

Chapter 2

God as a Balanced Being

In this lesson, we will discuss God as a balanced being. You must remember that although God is loving, merciful, and faithful, at the same time the Bible reveals Him as just, holy, and righteous. This country has had so much of the "love of God" that they think God is a Santa Claus sitting up in heaven waiting to kiss somebody. This country has had so much of "love" they can read John 3:16 and never blush. America has been exposed to so much love, preached by lovely people who want people to love them so they can get their money, that this country has forgotten that God is *just* and that God is *holy* and that God is *righteous* and that He will not tolerate sin, never has tolerated sin, and never will tolerate sin. *War is God's judgment on sin here, and hell is God's judgment on sin hereafter.* God has never gone out of business in His attitude toward sin nor will He ever.

Many Christians today have a lopsided view of God. Some overemphasize His love and forget that He is just and holy at the same time. Now, it is the love of God that allows God to forgive sin and to show mercy to a repentant sinner, but it is the *holiness* and *justice* of God that demands that sin must be punished to the fullest extent of the law. Romans 6:23 says, "**For the wages of sin is death.**" We read that every transgression in the

Old Testament received a **"just recompense of reward."**

We must get a balanced view of God. The emotions that show up in man are small, depraved counterfeits, or counterparts, of the original nature that is perfect and holy and righteous. The liberal and the atheist, of course, have trouble with this because they figure this way (figuring from the depths of their depraved natures): "Well, surely God is better than man, so if man hates, God wouldn't hold a grudge against anybody. God can't hate anybody." They figure, "Well, if man can forgive an enemy, then certainly, God can forgive a man anything." This, of course, is a perverted view of the majesty of God. Every attribute of man is magnified a thousand times in the Lord. God, to be a balanced God, has to have a balanced nature; God Almighty has to be a perfect being. His *jealousy* has to be perfect. His *love* has to be perfect. His *righteousness* has to be perfect. If God were a human being, He would be completely frustrated. God is not like a human being. God is God and His *holiness* is perfect. His righteousness is perfect. His justice is perfect.

God will not acquit sin at all, or overlook the sins of the sinner. They have to be paid for in some way. We have Calvary as the manifestation of God's willingness to pay for man's crimes which God does not forgive apart from substitutionary atonement. The trouble, of course, comes from trying to liken man to God and creating a god after man's image, or creating a god after man's fanciful pagan imagination. The God of the Bible created man in His image and man fell.

Therefore, man's emotions and feelings, his jealousy, his wrath, his righteousness, his justice, man's laughter, his tears, his holiness, his goodness, his kindness, and his mercy are fallen counterparts. They are minimized remnants of the once great and holy character of man's Creator—God.

Although God became man in the flesh, God in essence is a spirit, and therefore, He is a balanced being, and all His attributes are perfect. God is not a mere human being. If God were a mere human being, you could deal with Him like any other man. God is not a mere human being. God is not a man. Numbers 23:19 says, **"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent."** God is not a man, so His wrath and His love work together in perfect harmony, for one becomes a balance for the other. For example, for a man to argue that hell is impossible and that a loving God could not send a helpless human being there for ever and ever is an unbalanced view of God which comes from a mental sickness on the sinner's part. To argue that hell is impossible on the grounds that *you don't want to believe it* is nonsense. And if you continue to reject the truth of it, after it has been revealed, on the grounds that you don't believe or you can't "prove it," that only proves that you are mentally sick.

You have never seen the backside of Uranus. What does that mean? You don't know what is beyond the third heaven or the sea of glass. What does that mean? There is no man who has seen the inhabitants of the earth (that the Bible speaks about) who are in the bottomless pit about four

— thousand miles straight under your feet. So what? To argue that hell is impossible is a rather stupid argument in view of the fact that many unsaved men have a foretaste of hell before they get there to such an extent that they even say "hell is just in your mind." To argue that hell is impossible is ridiculous in view of the fact that Jesus Christ stated it was a *fact*. As a matter of fact, in the Sermon on the Mount, it was the Lord Jesus Christ who first coined the expression "**hell fire.**" People who don't like "hell fire preaching" don't have any business fooling with the Sermon on the Mount. Yet, some of the wildest situations you ever heard of occur in America where liberal socialists are majoring in the "Sermon on the Mount" and never talk about *hell fire*.

