

PREFACE

Scripture to Study This Week: Philippians 3:1-11

Scripture to Memorize This Week: John 17:3

1. Do you agree with Pink's statement, "a spiritual and saving knowledge of God is the greatest need of every human creature"? Explain.

2. Why is it that a true and clear knowledge of God must come from Scripture? What happens when men stray from this principle?

3. Why do you think the knowledge of God and His perfections is often ignored or seen as impractical?

1 Timothy 1:15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Peter 2:2-3 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation - ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Psalms 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Galatians 2:20 It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Ephesians 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

Scripture for Memory and Meditation

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

Romans 8:29-30 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

James 1:27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

4. List as many reasons as you can think of why studying the character and person of God is a valuable and vital exercise.
5. Describe how a true knowledge of God differs from a mere theoretical knowledge.
6. How does the work of Christ and the message of the gospel relate to this whole idea of truly knowing God?
7. Take time now individually and then as a group to pray as the author urges us here in the preface.

CHAPTER 1— THE SOLITARINESS OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

Isaiah 40:12-26

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

Ephesians 2:13

1. Do you tend to assume that your conception of God is adequate? How do we guard against this tendency?
2. Summarize in one sentence the solitariness of God.
3. Think about God's existence before He created anything. What was this existence like? What kind of response does this stir in you?

4. How is God sufficient where all other competing idols in our lives fall short? Is this reflected in your affections, your decisions, your actions?
5. Describe the value of knowing God. How might this affect the way you spend your time, what you look forward to, how you spend your money, etc.?
6. In what specific ways has your view of God changed or been enhanced through this study? How has this affected you practically?

CHAPTER 17— THE CONTEMPLATION OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Job 38-42

Scripture to Memorize This Week: Ephesians 2:19

1. Do you agree that dwelling on the person of God is beneficial? If so, how exactly does it benefit someone?

4. If God did not need to create the world why did He? What purpose does it serve?

5. Describe what state your knowledge of God would be in were it not for His revelation through Scripture and the aid of the Holy Spirit.

2. Why is it that man will never be able to fully comprehend God?

6. How does the solitariness of God serve to highlight and magnify the beauty of Christ's incarnation and work?

3. Does the fact that you will never fully comprehend the infinite personhood of God delight or discourage you? Explain.

7. What implications does the solitariness of God have for who you are and what you do?

CHAPTER 2— THE DECREES OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Ephesians 1:3-14

Scripture to Memorize This Week: Ephesians 2:14

1. Describe the decree of God in your own words.

2. How do God's decrees differ from the decisions and government of man?

3. Why is it important to tread carefully when we consider God's sovereign decree and sin? What biblical teachings must we affirm and what errors must we avoid?

4. Do you view sin as God does? How can we grow to view our sin more accurately?

5. As you reflect on the fury of God's righteous wrath against sin how is your view of Christ and His work affected?

6. What practical applications flow from the doctrine of the wrath of God?

CHAPTER 16— THE WRATH OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Revelation 19-21

Scripture to Memorize This Week: Ephesians 2:18

1. What is it that makes men hate or at least want to avoid the doctrine of the wrath of God?
2. Why should the believer delight and rejoice in the wrath of God? Is there a right and wrong way to do this?
3. Describe the two greatest displays of wrath portrayed in Scripture you can think of. What is your response to these?
4. In light of what the author describes in this chapter, how would you respond to someone who claimed that God's decree makes humans into some sort of puppet or robot?
5. How is the wisdom of God's decree both difficult at times and comforting at other times?
6. Take a moment and contemplate the eternally decreed work of Christ on your behalf (consider passages like Matthew 25:34, Acts 2:23, Ephesians 1:3-4, and 1 Peter 1:20). Describe the effect of this aspect of God's grace on you.

CHAPTER 3— THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

Psalm 139

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

Romans 11:33

1. What is your response to the fact that God knows every part of you and your life in the deepest way possible?
2. How does Christ turn God's perfect knowledge from being a frightening and repulsive thought to being a comforting and joyous truth?
3. How does God's infinite knowledge serve to encourage prayer rather than discourage it? Explain.

