



Fall 2020

Life Group Lessons



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#1. The Surpassing Greatness of God

Opening Up

Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. Psalms 145:3 (NIV)

Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. 1 Chronicles 29:11 (NIV)

Describe the moment you most clearly perceived the greatness of God.

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” -- A. W. Tozer. *The Knowledge of the Holy* (p. 4).

“So necessary to the Church is a lofty concept of God that when that concept in any measure declines, the Church with her worship and her moral standards declines along with it. The first step down for any church is taken when it surrenders its high opinion of God.” -- A. W. Tozer. *The Knowledge of the Holy* (p. 8).

“People often think that by the infinity of God is meant immense size or endless duration-as if God were older than anyone could count or bigger than anyone could measure. But by saying God is infinite we mean that we must deny of God the kinds of limitation (like age or size) that raised a question about finite being. Think of it this way. If something is limited, it is limited in terms of something else-it is not what or where the other is. So limitation involves nonbeing. But God, if he exists, is the very fullness of being. So there can be no limitation in God. He must be without limit; that is, God must be infinite.” -- Peter Kreeft; Ronald K. Tacelli. *Handbook of Christian Apologetics: Hundreds of Answers to Crucial Questions*.

2. One of the most astounding attributes of God is his **eternal** nature. He is without beginning and without end. The eternality of God does not only mean that he has and will exist for all time, but also that he is timeless and ageless, ever existing and never changing. We are but for a moment; God is forever and ever. Examine the following Scriptures. What do they teach about God’s greatness?

- Exodus 3:14
- Isaiah 40:28
- Daniel 7:9
- Revelation 1:8
- Job 36:26
- Psalm 90:2
- Psalm 90:4
- 2 Peter 3:8



3. The **self-sufficiency** of God is the declaration of his infinite greatness and His exalted place above all creation. All things depend upon him for their existence, yet he depends upon no one and no thing. Examine the following Scriptures. What do they teach about God's self-sufficiency and his relationship to his creation?

- Acts 17:22-31
- Psalm 50:8-15

4. The **immutability** of God means that he never changes in his nature or character. He is absolutely unchanging, constant and faithful. He does not evolve, grow or become because he is already sublimely perfect. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. What God was, he is and will always be. He is the only constant in the universe, the only Being worthy of absolute and unreserved trust. Read the following passages and comment on the nature of God's being revealed there.

- Psalm 102:25-27
- Malachi 3:6
- Hebrews 13:8

Looking In

How ought Christians to live differently because of their knowledge of the greatness of God?

Moving Out

As you consider what is to come this week, how will an understanding of God's greatness shape your thoughts and actions?

#2. The Goodness of God

Opening Up

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Psalms 107:1 (NIV)

Oh, how abundant is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you and worked for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of the children of mankind! Psalms 31:19 (ESV)

Share with the group a life experience (yours or someone you know) in which the extraordinary goodness of God was displayed.

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

"The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and His unfailing attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people." -- A. W. Tozer. *The Knowledge of the Holy* (pp. 105-106).



“He is originally good, good of Himself, which nothing else is; for all creatures are good only by participation and communication from God. He is essentially good; not only good, but goodness itself: the creature’s good is a superadded quality, in God it is His essence. He is infinitely good; the creature’s good is but a drop, but in God there is an infinite ocean or gathering together of good. He is eternally and immutably good, for He cannot be less good than He is; as there can be no addition made to Him, so no subtraction from Him (Thomas Manton).” -- A. W. Pink. The Attributes of God

“Because of God’s goodness to believers, our lives should exemplify that goodness to others. If we don’t do good to others, there is reason to wonder if we are letting our good God rule and reign in our lives. As John says (3 John 11), “Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.” And Paul reminds us in Gal 5:22 that the fruit of the Spirit is goodness. Even as God is good to all people, we must also be good.” -- Feinberg, John S. No One Like Him (Foundations of Evangelical Theology) (p. 475).

