

THE GLORY OF GOD

PETER TAN

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1. THE MERCY AND GLORY OF GOD

We want to touch on a new teaching series called “The Glory of God.” Let us examine the bible regarding the glory of God and what God’s glory can do to our lives. We want to see first the prophecy in Isaiah 60 regarding the glory of God in our days. It says in verse 1-6 Arise, shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth and deep darkness the people. But the Lord will arise over you and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes all around and see. They all gather together, they come to you. Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side. Then you shall see and become radiant. And your heart shall swell with joy because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you. The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.

It tells us what the glory of God can do. Now Isaiah 60 speaks about the glory of God that will come on Israel in the last days. But in typology, it points to the church, that the glory of God in these last days will be restored back to the church and the church shall be filled and clothed with the glory of God. With the glory of God, His presence, His position, His resurrection grace and power will come forth. So, the glory of God does bring forth certain side benefits into our lives. But as we study the bible, we want to see how the glory of God comes, what it consists of, and what it does.

The glory of God is a substance. It is the tangible manifestation of God’s presence. The glory of God is a substance that manifests in a natural realm. Although it is a spiritual substance, it can manifest in a natural realm. For example, you can not touch water vapor. You could sort of try to catch water vapor and you can not because it is in a vaporized state. But when water is condensed into liquid form or solid form, it becomes tangible. In the same manner, the glory of God is invisible in the spirit realm yet God can cause a condensation to take place. God can cause a solidification of His glory upon a place, upon a person, upon a house. See God’s glory is generally His presence bestowed upon this world, just like air that surrounds this world. Yet, God can cause His presence to be condensed and solidified in a certain place to make it tangible. Like for example, in the burning bush that Moses saw, it was the glory of God’s presence on the bush. And the glory of God was tangible. It was visible. The bush burned and yet was not consumed. The glory of God can rest upon a physical object. Sometimes when we worship God, the glory of God can condense in that place and you feel the presence of God in that place. But when you walk away from that place, suddenly you do not feel the tangible presence anymore. As long as you are in that place, you feel the presence. The glory of God has an ability to hover over an object or over a place.

Let us look at Exodus 34. Moses had just seen the glory of God and in verse 29 Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hand when he came down from the mountain). That Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

See God’s glory can come on a physical object. It can come on the burning bush and cause it to be lighted. It can come on human flesh, like it came on Moses’ face and

make it luminous. Can you imagine Moses' face shining with a supernatural illumination that was unexplainable in the natural? Nothing natural caused it. But there was a spiritual cause. His natural face had been exposed to the glory of God.

II Cor. 4:6 says, For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Our salvation came because of a measure of God's glory that is revealed in our hearts. God places a portion of His glory into our lives when we were born again.

II Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. So we need to develop an ability to behold God's glory. It says we all beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

In fact, the glory of God is such that if there is a great measure of it upon our life, it will cause a transformation and a lifting up. I believe one of the things that will happen in the last days is that God will place His glory in a greater measure in the church until the church is so full of God's glory that the very glory of God causes us to be translated into His presence.

We have three examples of that in the Old Testament. The first was Enoch who walked with God and he was translated. The second was Moses because he had tasted God's glory so much that even though he died, the bible says in Deut. 34 that God buried him. God specially sent an angel to bury Moses because of the amount of glory that he had tasted. The book of Jude recorded how Michael the Archangel came to collect Moses' body. Now that was unusual. It was special. In the Old Testament, there is no record of God collecting the corpses of any saints besides Moses. See the Old Testament saints who died are kept in a place until Jesus came. Moses went there but because he had tasted and touched the glory of God so much, God sent an angel Michael to set him free, took him out from Hades, resurrected his body and raised him up again. This is why in Matt. 17, Mk. 9 and Lk. 9, we see him talking to Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration. He was translated into God's glory. Why did God do that for Moses? Moses had partaken of God's glory. God's glory can cause the dead to rise again and become living. The third person is Elijah, who was caught up in a chariot of fire and his mantle fell on Elisha.

Let us look at the book of Numbers. When Aaron's leadership was challenged, the bible tells us in Numbers 16:5 and he spoke to Korah and all his company saying, "Tomorrow morning the Lord will show who is His and who is holy, and will cause him to come near to Him. So there was a dispute. Then in chapter 17:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father's house, all their leaders according to their fathers' houses – twelve rods. Write each man's name on his rod. And you shall write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod for the head of each father's house. Then in verse 7 Moses placed the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness.

Bear in mind that the tabernacle of witness points to the Ark of the Covenant and that is where the glory of God dwells. So, twelve rods were placed in the tabernacle of witness. In verse 8 Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the

tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds.

That is what the glory of God can do. When we focus on God's glory, when we seek His glory, when we hunger for His glory, when we sit in the glory of His presence, a transformation takes place in our lives. And in order to understand how that transformation takes place in our life, we need to see the breakdown of God's glory in order that we can grow in God's glory.

Let us look at Exodus 34. Bear in mind that Exodus 34 was the answer to chapter 33:18 when Moses said to the Lord, "Please show me your glory." He was so hungry for God that he said, "God please show me your glory." Then God answered him in chapter 34:5 Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

Bear in mind that what God was doing was showing His glory. After all Moses said, "Please show me Your glory." He asked God in his petition, "Lord, show me Your glory." And God said, "I will show you the back part of My glory." When God came on the mountain, the glory of God was manifested and God said five things about His glory in verse 6. The Lord is No. 1 merciful, No. 2 gracious, No. 3 longsuffering, No. 4 abounding in goodness and No. 5 truth. So, God outlined His glory. What God revealed to Moses was His mercy, His graciousness, His longsuffering, His goodness, and His truth. These five attributes make up God's glory. If we want to grow in God's glory and be in a place and position for God's glory to grow strong and full in our life, we need to grow in all these five attributes of God.

This morning we will only consider one – mercy. If we grow in mercy, we will grow in God's glory. Mercy is to withhold judgment. To be merciful is not to pronounce judgment but to grant pardon. For example, if a person has committed something wrong, he deserves the judgment and the punishment commensurate with his misdeeds. However, mercy is to show pardon and withhold judgment even though the deed was deserving of punishment. And we need to grow in mercy if we want to learn to grow in God's glory.

Do you notice that when we began to lose mercy, we become less merciful to others? Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." When we begin to show less mercy to others, something is lost in our countenance itself. We lose part of God's glory upon our life. Mercy is an attribute that God has.

Although Lk. 6:38 is frequently used as a text to exhort the congregation to give generously, yet the context of Luke 6:38 speaks more than an offering. Give, and it will be given to you good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. But do you notice the context of verse 38? In verse 35, Jesus is talking about forgiveness, love your enemies and then suddenly He ties it to mercy in verse 36, Therefore be merciful just as your Father also is merciful. No doubt, what has been done against you may justify a recompense but Jesus said to show mercy and

withhold judgment in verse 37, Judge not and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Then He talked about the measure of your giving in verse 38. Thus, the context of Luke 6:38 is not merely the giving of your money, possessions, or offerings. The context is the measure of the giving of your forgiveness (verse 35), the giving of your mercy (verse 36) and the withholding of judgment and condemnation (verse 37). Thus, verse 38 imply that when you are very forgiving, merciful and constantly withholding your judgment and condemnation of others, forgiveness, mercy and lack of judgment will be given to you good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will be put into your bosom. What you sow is what you reap. You sow forgiveness you reap forgiveness. You sow mercy you reap mercy. You sow “non-judgmentalism,” you reap “non-judgmentalism.”

Now turn to Matt. 7 where in the context on the Sermon on the Mount we see the explanation of the context. Verse 1 and 2, Judge not, that you may not judge. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. Now He is not talking about finances here. He is talking about judging others. He is saying we reap what we sow. When we sow judgment, we reap judgment. Since we all need mercy from God on the Day of Judgment, we had better sow mercy in our relationships with others on earth. When we sow mercy, we reap mercy. And when mercy comes the glory of God comes. The glory of God is tied to mercy. That is part of a Christian life.

Now we look over to the Old Testament in the book of II Chron. 5:13. Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lift up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praise the Lord, saying, “For He is good. For His mercy endures forever.” Notice what they were doing. They were exalting the mercy of God. “Lord, You are merciful, You are gracious, Your mercy endures forever.” When they were exalting the mercy of God, the last phrase of verse 13 says that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud. That means that what they say is also as important as the music. It did not say when the music was as one that the glory of God came although it may include that. It says that when the musicians were as one, they made one sound to be heard and when they praised the Lord saying, “For He is good and His mercy endures forever,” then the glory of God came into the place.

Wherever there is no forgiveness, there is no glory. Wherever there is no mercy, there is no glory. The fastest way to remove God’s glory out of a place so that God does not like to manifest is an atmosphere of strife and unforgiveness. But the fastest way to get God’s mercy and God’s glory into a place is when people grow in God’s mercy. People grow to accept one another. People grow with the ability to forgive to forget, to bless and altogether to exalt the mercy of God.

In traveling to several places and encountering several different groups, I notice that the place where there is plenty of love and forgiveness and mercy is where it is easiest to move in the anointing of God. One of the easiest ways to stop God’s anointing and glory is when people’s hearts are hardened and they withhold mercy from each other. They are bitterly criticizing and condemning one another, both in public and in private.

II Chron. 5 says when they sang and praised the mercy of the Lord that the house of the Lord was filled with the cloud. That was God's glory. In chapter 6 Solomon prayed in verse 41-42 Now therefore, arise, O Lord God, to Your resting place. You and the ark of Your strength. Let Your priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation and let Your saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, do not turn away the face of your Anointed. Remember the mercies of your servant David.

The moment the mercies of David were mentioned in II Chron. 6:42, the next verse in II Chron. 7:1 says, When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering of the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

Then look at verse 3 When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying, "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever." You feel and sense the glory of God wanting to arise when we exalt His mercy.

Now the mercy of God, which is one of the five parts of God's glory, is tied up to the blood of the Lamb of God. How can we show mercy to others through the blood of the Lamb? How can we receive mercy from God through the blood of the Lamb? The blood of the Lamb is the key to enter into God's mercy.

Examine every carefully in II Chron. 5 the same passage that we have read but you notice something that took place before the singing. Chapter 5:5-6 Then they brought up the ark, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that were in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up. Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him before the ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude.

Can you imagine the amount of blood that was shed? They made so many sacrifices that they could not even number the animals. The tremendous amount of blood shed prepared the way for God's glory to manifest. See God told Moses, "You can not see My glory. No man can see My glory and live. But I will show you the back part of My glory." Moses lived in the old covenant where Jesus had not shed His blood yet. The entire animal sacrifices point to the blood of Jesus that was to be shed. But in the New Covenant, many times people pray to God, "Lord, show me Your glory. Lord, let Your glory come upon me." Sometimes they do not realize what they are asking. If the glory of God comes when there is sin in your life, it would kill and destroy you. See the glory of God will react very much to sin and destroy sin. If sin is a part of our life, we would be destroyed by God's glory.

That is why we need to look at II Thessalonians 1:9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. You say, "I did not realize that the glory of God is an instrument to punish the wicked." If the glory of God comes upon you, and the blood of Jesus is not upon you, it will destroy you. When people say, "Lord, give me Your glory," when God really sends His glory and sin is present in your life, the glory of God will destroy you. We are talking about God's sacred presence. The glory of God can only come on a place where the blood of Jesus has come. The blood must be present first before the glory

can come. The blood must touch the place first before the glory touches it. The blood represents the mercy of God.

There is a commandment to Aaron in Leviticus 9:6. Then Moses said, "This is the thing which the Lord commanded you to do, and the glory of the Lord will appear to you." Apparently, the glory of God is not something mystical. The glory of God is supposed to be something that manifest whenever we do the right thing. The glory of God will always come whenever we move in the right direction. And here he says to Aaron you do this thing and the glory of God will come. Moses did not say may appear. God's glory will not tentatively come. Moses said will appear. God's glory will definitively come.

In verse 8 Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him. And he dipped his finger in the blood, put it on the horns of the altar, and poured the blood at the base of the altar. But the fat, the kidneys and the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offering he burned on the altar, as the Lord had commanded Moses. The flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp. And he killed the burnt offering, and Aaron's sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around the altar. Then verse 22 Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

Notice the same key again is the blood, representing the mercy of God, which must be shed. God in His mercy withholds His glory until the blood is shed. The blood of the animal sacrifices points to the precious blood of the Lamb of God that signifies the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the interesting thing is that the blood was taken and it was sprinkled in the Outer court, in the Holy place, and in the Most Holy place, the Ark of the Covenant. The tabernacle of Moses represents our spirit, soul and body. The Outer Court represents our physical body. The Holy place represents our soul and the Most Holy place represents our spirit. The blood must be shed. The blood of Jesus must be applied to our body, to our soul, which includes our mind, and to our spirit to prepare us for the glory of God.

Turn to the book of Hebrews 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Notice the blood purifies our conscience.

Then in Hebrews 10:19, Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Notice the words sprinkling and sprinkled in the two-abovementioned verses. In the first verse, if the sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats can sanctify for the

purifying of the flesh, how much more would the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus do? It would not only sanctify the flesh, but even sanctify the conscience from dead works. The second verse says that our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience. Where did that sprinkling come from? The answer is found in the first verse, Heb. 9:13 - the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus sprinkles our hearts from an evil conscience.

Now here we also read Heb.10:10, By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. We have been sanctified through the body of Jesus Christ.

Then verse 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord; I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them.

In summary, Heb. 9:13 says the blood of Jesus sanctify for the purifying for the flesh, that is, the body as well as the conscience from dead works. Heb. 10:19 says that the blood of Jesus sanctifies the heart from an evil conscience. Heb. 10:16 says that the Lord will put His laws into our hearts and write His laws into our minds.

The body, the mind, and the conscience are mentioned. The blood of Jesus is applied to our body, to our soul and to our spirit. It is invisible but the atonement covers these three areas to bring the mercy of God into our life.

What does the blood of Jesus do to our body? Sin nature is in our body. It was against that sin nature that Paul cried out in Rom. 7, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Then he turns around and says, "Thank be to God, through Jesus Christ." See the blood of Jesus is able to cancel out and nullify the power of sin in our body. That is the power of the precious blood of Jesus.

Turn to Rom. 7:24 O wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. He continues to talk about the Spirit of God but in chapter 12 he gets back to the same subject in verse 1. I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. The blood of Jesus Christ comes upon our physical body to transform our physical body and impart the life of God to it. It is in a spiritual sense yet it affects us naturally. Paul was talking about the spiritual affecting the natural here.

Let us just read some of the background that Paul wrote in the book of Romans. Notice in Rom. 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. Remember in verse 4, he talks about the glory of the Father. Look at verse 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. It talks about how our old man has died. How is that possible? In verse 11, Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in

its lusts. See there are imperfections in our body and Paul talks about how the sin nature works in the physical body.

In Romans 7, he speaks very clearly about sin in the flesh. Now if I do what I will not do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members. According to the context in the book of Romans, the word members refer to the physical body. The physical body has a sin nature in it because of the fall and the curse of the law. Paul was talking about how Jesus Christ can transform our very physical body by crucifying our body of sin.

Our physical body needs to be presented to God. The blood needs to touch the Outer court. The precious blood of Jesus needs to come and transform our very physical body. The blood of Jesus will cause us to receive zoe, which is Greek for God's kind of life. See the blood of Jesus carries zoe life with it and zoe life needs to come into the physical body. Rom. 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give (zoe) life to your mortal body. He is not talking about just our spirit or our soul. He is talking about the life of God coming upon our physical body. Our physical body can receive the very life of God through the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross of Calvary.

The blood does two things. The blood takes away the poison and the blood gives life. The blood takes away the poison of sin in our life and the blood transmits life into our physical body. That is what the blood of Jesus does in the physical realm. The blood of Jesus needs to come into us and transform our emotions, our will, and our mind. There are many people who say, "I do not have a strong will." It is because your will is bound by sin. God created every human being with a strong free will. But through time, that free will has been yielded to the wrong forces. As a result, the sin nature has sucked out spiritual strength from your free will. So, the precious blood of Jesus needs to come into our mind, our soul, our emotions, and our will to cleanse us and to change our inner most being. The blood of Jesus needs to touch the very depth of our thought life, the very depth of our emotion. See sometimes people say, "I do not know why emotionally, I feel this thing is right but I know that according to the Word, it's not right." How is it that their emotions are working against God's Word? Surely, God never intends that. The reason is that the blood of Jesus has not sanctified the emotion. So, the emotions are open to the wrong influences. We need the blood of Jesus to touch our soul. Of course, we need the blood of Jesus to be shed into our hearts, into our spirit. So, the blood of Jesus needs to be upon our lives spirit, soul, and body for the glory of God to manifest through our life.

