

welcome Spring

SOUTH COAST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Ordinary people **"continually praising"** an extraordinary God

This week saw little Ava celebrate her first birthday. It has been a harrowing year, not only for such a little baby as Ava, but for her whole family.

As a church we have followed Ava's cancer journey through her daddy's and grandma's messages. God's love and graciousness has helped support that little family during their heartbreaking battle. They continue to praise Him and give thanks for their blessings.



Posted by Oliver Coppins Ava's dad on Monday
"Happy first birthday to our little miracle. Today one year ago we welcomed you into the world. We had no idea of what lay ahead but in those first few moments it was pure bliss. Now one year on, you are a survivor and stronger than ever. Your smile is infectious and those rare moments you giggle are just amazing. We pray God's blessing will continue to flow over you and keep you safe. We look forward to the future and continue to watch you grow and develop. We love you so much Ava."

Just an example of God's love, compassion, goodness and faithfulness to his people.

4 Beautiful Truths about Who God Is

Clarence L. Haynes Jr. Contributing Writer for Bible Study Tools

Is there a bigger or more challenging question to ask than who is God? Better yet is there even a way to answer this question in one article? How do you take the one who is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing and try to describe him in the space of a few words?

The answer is you don't. The full answer to who is God is too broad to put into one article so I am not going to try. What I am going to do is to focus on some of the characteristics and ways God chooses to describe himself in the Bible. Specifically, I want to share four qualities that will give you a taste of who God is.

What God Are We Talking About?



To make sure we are all on the same page and to take nothing for granted, this is the God we are talking about. He is the God who is eternally existent in three persons,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The God who is the maker of heaven and earth. The one who will reign forever. The one for whom nothing has been or ever will be impossible. The one who does exceedingly and abundantly more than you could ever ask or even imagine.

I could go on but I think you get the picture of the God I am talking about. With that settled, I want to focus on the aspects of God's character which are the ones that draw you close to him and the ones that draw you into wanting to worship him.

Knowing him as the all-powerful, all-knowing, ever present God honestly is not what draws you

to him. It is the other parts of his character that do and that is where I want to focus, so let's dive in.



God Is Love

"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:8).

Of all the qualities of God and in answering the question of who God is, I believe this is the most important aspect of God's character. He is love. The very essence of who he is, at the core of his DNA, is love.

This is so vital because without God being love, there is no hope of ever having a personal relationship with him. Everything related to your salvation flows out of the fact that God is love and he loves you. One of the most famous verses in Scripture, John 3:16 says:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Because God loved you, which is who he is, he gave his son to die for your sins and mine. Without this great love of God, we would still be trapped and lost in our sin. The good thing is that love is not something that God does, love is who God is because God is love.

God Is Compassionate

"The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion" (Psalm 116:5). Sometimes we don't understand what



compassion is. The true definition of compassion is not just seeing the need or condition of a person, but stepping in and doing something about it. Typically, when Jesus had compassion on the crowds or an individual, he would then follow it up with an action to meet the need of the crowd or individual. Therefore, compassion leads to action.

The reason why it is so important to connect compassion to the question of who God is, is because it is what causes him to intervene in your life on your behalf. The love of God and the compassion of God are closely tied together. Because God loves you he has compassion which causes him to pour out mercy and grace.

We find mercy when we should receive judgment and we find favor and grace when we don't deserve it. This all flows out of a God who is gracious, righteous, and compassionate. He sees your condition, and rather than leaving you in it to fend for yourself, he helps you. This is because his compassion won't allow him to leave you in the state that you are in. This incredible compassion causes God to forgive sin, bring help, or even bring us a blessing, not because we've earned it, but because of his compassion motivated by his love. God's compassion is a central aspect of who He is.



God Is Good

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever" (1 Chronicles 16:34). I believe it is

impossible to try to answer the question of who is God and not talk about his goodness. Many people get tripped up because they look at life and they ask if God is good then why did this happen? While these types of questions are valid, they don't eliminate God's goodness. Let me explain.

One of the reasons God is so good is because he dealt with our worst and most tragic condition first. He dealt with our sin problem. What good would it be to have everything perfect in this world, have every luxury and have nothing bad ever happen or go wrong, and then to die and be lost eternally. There is nothing good in that, in fact no one would call that good – they would call that tragic.

