

The Personality of God

This chapter deals with the *personality of God*. Personality, of course, is characterized by a being possessing knowledge, feeling, and will power. An idol is devoid of personality, for an idol neither knows, feels, nor responds. Our God is an individual, who is living and has definite personality characteristics. God is a person, not an influence or an unseen force or power like electricity. Jeremiah 10:10 says, **"But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God"** Acts 14:15 says, **"Turn from these vanities unto the living God."** First Thessalonians 1:9 says the converts **"turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."** We read in 2 Chronicles 16:9, **"The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect."**

GOD'S INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

God has some natural attributes which can be either *communicable* or *incommunicable*. First of all, we will discuss God's incommunicable attributes. By incommunicable, we mean that God Himself, as a spirit and as a person, has certain innate qualities *which cannot be transmitted to man*; which a man by his natural ability or reasoning or senses cannot grasp. This is why the unsaved man has a tendency always to become a self-righteous agnostic, or a self-righteous

teous humanist. Since he cannot grasp God with the mind, he figures either there is no God or you can't get to know Him. God has certain natural attributes which have a quality about them that are uniquely His. God possesses certain basic qualifications. 1) He is *eternal*; we refer to this as His *infinity*. 2) He is *unchangeable*; we refer to this as His *immutability*. 3) He possesses all power; He's *omnipotent*. 4) We speak of God, too, as being present everywhere at the same time. This is called *omnipresence* or, as the classical theologians call it, "immensity." 5) He has all-knowledge, which we call *omniscience*.

In short, God within Himself, as an intelligent living being—the Author and Creator of all life and the source of all life—is infinite, immutable, all-powerful, all-present, and all-knowing.

God Is Eternal

First of all, God is *eternal*. To be the true God, He must have neither beginning nor ending. He must be eternal. He must be more eternal than the universe or the heavens, which the pagan Greek philosophers thought were eternal, because they believed in what we call "the eternity of material." They believed that *material things* were eternal. We will discuss more about the belief that *material things* are eternal when we get into the doctrines of anthropology and creation, but of course, any man knows that it takes a great deal more faith to believe in the eternity of matter (as all dialectical materialists believe) than it does to believe in the eternity of a spiritual Being.

All right, God is *eternal*. An idol is disquali-

fied, for it was made by someone, thus it had a beginning. In Psalm 90:2 we read, **"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."** In Genesis 1:1 we read, **"In the beginning God."** God has always existed. It is true that Taylor's so-called *"Living Bible"* and other corrupt translations have changed Genesis 1:1 to try to make something there *before God*, but this is quite typical of pagan speculation and the Disneyland type of theology that is being taught in America today.

God Is Unchangeable

God is *unchangeable*. God is so constituted that He cannot change. Malachi 3:6 says, **"For I am the LORD, I change not."** James 1:17 says, **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."** God is unchangeable. He says, **"The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent"** (1 Sam. 15:29). Once God has said something, He is going to do it. It is true that the Lord may change His mind about a circumstance that is flexible about which He has laid down *no definite decree*, such as the destruction of the earth in Genesis 6, 7 and 8, but where God has *spoken and committed Himself to writing* (and there are more than eleven hundred promises in writing on which you can get your hands), He does not change or repent. **"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,"** Romans 11:29.

God Is Omnipotent

In God's *incommunicable* attributes is the attribute of all-powerfulness or omnipotence. If He lacked this, He would not be God. **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."** That is creative power. He said, **"Let there be light: and there was light."** The spoken word of God carries a power and authority to it far beyond the decrees of any church that ever was or ever will be. **"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword,"** and when God said, **"Let there be light," "there was light."** *Man cannot speak rain into existence.* Man cannot speak lightning or thunder into existence. Man cannot speak *life* into existence. God can! Man makes things out of *existing material*. God creates out of *nonexistent materials* objects that are good and perfect. Notice in Genesis 1:4, **"It was good."** In Job 42:2, Job says, **"I know that thou canst do every thing."** The Psalmist said, **"For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast,"** Psalm 33:9. And speaking to Jeremiah, the Lord said in Jeremiah 32:27, **"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?"** Certainly not. He can do anything or everything. A man said, "Well, can God move an immovable boulder?" Or, "Could God create a sun so heavy He couldn't move it?" You know, you have a lot of nonsense going on.