The glory of God is tied to the mercy of God, which in turn is tied to the blood of Jesus Christ. Sometimes people go around claiming the power of the blood, "I am covered with the blood." Or when they are doing anything they say, "God covers me with the blood." The most important thing for us to realize is that the blood should be covering us all the time. It is not only in time of need that we ask the blood to cover us. If for one moment the blood is not on our life, we are not acceptable before God. The precious blood of Jesus makes us acceptable to Him.

Just close your eyes for a moment and say, "Lord Jesus, thank You for your precious blood that is upon my conscience and upon my spirit. Thank You for Your precious

blood that is upon my emotion, my will and my mind. Thank You for the blood of Jesus that is upon my physical body.

Sanctify my physical body with Your precious blood. Thank you for the power of the blood. We extol the power of the blood. We lift up the mercy of God in expectation of the glory of God in our life.

2. THE GRACE AND GLORY OF GOD

Turn to the book of Exodus 34:5 Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. This is the occasion when Moses asked, “Lord, show me Your glory.” Now the Lord came down to show him His glory, and verse 6 says, And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth.” Although the word glory is not mentioned, this revelation of God to Moses is the revelation of the glory of God. God is showing His glory to Moses. And we have said that there are five aspects of God’s glory. If we were to grow in these five aspects, we will grow to understand the glory of God. The first aspect, which we have seen, is mercy. God proclaims His mercy. Secondly, God proclaims His grace. He says the Lord is gracious. Then we see the next one, longsuffering, followed by goodness and truth. So there are five aspects concerning the glory of God manifested to humanity. If we want to understand God’s glory, we have to move into these five aspects. We have seen in last message how the Israelites exalted the mercy of God saying that the Lord is good, His mercy endures forever, and how the glory of God appeared to them in II Chron. 5.

Today we are going to look at the grace of God manifested to His people both in the Old and in the New Testament. When God says that He is gracious, it means that He shows forth His grace. In the old covenant, the grace of God refers to right standing with God. It still does refer to that in the new covenant but we will show how it has changed in the new covenant. In the old covenant it says like in Gen. 6 how Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. We also find Moses saying the same thing. He said, “If I have found grace in Your sight, then grant me this request.” Later in chapter 34 when God’s glory passed by and Moses saw the back part of His glory, Moses quickly ran to the Lord and said, “If I found grace in Your sight grant me,” and he began to ask for certain requests from God. So, the grace of God is tied up to the glory of God.

God has to reveal Himself in order for us to understand Him. It is not just man finding God; it is rather God revealing Himself. No matter how much we try to understand God with our finite understanding, unless God chooses to reveal Himself, there is no way we could have understood Him. Unless God chooses to reveal by His Spirit, we will never grow and understand. That is why we are to ask for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. For God is such that no human mind can understand Him. The only way is for God to come down to our level and reveal Himself. For Christianity is a revelation of God to man and not just man finding their way to God. We have set the fact that man can not come to know God by himself. All the philosophy of man has never led him any closer to God. All the great minds and brains that have ever lived and died could not even come close to a hair breath of the wisdom of God. They have tried to comprehend this earth and this existence that we are in. You remember Jesus told His disciples that they are blessed for God has chosen to reveal to them what many wise men longed to hear what they hear, to see what they see.

See it is only that when God reveals that we can receive. Without revelation, there is no reception. Revelation comes first followed by reception. If Christ did not reveal His salvation, we have nothing to receive. It is the revelation that must come first. And so there is a progressive revelation from God. The only way we can grow in God

is by His grace. The grace of God is God's revelation of Himself to us. As He reveals we receive. And if we are faithful to His revelations, He will reveal more. Revelation is progressive until we have grown in His fullness.

In the Old Testament, grace is finding a position with God and reaching into the depths of God. We realize that grace and holiness are related. Despite the fact that God is holy, almighty, awesome, majestic, all-powerful, radiant in all His marvelous shining glory, Moses could still approach God. How is that possible? Moses found grace in the eyes of God. God bestowed His grace upon Moses to approach Him. In the old covenant, the grace of God is not something where you just sit around and wait for God to show Himself to you. Everyone whom God showed grace made an effort. Everyone in the old covenant whom God revealed has made efforts. It is not that their efforts earned the merit of grace but their efforts were the signs for their hunger for God that God looks for. Those who hunger for God will find God. Those who do not hunger for God will not find Him. Before Noah found grace in the eyes of God, it is written how Noah was obedient to the Lord and that's where we find the word righteous.

So, let us define holiness and righteousness. Those two words are confusing to many people because we think that they are the same thing but they are different. Give me a definition of holiness.

Tremendous favor in the sight of the God.

Righteousness is right standing in the sight of God.

That's probably the basic Christian problem. The bible has two different Greek words and two Hebrew words for holiness and righteousness. Therefore, they must convey two different concepts. What is holiness? Holiness is a state without sin. What is righteousness? Righteousness is without sin too. See that's probably a situation in all Christians' lives. What is holiness? Holiness is someone set aside apart onto God. What is righteousness? Righteousness is right standing. Setting apart is another Hebrew word and another Greek word altogether. Holiness and righteousness - how do we differentiate the two? What will be a good definition of holiness? When we say God is holy, the first thing people think is sinlessness. See we all think in negative terms. What is light? Absence of darkness. In this definition, we do not define what light is. We actually define what it is not. What is faith? Absence of fear. That would not be a definition. That would only be a definition of what it is not. Defining what it is not helps us to define what it is.

So, what is holiness? Without sin. That is only part of a picture. Sinlessness and freedom from sin is not holiness itself but it is a result of holiness. Sometimes a person may not be sick although there is a virus attack because the body's defense mechanism is successfully fighting that attack. But if the body's immune system is not strong enough, the body succumbs to the viral attack and the person becomes sick. So, the fever is not the exact cause but it is a symptom of the virus attack. So, what is holiness? Is it the absence of sin? That is just the result of or the symptom of holiness. We have not even got the definition of holiness. What exactly is holiness? One of the most famous commandments in the bible is be holy as God is holy. If holiness is not just being without sin, then what is it? Holiness is being like God. That is the definition of holiness. See we have no measurement for holiness except God. If there

is any measurement of holiness, it is His attribute, His nature, and everything that He is. Holiness is being like God, being like who He is and what He is. God's nature is a nature of love, and the very expression of perfection. He can not stand imperfection, sin or disobedience. God is the very expression of that which is harmonious; that which is melodic, and that which is perfect. So, holiness is being like God. The result of being like God will be the absence of sin. So it is not something negative; it is something positive. The more you talk like God, think like God, believe like God, the more godly you are then the more holy you are. Holiness is being like God. So, we have defined holiness. The measurement of holiness is God Himself. He is the very personification of holiness.

Now lets deal with righteousness. Righteousness is comparing ourselves with the commandments and the laws of God. So righteousness is the obedience that we demonstrate to the given commandments, statutes, ordinances and testimony of God. Whatever spoken word and commandment God has given to live life in social life, in spiritual life, in personal life, in business life, in ministry life, in proportion as we obey them that is the proportion that we have moved into righteousness. See the commandments show the right standing in God. So, righteousness has to do with works while holiness has to do with God. Righteousness relates to the works. Holiness refers to the nature of God. Righteousness has to do with your faithfulness to God's commandments.

Let me give a few bible stories as an example so that you can relate to that. You remember how Noah is considered as righteous. What does that mean? While the world was falling into sin and disobeying God's command, he was obedient to God's commandments. He kept God's commandments diligently. So, he was righteous in his generation. He is a preacher of righteousness. What does that mean? He teaches what people must do in order to be obedient to God. He tells people to keep God's commandments. But nobody listened to him.

Then we read in the New Testament how Joseph was a righteous man. At first, he wanted to put Mary away secretly. He was a righteous man until God had to reveal to him in a dream that He is doing a special creative work in Mary's womb. Joseph was considered righteous in the sight of God. What does that mean? Joseph was a person who followed the Jewish customs and laws as much as he knew. He was one who is faithful to all the commandments as much as he knew.

What about Zacharias and Elizabeth who were also called righteous? What does that mean? They were obedient to all the Jewish laws and customs and they kept them faithfully as much as they know how. See righteousness relates to the commandments. Holiness relates to the person of God. Having defined holiness and righteousness then we can move on from there.

See in the old covenant before God reveals His grace and glory, He sees how we have obeyed His commandments. See the glory of God is revealed in measures. God has a standard measurement before He reveals His grace. God's standard measurement is if people can not be obedient to His revealed commandments then they can not be obedient to any further revelation of Himself. He that is faithful in little will be faithful in much. He that is faithless in little, how can he be faithful when God gives more? So, God does not reveal Himself to the unfaithful ones. God reveals Himself to those who were already faithful to what they know and to the written Word that they

received. If we are not faithful to the written Word, do not talk even about hearing God's voice or having a vision. See God has a standard of measurement before He reveals more of Himself. We need to understand how the grace of God comes. We can not just sit around and wait for God's grace when we have not been obedient to God's commandments or are not keeping God's written Word. If we know what to do and do not do it, we are unrighteous. We have not been faithful. We have not been obedient. So, we need to be obedient first.

Let us see how the grace of God comes on Moses' life, the very one that received this revelation. In Exodus 33:12 Then Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people,' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' If you want to grow in God's glory, you have to grow in God's grace. This is God's graciousness; how His grace is given and imparted and what He bases it on. How did Moses reach the stage where God says, "I know you by name, Moses and you have found grace in My sight." How did Moses reach that stage? The basic thing that Moses had done was that he was obedient. He was obedient to God's commandments. He was a person who obeys God and seeks after God. He is not just satisfied to keep the law of God. He is someone who presses further. You can see his character in Exodus 33 when he said, "Show me Your glory."

There are usually three groupings of Christians. The first group is content with doing the barest minimum. They feel being nominal Christians is enough. The second group has great plans to do all that is there but stops short when it comes to actually carrying the plans out. The third group says, "I will do all that is there," and they keep seeking for more to do. When Reinhard Bonnke and his team were organizing a crusade and getting all the churches to co-operate, they got three different responses. One group said they want to have nothing to do with that crusade. One group said, "We are for it all the way." The third group says, "We will watch and see if it is good and then, we will come in later." When we get into this church project, sometimes we have three responses. One group that says, "It can never be done." Another group says, "Let us go for it." The third group says, "We will watch and see if all work out. If it does, we will be there."

I was thinking about this little parable of the chicken, cow, and pig. They were talking how they serve man. One day the chicken said, "I have been a blessing to man. I give them eggs." Then he looked at the cow and asked, "What about you?" The cow said, "Well, I have been a blessing to man too. I give them milk." Then they turned and looked at the pig. The pig looked back at the chicken and the cow and said, "It is very easy for you to talk. If I were to serve man, I have to give my life." But that is the way some people are – they are just satisfied to give their eggs everyday. Some people will give their milk and say, "That's it. That is as far as I will go." But sometimes it takes sacrifice. All over the world, you will find ten percent of Christians doing ninety percent of the work for the rest of the Christians. Paul would say, "Brethren, this should not be." Also, Christians should be mobilized to do their part in God. We need hearts that are more than willing to go all the way with God.

Many years ago when we were preaching the Word of Faith message, the persecution was so heavy that we hardly had any friends. No one wanted to associate with us because we were so controversial. Controversial not because you want to be controversial but because you believe what the Word of God says. We preached that

message of faith even though it was not a popular message. We went through all the storms. Now after ten years later, the message has become acceptable today. Some guys later came around and said, "We are with you all the way." Where were they when we were in the line of the enemy's fire? That is the way it is. We need the Calebs and the Joshuas who know the Lord and go for it.

So, in the same way concerning the commandments and the laws of God, we need to be people who would go to the second mile. There are some whom what I call the half miler. They will only go half a mile. Then they will sit down and their coffee break takes a lifetime. Then there some who what I call the one miler. They do everything the Lord says then they have their coffee break. But then there are those forget their coffee break and go for the second mile. The first mile is just merely fulfilling our duties but the second mile is making our offerings and sacrifices.

That is the way God has established His system. Righteousness is complete obedience to all the commandments of God. And Moses was one of them. At the end of Exodus chapter 40:16 Thus Moses did; according to all that the Lord had commanded him, so he did. Verse 19 And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. Verse 21, as the Lord had commanded Moses, Verse 23, as the Lord had commanded Moses. Verse 25, as the Lord had commanded Moses. Verse 27, as the Lord had commanded Moses. Verse 29, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

It looks so redundant to repeat as the Lord had commanded Moses several times but God is making a statement here about Moses' character. You see Moses had to be very careful when he saw the vision of God in the Mount. He had to come down and make exactly the pattern that he saw and he did exactly. He has that type of heart. Moses was not a half miler. He was not a miler. He was a second miler. He would go for the second mile. He would go for more for God. You see Moses saw God judging the Israelites. Originally, God desired all the Israelites to be kings and priests but in the end, only one tribe the Levites remained in the priesthood. Moses was concerned. Although God says that He would send His angels to go with them because of His grace, Moses wanted more.

Lets read the background chapter 32:34 Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My angel shall go before you. So God has promised His angel. Originally, God wanted to be with them but now God says, "If I go with them My presence is so strong they will all die off." So God says, "I will send My angel with you." Moses was not satisfied; he is a second miler. So in Exodus 33 when a pillar of cloud appeared and God was speaking to Moses, he said in verse 13 Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people." And He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.

Moses is going for the second mile. Most Christians would have stopped at the first mile. He said, "Lord, your angel is not enough. I want You. You said that I have found grace come with me." Moses had a secret hunger in his heart for the extra of God. So, when he says to God, "Show me Your glory," God started showing His glory. In Exodus 34, God appeared and God walked by and proclaimed His glory. Did

you know what Moses did the moment God pass by? That shows that he must be preparing for that in chapter 34:8 So Moses made haste and bowed his head towards the earth and worshiped. Then he said, “If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we are a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance.” You know what Moses was saying. It looks like he premeditated it. I mean when he says, “God, show me Your glory,” and God says, “Alright, I will show you My glory.” So he waited and when God’s glory came, he already had in his heart to intercede for the people. So when God’s glory came he quickly said, “Lord, you must come with us.” He is not interested in just going half a mile or one mile. He is interested to go all the way.

Here is another example in the life of Daniel. That story in Daniel chapter 1 is very familiar to people. Almost everybody knows the wonderful blessing that we can claim. Verse 15 And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies. Then verse 17 As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. These kids were ten times smarter than the rest. They had knowledge in the arts, science, and literature of the Chaldeans. Grace does not come by just sitting down saying, “I am a half miler.” We see here that all the young men were taken and Daniel was among them. They were all actually Jewish young people. Daniel had to be obedient first before he could receive God’s grace. You do not receive God’s grace and then you become obedient. You are obedient first and then you receive more. So, God has a standard procedure to impart grace. He looks at us and seeks to impart more grace. See God reveals Himself proportionally. We can not know Him unless He reveals Himself to us. But does He reveal? How does He make a choice since He is no respecter of persons? He looks for the second miler. Those who are not even faithful are not even considered. Such people are not even on His waiting list. So to get on God’s waiting list by being obedient with all of our heart to all the commandments that we know. Being faithful day in and day out to whatever commandments God has given. Just be faithful and press for more of God. All the Jewish young men who went to Babylon started backsliding. They forgot about the Jewish customs and laws, which were required in the old covenant. Daniel said, “No, I will keep God’s commandments.” So he chose to be righteous and then the reward came. We always see the pattern - the reward comes after righteousness and not before.

Look at Joseph in Genesis. When he was tempted and bribed, he chose to be righteous then the reward came. So grace always goes to those who chose to be righteous, who chose to be obedient, who chose to be faithful. And get on the waiting list of God. And when on the waiting list of God, let there be a hunger for God in your heart. We can not get it but we can position ourselves ready to receive it. We can not get what God does not give. But we can position ourselves in a place ready to receive. That is why Isaiah 40:31 says they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. The waiting and positioning is by righteousness. As we are faithful and righteous in all these commandments of God then we will be able to position ourselves to receive the grace. In the old covenant, to receive God’s grace, we have to be placed in right standing before Him. That is God’s grace shown in righteousness. Holiness is flowing with the nature of God. When we have righteousness and holiness, both His grace and His glory can be poured in our lives. So, we have defined holiness and righteousness.

When Jesus came in the new covenant, something took place. He came and lived the righteous life for us. He lived everything that needs to be lived. He obeyed all the commandments of God; He was righteous. What happened next is marvelous. When Jesus died on the cross, He made it possible for that keeping of God's commandments to be imputed and imparted. Imputed is the transfer of position; imparted is the transfer of substance. Whatever is supposed to be imputed on Him is imputed on you. It means that the position that is supposed to be placed on Him is now placed on you. But imparted is transference of substance. But something strange or interesting took place when Jesus came. In the new covenant, Jesus made it possible for righteousness to be imputed and imparted which was not possible in the old. And for the first time after Jesus came, righteousness is referred to as a substance that is freely imparted.