— To argue that hell is impossible proves that a sinner has an unbalanced view of God. To understand the horrors of hell and the blackout at Calvary, we need to think about the holiness of God and the severity of God: God's wrath on sin. How can any of you people talk about the love of God and the love of Christ when you read in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "**For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**" What do you suppose is involved in God making Jesus Christ to become the personification of sin? Love? In plainer words, when we reject the doctrine of hell and the severity of God, we are unbalanced—not the Lord. What do you suppose is involved in this statement? "**For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust,**" 1 Peter 3:18. You call that love? What do you make of this statement? "**Christ hath redeemed us from**

the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” Galatians 3:13. Would you say that if God turned you into a *curse* that that was a manifestation of His *love*? No. To understand the horrors of hell and eternal punishment you have to remember that the God who reveals Himself in the word of God is a *holy God*. He is not like the god who reveals himself in TM—the great passive neuter force. He is not like the god presented by the graduates and the faculty members of the leading state universities in America—the great neuter force field or the energy field of eternal evolution.

The God of the Bible reveals Himself as holy and He manifests a severe attitude against sin. *That is why many scientists prefer other religions.* The holiness of God demands that we be holy. The law of God pronounces eternal damnation on the guilty sinner in accordance with the justice of God. One of the great marvels of our age is that God found a way of salvation that satisfies both His holiness and His love. You read about this in Romans 3. How can God be *just* and at the same time justify all the sinners? The only way God can be just and holy and justify the sinner is to *take the sinner's place*. This solution satisfies the law and leaves man as a creature with a free will who can choose either salvation or damnation: heaven or hell.

God Is Holy

All right, first of all, God is holy. You can't imagine a God who can be anything but perfect and holy. If He is not perfectly holy, then He's not God. To be holy, of course, means to be free

from all defilement—to be pure. God is absolutely pure. The Bible says in 1 John 1:5, **“God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”** Habakkuk 1:13 says, **“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.”** In Exodus 15:11, we read, **“Who is like unto thee, O LORD . . . glorious in holiness.”** In 1 Samuel 2:2, **“There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee.”** In Isaiah 6:3, the seraphims are crying, **“Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts.”** Simon Peter says in 1 Peter 1:16, **“Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”** This holiness of God separates Him from man.

Educated sinners, who like to think they are all right, always reject the first three chapters in Genesis. You will find the standard operating procedure for faculty members of state schools is to pretend that from Genesis 10 onward we are dealing with history, but from Genesis 10 backward we are dealing with mythology. Strange, isn't it? Of course, they are forced to admit that from Genesis 10 on is history because it is *recorded history*, and dead men tell tales, and the stones and rocks cry out. See Luke 19:40. There is evidence for the flood in history. There is evidence of Ur and Lachish and Akkad, the Babylonian cities in history. There is evidence of Abraham's dwelling place in Ur of the Chaldees and of the ziggurats in Babylonian history. Therefore, the standard way of handling the Bible by the unregenerate, fallen, depraved, Christ-rejecting, God-defying sinner is to pretend that everything from *Genesis 10 on is history* but from *Genesis 10 backward is mythology and legend*. Why? Because the first three chapters state that

man is not going up: *he is going down*. The first three chapters teach that Darwin was a bigger monkey than he thought he was. The first three chapters teach that you were made in the image of God and that you are now *descending to the level of a beast*. That is what we call "negativism." I believe that one ounce of negativism is worth a pound of positivism when it comes to dealing with the truth. And these positive thinkers, after all, are the most negative thinkers in the world when you get right down to it.

The most intolerant, bigoted bunch of dogmatic, narrow-minded hypocrites who ever lived are scientists who profess to be broad-minded. You throw that old *King James Bible* at them and watch them clam up and have hysterics and strip their gears and burn out their clutch plate and burn the valves and throw pieces of carburetor all over the highway. There is nobody in this world more narrow-minded or more intolerant than a religious liberal. Nobody! They are the people who try to get Bible broadcasts off the radio. They are the people who try to shut down the radio stations with blackmail by threatening the FCC. They are the people who can't stand any Bible truth contrary to their own liberal upbringing. Well, in the Bible the holiness of God separates him from fallen man, and man is a fallen creature.

"Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ," Ephesians 2:13. The only way that man can approach a holy God is through shedding of blood, for **"the life of the flesh is in the blood,"** and God is life, and God gave life to man. There is not a heathen in the

darkest parts of Africa or Asia who doesn't know that **"without shedding of blood is no remission"** of sins (Heb. 9:22). You have to go to college to unlearn that basic, universal truth. God is *holy* in the Bible. *The God of the Bible hates sin*. His holy wrath will punish sin. And this explains Isaiah 53:10 where the Bible says, **"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him,"** (Jesus Christ). Isaiah 53:5 says, **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."** God is holy. The God of the Bible is not the god of Buddhism and Hinduism. The God of the Bible is holy and does not tolerate sin. The God of the Bible does not call evil "good" and good "evil." The God of the Bible never speaks about "values clarification" and "relative situation ethics." That is the work of the Christ-rejecting, hell-bound, fallen, Adamic nature as it seeks to set up its own standards to replace God's standards because God's standards are too high. *God is holy*. You say, "Well, how in the world can I become holy like God?" You can not apart from a sinless Saviour who died in your place. (Like they say out in the world, "No way, man, no way.")

God Is Love

All right, secondly, God is love. We read in 1 John 4:8, **"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."** This is not only a verb that says God loves, but it is also a noun—"for God is love." If God lives in a person's heart by conversion, then they must love Him, for He is indwelt by love. John said in 1 John 4:7, **"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God."**

What is love? Well, out there on the magazine racks love is fornication, premarital sex, perversion, bestiality, and adultery—or adult consent in adultery. When the newsstand speaks of “love” and somebody’s love affair or somebody’s romance, they are talking about fornication and adultery. You are living in a day and age that never “tells it like it is.” It professes to be the most frank and open generation on the scene; but it is the most deceitful, hypocritical, varnished, veneered, shellacked generation that ever lived. What is love? Well, folks talk about “falling in love”; that is, covetousness or emotional upset. Folks talk about “making love,” meaning fornication or adultery, or a married situation or relationship. Of course, this isn’t love.

Love is a desire for, and a delight in, the welfare of the one on whom the love is bestowed. Love is giving. True love is even love for your enemy—Matthew 5:46, **“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?”** A hippie who loves the hippie, groupie, moonie and the communees and the communists, and hates “the establishment” is a rascal. Christ said, **“Love your enemies . . . pray for them which despitefully use you,”** Matthew 5:44, **“bless, and curse not,”** Romans 12:14. If all you can love are the folks that are in agreement with you, you “ain’t worth shooting.”

Love is a desire for, and a delight in, the welfare of the one on whom the love is bestowed. If you love somebody, you want to give things to them. Do you love God? If you love somebody you like to spend time with them. Do you love God? I didn’t ask you if you put up with Him as a

boarder or dictator or pay Him weekly rent as a landlord. If you love somebody, you want to talk with them. If you love somebody you take sides with them against their enemies. Do you love God? If you love somebody, you hesitate to think evil of them and always think the best of them. Do you love God?

The love of God is manifested toward the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and believers in particular. The Bible says of the unbeliever in John 3:36, "**He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.**" The Bible says about the religious man, that is counting on his religion and his sacraments to save him, that he is alone in the world, "**dead in trespasses and sins,**" without hope, "**without God,**" and that he is by nature, by birth, a child of wrath. Read Ephesians 2. Now, how is that for a negative picture of mankind? You don't read through the Bible very far before you see why it is not permitted in a college curriculum except as dead history or as a sample of poetic beauty. You don't have to read through the Bible very far before you find out why professors ceased to study the great doctrines and truths of the Bible and believe them. You don't have to read a great deal of the Bible to see why many people prefer Hinduism, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, or Rama Krishna—something that won't rock the boat.