Of course, God can't do something *inconsistent with His own nature*. By virtue of His *nature*, and by virtue of the divine attributes of His nature, God can't *lie*. God cannot go back on His word once He is committed. The Lord can't see your sins under the blood of Jesus Christ. The

Lord couldn't take a saved sinner and put him into hell after he became a member of the Body of Christ. After all, Christ suffered once for sins, **"the just for the unjust."** No part of Him is going to suffer again. So when we talk about God doing *everything* and *anything*, we are speaking within the confines of the limits *which He has laid down for Himself*. As a holy being we can be absolutely certain that God will not do anything to violate His nature, which is essentially righteousness, holiness, and goodness. God would certainly never take an unsaved man and put him up there in Heaven where he would have to come before the throne and sing, **"Holy, holy, holy,"** and cast his crowns before the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ when he wanted to throw them at the feet of Buddha. You follow me?

In plainer words, God will be consistent with His nature. God would certainly not elect 150 million people to go to heaven and then damn 150 billion to go to hell, having them to show up at the judgment saying, "I couldn't get saved because my sins weren't paid for." The Lord is not going to laugh at them and say, "Well, tough apples. I just happened to choose the other kind. No provision was made for you *because the atonement was limited.*" I mean, there's some people crazy enough to think *that*, but that would be a violation of God's essential attributes. God is *holy*. God is *righteous*. And although God is love, He wouldn't force a man to get saved against his will because that wouldn't be love. *That would be coercion.*

God Is Omnipresent

God's *omnipresence* is one of His attributes.

We call this in classical scholastic theology God's "*immensity*." That is, He is present everywhere at one and the same time. Notice Psalm 139:7-10, where David said, "**Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me.**" The Lord said to Jeremiah, "**Am I a God at hand . . . and not a God afar off?**" (Jer. 23:23). The same Lord knows where every hair of your head is, and the same Lord watches the sparrow fall to the ground; Christ said He did.

(I realize that some of you people think I'm very blunt, but that's because you're rather stupid. After all, if Christ said one thing and *you* said another, your argument is with Him, not me. You need not pick bones with me and get upset with Dr. Ruckman. Get in a fight with Jesus Christ.)

He said a sparrow doesn't fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. He said, "**the very hairs of your head are all numbered**" (Matt. 10:30), and if you don't believe that then get in a fist-fight with Him. Don't get shook up with me! You just betray your lack of intelligence. In Ephesians 1:23, we read about Christ's body being "**the fulness of him that filleth all in all**"; God is everywhere at once. If you could get to Jupiter, you couldn't hide from God. If you could get to Venus, He would still know which one of your teeth was going to decay first. And if you got to Venus and back, the Lord would still know about those pornographic magazines you read *in the spaceship* going up. You see? Do you see why a

lot of people do not believe in God? *They cannot afford to.* In the dirty, filthy, wicked lives they're living, they can't afford a *check*. They want a check on Sunday morning—some of them. They'll stand up Sunday morning and say, "Look here, Brother Ruckman, I'm a vestryman." "I'm a deacon." Sure, anybody can get a god that checks on them once a week or twice a week or if you're real dedicated, three times a week, but what about that Saturday night late TV show and those *video cassettes*?

God Is Omniscient

The Bible says in 2 Chronicles 16:9, "**For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.**" Nothing is hid from the Lord. He's omniscient, all-knowing. The Bible says in Job 34:22, "**There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.**" Job confessed, "**No thought can be withholden from thee**" (Job 42:2). And Isaiah said in chapter 40:28, "**There is no searching of his understanding.**" The Bible says in Matthew 12:36, "**Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.**" Someday God will take that car you were in last Friday (or Saturday) night and rip the top of that thing back like a sardine can, and everybody in town will know all about it. If there is one thing that Bible makes clear, it is the fact that God knows *what* is going on, *how* it's going on, *when* it's going on, *where* it's going on, *who* is doing it, and *why* they're doing it.