3. Describe the nature, extent, and quality of God's love. What about it is most astounding to you?
4. Why is it important to affirm that God loved us first? What would be the problem if we affirmed the opposite?
5. How does the love of God provide comfort and strength in the midst of trials and difficulties? Give an example of how this might work practically?

CHAPTER 15— THE LOVE OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Romans 8:31-39

Scripture to Memorize This Week: Galatians 2:20

1. In what ways are conceptions of God's love in our day off-balance or erroneous?

2. Does the fact that God's love is uninfluenced make it seem less personal? Is this impression accurate? Explain.

4. Where in Scripture would you go to refute the view that God doesn't know the future with absolute certainty (a view known in theological circles as open theism)?
5. List five things that come to mind as you think about the scope of God's knowledge (e.g. every hair on every head).
6. Describe how God's knowledge of the future as seen in prophecy connects with His purposes and sovereignty (see Isaiah 46:8-11).
7. *Does God's knowledge bring you to amazement, awe, and adoration? Explain.*

CHAPTER 4— THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

John 10:7-18

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

Romans 8:29-30

1. Why do you think the topic of foreknowledge is so controversial? What kind of controversy have you experienced regarding this issue?
2. Do you agree with the tone the author takes towards those who differ from him? What kinds of attitudes are important in these kinds of discussions?
3. How does Scripture's teaching on the sinfulness of man make the idea of God foreknowing our self-produced faith evidently false?

4. List out some of God's mercies on all men in general. What would be an appropriate response to these mercies?
5. Describe how God's mercy towards sinners in general might serve as a connection or point of communication in sharing the gospel with an unbeliever.
6. Does beholding God's mercy stir in you a deeper desire to know and enjoy God? How does this make Christ's work more precious and heaven more appealing?

CHAPTER 14— THE MERCY OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Psalm 136

Scripture to Memorize This Week: 1 Peter 1:3

1. What is the difference between grace and mercy according to the author?

2. How deep is our misery? How serious is our sin problem? How does considering this magnify God's mercy?

3. How does the sovereignty of God's mercy strike you? Is it difficult to accept? Does it seem important?

4. Summarize what Scripture means when it speaks of God foreknowing. What are the key elements in the passages cited?

5. How does the rich personal nature of the foreknowledge of God serve to magnify the grace of God in your mind?

6. *How does the saving work of Christ relate to God foreknowing His people?*

7. What application do you see in this chapter for what you believe, how you think about yourself, and how you relate to God?

CHAPTER 5— THE SUPREMACY OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

Psalms 2

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

2 Corinthians 5:21

1. In what ways do we tend to erroneously think that God is like us (Psalm 50:21)? Why do you think we tend towards this?
2. Take a moment to write down in your own words what God's supremacy means. How supreme is He? What kinds of words do you find useful in this description?
3. What is one example from Scripture of an individual who had an understanding of the supremacy of God? How did this understanding affect that person?

4. How does your life story add another account to the long line of surprising recipients of God's grace?
5. What aspect of God's grace is new to you or most astounding? Explain.
6. What is your response to the grace God has so richly poured out in your life? How does it affect your response to God and your interaction with others?

CHAPTER 13— THE GRACE OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

Ephesians 2:1-10

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

Ephesians 5:1-2

1. In your own words define and summarize God's grace.
2. What is significant about the fact that God's grace is eternal?
3. How free is grace? Why do we tend to resist its freeness?
4. How does God's supremacy help you think rightly about earthly dangers, world powers, and the events that often seem uncontrollable?
5. Having read this chapter, take a moment to reflect on the incarnation and God's compassion towards us in Christ. What is your response to these truths?
6. How does beholding God and considering the supreme joy of knowing Him encourage your heart in telling others the good news of Christ?

CHAPTER 6— THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

Daniel 4

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

1. Consider Pink's statement, "divine sovereignty means that God is God in fact, as well as in name". In what sense is God's sovereignty attached to the very idea of Him being God?

2. How sovereign is God? Are there limits to His sovereignty? What evidence do we find biblically?

3. Why do you think men tend to resist God's sovereignty? What about it is so disturbing to us?

4. How does understanding God's holiness and justice serve to highlight the reality of His patience?

5. How does the work of Christ serve as a foundation and reason for God's patience (see Romans 3:25-26, Romans 9:22-26, and 2 Peter 3:8-10)?