Let me give some scriptures in the book of Rom. 5:17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. For the first time, you find that righteousness is written as a gift. This is the first time you hear it as a gift that can be imparted. When Abraham looked forward to Christ's coming, he believed God and it was accounted to him as righteousness. It was not imparted but it was imputed on him. Impute is more of a term used in accountancy. For example, something that is not yours is accounted to you as yours. So it's a legal aspect that has been done. But Abraham did not taste of it. It was imputed positionally to be his. But when Jesus Christ came, it was not only imputed; it became possible to be imparted. Righteousness became something that could be imparted and experienced. And for the first time you read of it like in the book of Philippians 1 of righteousness working as a substance. Phil. 1:11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ. So, when Jesus came something took place. Whatever it is that God gave, He now not only gives it positionally, He gives it as a substance that can be bestowed inside our spirit. And that is how grace became a substance. Grace in the old covenant was originally just a position but now, it is a substance imparted to our spirit man.

We have the outworking of the grace of God. We have the outworking of the righteousness of God. We have the outworking of the substance of Christ Himself in the new covenant. This is something that the old covenant could not conceive of. We have in seed form the ability to keep all the commandments. What is righteousness? It is the keeping of the commandments of God. And what is the substance of righteousness? It is the substance of God's ability imparted in such a manner that it could become a part of us. And suddenly for the first time righteousness is linked up with holiness because it is God's very substance in Christ. Before that, there was no link. Righteousness had to do with the commandments of God whereas holiness is being like God. But for the first time, there is the link in Christ Jesus. Mercy and judgment came in Jesus Christ. And the substance of God's being, God's holiness, God's righteousness, all suddenly became possible through the divine channel of God's Holy Spirit. When we grow in the grace of God in the new covenant, we automatically grow in the glory of God. In the old covenant, the people who experienced God's glory are those whom God shows His grace. See as they find grace in God, God shows Himself. As they are obedient in righteousness, God shows His grace. And when God shows His grace, they see more glory. As they see more glory, they are changed and transformed. In the new covenant, the same principle applies but in a different manner. As we grow in the substance of God's grace, we grow in the substance of God's glory. In the old covenant, the glory of God is like a cloud

inhabiting a place. In the New Testament, the glory of God is placed right into our spirit man when we are born again.

Lets turn to II Cor. 4:6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The glory of God is not only in heaven. The glory of God is in our spirit. That is why from time to time, if you ever spend time in His presence, the glory comes out through your eyes, through your words and through your being. In John G. Lake's books, you read his experience of flashes of God's glory coming into his body. In Kathryn Kuhlman's biography, people who knew her before she went into the ministry said her eyes looked different after she entered into the ministry. She is not the same Kathryn Kuhlman. Why, because the glory of God is inside her.

Paul says in II Cor. 4:7 we have this treasure. What treasure is he talking about? The glory of God. See the grace of God is tied to the glory of God. The impartation of God's grace is the impartation of His substance and of His very glory. He says we have this wonderful treasure, wonderful substance in earthen vessels inside us building in us. And that is why in verse 8 We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed. Why, because the glory of God can not be crushed. Then he says we are perplexed but we are not in despair. This not a statement of defeat; it is a statement of triumph. We are persecuted but not forsaken because the glory of God is in us. And he says we are struck down but we are not destroyed because the glory of God bubbles forth from within us. And I like what he says in verse 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. This is the precious experience of the glory of God inside us. Verse 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The more pressure is exerted on us on the outside, the more the glory of God flows mightily on the inside.

We close by looking at four Greek words for power – exousia, dunamis, kratos and ischus.

The word exousia relates to the authority of a believer. Jn. 1:12-13 says that as man has received Him He gave power or exousia. Exousia is the power that belongs to you in Christ. It is what you release in His name.

Dunamis Acts 1:8 when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall receive dunamis. Dunamis refers to the power of the Holy Spirit. Every time when it is used in the New Testament, it refers back to the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word ischus refers to a different realm of power. Kratos also refers to a different realm of authority.

But let me just summarize for you the definition. In the book of Acts 19:20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily (kratos) and prevailed (ischus). Verse 20 is a play of Greek word. It says the word of the Lord grew kratos and ischus. Ischus relates to the power of God in various workings that we have defined in our teaching series on "Revival of Word and Spirit." Kratos relates to invincibility and ischus to efficiency. But there is more that we want to look into here. You notice in verse 20 kratos relates to the power of the Word. It says the word of the Lord grew kratos grew mightily.

As we look at the word *kratos* for a moment, turn to the book of Eph. 1:19. There is a play of Greek word here. And what is the exceeding greatness of His (*dunamis*) power towards us who believe according to the working (*ischus*) of His mighty power (*kratos*) which He worked in Christ. Now turn to Eph. 3 this time Paul only uses one word in verse 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man. There is a play of Greek word again. He says that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory. See the working of God's glory in our life will be the operation of all these four different realms of power. The glory of God comes from being filled with *kratos* and *dunamis* through His Spirit in the inner man. It comes from Christ dwelling in your heart through faith. It comes from being rooted and grounded in love. Here is where *kratos* is related to the power inherent through the written Word of God.

Now the four words are combined into twins. *Exousia* and *kratos* flow together. *Dunamis* and *ischus* flow together. There are four Greek words for power. One is *exousia*, which means authority. One is *dunamis*, which refers to the power of the Holy Spirit. *Exousia* authority is like a policeman wearing his badge and stopping a twelve-wheeler truck. He signals to the truck driver to stop and he stops. This does not mean that the policeman had the power to stop the truck; he only has the authority to stop the truck. But if it had been *dunamis*, it would have been different. If Samson wants to stop the twelve-wheeler truck, he would just rip off one of the wheels. Then he would have stopped the truck but in a different way. He uses *dunamis* the power of the working of miracle.

Kratos means the power in the Word. In Eph. 6, there is a play on the word *kratos* when he talks about being strong in the power of the Lord. The armor of God is tied to the Word of God. The helmet of salvation is the word of salvation. The breastplate of righteousness is the word of righteousness. The girdle of truth is the word of truth. The shoe of the gospel of peace is the word of peace. The shield of faith is the word of faith. The whole armor is tied up to *kratos* the Word of God. So *kratos* is the power that is inherent in the Word.

When you do your devotion and meditation, the power released is *kratos*. *Kratos* power is related to *exousia* power. They are linked up like twins. *Exousia* is what we are in Him, your position in Him. And this is where Eph. 3 helps us to understand *kratos*. *Kratos* is the working of Christ in us. That is why in Eph. 3 you read how Paul pray that you will be strengthened (*kratos*) with *dunamis* from the Holy Spirit that Christ may dwell in your life. But Christ is already in your life since you accepted Christ. The Ephesians were already baptized in the Holy Spirit. But we are talking about a continual growth of Christ in our life. Christ is established in us but Christ has to continually work in our life. Every time when Jesus said, "Abide in Me," He also says, "Let My Word abide in you." See *kratos* power has to work in you. There is no way you can abide in Him and He in you without the Word. The power of the Word works in establishing that Christ life in us. You may be in Christ but is the fullness of Christ life in you? The life of Christ in you is proportional to the working of *kratos* in your life. That is one working of the glory of God in our lives. That is why in II Peter it says if you want grace and peace to multiply he says get the Word of God. When you get the knowledge of the Word in your life, *kratos* changes your life. The more the *kratos* change your life, the more Christ is in you. We are in Christ and Christ is in us through His Word. Abide in Me and let My Word abide in you. His Word abiding

in us is the working of kratos in our life. Heb. 4:12 the word of God is sharper than a two-edge sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The Word of God is cutting us so that Christ may be full in our lives. The glory of God is in many people's lives but it is not able to come forth because of a lack of kratos in their lives.

Then over here we need some scriptures to understand ischus. Dunamis refers to the dynamite of the Holy Spirit. It should be translated as power all the time. We have taught about it as ability but we want to go into details. I Peter 4:11 notice in verse 10 he talks about the grace of God so he is still on the subject on the grace and the glory of God. Verse 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone minister, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever, Amen. Now here the word ability is the word ischus. If anyone ministers, let him do it with the ischus which God supplies. Of course, all the different powers are related. Just as kratos is Christ in us through the Word, dunamis is the power of the Holy Spirit so ischus is the tangible dunamis that becomes a part of us. It is the ability of God that has become so much in your life. He is the Holy Spirit yet now it is you. He has become a part of you. And of course, ischus relates to the power of prayer, just as kratos relates to the power of the Word. As we wait on God, there is a spiritual tangible change. As we move into ischus more and more, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are imparted to you and you operate in them so much that ischus and the gifts of the Holy Spirit have become a part of you. It is very hard to divide ischus and you any more. It has been absorbed as part of you.

Let me illustrate it. When a little child grows up with a talent for music, at first, you could differentiate the talent and the child. But as the child develops that musical talent, the talent becomes the life and the profession of the child. Music becomes the child's very being. You could not divide the child and the talent any more. So ischus is the inworking of the Spirit in our lives. His graces, His ability that He places in our lives had become a part of us so much so that you can not differentiate that which is of you and that which is of God. You have become that part of the working of God and vice versa. At first when you eat physical food, you could separate the food from your body. Even when the food is in your mouth, you could still separate it. But once the food gets absorbed into your blood stream and become the building materials of some of your cells in your body, you can not say that the chicken is still inside you. No, it has become a part of you. So there is a point when that which is imparted becomes that which is us. This ischus is the inworking of the Spirit of God in our life. So dunamis is the power of the Holy Spirit and ischus is the Holy Spirit working in us.

All these four exousia, dunamis, kratos and ischus constitute the working of God's glory in our life. As we grow from glory to glory, more substance of God's power is imparted into our spirit man and we grow in His grace.

3. THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Exodus 33:18 and [Moses] said, "Please show me Your glory." Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will compassion." And shortly after in Exodus 34 the Lord did exactly what He promised to Moses. In verse 5 Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth.

We are looking at the glory of God. When God manifested His glory to Moses, He mentioned five attributes. The Lord came down and proclaimed the name of the Lord, saying, "The Lord, the Lord, God, merciful, gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth." This tells us that the glory of God that came down consists of five ingredients - mercy, graciousness, longsuffering, goodness, and truth. We have already seen mercy and graciousness earlier.

In this message, we want to look at the word goodness, which is one of the ingredients of God's glory. We desire to grow in God's glory. We want more of God's glory upon our life. The bible prophesied that His glory would be on His people. All the Gentiles shall see the glory of God. We need to grow in glory and in order to do so, we need to understand what glory consists of. We must grow in these five elements of God's glory in order to grow in glory. We must grow in mercy. If we stop growing in mercy, we will stop growing in glory. We must grow in graciousness. If we do not grow in graciousness, we will not grow in glory. We must also grow in goodness. Otherwise, we can not grow in glory.

In the last message, we saw that graciousness is tied up to holiness and righteousness. They are the impartation of God's very nature and being into us. In fact, all five would have relevance to God's nature but each has its special aspect. For example, holiness and righteousness has its own aspect, which we have touched on in our previous message.

Do you notice the God summarizes all the five ingredients into one general word goodness too? In Exodus 33:19 I will make all My goodness. I did not know goodness is a substance. But God says goodness is a substance. I will make My goodness pass before you. Is goodness an attribute or a substance? It is both. Goodness is an attribute of God, which consist of His attitude. Do you notice that most of the time we understand goodness either in two forms? This reminds me of the Chinese operas. The musicians would sound the Chinese instruments and the main actor makes a dramatic entrance, saying, "I am a good man." They always make an entrance this way.

So when we say a person is good, what do we mean by good? A good person usually means that he or she does not do evil. Again, it is a negative perspective. It does not define what it is. It defines what it is not. He is a good man that means a person did not do anything wrong. It does not give a definition. It gives a non-definition. It tells us what it is not. The same way like we were trying to define holiness and righteousness in our last message. Most of your answers about holiness and righteousness were non-definitions. Non-definitions tell us what the term is not but they do not tell us what the term is. Holiness is the very nature of God Himself. It is

not the absence of sin but it is the presence of God. And righteousness is both a right standing with God and in the New Testament it became a substance through Jesus Christ a gift of righteousness.

When we say that someone is a good person, people think about what that person did not do. The other aspect is we think that the attitude of a good person is being kind, benevolent, amicable, meek, gentle, and all kinds of positive words to describe a person. So, we sometimes think of goodness in terms of attitude.

When God speaks about goodness, He speaks about substance and attitude. Your answer would be half correct if you refer goodness to be an attitude like kindness. The other half is that goodness is a substance. Otherwise how can Ps. 23 say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me." Something following me can not be an attitude. If the attitude is following me, it should be my attitude. It should be in me, not following me. But there is something following us. Surely, goodness and mercy is following me all the days of our life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. So goodness and mercy are powerful things.

Here is why it is powerful. Ps. 37:23 says The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and He delights in his ways. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down. Now, don't you think that is powerful? A good man may make mistakes and fall, yet the Lord will raise him up again. But if you are a bad man and you fall, you fall. You lack the substance of goodness to prop you up in troubled times.

But apparently there is something powerful about goodness. When it gets a hold of us, it preserves us. It preserves us in imperfection. It preserves us when we make mistakes. It preserves us when we fall. So, it is powerful. If we understand goodness and apply it in our lives, we become essentially in substance and attitude, a good person. The quality of goodness has a preserving power in our life.

Let me illustrate something more powerful. You remember Abraham. Essentially, he is a good man but he did stumble and fall. He is human. Essentially, he is good but he is still made of flesh and blood. He makes mistakes. He went with Sarah his beautiful wife into king Abimelech's territory. When he went into Abimelech's territory, Abimelech took one look at Sarah and said, "Get her for my harem." When the armed men approached Abraham and said, "Our king wants her," Abraham was thinking about his life. He has made an agreement with Sarah saying, "If any body ask who you are to me, say that you are my sister. Don't say you are my wife otherwise I will be killed." So, these guys came and asked him. He says, "She is my sister," so they took her and Abraham did not do anything about it. Some of you look innocent as if you never told a lie before. What about half-truths? People call it a white lie. A white lie is a partial truth given so that you will not know the whole truth. You have given incomplete information in such a way that your hearer will be misled to a wrong conclusion. It is true that Sarah is his sister as she is Abraham's half sister. But that is half the truth. Abimelech concluded that therefore Sarah is not Abraham's wife if she were his sister. Abraham was afraid that the other half of the truth would get him into trouble. So he refrained from speaking the other half of the truth and he fell into sin.

But the amazing thing is our Father God. King Abimelech took Sarah to his harem and when king Abimelech was asleep, God gave him a dream. In Gen. 20:6 God told Abimelech in a dream. God said, Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your

heart. Now Abimelech apparently has some integrity too. That is also why God worked a dream in his life. See God preserves the man of integrity too. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them (Proverbs 11:6) For I also withheld you from sinning against Me, therefore I did not let you touch her. Now therefore, restore the man's wife. Abraham was the one responsible because Abraham told a lie. He could have trusted the Lord to defend him. If he dies for telling the truth, so be it but tell the truth. He told a lie and Sarah went along. And He says, "Restore the man's wife for he is a prophet." God is defending a liar. God is defending a man who has fallen. Question, why? - because essentially he is a good man. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. And He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand. (Psalm 37:23-24)

Now when you fall you pay a price for it. I am not saying you do not pay a price for sin to a certain extent. But the fact is there is restoration. Why is God working restoration so fast? Abraham walked in goodness. He would qualify the description of a good man in Ps. 37:23 whose steps are ordered by the Lord. See it does not mean that you failed once that you are a failure. It does not mean that when you told a half-truth, which is wrong, and a lie in some pressurized situation, you are a liar. But if you continue at it, you may become a habitual liar but the fact is those who are good do not intend to continue that habit of lying. That is the difference.

It is because of goodness that God worked in Paul's life. In the book of Acts, Paul was a cruel man from the outward perspective. He took Christians from their homes, threw them into prison, separated families, killed, and was involved in the killing of Stephen. He was on his way to Damascus to work more destruction when Jesus appeared to him. Why did Jesus work in his life that way? Most Christians would have been praying, "Fire from heaven, come down and fry him." Why did God work in his life? There are two reasons. One is intercession. We believe Stephen's prayer helped. "Lord, lay not this to their charge." He exercised mercy and forgiveness. Secondly, despite his cruelty and destructive streak, Paul was a good man. Outside he looks like a bad person but inside he was sincere in what he was doing. He genuinely thought he was protecting God's interests.