Now, the heathen know this unconsciously. The heathen have a knowledge of God which far surpasses the greatest brains in the men who write for the *Scientific American* and the scientific journals, men like the members of the American Association of Scientists. It is true that we occasionally have on those boards, and in that group, a sprinkling of Christians (who use about thirty different versions in order to prove *their own authority* instead of the authority of the word of God), but that's neither here nor there. The point is that education is the great force, many times, in getting a man to deny his common sense and rationality, and education (many times) is the damning factor in a man's life. As a famous educator once said, "Education without salvation is *damnation*." The reasons are not hard to find.

GOD'S COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

By "communicable attributes" of God we mean those particular qualities in God that He can convey to a man so that a man can understand them. There is no way on earth the finite mind can grasp God's *immensity* or His *eternity* or His *immutability*. Try as we can, we cannot imagine a Being who *has always lived* and *always will live*. This is the educated man's alibi for rejecting God: since he, the finite brain, cannot grasp or understand the *essence* of God; therefore, God doesn't exist. It is like a two-year-old who can't explain the rattles on a rattlesnake, so he pretends that rattlesnakes don't exist, and he goes out and plays in a rattlesnake den. It is stupidity, and whether it's *educated* or *uneducated*

stupidity, it amounts to the same thing.

Here we deal with God's *communicable attributes*. When we say "communicable" we mean that God can communicate them—they can get across. We hear a lot today about "sharing" and "communicating." We hear a great deal about it from people who do not communicate with God, and God does not communicate with them. (Very unfortunate, but that is sometimes how it goes.) Now, these are things that God has communicated to man *that man can grasp*.

God Is Holy

The first of these is that God is *holy*. We can understand that if only by analogy. We can understand that we are sinful, and we are not in the least like God. We can understand that by studying God's dealing with *nations* and with *people*. We can understand it by studying God's dealing with *sin*. We do not have to have a Bible necessarily, although it is helpful in understanding God's attitude about holiness. The Bible says, "**Be ye holy; for I am holy,**" 1 Peter 1:16. And we read in Exodus 34:14, "**For the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.**" Notice in particular Exodus 15:11, "**Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders;**" and also Isaiah 6:3, "**And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.**" However, you wouldn't have to have these passages to know that God is no respecter of persons and that God deals with sin.

As a man said one time, " *War* is God's judg-

ment on sin here, and *hell* is God's judgment on sin hereafter." By this we simply mean that if a man has his eyes open and spends much time in hospitals, jails, insane asylums, and divorce courts, he will come to the conclusion that God does not put up with sin. Of course, if he's *educated*, this will help blind him a little bit. If he has enough education so that he thinks "everything is relative, and the factors are complex, and you can't always say what the case will be," then, of course, he can find a way to get out of it and *pretend that it isn't God's judgment on sin*—it's just accident or misfortune or tragic occurrence or "spin the wheel, place your bets, ladies and gentlemen, around and around she goes and where she stops nobody knows." Anybody who can read and write and distinguish a *B* from a *C*, and a *D* from an *E*, can distinguish *adultery* from *fornication* and can understand that "premarital sex" is spelled the wrong way by those who tell it like it *ain't*. Anybody who can distinguish a *Z* from an *S*, or an *S* from *T*, can surely see the difference between *right* and *wrong*, morally, if they are honest themselves. God is holy.