2. All God’s ways are good because they are founded upon his perfect and most holy character. The implications of this truth are sweeping. His purpose and plan for our lives and his providential direction of them is worthy of our unqualified confidence and trust. We should never lean upon our own understanding nor seek to do that which is right in our own eyes. Rather we should look to God alone as the standard of all goodness. Read the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about God’s goodness.

- Romans 12:2
- Genesis 50:20
- 1 Chronicles 16:34
- Psalm 25:8
- Psalm 23:6
- Psalm 27:13
- Psalm 34:8
- Psalm 107:8-9
- Psalm 145:5-7
- Lamentations 3:25
- Mark 10:18
- James 1:17
- Matthew 7:11
- Romans 8:28

3. How can we affirm God’s goodness yet recognize the reality of evil in the world? Atheists often argue against the existence of God because of the presence of evil in the world. What is the rationale behind this argument and why is it false?

Looking In

How does the knowledge of the goodness of God bring comfort and strength to you right now?



What would change in your attitude toward your circumstances if you saw them through the grid of God's goodness?

Moving Out

In what areas of your life this week ought you to be expecting evidence of God's goodness?

How can a knowledge of the essential goodness of God help you to encourage and strengthen others?

#3. The Sovereignty of God

Opening Up

Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. Psalms 115:3 (NIV)

"I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Job 42:2 (NIV)

Share with the group about a time when you got a "raw deal" that seemed terrible but ended up really good in the end.

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

"The Scriptures not only teach us that God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, but also that He is its Sovereign Lord and King. He rules over all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest to the smallest, by His perfect wisdom, infinite power, and absolute righteousness. He is free to do all things according to His own will, and to do them for His own glory and good pleasure. What He has determined, no power in heaven or on earth can annul." – Paul Washer

"God is the creator and therefore the owner, possessor, and Lord of all things. Apart from him there is no existence or ownership. He alone has absolute authority. Always and everywhere his will decides. Again and again, accordingly, there is mention in Scripture of God's sovereign will

That will is the final ground of all things, of their being, and of their being as they are." – Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics

"Even to discuss the authority of Almighty God seems a bit meaningless, and to question it would be absurd. Can we imagine the Lord God of Hosts having to request permission of anyone or to apply for anything to a higher body? To whom would God go for permission? Who is higher than the Highest? Who is mightier than the Almighty? Whose position antedates that of the Eternal? At whose throne would God kneel? Where is the greater one to whom He must appeal? Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." -- A. W. Tozer. The Knowledge of the Holy

"There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children ought more earnestly to contend than the



doctrine of their Master over all creation—the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands—the Throne of God and His right to sit upon that Throne.” – Charles Haddon Spurgeon

"God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established" -- Westminster Confession of Faith, 3.1.

2. God's attribute of sovereignty means that God is able to do all that He desires to do. When He sets out to do something, it will come to be. If He purposes something, it will surely happen. Nothing can thwart His plan. When He chooses a certain course of action, no one and no thing can prevent it. Read the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about God's sovereignty.

- Job 11:7-10
- Proverbs 16:33
- Job 42:2
- Lamentations 3:37-39
- Daniel 4:34-37
- Acts 4:23-28
- Colossians 1:15-18
- Romans 8:28

3. How can we hold to the truth of God's sovereignty and yet uphold human responsibility? If the Bible teaches both, how is this not a contradiction?

Looking In

How does knowledge of the sovereignty of God bring comfort in times of trouble or distress?

What encouragement do we gain from knowing that God is directing the affairs of the world even when things seem to be going so wrong?

Moving Out

In what areas of your life this week are you surrendering to and depending upon the sovereignty of God?

#4. The Holiness of God

Opening Up

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." Isaiah 6:3 (NIV)

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15-16 (NIV)

Share with the group an experience when you specially felt you were in the presence and holiness of God.



Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

“Creatures are not inherently holy, nor can they sanctify themselves. All sanctification and all holiness proceeds from God. Because YHWH is holy, he wants for himself a holy people, a holy priesthood, a holy dwelling... The holiness by which YHWH put himself in a special relation to Israel and which totally claims Israel for the service of YHWH is finally supremely manifest in that in Christ God gives himself to the church, which he redeems and cleanses from all its iniquities.”
– Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics

“The sudden realization of his personal depravity came like a stroke from heaven upon the trembling heart of Isaiah at the moment when he had his revolutionary vision of the holiness of God. His pain-filled cry, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts, expresses the feeling of every man who has discovered himself under his disguises and has been confronted with an inward sight of the holy whiteness that is God. Such an experience cannot but be emotionally violent.” -- A. W. Tozer. The Knowledge of the Holy (p. 135).

“God’s holiness is manifested at the cross. Wondrously, and yet most solemnly does the atonement display God’s infinite holiness and abhorrence of sin. How hateful must sin be to God for Him to punish it to its utmost desserts when it was imputed to His Son!” -- A. W. Pink. The Attributes of God

2. God’s holiness is inalienable. His name is the Holy One. Holiness is not something that God decides to be or do, for it is essential to his nature. God is holy. He would have to cease being God if he were to become unholy. He would have to deny his own nature to do something that is unholy. This is a tremendous truth that inspires extraordinary confidence in God. Examine the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about God’s holiness.

- Exodus 3:1-5
- Exodus 15:11
- Isaiah 6:1-7
- Isaiah 57:15
- 1 Peter 1:15-16
- Hebrews 12:14
- 2 Corinthians 5:21

3. What is the essential meaning of God’s holiness? How is it that God can be so holy and yet enter into relationship with sinners like us?

Looking In

How does an understanding of the holiness of God affect our attitude toward sin? Our worship? Our Christian life? Our purpose in the world?

How does the Christian pursuit of holiness relate to the holiness that God gives through Christ?



Moving Out

What needs to change in your life beginning now as you reflect upon the holiness of God?

#5. The Wisdom of God

Opening Up

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Romans 11:33 (NIV)

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. James 3:17 (NIV)

Some have said that our modern world is long on knowledge but short on wisdom. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

"A simple person often excels a learned one in wisdom. Knowledge and wisdom are rooted in different human capacities. We acquire knowledge by study, wisdom by insight.... Knowledge is theoretical; wisdom is practical and goal-oriented. Knowledge is a matter of the mind apart from the will; wisdom, though a matter of the mind, is made subservient to the will.... [Wisdom] is ethical in nature; it is 'the art of living well'; it characterizes the conduct of those who make the right use of their greater store of knowledge and match the best means to the ends." – Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics

"When Christian theology declares that God is wise, it means vastly more than it says or can say, for it tries to make a comparatively weak word bear an incomprehensible plenitude of meaning that threatens to tear it apart and crush it under the sheer weight of the idea. His understanding is infinite, says the psalmist. It is nothing less than infinitude that theology is here laboring to express." -- A. W. Tozer. The Knowledge of the Holy (p. 77)

Q. 2. What is the essential wisdom of God?

A. The essential wisdom of God is his most exact and perfect knowledge of himself and all his creatures, and his ordering and disposing them in the most convenient manner, to the glory of his own name. Ephesians 1:11. "According to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." – John Flavel, Of God's Wisdom

2. The word omniscient refers to the divine attribute of possessing all knowledge. The omniscience of God means that He possesses perfect knowledge of all things past, present, and future – immediately, effortlessly, simultaneously, and exhaustively. There's nothing hidden from God. There is never the slightest difference between God's knowledge and what really is. He not only knows all the facts, but He interprets them with perfect wisdom.... Every creature, every deed and every thought is before him like an open book. Read the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about God's wisdom.



- 1 Samuel 2:3
- Ps. 33:13-15
- Hebrews 4:13
- Ps. 104:
- Isaiah 40:13-14
- Romans 11:33-36

What can we learn about wisdom from the following passages?

- Proverbs 3:13
- 1 Kings 3:5-28
- James 3:17

Looking In

How does confidence in the wisdom of God bring comfort in times of trouble or distress or uncertainty?
How do you intentionally seek, enact and rely upon the wisdom of God?