6. As you reflect on the patience of God towards you, in what areas are you encouraged to grow in patience? How does God's patience equip you to grow in patience?

CHAPTER 12— THE PATIENCE OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: 2 Peter 3:1-13
Scripture to Memorize This Week: Psalm 103:8

1. Do you agree with the author's statement, "the glory of this grace itself shines forth on almost every page of Scripture"? Give some examples that support your answer.

2. Is the definition of God's patience in this chapter new to you? How does it adjust your view of God?

3. How do we tend to interpret God's patience? Why do we so often take it for granted?

4. What makes God's sovereignty a sweet and joyous truth for us as God's people?
5. Do you find divine sovereignty and human responsibility difficult to reconcile? Do you find the author's description and argument in this chapter helpful?
6. How does God's sovereignty affect the way you view and react to the minor events that make up every day life?
7. How does Christ ultimately deal with your responsibility and subsequent failure? How do these truths orient your mindset and attitude in living daily life?

CHAPTER 7— THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Scripture to Memorize This Week: James 1:27

1. List two things in our world that seem to be unchanging. In what ways do these things fall short of being perfectly immutable?
2. How would your thoughts about God and relation to God be affected if the possibility existed that some aspect of Him might change?
3. How does the perfection of God rule out the possibility of change?
4. Where would you be and in what condition would you be without God's goodness?
5. How is the goodness of God displayed most supremely in Christ and His work of redemption?
6. What is your response to beholding God's goodness? What effect might it have on your life?

CHAPTER 11— THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Psalm 145

Scripture to Memorize This Week: 1 Peter 2:2-3

1. What is goodness? Give a definition and an example of goodness demonstrated.
2. What about God's goodness and its display was new to you as you read this chapter?
3. What do you think prevents us from seeing God's goodness in the world around us from day to day?
4. How would you explain the biblical reality that God interacts with men in time and space seemingly reacting to various circumstances while remaining immutable in His counsel?
5. In what ways do you change? How does reflecting on this increase your amazement at the immutability of God?
6. Why do we tend to put too much trust in men (ourselves and others)? What needs to change in your life in this regard?
7. What makes the immutably of God comforting to you? How might this affect the way you view and deal with the myriad of things in your life that do change?

CHAPTER 8— THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: Revelation 4

Scripture to Memorize This Week: 1 Timothy 1:15

1. Holiness speaks of the separateness of God. In what ways is God separate from His creation? What aspect of God's separateness does the author emphasize in this chapter?

2. In what sense does God's holiness characterize all of His other attributes? Give an example of what this means.

3. In your own words, describe how God's holiness is displayed most perfectly at the cross of Christ.

4. How does the faithfulness of God encourage you in the realm of evangelism?

5. How vital is the faithfulness of God when it comes to our eternal salvation as believers? Explain.

6. How might a constant awareness of God's faithfulness to His promises affect the way you think and live day to day?

CHAPTER 10— THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week: 2 Peter 3:1-13

Scripture to Memorize This Week: 1 Corinthians 1:9

1. Use your own words to define in one sentence the faithfulness of God.
2. In what kinds of circumstances and situations are you tempted to doubt the faithfulness of God? Why do we doubt God's faithfulness at times?
3. List one promise of God that we see fulfilled in Scripture. List one promise that we will see fulfilled in the future.
4. What does divine holiness do to our misguided efforts to earn merit before God or boast in our own righteousness? What effect might reflecting on these truths have on your coming week?
5. How does the holiness of God make the goodness of God in Christ sweeter to your taste? Explain.
6. Why and how are believers to pursue moral holiness in their lives?

CHAPTER 9— THE POWER OF GOD

Scripture to Study This Week:

Habakkuk 3

Scripture to Memorize This Week:

1 Corinthians 6:11

1. How would an absence of power cause God's other attributes to become rather meaningless? Explain.
2. Give one example of how the words of God display His power.
How are God's power and God's word connected?
3. What are the most powerful creatures or forces you can think of in the created universe? In what sense does the power displayed in those things come from God?
4. The author describes God's power in creation, in preservation, in government, and in judgment. Which of these is most awe-inspiring to you and why?
5. What would our world and your life specifically be like without the power of God? How dependent are you on God's power?
6. What application do you see in this chapter for the way you think about and live life?