God Is Righteous

God's next communicable attribute is His *righteousness*. God is righteous. In Psalm 116:5 we read, "**Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.**" And in Ezra 9:15, "**O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.**" Among the many passages dealing with righteousness in the book

of Romans, we find the great passage in Romans 10:3-4, which says, **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."** The righteousness of God is the great theme of the book of Romans. Romans 9:14 says, **"Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."** Notice also Romans 8:10, **"But the Spirit is life because of righteousness."** Righteousness. That is the great theme of the book of Romans. Romans 6:18, **"Ye became the servants of righteousness."** Romans 6:19, **"Your members servants to righteousness."** Romans 6:20, **"Ye were free from righteousness."** Notice this thing over and over again. Romans 6:13, **"As instruments of righteousness unto God."** Notice how it keeps cropping up and cropping up and cropping up throughout the book of Romans. Romans 5:21, **"Might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life."** Romans 5:7, **"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die."** And over and over and over. Notice in Romans 3 how righteousness keeps coming out. Romans 3:26, **"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness."** Romans 3:21, **"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested."**

This is what the unsaved man doesn't want—**"the righteousness of God."** What a man wants is his *own righteousness*, and the Bible says in Isaiah 64:6, **"All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."** Even after a man is a saint, a saved sinner, the Holy Spirit has to help him produce what we call **"fine linen"** which the Bible says is **"the righteousness of saints."**

God is righteous, says Jeremiah 12:1, **"Righteous art thou, O LORD."** **"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"** For some of you people who say, "Well, I just took that for granted," don't forget: in God's dealing with us, we often considered Him to be unrighteous, *at least in our attitude or response toward His providential dealings.* It is one thing for a man like me to sit here with my bills paid, in good health, with food in my stomach, and with clothes on my back and say, "God is right and makes no mistakes." It's another thing for me to be in a wheelchair or to have a little girl on a kidney machine, having spent \$13,000.00 in doctor bills, and then praise God and thank Him for doing right, isn't it? Again, *education* is a great hindrance along these lines. Any education that fails to point out that *man is wrong* and *God is right* is not an education. You can learn more like Jonah did going to whale college and graduating with a degree in whale vomit than you can in ten universities in this world if they don't teach you that *God is right* and *man is wrong.*

God is righteous. Psalm 145:17, **"The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."** This is the great theme of the book of Job—*Why do the righteous suffer?* Wasn't God doing unjustly in dealing with Job the way He did? Didn't God treat Job wrong in view of the fact that Job was a just and righteous man and feared God? **"Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar,"** Romans 3:4.

God Is Merciful

God is merciful. We know this about God.

This is a communicable attribute. God can communicate His mercy to man. Notice Psalm 103:8, **"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."**

There isn't anyone reading this booklet who hasn't experienced *the mercy of God*. Whether you recognize this or not, or acknowledge it or not, is beside the point. The point is, it has been dispensed to you. There has been sometime in your life when you said, "God be merciful to me" or "God help me" or "God have mercy on me" or "God get me out of this," and God helped you and got you out. The fact that you may have reciprocated by rejecting His Son is your personal matter, not mine. The fact that you may have reciprocated by studying geology fifteen years to disprove Genesis 1 is your funeral, not mine. But God is merciful; His tender mercy is over all His works. The Bible tells us in Psalm 103:8, **"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."**

Psalm 86:15 reveals this great truth about God, **"But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."** One of the great attributes of God is His longsuffering (His putting up with sinners, His mercifulness to bad, wicked men), mentioned in Numbers 14:18 and again in Exodus 34:6-7. He **"sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,"** Jesus Christ says in Matthew 5:45, telling us that often the mercy of God is mistaken for salvation.

There has been many a man who thought because God got him out of a car wreck, or got him out of a hospital, that it meant God had accepted

him *spiritually*. In the sense of redemption and salvation, of course, this is not true. God accepted the prayers of Cornelius as a *memorial*. He accepted his good works as a "memorial" before God, but the man was still *unsaved*. You should read Acts 10 to learn that where God is often merciful and compassionate, putting up with man's devilment and allowing certain things to happen, His mercy doesn't last forever, and at death you either die under His mercy, or you die under His *wrath*. His *wrath* is there, and you can know it, and you can feel it.