Paul recognized his former life in I Tim. 1:13 when he wrote, although I was formerly a blasphemer. We are not saying that his former life of cruelty was not wrong. It is still wrong. Wrong is wrong, sin is sin. But restoration is possible when there is essential goodness. Don't we do that to our children all the time? It is a different thing when you punish a child who persistently and constantly chooses to do evil. But it is a different thing when your child failed under fear of pressure, so they came back and told a lie. Essentially, they do not intend to do that. But they yielded to the pressure of fear. Evil may try to creep into their hearts but essentially, they are good.

Now let me draw a careful line here. If we constantly repeat our failures, sins, or shortcomings, it can turn us into an evil person. So what we are teaching is not an excuse or license for sin. But what we are teaching is to understand the mercy and goodness of God and how He deals in our life. I believe if not for the mercy, the grace and the goodness of God, not one of us would be sitting here. Who amongst us here can say, "I have never fail." Who can say they have never faulted. None of us. But God continued working in our life. He searches the deep things of the heart. He knows essentially you are good.

Essentially Paul was good. He really wanted to do well but he was self-deceived. He was doing evil things while thinking he was doing good. This is what he says in I Tim.1:13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man, but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. He did not do it purposely. He did it ignorantly and out of lack of knowledge. If you understand this truth, you would be more merciful to others than you ought to. We write off many people because we look on the outward, and do not see on the inward. If God adopts that attitude towards us, we will all be finished. That is why sometimes people may hurt us with their words and in their actions but we need to see beyond their words and actions. If we do so, we can see their love and intention and we can nurture fellowship too. Otherwise, there is no fellowship.

So, Paul obtained mercy because of his essential goodness. He acted out of ignorance and lack of knowledge. Many people do things and say things that they should not say or should not do because they know not what they do and know not what they say. Sometimes what they do and what they say is hurting. It cripples, depresses, and discourages others. It could actually cause people to turn away from the Lord. And normally we would say that such sin is worthy of the punishment. But yet, God looks at the heart. He sees goodness in a spark there. He deals with it. He would step in. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, though he fall, though he fall, he will not be cast down.

Paul also says this in the book of Acts 22:3 I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. Do you know that when Paul was persecuting the Christians he thought he was doing the right thing? He thought he was helping God to get rid of the heretics who were destroying the Jewish faith. See his zeal was not for selfish motives. He went all out against them thinking that he is serving God. He was zealous towards God. Then the other portion was his ignorance and unbelief. This proves to us that essentially he was a good man. We know because when he came to know the truth that he was wrong and that the Christians were right, he became a different man. He became a blessing instead of a curse. He became a solution instead of a problem. He became an encourager instead of a depressor. He became one who contributes instead of one who destroys. That change came in an instant because essentially that was his desire to serve God and to do what is right. But he lacked knowledge and he did the wrong thing. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord though he falls he will not be cast down.

Some of you sitting right here are on your way to Christian perfection. You fall from time to time. And you wonder how you are going to pick yourself up and press on. When some people make a mistake, they dare not face anybody any more. They feel like hiding at home. All of us make mistakes but what makes the difference is to get out of it quickly. We get back on the right track and we press on. Of course, it demands a teachable attitude. It demands that we are able to correct what we did. Paul was very frank about it. He admitted that he was wrong. I think one difficult sentence people have to say is, "I really love you with agape love." Not many people really can say that and mean it. The other is, "I am wrong. Please forgive me." Human pride does not want to say that.

From the time of Adam's fall, God asked, "Adam, Adam, where art thou?" Do you know that God knows where Adam was? Of course, God knows where Adam was. Don't tell me God doesn't know. Then what kind of God are we talking about? God knows where Adam was but God wanted Adam to respond and say, "I have failed you, I have made a mistake." Adam did not do such a thing. Adam was hiding and God asked, "Did you eat of that tree? See God knew the answer. He wanted an answer from Adam. Adam did not even say, "I did." He said, "The woman gave me to eat." God asked the woman. The woman said, "The serpent." But every one of them can not come to God and say, "I am sorry. I was wrong. Forgive me." See that demonstrates whether you are a good man or not. A good man though he falls will not allow himself to be cast down he will get up again and walk off. Goodness is powerful. We have to develop goodness in our lives. Goodness is both an attitude and a substance.

While we are on the subject of Adam and Eve, I want to digress and share some prophetic significance for our times. There is a local church where every first Saturday of the month, the pastor sends some of his members on study tours to heaven. Since we are fast approaching the end times, the Holy Spirit wants to accelerate our learning. These study tours of heaven will reveal many secrets for our times. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, the pastor walks up and down the aisle and picks a few members who were chosen by the Holy Spirit to make a trip to heaven. He asks them to prepare by confessing their sins and asking for grace. Once they are ready, the pastor points his forefinger at them, one by one, and they fall to the ground like dead men and women. He asks the ushers to examine them and roll them on the floor and there is no response from them. Their breathing and their heartbeats even slowed down considerably. They are then carried to the stage for an hour or so before the pastor claps his hands to wake them up. They then go to the mike to make their reports to the congregation.

In one of the reports, a member described how he was taken to a computer screen by an angel to see what really happened in the Garden of Eden. He saw that Adam was very, very handsome and Eve was even more beautiful and pretty. She was so beautiful that Adam loved her very deeply. Adam loved her so much that he did everything to please her. He obeyed her every desire to the point of even being submissive to her. Eve had a peculiar penchant for snakes. She would carry a snake about her and let it twirl around her body. She loved to play with her pet snake. She would constantly talk with the serpent too. Of course, this was before the fall, and the animals were friendly and harmless. The serpent was not seen to be evil and there was nothing squeamish about it. It may have been very beautiful and attractive as well. Eve also greatly admired Adam for his knowledge and wisdom. She yearned for that kind of wisdom that Adam had. She saw that Adam could name all the animals and administrate the Garden of Eden with great knowledge and wisdom.

It was for these reasons – that Eve was friendly with her pet snake, that Eve admired Adam for his wisdom and that Adam was submissive to Eve – that the devil pounced upon to bring the downfall of man. He had been observing this for many years and finally when Adam and Eve were about thirty years old, the devil used the serpent to talk to Eve about getting the wisdom of God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve fell for it since she trusted her pet snake and since she wanted to be Adam who had such great wisdom. After Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, she gave

some to Adam to eat as well. By this time, Adam had already cultivated the habit of obeying Eve all the time because of her great beauty and he too fell into the devil's trap and obeyed Eve. The sin of Eve is greater than the sin of Adam.

Recently, there seems to be a craze for keeping pet snakes. I watched a Discovery Channel documentary that showed many teenaged girls buying pet snakes. Ironically, when Discovery Channel interviewed them, many of the girls said that their keeping pet snakes had nothing to do with the serpent and the devil and "stuff like that." You would notice that their minds were automatically led to associate the serpent with the devil. I believe that their consciences were pricking them and warning them but they chose to drown out their inner voice by saying it is ok to keep pet snakes. They do not realize that a bigger picture was being played out and they were the mere pawns of the devil. The devil is leading them to adopt the habit of Eve, who also loved to play with pet snakes. At the time when the devil was permitted to test Adam and Eve, he used Eve's pet serpent to speak to her. So will it be in the last days. Satan will use these pet snakes to communicate with their mistresses, perhaps by telepathy or ESP, to mislead them to accept the Antichrist and rebel against God. Christians too who keep religious statues, icons and pictures at home have also to beware. In the last days too, Satan will speak through these statues and mislead them to accept the Antichrist. It is much better to get rid of them than allow them to be your stumbling blocks. Do not be surprised to find that your devout mother or wife is kneeling before the altar, and there is a religious picture or statue there. Suddenly, she hears a voice coming from that statue or picture saying that the Antichrist is a great and holy leader sent from God. She believes that deception, tells everybody what she heard, and lead the whole family and neighborhood to worship the Antichrist. Terrible deception will take place during the end times and woe to those who do not have the Spirit of truth with them.

Many bible teachers teach that Adam should have exercised his headship over Eve and commanded her to obey God rather than listen to the voice of the serpent. He should know what God has commanded and he should command his household to obey God. All this is true but we should understand the hold that Eve had over Adam. In fact, the heaven's report states that Eve was domineering over her husband, Adam. She was constantly ordering Adam around, and Adam was being very submissive to her. So it should not be a surprise that Adam obeyed Eve when she gave him the fruit to eat and that was the fall of mankind. Like a chess game, the devil had already studied his opponent's weak points and placed his pieces in strategic locations before springing the checkmate on Adam.

This same heaven's report states that the devil will use this same tactic to trap mankind in the last days. Satan has always used women to bring about the downfall of man. Witness the number of ministers and ministries, families, government leaders, even businesses collapsing because of an illicit liaison with a woman. For by means of a harlot, a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. (Proverbs 6:26) Just as the devil used Eve to bring down Adam, so will he use women to lead in the rebellion against God and side with the Antichrist in the last days. It is no coincidence that you see the rise of many woman politicians and government heads in the last decade. It is also no coincidence that feminism, feminist theology, the worship of goddesses has gained ascendancy in many societies. All these are part of Satan's chess moves to spring the final assault on mankind. This number will increase as the world heads rapidly towards the final scenario.

Now, let us come back to our topic. Like CNN, sometimes I will have to interrupt the topic to bring you the latest from heaven. We need to keep up with what God is doing in our present times. I am sure you will not mind.

Lets look at Exodus 33:19 Then He said, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. When God said, “I will make My goodness pass before you,” and then mentions mercy, graciousness, longsuffering, goodness and truth, He implies that goodness covers all the five aspects of His glory. Then in chapter 34 he repeats again in verse 6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth. Do you notice among all the five attributes, goodness was emphasized?

There are five attributes mentioned there they are mercy, graciousness, longsuffering, goodness and truth. But goodness is the one that has a word placed next to it that says, “abounding.” There is an emphasis on goodness.

Now the Hebrew words for goodness found in Exodus 33:19 and in Exodus 34:5-6 are different. The word in Exodus 33:19 where He says, “I will make all My goodness pass before you,” is the Hebrew word tob. The Hebrew word tob is the essential word for goodness. All the five attributes of God’s glory come from tob and are available because He is a good God.

Exodus 34:6 where He says, “abounding in goodness,” is a different Hebrew word for the word goodness. There is a play on Hebrew words here. The Hebrew word for the word goodness in Exodus 34:6 is the word hesed and that word is normally not translated as goodness. The normal word for goodness in Hebrew is the word tob but this word hesed occurred 240 times in the Old Testament, and has been translated as kindness 38 times. Hesed is also translated as loving-kindness, steadfast love, grace, mercy, faithfulness, goodness and devotion. I like the word where the bible uses the word kindness because it conveys two things again - attribute and substance. So, the second goodness in Exodus 34 should strictly be translated as kindness, “abounding in kindness.”

We all sing the song “Thy loving kindness is better than life.” What do we mean by “Thy loving kindness is better than life?” If we can understand that, we can understand goodness also because they are related. See loving-kindness is a substance as well as love. So the meaning is this God’s loving-kindness is so long you could say that God’s loving-kindness starts from eternity to eternity. So everything is God’s kindness; it is one long line of loving kindness, of all His goodness and kindness. Our life is only that short. You could live for a thousand years and you would not have tasted the fullness of what God can do for you.

We are talking about goodness compared with kindness, or rather comparing tob and hesed since they are connected. In the book of Gen. 1 it tells us here that as God created this planet earth, there was one word God always uses. It tells us in verse 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then verse 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. Verse 18 He makes the light to rule over the day and over the night and to divide the light from the

darkness. And God saw that it was good. Then verse 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. Verse 25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. Verse 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

God made all these things and He says that it was good. He made some more and says that it was good. When He made man and women He says very good. Notice that all the creation of God is summarized by the word good. Everything that God gave is because He is good. That expresses an attribute of goodness. Goodness and being good is not just refraining from evil. When we say, "I am good to you," or, "He is a good man," we should not use it in reference to just somebody who refrains from evil. That is how the world measures goodness. The world uses an incomplete yardstick to measure goodness. The world does not add the spiritual dimension. But when God speaks about something being good, it means it has the ability to do something that improves you. It is not just the ability to refrain from evil. Goodness does something that makes you happy. So a good man is not just a man who sits down and do nothing. The bible qualifies a good man to be somebody who reaches out of his way, who makes a sacrifice for himself, who pays a price that you can enjoy.

All of you mothers know what it is like. You cooked hot tasty meals for your family. You sweated it out. It took one hour of planning, one hour of cutting the vegetables and meat and one hour of cooking. You prepared a great feast and when your husband and children sat at the table, they devoured the food in just five minutes. However, you did not mind. You feel satisfied that your family enjoyed your cooking. You did not cook to please yourself. It was for your loved ones to enjoy. You knew that your husband loves corned beef and cabbage and your children loved spaghetti. So you cooked these dishes so that they would have a very satisfying meal. That is the essential meaning of goodness.

So are you good to people? Goodness is not just having a quality of non-retaliation and non-evil. Goodness in a person says, "Let me see what I can do to improve your lot. Let me see how I can bless you. Let me see how I can solve your problem. Let me see how I can increase your happiness. Let me see how I can add something to you so that you can have a great day."

You see God did not create man and woman to work 8 to 5 only. God did not make man and woman on the first day so that they have to help God to create the rest. God made them on last day, the sixth day so that when everything was created, man just had to come and enjoy God's creation. That is goodness. That is also mercy because the general word for goodness called tob refers to everything that God has revealed, everything God has given of His love, of His blessing, of His mercy, of His graciousness, of His truth, everything He has given is classified by the word goodness. That is why He told Moses in Exodus 33:19 I will make My goodness pass before you. And that that goodness or tob consists of the five attributes including hesed, which is kindness.

That is why the book of James did not just say, “Every perfect gift is from above,” but it says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.” (James 1:17) Goodness means a gift that enhances you, that blesses you. That is the meaning of goodness. So according to the bible qualification of goodness if you are someone who just sits around doing nothing, the world may call you a good man. Why? Because he didn’t sin, he didn’t smoke, he didn’t drink, he didn’t do this and do that. But that is a non-definition. But in God’s qualification, a good man is one who constantly looks for things to do for others, things to bless others, things to enhance others. A good person is actively doing good to others.

Do you know Abraham was such a man? Abraham constantly looked for strangers to take in. Roland Buck mentioned in the book “Angels on Assignment” that when he went to God’s throne room, God pulled out three files belonging to Abraham, Paul and himself. God told him a hundred and twenty things that he would experience before he die. But God also pulled out Abraham’s file. He read all the records of Abraham’s file. Of course, the shortcomings and sins were washed out and were no more in the record. So Abraham’s failures mentioned in the Bible were not in his file since they were washed under the blood. But an emphasis was mentioned in his record up there. That Abraham was a hospital man. He was a man who always took in strangers. You saw a glimpse of that in the bible. When he sees these people, he would run to them and ask them to come in. He went out of the way to welcome his guests and told his wife to slaughter the fattest calf.

How many people will do that today? We will just give one dollar to a hungry stranger and tell him to buy his own lunch. Abraham was that kind of person to reach out to make people happy, and blessed them. He loves to bless others. That is what it means to be a good man. Goodness is the attitude of seeking to enhance somebody else’s enjoyment. It seeks to make life better for others. That is goodness. It is an attitude.

The other part is that everything that comes from God of His spiritual blessings, of His mental blessing and of His physical blessing are all categorized as His goodness. So when you have a financial blessing, it came from God’s goodness. When you are blessed with a car, remember it is God’s goodness to you. When you are blessed with a house, it is God’s goodness. When you are blessed with a revelation, it is God’s goodness. When you are blessed with musical talent, it is God’s goodness. When you are blessed with a good voice, it is God’s goodness.

Everything of substance is also included as goodness. The thing is that goodness is a substance that produces all the other blessings. Psalms 23 says, “Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.” If goodness was just an attitude, it would have been worded as, “Surely, goodness and mercy shall be in me all the days of my life.” Instead, it says, “shall follow me,” indicating that goodness is like a person following you wherever you go.

In Exodus 34:6, God mentioned the five attributes of His glory and one of these is the word *hesed* or kindness in. What do we mean by kindness? Is it someone who is gentle? It is someone who gives you things easily. Kindness includes generosity. You would not call a stingy man, kind. So all the things that God has given in our life are not because of what we have done. You show mercy when somebody has done something wrong against you. But you show goodness to someone when there is

nothing for or against you at all. You just desire to start the relationship by being good. God started the ball rolling when He made this world. Mercy is needed when there is a fault and judgment is required. But goodness is when there is nothing to begin with. For example if somebody sinned against you, you could pronounce judgment on them or you could take action against them. But in this case, you show mercy instead and the glory of God increases in your life. But showing goodness begins when there is no record of indebtedness to one another or obligation to show favor or when a person has not done any wrong to you. Goodness is when you reach out and say, "Let me see how I can bless that person." Goodness is willing to be generous. So, God has been generous to us. When we say, "Thy loving kindness is better than life," it means that God's loving kindness is bigger, wider, longer lasting than our lives. See life is only that short. His kindness is better than that. Now we know the meaning. When we say that God's loving kindness is better than life, it means it is longer and greater than life. God's kindness is so powerful.

