it: In this one room, there were missionaries there from literally all around the globe. Many different ethnic groups, a variety of languages.

And they were from every Christian denomination you could possibly imagine. Pentecostal. Anglican. Mennonite. Presbyterian. Baptist. They were all there.

This shows just how shallow I can be, but at first I was reminded not of worship, but of that old series of jokes:

*How many **Presbyterians** does it take to change a light bulb?*

None. The lights will go on and off at predestined times.

*How many **Lutherans** does it take to change a light bulb?*

None. Lutherans don't believe in change.

*How many **Unitarians** does it take to change a light bulb?*

We refuse to take a stand for or against light bulbs, but if, in your own journey, you have found that light bulbs work for you, you are invited to write a poem or compose a modern dance, and present it next month at our annual Light Bulb Sunday Service, in which we will explore a number of light bulb traditions, including incandescent, fluorescent, three-way, long-life and tinted, all of which are equally valid paths to luminescence.

And finally...

*How many **Baptists** does it take to change a light bulb?*

Baptists don't change light bulbs because then they'd have to raise their hands.

But the thing is, I saw almost *all* these denominations there at the conference in Uganda.

And then the worship starts. And I'm thinking — how's *this* going to work? And here's what I see: In the first row are the Pentecostals who — as soon as the first note of the song is played — instantly are lifting up their hands like they're getting mugged: "WE SURRENDER, LORD!"

And next to them, the Mennonites. Hair up in buns, long dresses — and those were the *men*. Just kidding.

Next to them, there was a Korean charismatic, who was totally into it, weeping as he worshipped, speaking out loud in Korean. The Pentecostals were trying to interpret. (Kidding again.)

And next to him: the Scottish Presbyterians, who describe *themselves* as "The Frozen Chosen." And they say that *with pride!* They were squinting up at the lyrics on the screen. Not singing, as far as I could see. But I could tell by their faces that inside they were saying — (read this with a Scot accent) "Wi' *arrrrr* singin'. In *arrrrr* hearrrts."

Next to them the African Anglicans. Which was a fascinating combination I had never before witnessed.

And you know what? It was *awesome*.

All these groups together, all these different ethnic backgrounds, denominations, languages — worshiping together! All in their different styles, all happy just to be together for a time of refocus and relaxation in God's grace at this conference in Uganda.

That is a foretaste of *heaven!* Look how the Apostle John describes it:

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne... Revelation 7:9a

What a blow to racism! That's a *God's-eye view* of the church worshipping Him. That could never be boring.

Worship Is Not a Spectator Sport

Bible scholar Ben Witherington writes,

Worship is the signal act of Christianity pointing the world not merely toward God, but towards the practice of praising, petitioning, adoring, thanking, serving God. ...What has happened in post-modern Protestant worship is that too often it has been turned into a performance of the few for the many in the pew. But worship is not meant to be a spectator sport like football. It is meant to be a participatory event in which we all get caught up in love and wonder and praise of our God.[63](#)

I agree. But how does worship become like that? Not by a preacher's nagging.

Worship becomes vital precisely when I focus on God and not myself.

When I dwell on His majesty.

When I'm lost in Him:

In His power, in His presence,
in His love, His knowledge,
His sovereignty, His faithfulness.

Like the writer of today's Bible reading reminds a disenchanted and bored people,

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. Isaiah 40:28

My worship is revitalized when I think of God, not me. When I think of who God is, not how I'm singing, or whether my hands should be up or down, or what others are doing.

I've found that then, even the most "boring" traditional church liturgy, or the most showy, laser-light contemporary service, can be a transforming experience of communal worship. It's when I'm aware of the majesty of God that I stand on tiptoe, or sit on seat-edge, expectant, aware of His presence, humble, open to His working.

I like what Annie Dillard said years ago about worship services in her book *Teaching a Stone to Talk*:

Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does no one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets.[64](#)

What sort of power do you invoke?

God is... worthy of worship!

Questions For Reflection

What has been your most meaningful and moving worship experience? What made it so?

Enjoying God

Read your Bible: [Psalm 34:1–10](#)

Spotlight Verse:

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Oh, the joys of those who trust in Him! [Psalm 34:8 NLT](#)

Blaise Pascal was one of the greatest geniuses in human history.

At 12, he was working out geometry problems that had never been solved.

In his mid-20s he invented a mechanical calculator.

He did ground-breaking research on atmospheric pressure and vacuums.

He also did the foundational work on theories of probability.

And did I mention he lived in the 1600s? And he did all this before his death at age 39? He must have seemed like a man from the future.

Like many people he slowly found himself falling away from his childhood Christianity. Then he found his interest in that faith slowly rekindled. He decided to pick up the Gospels and read them again.

And on the evening of November 23, 1654, he had what he called a “definite conversion.” It was a sudden, unexpected, overwhelming experience of the majesty of God.

I love how poetically he describes this mysterious, ecstatic experience in his journal from that night:

From about half past ten at night until about half past midnight,

FIRE.

GOD of Abraham, GOD of Isaac, GOD of Jacob
not of the philosophers and of the learned.

Certitude. Certitude. Feeling. Joy. Peace.

GOD of Jesus Christ

My God and your God

Your GOD will be my God

Forgetfulness of the world and of everything, except GOD.

He is only found by the ways taught in the Gospel...

Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy...

This is eternal life, that they know you, the one true God,
and the one that you sent, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ.

I left Him; I fled Him, renounced, crucified.

Let me never be separated from Him...

Renunciation, total and sweet.

Complete submission to Jesus Christ...[65](#)

This intellectual genius met God. Or as he wrote, GOD.