The Bible says in John 3:36, **"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."** Again, Romans 9:22-23, **"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."** So when we speak of God's mercy, we must never forget to speak of His wrath. God is a complete being and a balanced being. He's not just all love, peace, hug and kiss you, and let you get away with hell on earth. The Lord is not going to do it. Hebrews 12:29 says, **"For our God is a consuming fire."**

"God Is Jealous"

Nahum 1:2 says the Lord God is a *jealous* God. Now, it is hard for the unsaved man to figure this out. As a matter of fact, I Corinthians 2:14 says, **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, be-**

cause they are spiritually discerned." It is impossible for an unsaved man to figure out how God—if He is God and perfect—could be *jealous*. But this is stupidity on the part of the blinded sinner in failing to realize that every attribute of *man* is magnified a thousand times in *God*. After all, if the Bible is correct (and we say it with no doubt in our own mind that it is), then God made man in His own image, and if this is true, then the attributes which can be found in *man* will be found also in *man's Creator*. Every attribute manifested by human beings will be magnified a million times so that it would be impossible for you to imagine the intensity. No man reading this book can imagine the agony Jesus Christ felt when he knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane and contemplated becoming sin, turning into sin for sinful man, becoming a curse under the Father's wrath, after He Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, had *never had an impure thought one time in His life*.

The attributes of God are magnified hundreds of thousands of times. Although *jealousy* can turn to bad things and wicked things ("**Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?**" Prov. 27:4), and although jealousy and envy are two of the worst emotions ever felt by man and can cause untold damage, they are still part of a genuine nature which, if used properly, are correct and *holy*. Let me explain myself. It was jealousy that caused Satan to covet the throne of God—Isaiah 14:10-14. It was jealousy that caused Cain to knock Abel's brains out and that made him a murderer. It was jealousy that caused Joseph's brothers to sell him as a slave into Egypt. It was jealousy that caused the

brethren to rebel under Moses when God had chosen him as their leader. It was jealousy that caused Saul to try to kill David because he knew that the people had attributed to David greater accomplishments in battle than to himself.

The motive behind the crucifixion was *jealousy*. They were jealous of Christ's authority and His power and His knowledge of the word. They were jealous of His audience—the people listened to Him. They were jealous of His ability to get permanent, lasting results. Jealousy, per se, not connected with anything is neutral, but jealousy turned the wrong way is one of the most destructive, godless forces on the face of this earth. Do you know why China, Africa, and Europe would like to see America become an international socialist country? Because they are jealous of our welfare and our money and our power and our industry and our standard of living, *which we did not get through a capitalistic system. We got it through honoring God and the word of God.* When we cease to honor God and the word of God, we'll be just like any other pagan nation on the face of this earth scrubbing around for a living.

But jealousy is a genuine motive. *It was given to guard things that are right.* When Paul spoke of his jealousy in 2 Corinthians 11:2 he said, **"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy."** When the Bible says, **"The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy,"** in James 4:5, it means the Holy Spirit is concerned about His private property which belongs to Him. It is jealousy, in part, that keeps families together. When a man doesn't care who messes around with his wife, or a woman

doesn't care who messes around with her husband, you have got a home that is no more a home than a garbage dump. People say, "Do you have to talk that plain?" You do for this generation! They're tough as a rhinoceros' hide. Folks say, "Do you have to be so blunt when you talk?" *I should probably be more blunt.* After all, I'm dealing with a nation of adulterers, cutthroats, murderers, and thieves. (That's probably as mild as you can put it for a lot of folks.) I'm dealing with a congregation of people who have seen people stabbed, shot, poisoned, and murdered in their living room eight and ten times a week, sometimes five times a night.