God's loving kindness is something active that flows from God's essential nature of goodness. God is a good God and He is not sitting up on His throne with a big stick waiting to punish somebody. No, He is sitting up on His throne with a handful of blessing looking for persons to pour His blessings upon. Don't get the worldly image of God; get the bible image of God. God is looking for places and peoples He can put His blessings on. God has so much blessings that if He gives to every single human being it will only touch a drop of water in the ocean of what He could give. So great is His kindness and goodness onto us.

So there are two areas of goodness - one is in attitude and the other is in substance. We could learn to receive the attitude of goodness. And it is not something that will come immediately because goodness is developed through meekness, which involves "teachability."

Turn to Ps. 23 before you can have verse 6 you must have verse 1 The Lord is my shepherd. And goodness starts when you partake of the Shepherd's heart. And that means letting God break down your self life. The book of Isaiah says, "Heaven is My throne and earth is My footstool. Where shall I dwell? says God. Then He says He will dwell with those of a humble and a contrite spirit. We realize the humble shall be exalted. The proud shall be brought down. We need to come to God and allow Him to transform us like sheep by the Shepherd. We need to follow the Shepherd's heart. The Lord is my Shepherd. Then you can have verse 6, "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

Do you notice everything after verse 1 has to do with what the Shepherd done? So, the essential thing is the Shepherd. In verse 2 it says, He makes me lie down in green pastures - that's the work of the shepherd. He leads me beside still waters - that's still the shepherd. He leads me in the path of righteousness - that's still the shepherd. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death - that's still the shepherd. For you are with me. What is with me? Your rod. In verse 5, You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup runs over, - that's still the shepherd. See everything listed that is done is the work of a shepherd. You must allow the shepherd to lead you.

Let us read how to get into goodness. In verse 2, you must enter the shepherd's rest - lie down in green pastures. That's the way into goodness. He leads me beside still waters also that talks about stillness. So verse 2 talks about rest.

Verse 3 talks about putting something in you. When you restore a soul, you put something inside. He leads me in the paths of righteousness - you follow righteousness. You can not truly be kind to a person if you do not understand holiness and righteousness. If a person is unrighteous and selfish, how can he really be kind? Everything he does, outwardly the world calls good and kind, but his actions are full of ulterior motives. You can not move into goodness before you move into holiness and righteousness. In other words, you have to move into holiness and righteousness before you can really move into goodness. Unless God transform our hearts, we can not produce one ounce of goodness. See, goodness must come from the inside out not from the outside in. So, if your heart is essentially evil it needs to be touched by God. And if this day you do not know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, just ask Him in and the Shepherd will come and touch you. He will touch the inner core of your being. See now there is no more ulterior motive and it is pure goodness coming out. So there must be purity before goodness.

So verse 2 you must cease from all you can do by yourself. That is why Eph. 2:8-9 says that we are saved by grace through faith and that not of our own self but it's a gift of God. But the very next verse says we are His workmanship for good works. So, you must die to your own work before you can do God's work. That is why the rest can only come after you have holiness and righteousness.

Verse 4 shows that you must go through testing. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I am not talking about disease or calamity. Like Paul says the tribulation worked character. You die to yourself. In dying, there is resurrection. In yielding, there is strength. Before goodness can come out of you, you must know what it is to die to self.

Abraham knows what it is. He was tested on his relationship with his kinsfolk, told to get out from his kinsfolk. I mean it is not easy to separate from your loved ones. It is hard to say good-bye to people whom you love. But the greatest test was in the book of Gen. 22 God said, "Give me Isaac." That was the test of his very love. That was the valley of the shadow of death. The valley of the shadow of death is when your Isaac die. You started your business because you dedicated it to God and God blesses you but half way along God may ask you, "Is it still yours or is it mine?" God will ask you and test you. Isaac came from God any way. But the valley of the shadow of death is when your Isaac dies and God gives you a new Isaac. Unless you have tasted that dying to self, you can never be gentle. You can never be gentle to people. You will be rough and tough because you have never died to self. Gentleness can only come from a vessel that is crushed, broken and contrite before God. So that is No. 3 the valley of the shadow of death.

No. 5 the anointing that comes. That, my friend, is the glory of God. So verse 2 you rest. Verse 3 holiness is imparted in your nature. Verse 4 your Isaac die in the valley of the shadow of death. Verse 5 the anointing of God, the glory of God. You may still have many enemies but it makes no difference now because the anointing runs over you. And finally verse 6 the goodness of the Lord shall follow you all the days of your life.

4. THE ATTRIBUTES OF LONGSUFFERING

After Moses asked, “Lord, show me Your glory,” the Lord appeared to him in Exodus 34:6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth.” We are considering all the components of the glory of God. See Moses asked Lord God show him His glory. God did show him His glory and God described the five parts of His glory, - mercy, gracious, longsuffering, abounding in goodness and truth. We have seen three of them - mercy, graciousness and goodness. Today we look at the fourth, which is the word longsuffering.

The word longsuffering is from a Hebrew word erakhap, which is a combination of two words, the word slow and the word anger. So, what God is saying about His longsuffering is that He is slow to anger. He is slow to exercise His wrath. So longsuffering brings to mind tolerance. Long suffering speaks about tolerance. The bible says that part of the glory of God is His tolerance. His tolerance to our imperfection, His tolerance to our sins, His tolerance to our failings, His tolerance to all the disobedience present in the world. God has tremendous tolerance. We realize that God’s patience outlast us. God’s ability to put up with us outlasts our ability to put up with others. So longsuffering is the ability to tolerate, to remain the same in spite and despite of all that may come. It is a tremendous ability because the opposite of longsuffering in the dictionary would be possibly impatience. If we go by the Hebrew word erakhap, slow to anger then the opposite of longsuffering is quick to anger. That’s the actual Hebrew word – it is slow to anger. The opposite of that will be very quick to anger and quick to react. Longsuffering is in the whole of the bible. It starts from the time sin came into the world. Longsuffering in the New Testament points to the sufferings of Christ and points to sufferings that He prophesied that the righteous will go through.

We need to understand the concept of suffering. We are not talking about suffering from sickness, diseases, consequences of sins etc. We need to understand the suffering of Christ and the sufferings of a Christian believer in Christ. There is such a thing as Christian suffering. We believe in the Word of Faith message. We believe in God’s ability and willingness to prosper His people. We believe in God’s divine ability to heal His people and keep them in health. At the same time, we realize that there is a Christian aspect of what we call Christian suffering. As long as we are born again, we need to understand the truth involved in longsuffering because it has relevance to increasing the glory of God in our life. The amount of glory that you taste is proportional to the amount of suffering you have endured. It is important for us to understand that there is a relationship between the glory of God and longsuffering. This kind of longsuffering does not include suffering from the consequences of sin, sicknesses etc. Some Christians think that suffering for the Lord means having sicknesses and diseases. There is no need to suffer from sin and sicknesses since Jesus has redeemed us from them.

It is a different aspect altogether. In order to understand Christian suffering and longsuffering, let us see what God is tolerating here. What does God tolerate? The Bible does record God’s amazing grace, longsuffering and great patience but there were a few times when God’s wrath was also shown. We want to understand what provoked God so that we can flow with God. If we want to understand God we need

to understand His mercy, His goodness, His graciousness, but we have to understand the other part of God - His wrath. Jonathan Edwards in his early days of revival preached a sermon called "Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God." If God is angry, you got no covering. He preached under such an anointing on God's anger and wrath that many who heard the sermon literally clutched the pew for fear that they will fall into hell somewhere between the beginning and the end of the sermon. To preach that kind of message, you need an anointing. We need to understand what makes God angry. We want to please God. In order to please God, we want to know what makes His glad and what makes His sad and what makes Him angry.

There are several Hebrew words for sin. The Greek has a word for sin called hamartia. Hamartia literally means to fall short and it is an all inclusive term and word. It includes all the various forms that are described in the Hebrew. Hamartia means sin. The word hamartia is not a common word used in the Roman times where they missed something. Just like we use the English word missed the mark, it literally means to miss the mark. So, when the Roman archers are practicing shooting at the target and the arrow missed the bull eye, the Roman soldier will say, "Hamartia." You missed it. That means to miss the mark; to miss the standard that is what the Greek word says which is all-inclusive.

Now the Hebrew has several words for sin. You may have notice on the positive side there are also many words for God's commandments. The bible uses the word commandment, statutes, ordinances, and precepts. These are special words for the different aspects of God's commandments. All these things say something. Commandment has to do with His moral code. Statutes and ordinances come from the same Hebrew word, which speaks about religious ceremonies that He has ordained. Precepts talk about examples or principles that may vary in its application from one situation to the other.

If you want to see the fullness of how God's Word is described, read Ps. 119. The whole Psalm is about the Word. The psalmist uses so many descriptions about the Word. He calls the Word statute. He calls the Word precepts. So, when the bible uses positive Hebrew words for God's commandments, it tells us something. Like for example, a moral code like the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament is still applicable to the New Testament. And at the same time, we have new ordinances like the ordinance of the Holy Communion. That is a Christian ordinance. It would be a statute. Or the ordinance of water baptism. Or the ordinance that is prescribed in James 5, "If anyone is sick let the elders anoint him or her with oil" that is an ordinance. An ordinance is a method that God has prescribed. A commandment speaks about obedience to God's prescribed code of conduct. That is on the positive side.

On the negative side, the bible uses different words for sin in the Old Testament. There is a word transgression and there is a word iniquity. All these are special words that God uses. So why does the bible use all these aspects and how do we relate to God's tolerance in our life? That is where we look at Scriptures and lets start first in the Old Testament passage when God spoke to Abraham. Gen. 15:13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried

at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” When God was speaking to Abraham, the Amorites were in existence.

God was saying He could tolerate them for another four hundred over years. That is longsuffering. God say says, “I can tolerate them for another four hundred odd years until they really turn bad. That is when I am going to send you all to judge them.” The Israelites came out of the land of Egypt and into the Promised Land. On the way, they were God’s instruments to bring judgment on the Amorites. God knew there were iniquities but God said the measure of their iniquities was not complete yet. It has not reached the stage where He would call down His wrath. God is displeased but is not provoked to wrath yet. That shows His longsuffering towards the Amorites.

Then in Gen. 18 God said something about Sodom and Gomorrah. Verse 20 And the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave. Notice that God did not just step into Sodom and Gomorrah and immediately punish them for sin. He punished them only when their sin reached grave proportions. Did God compromised on the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah? No. It is God’s tolerance and longsuffering towards imperfection. We need to learn from God about His tolerance and longsuffering. We need to learn the longsuffering of God. God is not easily provoked. He is slow to anger. He has a great tolerance level. What is your tolerance level? Our longsuffering has something to do with the glory of God.

Lets look over to the book of Exodus at some of the examples of the anger or rather the wrath of God. Exodus 32 that was before God showed His glory to Moses. In verse 1 Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make us gods that shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” And Aaron said to them, “Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” So the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving too, and made a molded calf. Meanwhile Moses was talking to God up in the mountain. In verse 7 while God was giving him all the patterns and all these things. And the Lord said to Moses, “Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, “This is your god, O Israel, that brought your out of the land of Egypt!” And the Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people! Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.”

This event provoked God greatly. The Israelites have seen God’s mighty judgments on the Egyptians for one year. They have seen the workings of God more that the average person. They saw the ten plagues in Egypt. They saw the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night visible everyday. They saw the Red Sea parted. They saw the supernatural provision of water. They saw the Lord’s grace in supplying manna everyday. They saw the manifest glory of God on the mountain. And after all those things they said, “Let us make our own gods. So there was a background before

God got angry. See they were supposed to know better than that. But the most important point is that God said they have gone against His commandments. They have already been given the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. This event of making molten calves came after the giving of the Ten Commandments. God is giving further revelations to Moses. They have already transgressed to a certain extent. You notice that in Exodus 20 God has already spoken to a certain extent to Moses. And there was a certain revelation given onto the people. They should be aware of it. But the point is the word used here is the word commandment. Now there are degrees of God's reaction to different types of disobedience. The fastest way to provoke God is to break His commandments. God's commandments are the highest commandments followed by the others like statutes, ordinances and precepts. The commandments are the supreme and highest law. The easiest way to provoke God is to break His commandments. Especially the commandment that says, "Thou shall have no other god before Me." This is replacing God Himself.

So we realize that God is slow to anger. But His reaction to different types of transgressions is different. Compare this to the four hundred years of the Amorites' transgression. God used a different word - their iniquity is not yet complete. In our Christian experience with sin, we realize there are different types of sin. Sometimes there is a sin of commission. Sometimes there is a sin of omission. And sometimes there is a sin of ignorance. There are many types of sins. The beautiful thing is that the Hebrew language has specific words for each type of sin. God weighs different types of sin in different context differently. We realize that sin is sin. But there is a different degree of the sin of commission as it is of omission as it is in ignorance. Now of all types of sin, the sin of ignorance is the easiest to be excused and you got a longer grace period for repentance. But sins of commission are only committed after you have knowledge. See after you have knowledge on what is right and wrong, you have shifted from ignorance to the possibility of committing the sin of commission. The sin of omission may to a certain extent be due to ignorance. However, the other part of the sin of omission is that despite knowing what is right or wrong, you were just plain lazy to do what you ought to do. In the sin of ignorance, you completely did not know the matter of the transgression. In the sin of omission, you may know it but you did not try to avoid committing this sin. Or you did not do it zealously. But the worse is the sin of commission.

Just want to look at some New Testament passages to show the reaction of God in the different areas so that we can understand our Papa God. In the book of Acts as Paul was preaching at the Areopagus in chapter 17. Paul made this interesting statement. Remember he is talking about the unknown god. This is the statement in verse 26 onwards. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being as also some of your own poets have said, "For we are also His offspring." "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked.

In other words, God saw all those terrible things they were doing and God just overlooked their ignorance. That is amazing; how can Paul say this? What is Paul

trying to convey? See Paul is trying to show that there are different degrees of sin. God considers their sin in their context and level. Here it says God overlooked their ignorance. Then Paul says, “but now commands all men everywhere to repent. Because He has appointed a day that he would judge the world in righteousness.” Now that the light of the gospel has come to them, God will deal with them differently. Now the gospel is going forth and the time of the overlooking is ending.

The principle we want to bring forth is God’s tolerance. Now there is a side principle to this. God will judge each one according to the light they received. So in that measure God expects a response. If a person’s response to the greater light he received is too slow or none, his punishment would be greater than another person who received very little light and his response is also slow in coming. To him that is given much, much is expected. Man may say that is unfair. But God’s principles are very, very fair. That is how He runs the universe.

Having seen that lets look at one more scripture in the book of I John to show that there are degrees of sin. 1 John 5:16, If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death. Now John tells you the two categories of sin. There is a sin not to death and a sin unto death. A person who has committed a sin to death has no more chance. But a person committing a sin not onto death would still have a chance to experience God’s mercy and forgiveness.

See the judgment is according to the light we received. We have shown from the Word that this is the system of God and God has His tolerance level. His tolerance level is determined by the gravity of the situation and the responsibility and the capability of that person. In other words, when God judge, He does not judge on some broad general principles. His principles have been personalized and categorized into our lives. He is a great personal God with great ability. Like those of you who have many children in your family and you are bringing them up. You realize that there are some principles that you do not compromise. There are some principles that are standard procedures for family life. There are some rules and regulations that you apply to all your children, whether they are 16 years old, 5 years old, or 2 years old. There are some principles that you apply commonly to all, like the Bible principle of honoring father and mother. You would not let your children do something wrong. So there are some principles that are equally applied to all. We are in a sense God’s children so there are some principles that are applied to all equally and these are His commandments. When God classifies some rules as commandments, they are applied equally to all Christians, regardless of their Christian growth.