And when you meet GOD, not some godlet you fashion, there is a point when His love and His majesty ignites you

and zooms you
right past the atmosphere of the self
and into the infinite cosmos of pure worship.

Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy...

Brushes with God

When I read Pascal's description of his conversion I'm moved to tears. Because it helps me remember. My soul too has brushed up against GOD in unexpected moments.

I've had to pull over my car, so saturated with a sense of GOD I could no longer drive. I've casually glanced out my window at the neighborhood when suddenly an awareness of divine love for what I was seeing seemed to cascade through me — like I was caught beneath a waterfall of God's wonderful passion. More frequently I've found myself deeply moved during congregational worship, giving myself to God again with tears of joy and awe.

Certitude. Certitude. Feeling. Joy. Peace.

Why I'm Here

A heart filled with joy and love is one of the effects of trust in God:

For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. Romans 5:5b (NLT)

Those who look to Him for help will be radiant with joy... Psalm 34:5 (NLT)

I will be filled with joy because of you; I will sing praises to your name, O Most High. Psalm 9:2 (NLT)

Of course emotions can become idols, too, and I should never serve God just because I get emotions out of the deal. But...

But *enjoying* God is what I am *made* for.

As the Westminster Catechism affirms, "the chief end of man is to *glorify* God and *enjoy* Him forever."

I remember when I first read that as a kid I thought someone was playing a joke on me. *Enjoy* God? It seemed almost irreverent. No, I thought: My job is to *work hard* for God. Not to enjoy Him!

Wrong.

The chief end of man really is to *glorify* God and *enjoy* Him forever.

So how do you *glorify* a Being that already has all glory?

It's what we've been doing in this study. You *notice* His glories. You *thank* Him for His glories. And you *share* with others the glories of God you've been discovering.

As you *glorify* God, you grow to *enjoy* God, to lose yourself in His majesty and grace.

"In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him." — C.S. Lewis⁶⁶

I hope you've found that your enjoyment of God has been growing. It's a foretaste of heaven, because there you will be in bliss, enjoying God forever.

As the ancient church leader St. Augustine wrote in his *Confessions*:

Great are you, O Lord, and exceedingly worthy of praise; your power is immense, and your wisdom beyond reckoning. And so we creatures, who are a part of your creation, long to praise you ...because you have made us and drawn us to yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.[67](#)

How does that move you?

God is... the One I was made to enjoy forever.

Questions For Reflection

Can you relate to Blaise Pascal's experience? How so?

How has your enjoyment of God grown through this study?

More God Moments Ahead

Read your Bible: [Psalm 8](#)

Spotlight Verse:

LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! [Psalm 8:9](#)

You made it! I pray that 50 days of keeping your eyes open to the wonders of God has begun or deepened a lifelong habit for you.

In fact I hope your life is filled with God-moments: Moments when you're rushing to an appointment, or braving the weekday commute, or walking out to get the paper...

...and you see
the sunrise
a sparrow
the stars

And you think: Wow. God made that. And God made me. *And loves me!*

About three thousand years ago someone else had one of those moments. A young shepherd was busy herding his father's flocks. Probably thinking of shearing them and moving them to better pasture and watching for predators.

And then night fell. And he looked up at the stars.

And he said to himself: Wow. And he wrote:

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Psalm 8:1

David was having a sense of God as *Wholly Other*.

God, You are not like the other so-called gods: Gods of a family clan or of the land or of the sea. You are above *all* that. Yet... you reveal yourself to the smallest of us.

God and the Kids

From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. Psalm 8:2

I've quoted several of those *Children's Letters to God* so why not a couple more? I love the way these kids have a sense of wonder:

Dear God, are you as big as the whole sky and as strong as the whole world? That's a good thing. Very much, Dean.

Oh Lord, thank you for giving me my dad and mother. And their children. And dog and fish. Thank you for giving us the nice world to live in. And eyes to see it. And what we eat and brains to think. Thank you for everything. Love, Maxine. [68](#)

That could be a psalm right there. Can **you** be that thankful?

Then David's gaze moves from kids to the cosmos.

God and the Cosmos

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place...Psalm 8:3

Like we've done in this book, David considers the heavens. And he says as amazing as they are, they're "the work of your fingers."

The famous Bible translator (and my friend) Ron Allen told me the Hebrew word used there means "*finger-play*." To explain the concept, Ron asked me if I remembered Rosey Grier.

"Of course!" I said "The amazing football player!"

Then Ron said, "Do you remember his hobby? It was needlepoint!" And it all came back to me: How, even during interviews, this muscle-bound NFL star would be working on dainty sewing projects. Ron explained, "That's the image here. To the mighty, powerful God, the whole heavens are like a finger-craft."

Who Am I?

But David says when he thinks of all this, he asks,

...what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?Psalm 8:4

Maybe after this 50-day meditation on the attributes of God you too ask, "Who am I, that God should be mindful of me?"

"I have a bad past."

"I am not very religious."

"I have made so many mistakes."

"Who am I that He should be mindful of *me*?"

I hope during this study you've learned why God cares. It's not because of your religiosity or good deeds. It's because, as I've emphasized, God is *perfect in love*.

God's power is amazing. God's knowledge and sovereignty and omnipresence too. But of all His wonders, there's one that's most amazing:

His love for you and me.

When I realize that, like David, I have to conclude:

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!Psalm 8:9

May you be "filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19) all the days of your life.

PRAYER

Lord, thank you so much for Your love. I pray that all of us who have walked through this study would have an experience of worship that comes from the contrast:

God, You are so big. Yet — You choose to call my name and find me and save me. And hold me. May I live in awe of You today and surrender to Your love as You hold me.