Moving Out

In what area of your life do you need God's wisdom this week? How will you pursue it?

#6. The Justice of God

Opening Up

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.
Psalms 89:14 (NIV)

He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he. Deuteronomy 32:4 (NIV)

Recall a time when you were faced with an issue of injustice. How did it make you feel? How did it make others feel?

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

"YHWH is the true judge. He only judges justly and does not regard the person of the defendant.... God is completely righteous and acts in accordance with his justice. His righteousness consists especially in recognizing and bringing to light the righteousness of the just and causing it to triumph. He is righteous because he bestows salvation on the faithful. He saves them, delivers them, answers them, hears them, rescues them, gives them life, acquits them, vindicates them... Righteousness [is] equated with virtue and became the sum of all virtues, existing in God as in perfect harmony within himself." – Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics

"The Old Testament asserts God's justice in language clear and full, and as beautiful as may be found anywhere in the literature of mankind. When the destruction of Sodom was announced, Abraham interceded for the righteous within the city, reminding God that he knew He would act



like Himself in the human emergency. That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" -- A. W. Tozer. *The Knowledge of the Holy* (pp. 110-111).

"The wrath of God is as much a divine perfection as is His faithfulness, power, or mercy. It must be so, for there is no blemish whatever, not the slightest defect in the character of God. Yet there would be if "wrath" were absent from Him! Indifference to sin is a moral blemish, and he who does not hate it is a moral leper. How could He who is the sum of all excellency look with equal satisfaction upon virtue and vice, wisdom and folly? How could He who is infinitely holy disregard sin and refuse to manifest His "severity" (Rom. 9:12) toward it? How could He who delights only in that which is pure and lovely, not loathe and hate that which is impure and vile? The very nature of God makes hell as real a necessity, as imperatively and eternally requisite, as heaven is. Not only is there no imperfection in God, but also there is no perfection in Him that is less perfect than another." -- A. W. Pink. *The Attributes of God*

2. As the judge of all the earth, the Lord God will do what is right. He does not appeal to an external moral standard. He is the moral standard. All his ways are just and right. Life only makes sense in light of an eternal moral standard. God is that standard. He invites us in to enjoy the benefits of his justice and to extend these to those around us. Read the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about the justice of God.

- Genesis 18:16-33
- Psalm 7:10-17
- Psalm 9:7-10
- Isaiah 61:8-9
- Romans 14:10-12
- 2 Thess. 1:5-10

3. In recent years and months we have seen a global outcry against the injustices of misogyny, racism and oppression. How does the Biblical notion of justice inform these movements?

Looking In

How does knowing that God is a God of Justice affect the way a Christian ought to live?

What encouragement do we gain from knowing that God will judge all people in righteousness?

Moving Out

What does it mean for you to practice the justice of God this week?

#7. The Love of God

Opening Up

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness. Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV)



9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. 1 John 4:9-12 (NIV)

Share with the group about a time when you experienced the love of God, whether directly or through someone God sent into your life.

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

“God not only loves but is himself love (1 John 4:8), and his love is the foundation, source, and model of our love (! John 4:10- 11). Love is most certainly identical with God’s being. It is independent, eternal, and unchangeable, like God himself.” – Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics

“From God's other known attributes we may learn much about His love. We can know, for instance, that because God is self-existent, His love had no beginning; because He is eternal, His love can have no end; because He is infinite, it has no limit; because He is holy, it is the quintessence of all spotless purity; because He is immense, His love is an incomprehensibly vast, bottomless, shoreless sea before which we kneel in joyful silence and from which the loftiest eloquence retreats confused and abashed.” -- A. W. Tozer. The Knowledge of the Holy (p. 128).