In the Bible, if you've never been born again by the Spirit of God (apart from your religion and your sacraments and the rest of your nonsense), you are "**dead in trespasses and sins**"; you're going to hell. You say, "I don't like that." Don't get

mad at me. Turn off your head instead of the radio. Get mad with God. Phone up the Lord in heaven and say, "Look here, I don't like your Book. I don't believe your Book. I know I'm better than that. What right have you to talk to me that way? Look who I am!" And then someday the undertakers will put you to bed with a shovel, and you will find out *who you are*. You say, "Why is it necessary to talk that way?" Because this country is so saturated with Hollywood love and the National Observer, Enquirer, and Midnight kind of love that the average person in America, when he talks about "love," is simply talking through his stack.

The Bible says in John 16:27, "**For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.**" "**For God so loved the world**" (past tense) "**that he gave his only begotten Son**" (past tense). This caused God to work out a plan of salvation to give men an opportunity to escape wrath and damnation. God is a loving Father and manifests His love to the Christian by chastening. "**For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth,**" Hebrews 12:6. Then love, in the Bible, is defined as giving. "**For God so loved the world, that he gave . . .**" It is very possible for you to *give* without *loving*, but, you cannot love without giving. In every love affair on the face of this earth, there is an element of selfishness on the part of one or both parties. You haven't got one love affair on the face of this earth where somebody isn't trying to get something for *themselves*. And this means simply this: If you've missed the love of the Lord Jesus Christ as your

personal Saviour, you have missed the greatest love on the face of this earth. Christ loved you enough to die for your sins, and you have no other friend who would love you like that.

God Is Faithful

"God is faithful." "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our LORD," 1 Corinthians 1:9. Deuteronomy 7:9 says, **"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God."** This word "faithful" means somebody who can be safely trusted, who is reliable and dependable. God is faithful, for He is honest and never changes. His **"faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds,"** says Psalm 36:5. **"All his works are done in truth,"** David says in Psalm 33:4. God's faithfulness is manifested in His keeping of His promises and in His fulfilling every word that He has spoken. God is unchangeable, for as Balaam said back in Numbers 23:19, **"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"** Yes, He will. God will keep every promise to protect, assist, and guide His child in need.

Some of the greatest promises in the word of God, held out to the believer, are so great that they are called **"exceeding great and precious promises"** by Simon Peter in 2 Peter 1:4. I will only quote a few of them, but you can see, by the checkbook that the Lord has given you to fill out, that a believer in Jesus Christ who has been born again has access to riches to which no unsaved man has access, no matter how high he is in his religiosity.

Check Number One—"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus," Philippians 4:19.

Check Number Two—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Philippians 4:13.

Check Number Three—"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Philippians 1:6.

Check Number Four—"The Lord is faithful, So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me," Hebrews 13:6.

Check Number Five—"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work," 2 Corinthians 9:8.

Check Number Six—"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Romans 8:38-39.

And finally, Check Number Seven—"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," Romans 8:28.

"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself," 2 Timothy 2:13. And Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:13, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

God Is Merciful

Moses says in Deuteronomy 4:31, "(For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee." A little bit later He did put Israel aside, but notice the statement is that He "will not forsake thee" in the sense of if you are *willing to go by what He said*, then He will keep His promise to you and will not forsake you and will show mercy. Notice that instead of inflicting pain and death every time as a punishment for sin, the Lord is merciful and spares the sinner and gives the sinner many blessings, health, comforts and earthly joys; these are given to both saved and lost. I don't know how many times God has given some of you people a good meal when you didn't even bow your head at the table and thank God for the meal. Amen? I don't know how many of you God has gotten out of car wrecks; and you still think you are smarter than Peter, James, John, Matthew, Mark and Luke. I don't know how many of you God has saved from a violent death, being thrown by a bucking horse, or being caught in an avalanche or earthquake or forest fire or brushfire. I have no idea. I only know that God is merciful, and God spares the sinner over and over and over again.