You have to face the Biblical facts: *God can be jealous!* God will not tolerate His children messing with the world! God *loves* His children and wants them for *His own*. Any parent who is not jealous over the safety, welfare, and security of his child is not a normal parent. Any parent who is a normal parent, and has what the Bible calls "natural affection," resents the world trying to train his child its way instead of the parent's way. A normal parent resents ungodly, carnal, filthy, wicked, perverted school teachers trying to teach their morals as the correct standard of morals for their child instead of the standard of morals the parents desire to be taught in the home. **"God is merciful."** **"God is a consuming fire"** (His wrath) and **"God is a jealous God."** Joshua 24:19 says, **"And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins."**

"God Is Love"

"God is love." You don't have to tell the average American that because the average American has been so soaked with this "God of love" that he thinks that God is nothing (to quote Joseph Parker) but a "great big kiss." The average American has had such a milksop god of love that he can read John 3:16 without shedding a tear. There is one thing America doesn't need anymore: it does not need a god of love. *The last thing under God's heaven it needs is a god of love.* This country has been brainwashed and soft-soaped with this iced tea, pink lemonade god of love business for so long that you have born again, saved people who don't think that God would even kill a sinner. *He kills them every day.* It is true that the Lord has **"no pleasure in the death of him that dieth"** and that the Lord is longsuffering, **"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,"** (2 Peter 3:9), but the same God who said that also said, **"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal . . . If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies"** (Deut. 32:39, 41). The same God said, **"To me belongeth vengeance,"** and **"A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth"** (Deut. 32:35, 22). The same God who said, **"Suffer the little children to come unto me"** (Mark 10:14) said, **"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"** (Matt. 23:33). The same God who said, **"Blessed are the pure in heart"** (Matt. 5:8), said in John 8:44, **"Ye are of your**

father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. So when we talk about "God is love," we don't have to spend a great deal of time on it. Every American has had that stuff soaked into him so that he thinks God wouldn't lift a finger against him if he lived like the devil. The Lord will kill you.

Romans 8:13, **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die,"** is written to a Christian. First John 5:16, **"There is a sin unto death"** for a Christian. You unsaved people, **"He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy"** (Prov. 29:1). **"Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"** (Prov. 27:1). Don't give us this stuff about "God is love," "crying in the chapel," "with arms wide open. He'll pardon you." He won't pardon you apart from blood atonement, sonny, and *your blood* is no good. It is going to rot in the ground. *Your flesh* is no good—it will decompose, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. *Your righteousness* is not going to get you anywhere but to a hole in the ground.

All right, **"God is love,"** 1 John 4:8, but *love* is not *God*. First John 3:16 tells us God is love as does John 3:16. **"God so loved the world, that he gave"** [past tense] **"his only begotten Son."** **"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us"** [past tense] **"and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins"** (1 John 4:10). *All the real love that God ever had to show for this world was manifested at Calvary.* **"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,"** Romans 9:16. God has chosen to show mercy to the unregenerate world at

Calvary, and if you want God's love and God's mercy you go to Calvary; there you will find God's wrath and God's blood in the same place. As a matter of fact, it's called "God's blood" in Acts 20:28.

Love and mercy show up in the same place where God's *wrath against sin is manifest* and God's jealousy for righteousness is manifest: at a painful, shameful, wooden, nail-pierced, whip-marked, bloodstained Cross. Apart from that, you can daydream about the "love of God" as long as you like, but you will only be a self-deceived fool in the end and will disobey the commandment, **"Let no man deceive you"** and **"Let no man deceive himself."** And again it is written, **"Be not deceived."** If you think the love of God in this age can be obtained without meeting God's requirements, you are deceived by Satan. **"So then it is not of him that willeth"** (you can't decide how God is going to have mercy on you) **"nor of him that runneth"** (you can't work your way into it; Rom. 9:16). God has showed you mercy, and God has showed you the place where He had mercy upon you, and until you come to *that place*, the sword of God's wrath has its point against you. God will not put away that sword unless you come to the place where He put it away in the helpless, bleeding back of the **"Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). And if that sounds new to you, it only goes to show that you have been a pagan for a long time, and it is about time you got the wax out of your ears. **"Evil communications corrupt good manners,"** 1 Corinthians 15:33. With the crowd with which you've been hanging out and the li-

brary you've been reading, it's no wonder you don't know anything. All right, "God is love." That is not all. "God is faithful."