Now there are some principles again using the illustration of our family. You have different children aged 5, 16 or maybe 2. Do you realize that some rules apply to the bigger ones that do not apply to the smaller ones? Why, because the smaller ones do not understand. So to a certain extend there are some firm rules for the older ones and some flexible rules for the younger ones. You allow more room for a 2 year old or a 3 year old to make a mistake than you do for one who is bigger. Why, because you are evaluating them based on their capability. So there are other rules that are categorized. Don’t just focus on the negative aspects of rules where the threat of punishment looms greatly in the child’s mind. The child should also look forward to obeying rules by

giving them appropriate rewards. The reward for obedience should also be bigger for the older child than for the younger child. Now with bigger responsibilities come bigger privileges. God is proportional, if He proportioned out an opportunity for us to be rewarded there is an opportunity to be punished greatly. In a spiritual sense, it's the same. The more we receive the more responsible we are to be.

Let me give an illustration. God seems to overlook a lot of mistakes in the Israelites' time. But Moses made one mistake. The Israelites have been asking for water so many times. Here they were again thirsty and they said to Moses to give them water. Moses was stirred up. He had his stick with him. He had used that stick previously to strike the rock and the water came out. That was the first time. Now here they are thirsty again and they wanted water. Moses looked at them and this time his anger was stirred. Remember he was the meekest man on the earth until that time. He said, "Do you think I can bring water out of this rock? He struck the rock and the water came out. He did not expect the water to come out because God spoke to him to speak to the rock not hit. And Moses just turned around and hit the rock. He disobeyed the instruction. God said to speak to the rock and not hit the rock. Just because he missed God in that area, God said to Moses that he was not allowed to go into the Promised Land. Moses kept asking God to let him in until God had to tell him not to talk to Him about it. In the end God said, "Alright, I will let you have a look at the Promised Land but after that it is your funeral." So, He took Moses up to Mount Nebo and Moses had a good look; that was all. But the fact is as you evaluate Moses' mistake, it is not as great as Aaron's sin. Aaron's sin is worse compared to Moses' sin. In fact, the bible says God would have killed Aaron if Moses had not interceded. Aaron was the one responsible for making the calf. Moses made this small mistake but in the sight of God, it was big. So we realize that God's evaluation system and tolerance level is in proportion to the light He has given out. We need to understand how God reacts to different areas of shortcomings so that we in turn will develop an ability to be like God and to learn His tolerance level.

Lets look at Isa. 53:4 Surely He has borne our grief and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted but He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

Now in these two verses, so many words are brought forth in the Hebrew. You notice here what Jesus did for us. It says He has borne our grief. He carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed Him smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquity. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. Now lets focus on these 4 words. Grief, sorrows, transgression and iniquities.

Transgression refers to a commandment and implies a commandment. Transgression is quite similar to trespassing. You would not know where you trespass if I did not give a signboard that says, "No trespassing allowed." But the moment I draw the limit of the line and put a "No Trespassing" signboard and then you still cross that boundary, that's when you commit a transgression. So, a transgression refers to a breaking of a revelation of His commandment and instruction. It includes also ordinances and statues. When God has told you how to do it and what not to do and what to do and you do not follow His instructions, that's a transgression. That is one of the things that really provokes God.

Now when Moses hit that rock it was considered a transgression. Why, because God told him what to do. He told Moses to speak to the rock and not hit the rock. But he hit the rock, so it was a transgression. No instruction no transgression. You can not commit a transgression if you didn't have knowledge. So there is transgression that Jesus took for us. He was wounded for our transgression.

The other three words are grief, sorrows and iniquities. Iniquities point to all transgression, all sins that are committed before you had knowledge. They are included in what Paul mentioned in Acts 17 those things that God overlooked. He overlooked their transgression not because they were not wrong but because these people had not received the light yet. When Jonah preached repentance to the people of Nineveh, and they repented in ashes and sackcloth, God pardoned them. One reason why Jonah ran away from God was not because he did not believe God.

Some people do not obey God because they do not believe; they have unbelief in their hearts. Remember unbelief is not non-belief. Unbelief is only possible after you were given the opportunity and the revelation and you choose not to believe. Unbelief is a choice. Ignorance is the result of condition. When Jonah did not obey God and tried to run away from God, it was not because of unbelief. And many people try to use the story of Jonah to apply to themselves. God tells them to do something and they give the excuse that they do not have the faith level. They do not fully believe in God and say, "I am like Jonah." God is not going to send a whale because you are different from Jonah.

The reason why Jonah did not obey was because of his personal grudge against the Ninevites. God told him, "I am going to destroy the Ninevites in forty days." Jonah said, "Good," and he ran off. That was how he responded. Why? It is because the Ninevites were cruel. They were the torturers and oppressors of Israel. It was like telling a Jew to go and warn Adolph Hitler that in forty days he is going to die. The Jew would have preferred to say, "Good for him," and run away too. That's the amount of hatred that Jonah had for the Ninevites. The Ninevites were very cruel people. When they conquer a place, they would torture the people. So Jonah heard from God that He is going to punish the Ninevites in forty days, inside him he says, "Very good. Lord I would rather You punish them in one day." So because of his personal grudge against the Ninevites, he ran the other way. It was not because he did not believe God could bring the judgment to pass. It is more a personal reason.

How do we know that? In the book of Jonah, when God brought Jonah to Nineveh and he preached, they all repented and the city was not destroyed. Jonah was not happy. He came to God and said, "Lord, I know You will do this. I know You, You are longsuffering. I know this will happen which I do not want it to happen. I want them destroyed. I know You, You are longsuffering. If I did not give them Your warning, they would be gone today. God I know this will happen." He was angry because God pardoned the Ninevites.

God has to teach him a lesson using the big plant as a shade. I want you to listen to what God said in chapter 4:9 Then God said to Jonah," Is it right for you to be angry about the plant? And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!" But the Lord said, "You have pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand

persons who can not discern between their right hand and their left – and much livestock?” Notice this – God spared the Ninevites because they can not see right from wrong. They had a lack of knowledge. They were a people without revelation. They had no Word of God to guide them. They never had any prophet or man of God to show them God’s ways.

They were in iniquity. Iniquity can be equal to transgression. But the application is slightly different. Transgression is knowing the instructions and violating them. Iniquity is when you do not know the rules and you violated them. Iniquity is also wrong and you will reap what you sow. Now when we say that this iniquity committed in ignorance does not provoke the wrath of God as much as willful transgression, it does not mean that you will not suffer the consequences of your wrongdoings, even if done in ignorance. You reap what you sow. You reap what you sow whether you believe in it or not; whether you are ignorant of it or not. You could walk right up to a thirty-five storey building and say, “I am ignorant of gravity,” and just walk out of the window. You may be ignorant of gravity but you will still face the effect of gravity. Ignorance is no plea to be protected from the effects of our wrong action.

We are talking in terms of God stepping in, intervening or judging. That is the perspective.

Notice what Jonah said in chapter 4:1-2 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. So he prayed to the Lord, and said, “Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country?

Do you notice he talked to God before that? He said, “Lord, I know you are going to pardon them if they repent so I am not going. I told you this would happen. You are full of longsuffering.” In other words, Jonah was recognizing the fact that God’s tolerance and longsuffering was greater than his.

Therefore I fled to Tarshish; for I know that You are (notice that all these words coming up that we have covered.) gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.

Jonah had the first hand perception of the grace, the mercy, the goodness, the longsuffering of God. God’s longsuffering made him angry. And God has to gently teach Jonah why He is longsuffering through the plant. See Jonah is not a creator. He did not made the people. God loves every human being whether they know Him or not. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever should believe in Him shall not perish but shall have everlasting life. Jesus said what shall it profit a man if he were to gain the whole world and loses his own soul. See the souls of men are precious to God. We can not cover all the scriptures but a lot of New Testament scriptures indicate that the reason Jesus’ coming is not yet is because of the longsuffering of God. He is not willing that any should perish. Longsuffering again is the word that comes forth.

So lets turn back to Isa. 53. We mentioned that iniquity is in a sense of those who whatever area in their live do not know their right hand from their left. That is the way God expresses it. So in our present life as it is. As believers, because you are not perfected yet we do not know some things yet. So those things that we do not know

when we commit an error in that area is considered iniquity, But those things that we know that we commit an error it becomes a transgression. So these two classes of shortcoming of sin are classified. He was wounded for our transgression. He was bruised for our iniquity. Jesus has come to cover us with His blood in these two areas. Is it not wonderful to know that the blood of Jesus can cleanse us from the sin of commission and the sin of omission and the sin of ignorance?

Two other Hebrew words Isa. 53:4 Surely He has borne our grief and carried our sorrows. The words grief and sorrows are from special Hebrew words that were translated as infirmities and sicknesses in Greek in Matt. 8:17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." There you have it infirmities and sicknesses, which in the Old Testament were put as grief and sorrows.

But the actual Hebrew word for the word grief speaks about weaknesses and flaws. Now you see that conveys a totally different perspective altogether from the word grief. You see weaknesses and flaws speak about things that are not so much as an act but a state of being. For example, a sin of commission is a wrong action. A sin of omission is a lack of action. James mentioned, "What thou should have done thou doest not." But a weakness, which is a special Greek word, does not refer to sickness. A few times, it was used to refer to physical sickness but most of the time the Greek word has been specially used to refer to flaws, whether they are flaws in your soul character, flaws in your physical being, or flaws in your nature. The Lord Jesus also takes these flaws upon Himself.

David said in the book of Psalms, "I was conceived in iniquity." He is talking about the nature of sin. See the word sin means to fall short of a standard. For example, in the natural, car factories produce cars. They will have a section for quality control. What does the quality control section do? The quality control section will remove products that are not up to the standard and that have flaws. Or maybe certain parts are not functioning, as they should. See in the world of man's creation, man can not really produce products that are exactly the same although generally speaking, a particular brand or a particular model should have a certain standard. But let me tell you every one is different. Every car is different although there is a general standard. See every guitar is actually different. You could buy a guitar of the same brand, the same make and the same model but professionals will tell you that each guitar is unique. Even though generally speaking there could be similarity among those of the same model and same brand but each is unique. You can take two guitars of the same brand, same model but when you play each of them they will sound different. So there can be differences in products of the same brand and model. There can also be flaws when the products come out in an assembly line.

When Adam and Eve fell and their spirit man was cut off from God, there came the opportunity for flaws to come into the soul of man. Even scientists who research into chromosome and genes of man will tell you that there is a flaw in the genetic makeup of everyone. The flaws in our genes may give rise to some physical problem. The sin nature is the flaw of imperfection in man and gives rise to general weaknesses in us. Rom. 8:3 mentioned something in that area. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh.

A flawed nature, a flawed mind and a flawed soul. Now the flaws in our life will result in flaws in our actions logically speaking. So there is an area of sin, which is identified as sin within our very makeup and our very being. It is called Original Sin and sin nature within us. To a certain extent there is another area that God is tolerant to. God is tolerant towards this sin nature in us and He supplies the grace to overcome sin where we are not able. When the flaw will affect your ability and where you have a disability whether of body or soul, God supplies the grace. So that Paul using the same Greek word in II Cor. 12 says when I am weak then am I strong. So, a general flaw that is there and here is where God's patience is great. See, in transgression and iniquity there is a grace period for us to change before God starts dealing with us.

But flaws take time and grace. You not only have to deal with it, you have to put something in. It is not just the non-action. There has to be a very change and an impartation of a new nature and life. Potentially, we have that change and new nature in Christ but subjectively we are still growing into that. In Christ, you are perfect. But on this earth, you are still not perfect. You are still growing onto perfection. On one hand, Paul said in Colossians 1:21-22 that Jesus has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight. But in the end of the book of Colossians 4:12, Paul says that Epaphras ... is always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. You are made holy, blameless and above reproach in Christ then but now he says that Epaphras has to pray to make you perfect and complete. That is a part where God is also tolerant. And of all areas this is the area where God's longsuffering is very great.

Remember in our last message on the goodness of God, we discussed how Abraham, a prophet missed God when he denied that Sarah was his wife and Abimelech took her into his harem (Genesis 20). He had a character flaw but because of his goodness of heart, God was able to deliver Abraham and his wife from Abimelech. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations (2 Peter 2:9). Ironically, Isaac also had the same flaw when he denied that Rebekah was his wife and that she was her sister (Genesis 26). We are not sure why "like father, like son," that Isaac repeated the same lie as did his father Abraham. It may have been in his upbringing or something acceptable given the social circumstances that he was in. That is the area where God has the greatest longsuffering and compassion.

Then of course the other area is sicknesses, which talks about physical disability. We realize that our spirit is willing but our flesh is weak. In other words, we could actually do more things if we do not have a limitation of the body. It would be wonderful if we do not have a body to limit us. I would like to do thousands of things in the kingdom of God but our body limits us. You do not push yourself too far until you pass out unconscious. You know you can only push your body so far and then you need to give your body a good rest. Otherwise, your body will start protesting. There is a limitation to our physical body and unless God speaks to us, we can not bypass the natural law. They will still operate and we are still bound by physical laws. If we transgress the physical laws, we pay a price for it by suffering all manner of ill health.

That is an area of a different type of transgression or a different type of shortcoming, which is classified under the second word there, sorrows. Breaking physical laws is in a sense a transgression too. If you break the natural law, you will have to pay the

price. That is where the Hebrew sorrows is translated as sicknesses in the Greek or what you call physical disability in the physical realm.

Having seen the four areas of transgressions, iniquity, flaws and sorrows, and God's relationship to us we must understand that God's longsuffering is categorized. See when the Israelites disobeyed the commandments He told Moses, "GET OUT. LEAVE ME ALONE." You see the anger of God. Do not ever touch God's commandments by disobeying them. I mean when God's commandments are given as supreme, disobedience to them would be the first thing that really makes Him angry. If you do not want to be in the hand of an angry God, be obedient to His commandments.

The other category is the area of iniquity. You commit iniquity when you are ignorant or are in the dark. Then you got to pray a different prayer for God to give you light. You have a greater degree of tolerance given because you do not have the light. Like Paul says in Acts 17 God overlooked the Greeks for ignorantly worshipping foreign gods. It does not mean He is not working in your life. He is still working in your life. But His tolerance is greater.

Then the third area that elicits greater tolerance from God, even greater than the second area of ignorant iniquity, is our flaws. This is where God's greatest compassion rises up because He knows our shortcomings and flaws. Flaws do not go away easily. It demands the greatest compassion.

And of course, the fourth realm is our sicknesses and sorrows when we have transgressed physical law and suffering the consequences or when we have inherited flawed genes that give rise to sicknesses and diseases. In this physical realm, God grants the ministry of healing, miracles and deliverance.

But they are all in different degrees. As we apply God's longsuffering to our personal lives, we realize this. When you find it hard to tolerate another person, is it because of a person's flaw; is it because of a person's action; or is it because of a person's disability?

We realize that many of our ways are different from God's ways. When God gets angry, His principles do not go out of the window. But when man gets angry there is no more principle. See God's anger is based on principle that is why Moses can intercede and say, "God, remember the covenant." And God relented of His anger. See God's anger is still qualified by His principles.

If the glory of God includes the quality of being slow to anger, we also must be longsuffering before the glory of God comes. I tell you Jesus was very tolerant when He was on this earth. He was amazingly tolerant. And we need to learn the example of Jesus. And if anyone who wants to be in the ministry, whether full time or part time, one of the requirements is tolerance. Why, because in the ministry and in the kingdom of God you do not deal with a lifeless commodity. It is far easier to work in the secular job than in the ministry. It is far easier to be in the secular realm and be an expert in one field. But dealing with human lives demands a great level of tolerance. If you are an accountant, you must balance the debit side with the credit side. If both sides do not balance, then something is wrong and we could look into that but human lives are different.

So when we want to be like God in longsuffering so that the glory of God can come on our life we must realize that the next time you are irritated or angry don't let your principles go out of the window. Your actions have to be governed by principles.

Then we need to understand these four aspects. If you can not tolerate another person because of an action he has done, your tolerance level is low. You are not longsuffering. You are "shortsuffering." You have a short fuse. Remember some actions are the results of flaw. You could tell whether a transgression is a deliberate act of choice, a violation done out of ignorance or a result of a character flaw.

Let me share my heart with you. The majority if not 99.9 percent of the shortcomings in the body of Christ is more in the third area of character flaws than in the first area of willful transgression or in the second area of ignorant iniquity. There is a greater measure in the second than in the first. But the greatest part is in the third. That is why we need to have a great level of tolerance and patience. It takes time for a person to grow and mature spiritually, emotionally and mentally. You do not expect a 2 year old to behave like an 18 year old. For growth to take place, time is a factor. Time is of the essence. So, we have to consider what it really means to be longsuffering. And if we are to be like God, we have to have such a tolerance level that we could easily fulfill what Paul says to bear the weaknesses of one another. Not only put up with it but to live with it. Not only live with it Paul went one more step he enjoy it. We need to reach that area of maturity and the moment you do, that is when the Spirit of glory will be great on your life.