And yet, in all His sparing and all His mercy, the Lord says in Proverbs 29:1, "**He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.**" Throughout all, God's mercy is the constant warning that although God will put up with some things temporarily and be merciful to you, He won't put up with it forever. His mercy "endures forever" in the sense that God keeps His

word and God will spare the saved sinner, but His mercy ceases in hell, unless you can call a lake of fire a mercy for people who have rejected Jesus Christ. I can't imagine anything more like hell than being in heaven with Jesus Christ when I didn't believe on Him and thought He was just like Buddha. Wouldn't that be hell having to cast your rewards, which you had earned, at the feet of a man you didn't trust? How would you like to look into the eyes of a man who loved you enough to die for you, knowing that you *never trusted Him and never thanked Him and never received Him*? Maybe in that sense hell is "mercy."

Matthew 5:45 says God "**maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**" God will give good crops to an atheist. What does that mean? *It doesn't mean anything.* One time an atheist sent a letter to a preacher, and he said, "Preacher, it's October, and I plant on Sunday, plow on Sunday, and harvest on Sunday. Here it is October, and I've got the biggest bank account of any farmer in this county. How do you account for that?" And the preacher wrote him back and said, "God doesn't settle accounts in October. That's how you account for that." You may have gotten away with it a hundred times, but you won't get away with it at the White Throne Judgment; you won't. The Bible says, "**Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil,**" Ecclesiastes 8:11.

God is sovereign and can choose *to whom* He desires to show His mercy. Romans 9:15 says,

“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” The mercy of God can be shown to the multitudes. Exodus 20:6 says, “**And shewing mercy unto thousands of them [then here is His condition] that love me, and keep my commandments.**” In this day and age, God has chosen to show His mercy to people who come to Jesus Christ and trust Him as their salvation. He may allow His mercy to extend generally to an unsaved man, but His mercy in eternity (eternal mercy, eternal heaven, eternal life, and eternal joy) only comes to the man who does what God told him to do. And what God told you to do is to *quit trusting your own righteousness and trust His righteousness.*

How great is the mercy of God? In Psalm 103:11, we read, “**For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy, [condition] toward them that fear him.**” Again in Psalm 103:17, “**But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting,**” (condition) “**upon them that fear him.**” Notice in Proverbs 9:10, “**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.**” And for some of you proud, self-righteous, stubborn, self-reliant, self-preserving, self-sustaining, selfish, egotistical, religious, bloated, puffed up, swelled up, stuff-shirted people to go around talking about “**the mercy of God**” is like Charles Manson talking about being a Bible-believing preacher. You are not kidding anybody but yourself. “**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.**” And don’t tell us that you don’t have to *learn* to fear God. You also have to consider going to hell at

judgment. If you haven't considered it, you've overlooked it and are dealing just with the positive aspects of God, God's mercy. You've got a perverted god. *He's a crook.*

If your god only has one side to him—love and mercy—you haven't got the God of the Bible. You have not got a holy god. You've got a pervert. Why don't you trade him in for a used car and make yourself some money? People say, "Do you have to talk that way?" That is the way to talk in dealing with eternal things, and if you are honest, there is no other way to put it. You say, "I don't believe that." All right, sit still a minute and reason.

Now listen, if your god only has love and mercy, I say he's a pervert. Do you know why? Because if all he has is love and mercy, he has to love fornication, adultery, perversion, deviation, bestiality, blackmail, embezzlement, lying, killing, swearing, cheating, and extortion. He has to love them with the same degree that he loves honesty, purity, decency, courage and righteousness. There is that great, big, synthesized, integrated, passive, relative god. There he is. *He's a freak.* That is not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is not the God Who reveals Himself in the word of God. That is some other god. That is some other gospel. That has nothing to do with the revelation of God concerning Himself. That is a lost sinner trying to fashion God after the image in which man would like to create Him, so that God won't interfere with his devilment.

Again, Psalm 32:10, "**He that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.**" Then we

learn something. We learn that even an unsaved, Christ-rejecting, hell-bound sinner can experience the mercy of God in this life. God's mercy is one of His *communicable attributes* which He can communicate to man. However, when it comes to eternal mercy (the mercy of the Lord from everlasting to everlasting), this only occurs at Calvary in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who is **"God . . . manifest in the flesh."** God is determined to show everlasting mercy upon the sinner who trusts His Son and receives His Son. When the penitent sinner comes to Jesus for forgiveness, he claims no merit, but he throws himself upon the mercy of the Lord. When the unsaved man comes to God for salvation, he doesn't come for justice. He comes for mercy.