“There are many who talk about the love of God, who are total strangers to the God of love. The divine love is commonly regarded as a species of amiable weakness, a sort of good-natured indulgence; it is reduced to a mere sickly sentiment, patterned after human emotion. The truth is that on this, as on everything else, our thoughts need to be formed and regulated by what is revealed in Scripture. That there is urgent need for this is apparent not only from the ignorance which so generally prevails, but also from the low state of spirituality which is now so sadly evident everywhere among professing Christians. How little real love there is for God. One chief reason for this is because our hearts are so little occupied with His wondrous love for His people. The better we are acquainted with His love—its character, fullness, blessedness—the more our hearts will be drawn out in love to Him.” -- A. W. Pink. The Attributes of God

2. How would you try to explain to a seeker that God is love?

3. God is love. This may be one of the most well known and well loved truths about God. God’s love is unconditional and inexhaustible. It is without cause or coercion. It is of unparalleled comfort to all who open their hearts to him. Read the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about the love of God.

- Ps. 103:1-5, 8-10, 13-14
- Ps. 145:8-9
- Ps. 147:10-11
- Jeremiah 31:3



- John 15:9-14
- Romans 8:37-39
- Ephesians 2:4-5
- 1 John 4:7-21

Looking In

How does one take the head knowledge of God's love and translate it into heart knowledge?

How does knowledge of the limitless love of God impact day to day life?

Moving Out

In what ways will your life openly demonstrate the love of God this week?

#8. The Faithfulness of God

Opening Up

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? Numbers 23:19 (NIV)

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. Deuteronomy 7:9 (NIV)

if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself. 2 Timothy 2:13 (NIV)

Share with the group an experience or illustration of faithfulness that speaks to you about the faithfulness of God.

Drilling Down

1. Read each of the following quotes. What strikes you in each one and why?

Faithfulness denotes "the firmness, trustworthiness, and truth of the person or cause in which a person has put his or her trust The name YHWH H as such already expresses that he remains who he is. He is a God of faithfulness and without deceit.... as such he will always stand by his words and promises and prove them true, so that he will be seen as completely trustworthy. He is not a human that he should lie or change his mind. All that proceeds from him bears the stamp of truthfulness." – Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics

"God being who He is, cannot cease to be what He is, and being what He is, He cannot act out of character with Himself. He is at once faithful and immutable, so all His words and acts must be and remain faithful. Men become unfaithful out of desire, fear, weakness, loss of interest, or because of some strong influence from without. Obviously none of these forces can affect God in any way. He is His own reason for all He is and does. He cannot be compelled from without, but ever speaks and acts from within Himself by His own sovereign will as it pleases Him." -- A. W. Tozer. The Knowledge of the Holy (pp. 101-102).



"God is true. His Word of promise is sure. In all His relations with His people God is faithful. He may be safely relied upon. No one ever yet really trusted Him in vain. We find this precious truth expressed almost everywhere in the Scriptures, for His people need to know that faithfulness is an essential part of the divine character. This is the basis of our confidence in Him. But it is one thing to accept the faithfulness of God as a divine truth, it is quite another to act upon it. God has given us many "exceeding great and precious promises," but are we really counting on His fulfillment of them? Do we actually expect Him to do for us all that He has said? Are we resting with implicit assurance on these words, "He is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:23)." -- A. W. Pink. The Attributes of God

2. All God's ways are true and faithful because they are founded upon his perfect and most holy character. The implications of this truth are wide ranging. His purpose and plan for our lives and his providential direction of them is worthy of our unqualified confidence and trust. We should never lean upon our own understanding nor seek to do that which is right in our own eyes. Rather we should look to God alone; His faithfulness knows no bounds. Read the following Scriptures and comment on what they teach about God's faithfulness.

- Deuteronomy 7:9; 32:4
- 1 Kings 8:23-24
- Ps 146:6-10
- Lamentations 3:22-23
- Jeremiah 33:20-21
- Hosea 11:12
- 1 Thess 5:23-24
- 1 John 1:9

3. How can we hold to the truth of God's faithfulness when all visible evidence has vanished?

Looking In

How does knowledge of the faithfulness of God allow for a different approach to life's struggle and distress?

How would you describe the inner battle to trust in a faithful God or to turn to our own resources?

Moving Out

What will you do differently this week as a result of reaffirming the truth of God's faithfulness to you?