God in his goodness had to deal with our sin problem, by sending Jesus to die on the cross in our place. This one act opened the door for fellowship with him and more importantly for

eternal life. There is more goodness in the one act of God changing your eternal destiny, through Jesus Christ, than anything else he could ever do for you in this life.

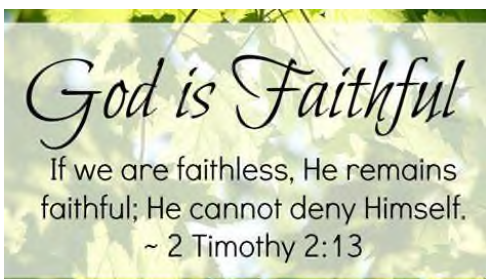
This doesn't mean there won't be hard places, spaces, and challenges in life because there will be. I have had my fair share and I am sure you have too. What it does mean however, is that these things don't cancel out God's goodness. The truth is the hardest and most difficult days you will ever experience in this life are temporary. They may be painful, but they are only temporary. In the midst of the pain of this life God doesn't leave you alone but brings comfort, because he has compassion and because he is good.

He then will cap off his ultimate display of goodness by giving you the eternal joy of heaven. We don't have to wait until heaven for God to shower us with goodness. As the psalmist said, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life (Psalm 23:6). He also said in Psalm 27:13:

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Goodness is core to who God is. Even if life takes a hard turn you can remember God's goodness because in this life, difficulties are only temporary. In fact, the trials of life cannot compare to all the goodness God has in store for you. So hold on to God's goodness in this life and know that there is a whole lot more to come.

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

God Is Faithful



2:13).

To be very honest with you, the thing that just breaks me every time I think about it is how faithful God is. There is this song by the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir called He's Been Faithful. I

cannot listen to that song without weeping when I think of how faithful God has been to me throughout my life. If you stop and think about it, I believe your story will be similar to mine. Think with me for a moment. **Clarence L. Haynes Jr.** is a speaker, Bible teacher and author

How many sins God has forgiven? How many times he has provided? Think of how God has continued to love us even when we were unlovable. Remember how he has never rejected you even when there were times you rejected him. Don't forget how he has answered prayers and comforted you when your heart was broken. How he brought the peace of his presence when your life was in chaos.

Over and over and over again God has proven his faithfulness because that is who he is. I cannot tell you the amount of bad choices and decisions I have made. The countless mistakes and times I wanted to run after my own thing and all I have ever found is a God who has remained faithful. Not because of me, but because that is who he is. Regardless of your situation, there is a God in heaven who will remain faithful to you both now and forevermore.

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Volumes More to Be Said

I hope you have seen my dilemma in trying to contain the answer to the question who is God into one article. There are literally volumes that can be written. What I hope you have seen in this article is the heart of God, because that is what I wanted to focus on.

Yes, there are other characteristics of God. I know he is just and he is judge and will eventually judge all sin. For this moment though I want you to focus on the things that will draw you close to him: his love, his compassion, his goodness and his faithfulness. Within these things you not only find God's heart, but you find a solid foundation upon which you can build your life and relationship with him.

I encourage you today to walk in his love, embrace his compassion, receive his goodness and remember his faithfulness. If you will do that

I promise you this will deepen your love for this great and wonderful God we serve. His arms are wide open ready to embrace you and remind you of how much he loves you. After all that is who God is, because he is love.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your goodness and faithfulness in my life. I will tell of Your love. I will tell of Your good deeds. I choose to glorify You in everything I say and do in Jesus' name. Amen

Psalm 119:93

<http://howtopraythescrptures.com>

MUSIC

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Great Is Thy Faithfulness is a popular Christian hymn written by Thomas Chisholm with music composed by William M. Runyan in Baldwin City, Kansas, U.S. The phrase "great is thy faithfulness" comes from the Old Testament Book of Lamentations 3:23. These exact words occur in both the King James Bible and the Revised Standard Version.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2i7_X8RQis

2nd instalment of the

Church Bulletin Bloopers



Thousands of churches across the world produce a weekly bulletin for their congregation. They are informative, functional, and never get a second look. But every now and then one gets published that no one has ever checked and produces what can only be described as a blooper.

1. Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30p.m. Please use the back door.
2. The 1991 Spring Council Retreat will be held May 10 and 11.
3. The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.
4. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.
5. Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. Please use large double door at the side entrance.
6. The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 p.m. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
7. Don't let worry kill you off – let the church help.
8. The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.
9. At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?". Come early and listen to our choir practice.
10. The third verse of Blessed Assurance will be sung without musical accomplishment.
11. The music for today's service was all composed by George Friedrich Handel in celebration of the 300th anniversary of his birth.
12. A song fest was held at the Methodist church Wednesday.
13. Hymn: "I Love Thee My Ford."
14. Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again" giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
15. Women's Luncheon: Each member bring a sandwich. Polly Phillips will give the medication.

16. Announcement in the church bulletin for a National PRAYER & FASTING conference: *“The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer conference includes meals.”*
17. The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hospitality.
18. Ushers will eat latecomers.
19. We are grateful for the help of those who cleaned up the grounds around the church building and the rector.
20. A warm welcome to all who have come today.
21. Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Nelson’s sermons.
22. During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J.F. Stubbs supplied our pulpit.
23. Please welcome Pastor Don, a caring individual who loves hurting people.
24. A new loudspeaker system has been installed in the church. It was given by one of our members in honour of his wife.
25. The sermon this morning: Jesus Walks on the Water. The sermon tonight: Searching for Jesus.

RECIPE

With the abundance of strawberries at the shops this week I thought a recipe for strawberry jam might be called for.

Homemade Strawberry Jam

Best served with scones and cream, this recipe makes around 1.5 kg of jam. Great in strawberry season.

Preparation: 1 day 2 hours › Cook: 45 min › Extra time: 15 min › Ready in: 1 day 3 hours

Ingredients

- 8 cups small strawberries
- 4 cups sugar
- juice of 2 lemons, strained



Directions

1. Layer the strawberries and sugar in a large bowl. Cover and leave overnight.
2. The next day, scrape the strawberries and their juice into a large, heavy pan.
3. Add the lemon juice. Gradually bring to a boil over low heat, stirring until the sugar has dissolved.
4. Boil steadily for 10-15 minutes, or until the jam registers 105 degrees C on a sugar thermometer.
5. Alternatively, test for setting by spooning a small amount onto a chilled saucer. Chill for 3 minutes, then push the jam with your finger; if wrinkles form on the surface, it is ready. Cool for 10 minutes.
6. Pour the strawberry jam into warm sterilized jars, filling them right to the top.
7. Cover and seal while the jam is still hot and label when the jars are cool.
8. This jam can be stored in a cool dark place and should keep for up to 1 year.

Tips

For the best results when making jam, don't wash the strawberries unless absolutely necessary. Instead, brush off any dirt, or wipe the strawberries with a damp cloth. If you have to wash any, pat them dry and then spread them out on a clean dish towel to dry further.

To sterilise jam jars

Wash them in hot soapy water, then rinse thoroughly and drain. Place the jars on a baking sheet to and dry in a warm oven for 10-15 minutes.

A little Father's Day Humour



Thanks to those who have given so generously. To allow continued Giving during these difficult times we will keep the Church bank details in the newsletter.

The relevant information is Westpac bank BSB 032-701 and Account Number 753335.



BIBLE TRIVIA

1. Finish the Beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers?"
Answer:
2. Finish the Beatitude: "Blessed are those who are persecuted because they are good....?"
Answer:
3. Who is the comforter?
Answer:
4. How many works of the flesh are there?
Answer:
5. How many fruits of the spirit are there?
Answer:

{Answers Next Week}

ISSUE TWENTY-TWO ANSWERS

1. In the book of Daniel, the beast is described as being swift as what animal?
Answer: **Leopard.**
2. Jesus is often referred to as being what animal?
Answer: **Lamb.**
3. Finish the Beatitude" Blessed are they that who hunger and thirst after righteousness....?"
Answer: **...for they shall be filled.**



Thanks to Jason Baker
GREAT, THERE WENT OUR CHANCES FOR WINNING THE FATHER & SON BOWL-OFF