"God Is Faithful"

Concerning God's *faithfulness*, notice Deuteronomy 7:9, "Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." Deuteronomy 34:4 says, "And the LORD said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." We have a great promise for the Christian in the New Testament in regard to God's faithfulness. First Corinthians 1: 8, 9 says that God will "confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." We may not be faithful, but thank God, "God is faithful" and will "confirm us" unto the end. Notice Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

We can *know* about God's faithfulness. We can experiment with it. We can learn about God's faithfulness by claiming His promises. We can put Him to the test. In 2 Timothy 2:13, we read these words, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." Look at that tremendous promise. That promise says if a man believes in Jesus Christ (gets saved and is born

again) and later the agnostics and the skeptics continually talk to him until they talk him out of his salvation, it doesn't make any difference: **"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself."** If you were ever saved, you are still saved. If you were ever born again, God cannot deny you at the Judgment Seat of Christ. There is no way Christ can point His finger at a born-again child of God and say, **"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity"** (Matt. 7:23). *He knew you.* There is no way God can take a member of the body of Christ whom the Holy Spirit has put into Christ and tell that member to get out of the body of Christ, for **"he cannot deny himself,"** 2 Timothy 2:13. That is God's faithfulness, or as the song says, "Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with thee." The Lord is faithful who has promised.

Conclusion

God is compassionate; 1 Kings 8:23, **"And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart."** "God is true"; Jeremiah 10:10, **"But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation."** God is uncorruptible; Romans 1:23, **"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."** "God is

gracious"; Psalm 116:5, "**Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.**" God is invisible; 1 Timothy 1:17, "**Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**" God is upright; Psalm 25:8, "**Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.**" God is perfect; Matthew 5:48, "**Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**" And to wind it up and put the capstone on, there is none like Him, Exodus 9:14, "**For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.**" There is nobody like Him; Deuteronomy 33:26, "**There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.**"

In view of the fact that our God is a great God, "**King of kings,**" "**Lord of lords,**" Who has "**a name which is above every name**"; in view of the fact that our God is God of gods, the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Savior, we should love Him. We should worship Him. We should fear Him. We should serve Him. We should obey Him. And "**the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,**" Proverbs 9:10.

Test for Lesson #2

Chapters 3 and 4

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. The false teaching that the Father is one God and the son is another is called?
 - a. Duplicate Theosophism
 - b. Dual Theology
 - c. Communism
 - d. Arianism

2. What is the pagan belief in many Gods called?
 - a. Polytheism
 - b. Hinduism
 - c. Multi-Theosophism
 - d. Multi-Culturalism

3. How many times did God refer to Himself in the plural case in Gen. 1:26?
 - a. none
 - b. 2 times
 - c. 3 times
 - d. 7 times

4. Immanuel means?
 - a. God is with us
 - b. A man became God
 - c. Jehovah reigns
 - d. none of the above

5. According to 1 Timothy 6:16, a man can see God.
 - a. true
 - b. false

6. Since God is immutable, he is _____.
 - a. all knowing
 - b. hears everything
 - c. unchanging
 - d. none of the above

Test #2 continued

- 7. What one thing does God submit Himself to?
 - a. His word
 - b. His children's prayers
 - c. His love for the Church
 - d. God does not submit to any man

- 8. _____ is God's punishment of sin on earth.
 - a. famine
 - b. AIDS
 - c. War
 - d. False Prophets

- 9. If a Christian goes astray, he may suffer the wrath of God's anger.
 - a. true
 - b. false
 - c. only if he loses his salvation
 - d. none of the above

- 10. If we _____ not, yet he abideth _____.
 - a. believe / faithful
 - b. abide / eternally
 - c. endure / in my heart
 - d. stray / in Heaven

Memory Verses are 5 points each

I Thes. 5:23

Matthew 10:28

John 1:1

Col. 2:9