The Lord Jesus Christ is very clear about this in the New Testament, and He has something to say to you egotistical, self-inflated stuffed-shirts who think that you are somebody and who think that your little, old sacraments, your little, old religion, and your little, old pinkey-dinkey "golden rule" can get you to heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ has something to say to you in Matthew 9:12 and 13, **"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth."** You ready? I'm going to light the firecracker, son, and send you off flying. I'm going to put the hotfoot on you. You ready? **"Go ye and learn what that meaneth."** What what means? Matthew 9:13, **"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."** Are you righteous? Then get out of the way and let a sin-

ner get saved; the Lord has no business with you. That Bible says in Romans 5:8, "**But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**" Romans 5:6, "**For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.**"

Are you ungodly? Are you a sinner? *If you are not then stay out of the way.* The Lord has business to do, and *you* are in the way. The Bible says about you that you "**standeth in the way of sinners.**" The Bible says (about you) that you don't enter the kingdom of God, and you stop those that are entering from going in. The Bible says (about you) that you stumble and cause those to stumble that are trying to find Christ.

(Read Malachi 2:8 and Matthew 23.) If you are not ungodly or a sinner, then you have no business getting in the way of people who are trying to find Christ. Get off the track before you get run over in the traffic. When the sinner comes to Jesus Christ for forgiveness, he claims no merit, but he throws himself upon the mercy of the Lord. He claims not his own righteousness but God's righteousness which is Jesus Christ; he does not plead for a chance to "live it" and does not point to his own life. He says with the ancient publican of yore, "**God be merciful to me a sinner**" (Luke 18:13). Another famous sinner (who wrote nearly a quarter of the Old Testament) said one time, "**Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness**" (Psa. 51:1).

God is merciful. There is not a case where a man ever came to God in fear, trusting God's righteousness and God's goodness, that God ever turned a man down. And the Lord Jesus Christ

held out his open invitation to sinners in John 6:37, **"him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."** For two thousand years, the Lord Jesus Christ has been standing at the crossroads of eternity inviting men to come to Him. He says in Matthew 11:28-30, **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."** He said to a certain group of self-righteous religious people, **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,"** John 5:40. The last invitation in the Bible before the prayer for the Second Coming of Christ says, **"the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,"** Revelation 22:17. God is merciful.

God Is Just

God is just. Moses said in Deuteronomy 32:4, **"God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."** David said in Psalm 19:9, **"The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."** The God of the universe is just and righteous and will mete out just judgment to each individual. Abraham said in Genesis 18:25, **"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"** He certainly will. If you want justice, you will get it. If you want God to square accounts with you and give you what you have coming to you, I'll guarantee you He will do it. That Bible says that in the day of judgment **"He shall reward every man according to his**

works" (Matt. 16:27). And He said in Romans 2:1, 5, 6, **"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, who-soever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things . . . But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds."** Solomon said, **"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil,"** Ecclesiastes 12:14. God will bring you into judgment—**"whether it be good, or whether it be evil."**

God is just. He will make no mistakes. Isaiah 45:21, **"there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour."** God, being just, righteous, and holy, must act in a manner that is just, righteous, upright, and holy; and He will. If your sins deserve hell, the Lord knows it. If pitting your puny self-righteousness against the righteousness of God is a crime worse than adultery or murder, I'll tell you somebody who knows it, if your pastor doesn't know it. God does! If your standing up and shaking your fist in the face of God Almighty and bragging about your Golden Rule and your Ten Commandments, while you were trying to prove that your righteousness was as good as the righteousness of Jesus Christ, so that you wouldn't have to trust him merits a lake of fire, don't worry, you will make it. First Samuel 2:3 says, **"the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed."** God's nature of character leads Him to do that which is right at all times, and God, as the Just One, will be the final Judge

of all things. Notice 1 Kings 8:32, "Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness." Notice also Revelation 20:12-15, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Conclusion