5. THE FORCE OF TRUTH

We have covered four areas of the glory of God. We are now going to cover the last and final area. Please turn to Exodus 34. In God's appearance to Moses, we see the five components of the glory of God. Let us read God's statement again when He appeared to Moses. Incidentally, it's because of this incident that Moses' face shone with the glory of God. Verse 6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth." There are five ingredients to the glory of God - mercy, gracious, longsuffering, goodness and truth. We have spoken on mercy, graciousness, longsuffering and goodness. So, this morning we will cover the last component of God's glory, which is truth.

The Hebrew word for truth, *emunah*, conveys a slightly different meaning from the Greek word for truth, which is *alethes*. *Emunah* does not convey the same meaning as truth in our English language. When we mention the word truth, people think about something mental. We think about facts, knowledge, principles, and wisdom. Truth is associated with mental activity like comprehension, understanding, logic etc. That's what the English word truth conveys. But the Hebrew word for truth has another shade of meaning called steadfastness. It is the ability to remain in the one place in season and out of season. It is the ability to remain the same yesterday, today and forever more. God says about Him being the Truth. He is talking about the ability to remain immovable in whatever circumstances and in whatever situation.

So, truth in the bible implies more than knowledge. If your knowledge is shaken it is not truth. If your principles are easily removed by every wind of doctrine that comes along, it is not truth. Or rather, the truth may not have sunk into you. The Bible does not speak about truth that applies only to mental comprehension. The word truth talks about a quality of a substance to remain eternal, unchangeable, and immortal. The fifth component of God's glory is this eternal, unchangeable, and immortal substance of truth. God is the giver of truth, the very personification of truth, and the essence of truth Himself. For God is the same yesterday, today and forever more. He was, He is and He is to come. He is the One who never changes from Alpha to the Omega.

We need to understand that the truth of God is linked to the Word in order to see how truth affects the glory of God in our life. When we speak about truth, we are talking about the very force of truth. Truth is a force. It is a substance and a force. Truth is a life force of being. It is not just a fact. In the English language, truth and lies speak about true and untrue facts. But the Hebrew word, *emunah*, or truth conveys the meaning of a life force that issue forth from God Himself. Truth is a living and flowing substance that can be imparted and given in measures.

Jesus conveys the same meaning from John chapter 14 to 16. He speaks about the Holy Spirit as a Spirit of truth. He is not just trying to convey to us the meaning that the Holy Spirit is just able to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It is not just that. See our English usage of the word truth limits what the bible is trying to bring forth. The bible is seeking to bring forth that truth is a living force and substance that has its beginning from God Himself. It is a part and parcel of the life being of God.

Now the Word of God is the instrument by which the truth is conveyed. The Word of God is a vehicle; it is an instrument of transport to put truth in and to give truth out. When God speaks His Word, His Word contains His life; His substance and quality. His Word conveys a life force that could bring eternal being, immortality and an immovable, unshakeable and unchangeable life force to any person on this earth who chooses to receive that life force. That is why we were born again through receiving the Word of the gospel, which conveys truth into our life. Jesus conveys truth as a force and not just as a fact.

Truth is a fact but it is more than that. Truth is a force, which reveals many facts of the existence of things. So, the Word of God is a vehicle for truth to be transmitted to us. The Word of God contains truth from God; it is the revelation of God Himself. Let us take a box that serves as a container for a bible. The box is not the bible; it is merely a container for the bible. It may or may not contain a substance. So, the Word of God is a vehicle. This box represents the Word. It is only a vehicle to contain the truth. See sometimes words can contain wrong forces. Sometimes words can be empty. Words are only containers. When a person speaks a word, you could pick up whether that person is angry, sad, happy, cheerful, or peaceful. Children are very sensitive. Children are sensitive not so much as to just what you say but also to the life force behind what you say. How you say your words is determined by what you put into your words. Children react more to what you put into your word than just the words themselves. People are the same way too.

So words are a vehicle. The word itself if it does not contain truth is empty. The devil's words contain fear and doubt. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Fear comes by hearing and hearing by the word of the devil. The devil chooses to put fear into his word and by repeatedly giving it to you, he is trying to transmit the spirit of fear to grip your life, to strangle life out of you and put you into bondage. I could just wrap an empty box nicely and give it to you on your birthday. You shake it and there is no sound. When you open it, there is nothing inside but air. Sometimes words contain no life. You may utter beautiful words, wonderful words, but unless life is inside these words, they are worthless.

What is that life? The life is the word truth. Jesus says in Jn. 14:6 I am the way, the truth and the life. Notice He ties them altogether. How can Jesus call Himself the truth? He is the very personification of the life force of truth. After all, it was Jesus that says the truth shall set you free and you will be free indeed. God placed His substance and life force of truth into the container called the Word. The Word can come in many forms. It can come in written form as logos or it can come in spoken form as rhema. When you receive the Word, the life force of truth is released to you. You have to open up the container and take what is inside.

Truth is a life force that God places in His container of the Word. We need to understand how the Word operates in our life in order for the life force of truth to be released in us. We need the truth to be released into our spirit man before it can be of any value to our life. Slow release vitamin tablets have its pros and cons. This vitamin is enclosed in a capsule. When you swallow a capsule, it does not release all its vitamins into your body. As it passes through your digestive system, it slowly releases itself. Drug manufacturers created such timed-release capsules because they reckoned that the body could not absorb everything at once. However, if the capsule takes too

long to release, it may pass out of your digestive system without completing the release.

Likewise, the life force of truth is enclosed in a capsule called the Word, whether it is the written Word or the spoken Word. What we need to do as our privilege and duty on earth is to learn to open the Word and release that substance of life into us, which is called truth. Proverbs 25:2 says, It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter. The Lord hides the life force of truth in the Word. As we make it a habit of uncovering truth upon gems of truth from the Word while digesting and ingesting the precious life force of truth, our spirit man slowly grow in glory.

In heaven, there is a Hall of Truth. Everyone will have to enter that hall and experience the life force of truth. That truth will expose every falsehood, false ways, false ideas and teachings, false behavior and every thing that is even remotely false. It is a time of great breaking down and you will experience brokenness according to the measure of falsehood lodging in your spirit, soul and body. After that, the person will have to enroll in a school of orientation where he or she will have to learn the correct ways of God. For those who have leant correct truth while on earth, their time in this school will be shorter. But those who have absorbed many erroneous teachings, their time in this school will be longer. Hence, while we are still living on earth, we should cry out to the Holy Spirit daily to teach us the truth and unlearn remove and repent of every false teachings we have learnt. This school of orientation takes from one year to twelve years, depending on the amount of untruths that the Christian has absorbed during his or her time on earth. A Christian who went there on a study trip to heaven reported that many who had to be in that school of orientation for longer periods were pastors and ministers. They were the ones who had more knowledge than the average Christian in the pew but unfortunately, most of their knowledge were dark knowledge and inaccurate knowledge about the ways of God. Therefore, they had to spend more time in this school of orientation to unlearn what they had studied, absorbed, lived, and taught to others.

I am reminded of Jim Baker, the tele-evangelist who served time in prison for his financial mishandling in his PTL ministry. His time in prison gave him much time to re-look at Scriptures and examine many of his teachings in the light of the Word of God. He came out with a book called, "I Was Wrong." He had a closer look at such topics like prosperity and saw that the Word of God gave a different perspective. When he was preaching on divine prosperity and giving, he said, "I sincerely thought I was preaching the right thing." After his time in prison, he saw the truth and changed his life accordingly. At least, he was able to revise his teachings and see the truth while on earth. If we do not seek the truth here on earth, we will have to undergo the breaking down process in the Hall of Truth and longer time in the school of orientation in heaven.

Now that truth operates differently for our spirit, soul, and body although the same substance of truth is released. But it has an effect on our spirit, soul, and body. Truth gives life to our spirit. Truth gives life to our soul and truth gives life to our body. The operation of truth being released to our three parts of our being is unique and wonderful. We need to see how this truth must transform our life before the glory of God shines forth. The measure of the glory of God in our lives is directly proportional to the measure that the truth has transformed our spirit, soul, and body.

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” He was perfectly yielded to truth. He was the personification of truth. That is why the glory of God in His life was full. And so, the truth as a life force will work gradually in our life from glory to glory. See truth is connected to the glory of God.

Turn to Jn. 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwell among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The truth is a life. John says he could see the glory of God in Jesus. He could see the fullness of grace and the fullness of truth upon the Lord Jesus. If truth is just a fact, how can you see a fact on somebody? Truth is a life force. It is a substance, which comes from God that we receive in different measures. And in Jesus’ life, it was full.

When the bible describes the Word of God as sharper than a two-edged sword, and the power inherent in the Word, it means that the Word that contains the life force of the truth of God. That is His operation.

Lets look at Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It tells us that it is not just a two-edged sword. It is sharper than a two-edged sword. I believe that the Word of God contains truth. The life force is more than a sword. By today’s technology, we have a comparison that Paul did not have. If Paul had our kind of technology, he might say that the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than a laser beam. See truth is like a laser beam. Paul didn’t have that technology in his days that he could compare it with otherwise Paul would have used it. But truth is sharper than a two-edged sword. It does not just cut both ways. It cuts every way. A laser beam cuts every direction.

I believe that there are natural things that can be compared to the spiritual realm. See the laser beam illustrate truth. The difference between a fluorescent light and a laser beam is a difference of purity and intensity. Fluorescent light has a mixture of different wavelengths of light. Light as we know comes in different colors. The different colors of light are due to the different wavelengths. Each wavelength is the energy level that each photon moves in. Fluorescent light can not cut materials because it is composed of photons traveling in too many wavelengths. It does not have the power to cut because light is a mixture. It can only give the brightness for us to see, to read and get around with. But it can not be used to cut because of two problems – there is a mixture of too many wavelengths and there is a lack of intensity. If a light is very intense, it will also carry heat. In order to produce a laser beam, the machine must remove unwanted wavelengths and produce only one wavelength of photons. When the machine produces only one wavelength of photons, it can then increase the intensity of the beam until it has enough power to slice through materials. With the aid of computers, laser beams can be produced with pinpoint accuracy and different intensities to slice through different types of materials – from corneas of the eyes to steel bars. It can be so mild that it can be used to cut through sensitive eyes to correct one’s vision but it can be so powerful that anything that gets in its way is melted down. Nothing can stand before that laser beam.

That is what Paul wanted to illustrate but he did not have the technology to illustrate it. Today we realize God’s Word is like a laser beam. It cuts in all directions. The life force of God is like a laser beam in intensity and what I call purity. See the truth is

pure. The purity of the truth gives power to the Word. The greater the purity of the truth you are preaching, the greater the power of the Word is reaching your hearers. Some preachers preach the Word powerfully because they preach undiluted and pure truth. They may be soft spoken and mild in their manner of speaking, but the uncontaminated and distilled truth they are delivering will make their hearers squirm and turn in their seats. The hearers can not help turning their legs to the left then to the right, because the darts of the truth are hitting them. Power is tied up to the purity of the truth. You want power get truth and get truth intensely. It will produce the laser beam of God in your life. The truth that is manifested of God is life and a life force.

Truth has many effects. It is said that Jonathan Edwards merely read his homily, "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God" in a dry, monotonous drone, as would any learned theologian do. Yet, his hearers were greatly convicted of their sins and many had to hold on to their pews because they felt they were slipping into hell if they do not repent.

Let me illustrate with Jesus' life first. In the book of II Thes. 1 we see Jesus at His second coming. Verse 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. Chapter 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. Turn to Revelation 1:16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. Notice again out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. Revelation 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. Remember that the bible writers were trying to convey the meaning as much as possible.

You see at first when I read the bible **I could never imagine our Lord Jesus appearing to John and out of His mouth comes out a little sword.** It looks quite bizarre when you have a sword coming out of your mouth. I was trying to figure out what John was trying to convey. **Then God gave me the picture and the vision of the Lord and it was not just a sword. It looks like a sword but it is not a sword. A light came from His mouth like a shining blade of a sword.** It looks like two-edged because it's from His mouth and in whatever direction it turn destruction came. See the bible authors could not use the illustration of a laser beam because it was not invented then. If the book of Revelation were clothed in today's language, Rev. 1:16 would read, "Out of His mouth came a laser beam." The power of Jesus' consecrated life and His living the Word enabled Him to speak the truth out like a laser beam.

See the truth is powerful. Truth destroys things that block the true way. Now truth has a two-fold effect. It either imparts or it destroys. Truth will knock down the lies of the devil. Truth will knock down all the fears of the enemy. Truth builds up life. It imparts tremendous substance. In Gen. 1 when God said, "Let there be light," I believe that the eternal life force of truth was released over this part of the universe. It was seen as a spiritual light. But the life force was released all over the universe. And it was that same life force that God said, "Let there be a firmament above the heaven and a firmament below." It was only possible when the life force of truth was released. And truth is always illustrated as a light.

A light is a force. Truth is a light force. The Word is a container of truth. Thy Word is a lamp onto my path and a light onto my feet. The life force of the Word will

illuminate our understanding, our wisdom, our conduct, our decisions, and our life choices. It is important to understand that truth will not tolerate lies. Truth will not tolerate anything that stands against it. It will destroy. You see on one hand the light that comes from God in Gen. 1 is creative and creating. But on the other hand, in the book of Rev. 19 the light, a laser beam that comes from the mouth of Jesus will strike and destroy the nations. Why? The nations have come under the power of the devil, the father of lies. All that the devil does is deceptive and temporal. So there is a battle between immortality and mortality, eternal things and temporal things. We need to learn how to give place to the light of God.

The light of God will destroy things that are temporal and establish things that are eternal in our life.

Let us see the operation of this life force called truth operating in our life and bringing the glory of God. In the book of II Cor. 4:6 For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It tells us when we were born again a ray of God's light came through the preaching of the gospel and entered into the depths of our heart. It stayed there and it produced the seed of God. This born again experience is the seed of life and the beginning of life taking place within us. That was in our spirit man. And continually from that time forward we are to take the Word and truth and let it fill our spirit being. For our spirit being can only grow with spiritual substance. Understand that truth is a substance.

Let me illustrate with a little baby in the mother's womb. The baby needs to grow physically. In order to grow usually doctors will give vitamins pills and a small little pill called vitamin B. The reason is this vitamin helps in the multiplication of cells. At that stage in the mother's pregnancy, the doctors give that physical substance. In order to grow physically we need to take in food physically. You could be for example trying to put on weight. You run ten miles a day. And you exercise six hours a day. But you eat only white rice with soya sauce. To build muscles you need protein. You could exhaust yourself all you can but without those natural substances, your body will not have sufficient material to build muscles. Instead of putting on more muscles, you may lose more muscles. Why, because of lack of material.

For example if you want to build a house you would make sure the amount of bricks you bought will be sufficient to build a house. You need the materials to build the house.

Now the spirit man needs to grow. Do not think that the spirit man will grow automatically. If there is not enough substance, our spirit man remains in its infantile stage, as do many Christians. They only read the bible once - Jn. 3:16. You know what happen - there is no spiritual material to build the spirit man. For physical body to grow physically we need physical materials. If we want to grow spiritually, we need spiritual materials to be given. You could have the ability to do something but if you do not have any materials, you would still build nothing. You could be the best contractor in town but if there is a world shortage of materials, you know what happen. Your ability is useless without the materials. You need the materials in order to build houses.

Our spirit man has the quality of growing, has the capacity to grow to be God like. Our spirit man has the inherent substance and essence to be like Jesus. But if there are no materials given, the spirit man can not grow. That is why Jesus said Matt. 4:4 Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. We need to give our spirit man materials. If all you do is to pray and worship and you do not spend much time in the Word of God, you are not giving your spirit man sufficient truth to feed on. If you do not feed your spirit man with the materials of the Word of God, you are like a little fetus kicking about, that's all. We need a mixture of the Word, prayer, and faith. One without the other is insufficient.

Even if you have all the materials, spiritual growth is not automatic. You need to practice the truth, do the truth, and exercise the truth before the truth can develop your spirit man. It does not mean that if you put your children through music education and give them all the training necessary, they will turn out to be excellent musicians. It is necessary that they spend many hours practicing in order to develop into excellent musicians. However, they will never develop into a musician if they do not have the opportunity to go through a proper training. If there is no music in the home there is even a lesser chance of developing.

The wonderful thing is that the spirit man will automatically take a hold of the Word and absorb into its substance and materiality. Spend time on the Word. Even though your mind says, "I don't understand everything," it is not for your mind. It is for your spirit to feed. As you discipline yourself everyday fellowshipping with the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to teach you and open the light of the Word to you, you will find your spirit man growing day by day. The spirit man needs the substance of light to grow stronger. We do that by getting the Word into our spirit man. It starts with that laser beam of God coming into our heart and it continues on growing on from there.

