

## Week 7: "The Personal Attributes of God"

### **Memory Verse: *Paul's Charge To Timothy***

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:14-17

### **Day One**

**Sunday, December 1, 2002**

### **"The Personal Attributes of God"**

**Read:** Nehemiah 9:17 (p. 532) and Commentary (p. 533)

**Reflect:** Since many of our conceptions and misconceptions of God's attributes come from parents and other authority figures, make a list of the personal attributes you learned from these influences in your life (either good or bad).

**Dig:** Note carefully the context: what human conditions are described in the preceding verse (vs. 16) and the following verse (vs. 18)? How does this contrast with God's attributes?

In the concordance, under the word "anger," (p. 1565) look up and thoughtfully read all the entries under "slow to anger." How does this word study increase your appreciation of God's tender patience?

**Apply:** After today's lesson, what lies about God (bondage) do you have to reject and what truth (freedom) are you being called to embrace?

Form a prayer to renounce the lies about God and to also claim the truth about God.

### **Day Two**

**Monday, December 2, 2002**

### **"God is Merciful and Good"**

**Read:** Psalm 100 (p. 657) and Commentary (p. 657)

**Reflect:** We often begin our worship services with the sentences: "God is good" and the people respond, "...all the time." Would you say that this declaration of God's goodness is your experience? Why or why not?

**Dig:** This is a five verse Psalm. What thought is in the exact middle? Why might that be important? (hint: what do we need to know for joy to overflow in us?)

Study other passages where the goodness of God is tied to the image of Him being our Shepherd:

- Ezekiel 34:25-31 (p. 942) Summarize in one sentence the goodness of God laid out in this passage.
- Matthew 10:1-13 (p. 1214) Summarize in one sentence the goodness of God laid out in this passage.
- Note carefully the two reasons that the author gives that we often miss the goodness of God (see the commentary on p. 657).

**Apply:** Take time to take out a sheet of paper and ask God for an attitude of gratitude. Then make a list of at least five ways that God has been good to you recently.

**Day Three**  
**Tuesday, December 3, 2002**  
**"God is Gracious and Kind"**

**Read:** Hebrews 4:14-16 (p. 1424) and Commentary (p. 1424)

**Reflect:** Who in your life is the person you go to when you need someone who is safe; that is, one with whom you can be vulnerable? What qualities of character of personality style does this person possess that makes them easy to talk to?

**Dig:** Whose understanding is deficient (ours or God's) so that the author of Hebrews makes the point that Jesus was tempted just as we are?

The literal meaning of "priest" in Latin is "bridge." According to this passage, how is Jesus a bridge between God and human beings?

The phrase "throne of grace" is used in this passage. This is an unusual phrase. What connections with other Bible passages are brought to mind by both "throne" and "grace"? What freedoms are we urged to experience in this passage?

**Apply:** Try something a little different today: in the privacy of your prayer place, stand, close your eyes, imagine that you are standing before the throne of grace and then confess your sins, asking God for mercy. Receive his mercy and go forth into your day cleansed.

**Day Four**  
**Wednesday, December 4, 2002**  
**"God is Faithful"**

**Read:** Read: Psalm 89 (p. 649) and Commentary (p. 650)

**Reflect:** Who in your life can you trust to always be there for you? Why is it so important to human beings to have trustworthy, stable people in their lives?

What does the meaning of the word "covenant" have to do with faithfulness?

**Dig:** How many times does the word "faithful" or "faithfulness" appear in this Psalm?

Verses 1-37 lay a foundation for the agony prayer of verses 38-51: Ethan, the writer of this Psalm, is probably a Levite who served in the temple. Now the temple has been destroyed by the Babylonian enemies. He questions God's faithfulness. How does the commentary (p. 650) answer this agonized question?

**Apply:** How has God been faithful to you? About what issue in your life is God calling you to wait patiently to see his faithfulness?

Seek your faithful God in prayer.

**Day Five**  
**Thursday, December 5, 2002**  
**"God is Immutable"**

**Read:** Numbers 23:19 (p. 174) and Commentary (p. 175)

**Reflect:** What are some of the things that seem to always remain the same no matter what?

Who is the most reliable human being in your life? How does their reliability give you a sense of safety in their presence?

**Dig:** Look up all the cross-references that are listed in the margin of your

"Freedom in Christ" Bible. How does each passage fill out your understanding of God's character?

- Isaiah 55:8-11 (p. 813) related to his Word.
- Hosea 11:8-11 (p. 989) related to his love.
- I Samuel 15:29 (p. 313) related to his judgment.
- Malachi 3:6 (p. 1069) related our response in terms of tithing.
- Titus 1:1-3 (p. 1411) related to our future hope.
- James 1:16-18 (p. 1441) related to our strength against temptation.

**Apply:** The last line of our commentary today reads "He is the Rock of our salvation who changes not."

Find a rock and hold it, asking God to use this common metaphor to help you pray a prayer of thanksgiving to him for his changelessness.