So we learn from our lesson on God as a balanced being that God is holy, God is love, God is faithful, God is merciful, God is just, and that "**our God is a consuming fire**" (Deut. 4:24 and Heb. 12:29). How can God be loving and still demand holiness at the same time? How can He be merciful and at the same time take care of the guilty sinner? The answer can only be found at Calvary. It can not be found in any system of works on the face of this earth. The answer to the problem can only be found at Calvary. At Golgotha, we find expressed both the wrath of God against sin and the mercy of God toward the guilty sinner. So in speaking of God's attributes, we learn several things at Calvary. We learn first of all that

God loves sinners and wants to save them. We also learn that God desires to justify sinners, knowing that they cannot justify themselves. We learn that God wants to demonstrate toward sinners His absolute, perfect righteousness so that they can see what He requires. We learn that God Himself is willing to take man's suffering, pain, temptation, sorrow, and sickness in Himself and bear the punishment of the guilty, although He, God Himself, is not guilty.

Thus, Calvary is where a cross is found. We find where man's will and where God's will cross, and where that cross is we find the righteousness of man obliterated by the righteousness of God. At that cross we find the mercy of God level and just and distributed evenly, and we find the wrath of God descending vertically on the helpless back of the crucified Saviour. You cannot find salvation, in this age, apart from a completed, perfected blood atonement. You say, "You're very dogmatic about that, Brother Ruckman." I don't have to worry about it. *I'm talking to bloody people.* I never have to worry in qualifying my language to prove anything or "validate" anything. My congregation is *bloody*. **"The life of the flesh is in the blood."** Whether you call that trouble Bright's disease, Hodgkins's disease, leukemia, arteriosclerosis, hardening of the arteries, blood clot, or anything else, when your blood ceases to function, you are dead.

So when I talk about a blood atonement for sin, I'm talking to anybody. I don't have to be "choosey." I don't care if you are a Roman Catholic priest, an Episcopal bishop, a Roman Catholic archbishop, a Jewish rabbi, or a Buddhist or

Hindu guru. I don't have to worry about whether you believe in daily vacation Bible school or whether you are a Bible-believing Baptist preacher or a Methodist steward or a Presbyterian elder or a Baptist deacon. You are all in the same boat. The Bible says, **"the life of the flesh is in the blood."**

The Bible says in Romans 3:22-23, **"There is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."** And when it comes to sin, there is no more difference between a doctor and a lawyer than there is between a junkie, a pimp, a prostitute, and a bum. I know that some of you people who were deceived into thinking that your education and your money made you respectable don't like that, but who cares what *you* like anyway? I mean, after all, when faced with the absolute truth of the word of God, to what does *your* opinion amount? Less than nothing. The Bible says that **"there is no difference."** Now, if it *says* that, it *means* that. The fact that you *think* you are different because of your education, your money, your social image, or your religious standing is no concern of mine and the Lord is not going to regard it one way or another. The Bible says in Romans 2:11, **"For there is no respect of persons with God."**

Calvary is common ground. It is ground which levels all men to sinners, and even includes God's Son as a sinner. You read in your Bible in Isaiah 53:12 that Jesus Christ **"was numbered with the transgressors."** When He came to the ministry of John the Baptist where sinners were being immersed and John tried to stop Him, Jesus said, **"Suffer it to be so now: for thus it**

becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). He took His place as a sinner in His baptism. He took His place as a sinner on Calvary. And God bless your soul, doctor, reverend, rabbi, father, lawyer (or whatever you call yourself), you will take your place there; or in eternity you will see the other side of God's face, the side you didn't believe was there. God is love, but not that kind of sentimental love that gushes over sin. The love of God is holy and just. God hates sin and God will not tolerate it. If you don't believe it, just keep on like you are going, and you will find out.

To understand God, His being, character, and nature, we must study Calvary. We must study the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must spend time with Psalm 22. Spend time with Isaiah 53. If you are an orthodox Jew, you will find both of these passages in your Old Testament. If you don't believe the New Testament, then read Exodus 12, Psalm 110, Psalm 22, Genesis 12, Isaiah 53, and Zechariah 10, 11, and 12. If you are a Catholic or Protestant and you believe the New Testament, spend some time in Romans 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Spend some time in Ephesians 1, 2, and 3. Spend some time in Colossians 2, 3, and 4. Above all, spend some time in your New Testament in the Gospel of John. Calvary satisfies the holiness and justice of God by fulfilling all the requirements of the law and permits a sinner to enter heaven legally. Or as Paul says in Acts 13:38 and 39, **"Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."** Again,

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— **“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,”** Galatians 3:13. Jesus Christ’s death on Calvary’s cross not only justifies you from the ceremonial laws given to the Jews but also from the moral laws of the Ten Commandments, which is perfectly clear from Romans 13 and 2 Corinthians 3.