Now the soul area has a different impact. The soul area needs that light of God to drive away the unrenewed areas of thinking so that our soul can think in line with the truth and function in a way it should be. In the book of Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.

See the Spirit of God will flood our minds with understanding so that our soul will flow into the fullness of God. Jesus made this statement here in Matt. 6:22 The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness. Now Jesus is talking in the context of His commandments, His sayings and His teaching. That's why in the Sermon on the Mount He gave the conclusion as whoever hears and heed it and do it will be the like the wise man building his house on the rock. When a man hears the words of Jesus and practices them, he is building his spirit man and life on the rock or substance of truth. But if he merely hears the Word and do not practice them, he is just building his house on sand. The truth is not in him. There is no solid substance of truth in him. He has no substance, no weight, and no foundation. Darkness has no substance. It is just the absence of light.

Jesus is comparing the difference of building our spirit man on right teaching and wrong teaching, right word and wrong word. As we grow and pass through this life, we sometimes receive and accept wrong teachings unknowingly. Some things that are taught to us are not the truth. They contradict the Word. See the world of education keeps changing and improving as more discoveries are made. Some theories proposed forty years ago based on the available data have been revised when more discoveries are made to cause a more accurate understanding. Teachings and principles contradictory to the Word can produce darkness in our lives. If you believe in something that is wrong and contradictory to the Word, it will produce darkness in your life. It is important that we believe right, we believe the truth, and we believe the Word. And before we accept a principle, make sure it is in line with the written Word of the living God. Anything contradictory to the Word will produce darkness and dark knowledge cripples the soul.

Once a local pastor was led by the Holy Spirit to summon and judge the spirit of deception. After a few moments of silence, he called out the name of the demon. Somebody in his congregation started manifesting violently. He commanded the demon to come to the mike, and the person having the demon was led forcibly to the mike by an unseen force. Some parts of the conversation went like this.

Pastor: Who sent you here?

Demon: Satan.

What for?

To destroy the work of God here.

Why do you come to this church to disturb the service here?

Because you speak the truth. I hate the truth. It is setting many of God's people free.

How do you disturb God's people?

When a pastor is preparing his teachings, I help him to prepare. When he teaches his congregation what I tell him to teach, I lodge in the minds of those who accept that wrong teaching. I hide behind that teaching and later destroy that person's life through that dark knowledge. I make him suffer poverty, sickness, and hardships. I make that person think that he is suffering for Jesus.

How come you can teach a pastor how to prepare his sermons?

Most pastors do not consult the Holy Spirit when they prepare their sermons. They rely on their analytical minds to understand the Word. That is where we come in. First we give them some deep teachings and then we add in the poison. These pastors do not inquire of the Holy Spirit. They think they are guided by the Holy Spirit but they deceive themselves because they hardly fellowship with the Holy Spirit. How can the Holy Spirit teach you anything if you don't fellowship with the Holy Spirit? So we give them some deep teachings and then we add in the poison that they can not detect. They think the first teaching is good, so they automatically think that the poison we are giving is also true. If they have the Holy Spirit, they would be

able to detect the poison. That is how we have spread much confusion among the people of God.

Do you specialize in this work?

Yes. I even attended Bible College in hell and I got a honors degree in theology as well.

What? You study the Bible in hell too?

Yes. Everyday we have to study the Bible in order to learn how to twist and turn the Scriptures and spread the wrong teachings. Many people just assume that as long as you can give Bible chapter and verse, you are doctrinally sound. They do not inquire of the Holy Spirit and they are no match for our subtle and twisted logic. Everyday we prepare the sermon outlines for pastors and bible teachers. Many people read the Bible without the Holy Spirit and that is where they go wrong.

Do you know that your time on earth is up?

Yes, I know.

Did an angel serve you the document from the Lord Jesus Christ?

Yes, he did. (The document is a notice from Jesus that the demon has been judged and his time is up and must now be consigned to his place in hell.)

By the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, all your legal rights are stripped and you are consigned to the place assigned to you. Go, in Jesus' Name.

The demon let loose a mournful cry and departs from the person, who later collapsed to the floor.

Now some Christians hold that you should not conduct any conversation with the demons in a deliverance case. This is generally sound wisdom, for Satan is the father of lies. When he speak lies, he speak naturally. It is easy for an untrained and inexperienced minister of deliverance to be deceived by demons in a deliverance case if he is not in tune with the Spirit of truth. However, this is not an absolute rule **for we see Jesus conducting a conversation with demons as well. The general rule is that you must be under the control of the Holy Spirit.** If you are under instructions from the Holy Spirit not to hold a conversation with the demons, follow that. However, if the Holy Spirit directs you to hold such a conversation, it is to expose the strategies of the devil.

The bible uses a very strange word. In James chapter 1:5-8 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, **for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven** and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is **a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

The word double minded is the word dipsuchos, which actually means double souled from dis, “twice,” psuche, “a soul.” It means that a lie from the enemy is absorbed into your substance and it began to look like it has a life of its own. So that the things that you want to do, you do not do. And the things you do not want to do you do. Why, because the enemy has planted the seed of darkness in our life and only the truth will wipe that out.

In the physical world, it is just like cancer. See cancer is caused by microscopic viruses that creep into the cells of your body like a guest. They kill the original occupants and occupy the cell. And it has become a cancer cell. It is not your original but it is accepted as your original cell because it is a counterfeit cell. It has crept in, killed the owner, and now lives in the cell. What it does is it sucks the nutrition from your body and multiplies itself. So, people have what we call cancerous growth. A cancerous growth comes forth and it looks like another life of itself. It is not your life; it is a separate life that is growing in your body but it draws nutrition from your body like it is your life.

Likewise, this happens to the soul. If the soul has not the truth of God and the light of God to shine the soul can not differentiate right and wrong. If we believe a lie, we will enter darkness straight away. Many areas of our lives need renewal. It is a progressive thing. That is why we need to keep an open attitude. Absorbing a lie makes you like being two souls. You want to do the righteous thing but you have no strength to do it. The cancerous soul has absorbed the strength from the good soul and your good soul is rendered helpless. You notice something is right and yet you doubt it. You have two souls, one good righteous and believing and the other bad, unrighteous and doubting. A lot of people are struggling in that way. Get the laser beam of Christ; cut out that darkness and throw it out. You have to make that decision and a choice. The moment you make a choice to fellowship with the Holy Spirit and let Him teach you the Word, He will slice the dark knowledge of your mind with the laser beam of the truth. Do not be surprised that many of the teachings you have received from your bible teachers, bible colleges and even renowned preachers contain much dark knowledge. Instead of seeking after this famous teacher and that famous teacher, seek after the Holy Spirit all the time and He will teach you the truth. Many bible teachers have sidelined the Holy Spirit when they study the Word and have come up with erroneous teachings that have caused much damage to the body of Christ.

When I first became a Christian, my first struggle or spiritual battle was about the Word. I asked all my bible teachers, “How can I accept this as the Word? How do I know that this bible is telling me the truth?” In the end, I came to this point that you either accept it or you reject it. You accept it by faith that this is God’s revelation or you can question it the rest of your life. I made up my mind never to question the bible. I made up my mind never to reject the bible. I made up my mind that the bible is the sole authority and truth by which all other measurements are measured. The moment I made that decision things became easy. Now if I have a question I ask, “What does the bible say?” If I have a problem, I will look at this bible and ask, “What does the bible say?” It becomes a different problem. My problem now is the lack of the knowledge of the bible and not so much a problem with questioning the bible. That was when things began changing.

When I went into the ministry, I found people had the same type of questioning regarding the bible as the Word of God. The eternal battle is the battle around the

Word. From Genesis chapter 3 Satan has never stopped questioning the Word. One of the first things that I was impacted with in theological education is the Word. When I was young and eager to serve God, I was asking whether the bible is the Word of God. I settled that question by believing by faith that the bible is the Word of God. Now that I am in the ministry, I am faced with other types of questions. I was faced with the Charismatic question. Is tongues of God? Is healing of God? And I find that people takes different stands. Some of my bible teachers and colleagues, whom I loved, take the opposing stand.

These two questions have provoked endless debates, with good people on both sides. Who is right?

I take the view that tongues are of God, but there is still the possibility of false tongues. The enemy has crept in the night and planted tares of deception and giving even sincere Christians the ability to speak in false tongues. Similarly, healing is of God, but again, there is the possibility of healing worked by the enemy. We take this premise based on the words of Jesus Christ. Matthew 7:21, Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'

You see, there are many ministers who do have a genuine calling from God. As long as they are faithful to God, and are under control by the Holy Spirit, God will recognize their work as righteous and lawful. However, there are also ministers who do not have a calling from God. Three types of ministers practice lawlessness.

The first are those who had a calling from God, but later on were rejected by God for committing lawlessness in their ministry. God chose Saul to be the first king of Israel, but later on, rejected him for his disobedience and unlawful sacrifice. Saul's life was one series of disobedience and failure to keep instructions. The first occasion was when Saul, through impatience, arrogated to himself the priestly office, offering sacrifice at Gilgal (1 Sam. 13:7-10). The second occasion was when he failed to observe the Lord's instructions to destroy Amalek completely and all they have (1 Sam 15). 1 Sam. 15:10, Now the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments." Although the Lord deposed Saul at this moment, the Lord allowed him to reign for another fifteen years. Some ministers do not know God has rejected them for their disobedience and lawlessness in their ministry, and they are still carrying on their ministry. Once God has rejected them, the enemy takes over their ministry and provides the "signs and wonders" to keep their ministry going. But they have become useful agents for Satan to further his nefarious designs and deceptions.

The second type of lawless ministers is composed of those who do not have a genuine calling from God but who served God because they have a "burden" to do so. Here is another deception and **false teaching in the church.** We do not urge men and women to enter the ministry by providing facts and figures on the number of the unsaved, the unchurched peoples, the need for missionaries, etc. Mission boards that do this are sending many lawless workers into the mission fields. All these should

be secondary to determining what is the call of God for your life. Many rush to do mission work after viewing some videos of countries needing missionary help. Jesus said, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” The Lord of the harvest is the Holy Spirit. Even though you may have a “burden” for some special group of people who needs to know the Lord, you do not go out until you have prayed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has the master plan for world evangelism, and you must serve His purpose. You do not rush out to the mission field and ask the Holy Spirit to serve your purpose.

In one of our earlier messages, **we spoke about a man who died and went to heaven, expecting Jesus to welcome him at the gates of heaven. He waited there three days before an angel told him that it is pointless for him to wait there since Jesus won't see him. He was puzzled because he had done a great work for Jesus. He had initiated a Christian businessmen fellowship that encircled around the globe.** There are chapters in every city and town in almost every country. There are meetings, magazines for Christian testimonies, souls were saved – surely he had done a great work for God. **But the angel asked him one question. When he started the work, did he really get the idea from God or was it from himself?** He pondered for a long time before he admitted that it was his own idea. The angel showed him his book of records and he was shocked at seeing the consequences of his actions. “You mean, I did that?” was all he could utter repeatedly. His work was actually drawing many Christians from their true callings when they jumped on the bandwagon he started.

The third type of lawless ministers consists of Satan's agents, whether they know it or do not know it. Jesus said, Beware of false prophets; who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Matthew 7:15). There are many Satanists masquerading as godly ministers but they will release dark and corrupting influences and spells on the congregations. They destroy many lives. In Europe, **during the communist era, many communist cadres were sent to seminaries and were later ordained to the ministry.** Many later climbed up the hierarchy occupying the highest echelons, where they have influence over the lives of millions. The false prophet will come from the ranks of an established hierarchy of an old, established historic church. It is the work of the enemy – he has successfully infiltrated the ranks of the church with his agents to destroy the church from within.

Nita Johnson once described her attendance in a service conducted by a healing evangelist. Although many miracles and healings were wrought that night, she felt in her spirit that something was wrong. She went home and wept the whole night before the Lord, bringing up the subject of this healing evangelist. The Lord told her that he was an adulterer and fornicator. She later on told this man what she heard from the Lord, and warned him of serious retribution if he did not repent. He was humble enough to repent and later on left the ministry. If we do not seek the Holy Spirit, we may also fall into the deception of the enemy. **We run after the signs and wonders, after the healings, after the “transferable anointing”, after every river of glory that is flowing around in the country but we do not run after the Holy Spirit.** No wonder many are deceived since they do not have the Holy Spirit to reveal the true ministers from the false ministers.

These three types of lawless ministers are instrumental to spreading false tongues and drawing many to their web of deception by their “signs and wonders” supplied by the network of demons accompanying them. That is why, if you do not have the Holy Spirit, you won't be able to see the truth and expose the deception of the enemy. If you are a Charismatic but do not walk in close fellowship with the Holy Spirit, you would think that all tongues are from God. You won't be able to discern that many are also praying in false tongues. If you are a non-Charismatic and do not walk in close fellowship with the Holy Spirit, you would write off speaking in tongues completely. You will not realize that the Holy Spirit does give genuine gifts of tongues. It is indeed a narrow path – avoiding the false tongues and false healings coming from false ministers on one hand and crying out to the Holy Spirit for the genuine tongues and genuine healings on the other hand.

In the end, I find that the battle lies around our close fellowship with the Holy Spirit in order to reveal the truth concealed in the Word. Many read the Word without the Holy Spirit, and in the end, they come up with doctrines from hell. And in proportion to how much we accept the truth that is inherent in the Word to that proportion can we progress in our life. Our actions must be based on the truth as revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Word. If you walk in any principles contradictory to the Word, you are allowing a cancerous light to grow in you. It will eventually destroy your life slowly but surely. Jesus calls it darkness.

Some former colleagues have come back to me and said they now realized the truth of the Charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit. They said that they had rejected these gifts earlier but now they need them in their ministry. You see we need the truth. If you don't have the truth, you are shortchanging yourself.

My friends today right now as we look into the future of what God is doing in these last days, the battle is still around the Word, the truth of God. How much of the truth do we allow to take hold of our life? How much transformation do we allow in our life? Rom. 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The word transformed is the Greek word metamorphoomai, which talks about a transformation that takes place in our very being. Turn to Matt. 17:2 He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. The word transfigured also in Lk. 9 is from the word metamorphoomai. If I were to consistently translate the bible, I will take Rom. 12:2 as and be transfigured by the renewing of your mind. Do you know that even in the natural realm what you think will be reflected on your face? You could tell when somebody is worried. See right now, if I were to ask you to change your thought I can change your face. If somebody is like plain Jane and if their mind is transformed they do not look like plain Jane they look like pretty Jane. It is in the mind. If we could transform our mind, we could transform our physical being.

Some people are very loveable; it is easy to love them. Some people are not - you got to really take up the cross to really love them. Why is that so? It is all in the mind. If your mind is not filled with what Paul says in Phil. 4 think on those things which are

good, having virtue, lovely, of good report, you fill your mind with that it will show on your face. I am giving you the secret of how to be loveable. If you do not have the right thoughts, people will take one look at you and they do not like you. They do not know why they don't like you - that's the problem. It is only in the mind. Now that is in the natural.

It is even more powerful in the spiritual. Those who walk with God have a beauty of holiness on their body. You could be to the world's ugliest but if you walk with the Lord, you will turn out to be more beautiful than those who are naturally endowed with physical beauty. Some people are not so well endowed and they spend all their time trying to look beautiful. Such people do not have a physical problem but they do have a mind problem. They accept they are ugly because they do not match the glossy images of slim, beautiful models. Even before others have a chance to know them, they already think that others do not like them. As a result, their countenance is affected. We have to change our mind to change our life. Wrong thinking is the killer in peoples' life and it is a killer in one's relationship.

That is why every time the devil tries to put some wrong thoughts into my mind, I brush them off. I would not want to think badly about anybody. The bible tells us to think good. So, it is important for us to transform our mind and gather more powerful spiritual transformation. The bible uses such a strong word. When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, His face and body shone. That is the transformation of God's glory. I believe as our souls are transformed, we will reflect a greater glory of God. So that when people look at you, they will see you as they saw Stephen before he was stoned. His face was like an angel of God. What was he doing? He beheld the glory of God.

The light of God is the truth of God. People do not relate truth in their thinking to the light of God coming from their life but it is related. Truth is tied up to glory. If you do not start changing your thought life now, the glory of God will be hindered and blocked in your own spirit, soul, and body. There is nothing lovelier to me than to see the glory of God on a person. To see the glory of God shining forth from a person's life is the loveliest thing possible on the planet earth. The bible tells us that one day the church of Jesus Christ will be so perfected that the world will look at the church and see the glory of God upon the covenant people of God. The glory of God, the truth of God affects our body by putting spiritual life and healing virtue into our body. We need to transform our heart and mind by learning, knowing, absorbing, dwelling in the truth of God. That is the power of God's transforming truth in the glory of God.