— Now, if you are one of those foolish people who believe that you are saved partly by faith and partly by works because you spend your time in James instead of Romans, and if you are one of those deceived, self-righteous sinners who is always going to the Judaistic portion of the New Testament to prove salvation by works (where you have no business being), you should spend some time in Romans 13 and 2 Corinthians 3. Learn that the Ten Commandments—all ten, not just nine of them—were taken care of when Jesus Christ died on the cross. The Christian is no longer under the law. He is under grace. You say, “Well, what then, shall we . . . ?” Oh, never mind all that hot air. When we begin to talk about salvation by grace through faith, we always have these self-righteous, Scripture-quoting Christians coming in and trying to damn the sinner before he can find Christ by telling him that if he does get saved he will have to do this and this and this and this and this. These men are blind guides who **“lead the blind,”** and they **“both shall fall into the ditch”** (Matt. 15:14).

— If you want to know what happens to a saved child of God who doesn’t live right, the Bible is very clear on it, but it certainly is never connected with his redemption or his salvation. His

redemption and salvation are completed at Calvary when Christ said, **"It is finished."** When Jesus Christ died on Calvary's cross, He satisfied the holy demands of a holy God for a just and righteous life and a perfect blood atonement, dying in the stead of the sinner. May God help you to see that today. May God reveal to you that Christ died, **"The just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,"** 1 Peter 3:18.

Test for Lesson #1

Chapters 1 and 2

Name _____

ID# _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

- Directions: #1. Look at the memory verses at the end of the Test.
#2. Memorize them so that you can recite them without using your notes or your Bible.
#3. After memorizing the verses, you are ready to take the test.
#4. Take the test. You may use the lesson booklet and your Bible.
#5. When finished, send the completed test(s) to: _____
#6. We will grade it and send it back to you with the next set of lessons.

Circle the correct answer to each question.

Questions #1 through #10 are 8 points each

1. Who says there is no God?
 - a. the Devil
 - b. an atheist
 - c. a fool
 - d. b and c above

2. What is the scripture reference for #1 above?
 - a. Gen. 1:1
 - b. John 1: 1-10
 - c. Psalm 14:1
 - d. no reference, only a Baptist opinion

3. The _____ declare the glory of God and the _____ sheweth his handiwork.
 - a. stars / sunset
 - b. preachers / signs and wonders
 - c. priests / nuns
 - d. heavens / firmament

4. Life had to come from what?
 - a. men and women
 - b. embryos
 - c. Life
 - d. the Sun

5. In John 14:6, Jesus said I am the way, the truth,
 - a. and the life
 - b. the God of all Heaven and Earth
 - c. the Son of the Blessed Virgin
 - d. the God of the Bible

6. There is no remission of sin without what?
 - a. the shedding of blood
 - b. the death of the testator
 - c. the Sacraments
 - d. being absolved by a Priest

Test #1 continued

- 7. What is the greatest love on the face of the Earth?
 - a. a man for his wife
 - b. Jesus for His Church
 - c. a mother for her daughter
 - d. a father for his son

- 8. On what condition will God show His mercy to an individual?
 - a. if He accepts Jesus' sacrifice at Calvary
 - b. if He gives a regular tithe to the church
 - c. if he keeps the 10 commandments
 - d. if he endures to the end

- 9. How does God reveal himself to us?
 - a. Through His word
 - b. Through His church
 - c. Through signs, wonders, and healing
 - d. Through those who have enough faith

- 10. The life of the flesh is in what?
 - a. the soul
 - b. the spirit
 - c. the blood
 - d. believing in God

Memory Verses are 5 points each

I Corinthians 10:13

I Peter 3:18

Romans 3:23

Romans 7:24
