

“God – The Father – part one”

Exodus 34:6-7

Introduction

- Tonight we continue our series we have entitled “ground work – laying a foundation for faith.”
 - The reason we are doing this is it is so important that every one of us are able to give a reason for the things we believe.
 - That is what Peter encourages us to do.

“Always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.” – I Peter 3:15

- We are supposed to understand what we believe and as the verse above states, we are to consider, ‘why’ we believe it.
 - Why do we hold the convictions that we do?

We looked first at God – His Existence...

- So often we are told that smart people believe in things like evolution and weak-minded people believe in God.
 - But as we saw there are some great reasons to believe that something out there exists greater than you.
 - The sign of the design – the intricacy of our world and our bodies, the idea that they happened without a designer is so hard to believe.
 - We looked at the signs in the universe – it and its elements have not always been, it did not create itself, so it had to have a creator.

We looked at the sign of morality and order – there is a reason we know in our hearts certain things are wrong.

- Because God has written His law on our hearts and we as the book of Romans says, suppress it, try to cover it up, but its there and it comes out all the time.

Next we look at God – His Word.

- If we are going to study theology, the study of God, then we need to have some logical reasons we believe He exists and we need have a reliable source to learn about Him.
 - And although there are 27 books consider ‘religious’ in our world, all teaching different things about God.

Only the Bible is backed up with consistency of scripture, archeological evidence, fulfilled prophecy, external sources, and scientific facts.

- When you consider that with the intense process the Bible went through in going from God to us – there is nothing like this book.
 - And so we have been using it to learn about God.

And we saw last time we were together, that unlike anything else called God, our God is a Trinity.

- Right there is it just another reason to believe man didn’t make this stuff up.
 - Because if you were trying to invent a god, like the Greeks did and the Romans did – well you would make him or her a lot like you, just better and eternal.
 - You wouldn’t say – how can I describe this being in the hardest possible terms – I know three yet one – that will confuse them.

But that is who god truly is, not just a better version of ourselves – He is unlike us in every way - He is a trinity – one God that exists in three persons God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

- There is one God – but each part of the trinity is distinct and different.
 - So the focus of tonight is what is God the Father like and why it a right understanding of who He is so important?

Sometimes it is hard for us to picture God as father.

- The reason is because we live in a broken society where very few of us had great dads.
 - Many of us had dad that were focused only on themselves, some of us had dad who were addicted to substances, who were unfaithful, who physical and emotionally harmed you.
 - Or who simply weren't around.
- And then you hear that God is Father and it is a hard concept for you because your earthly father had so many issues.

But it is really true for all of us because even those of us who did have great dads.

- Our dad will still sin and therefore, they may have been great guys, but the difference between them and God the Father is vast.
 - So how would we know what God the Father is like?
 - We can't study Him under a microscope like we study animals, you know "this is the thorax, this is the digestive system."
- I mean Psalm 95 describes Him as holding the world in His hands, it seems like He is a little beyond our science experiments.
 - So how do we find our what God the Father is like?
 - Well we need to go the Word.

In God's Word we find out what He is like as we study His attributes and the names He chooses to be called by.

- The Word is filled with God's attributes or as theologians like the call them – His perfections.
 - And that term is used not just to sound fancy, but also to teach an important truth.
- With each of the attributes of God, He is not just party to that attribute; He is the perfect representation of that attribute.
 - For example, God does not simply love, He is love, and He is all that love is and more.
 - He is the perfection of Love and every other attribute we will discuss.

We also call these attributes of God "perfections" because God is these attributes at all times, while also being these other attributes at all times.

- You see - I can love and at times I can be a jerk.
 - I am loving sometimes and at other times I am not.
- With the Lord, again to use the example of Love...
 - He is loving at all times.
 - Even when He is demonstrating His wrath, it does not mean at that time He does not love, it is simply another side of His love.
- These are the perfections – the perfect demonstration of what these attributes are meant to be.

Now we are going to go over 7 perfections of God, and this list is definitely not exclusive – the Bible is full from cover to cover of things that God is, and things He is not – but 7 is good number to start with and it will leave with you a better picture in your mind of who God the Father really is.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God.

#1 – Eternal

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God." – Psalm 90:2

- From cover to cover in His Word, God is described as eternal - this means He exists endlessly.
 - He exists endlessly backward and forward from our perspective.

From His perspective He is outside of time.

- He sees the succession of events.

- But they do not bind Him as we see from prophecy.
- The best explanation I have ever heard of this is the picture of the blimp at the New Years day parade. If you are setting there you see what is in front of you. He sees it all, from above the parade.
 - In time He sees it all from beginning to end.
 - From our perspective He extends endlessly forward and backward.

What I learn from that is simply this.

- God has always been – and always will be. He is not going to leave me like earthly parents or friends have. He is eternal.
 - And He has everything under control – existing outside of time, and sees all.
 - So when He speaks into my life, I can trust it.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God

#1 – Eternal

#2 – Holy

“You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God *am* holy.” – Leviticus 19:1

- God declares Himself to be Holy, but what does that mean?

We usually think of Holy as something, which is not sinful.

- Definitely that is true, but it’s more than that.
 - One definition of Holy is “separate from sin.”
- But remember these are perfections, the complete meaning of each term.
 - So for God to be Holy not only means He is separate from sin
 - But it also means He is completely pure, and thus distinct from all others.

He is Holy – separate from sin, completely pure.

- To illustrate further, if we were to say that being healthy is simply to be free from illness. That is not giving the full picture. To be healthy is an infusion of energy, just being right.
 - So with the Lord – Holy – being separate from sin, and completely pure.

The Lord is Holy.

- But what is so important about this is what God is telling the people in Leviticus 19 that because He is Holy, they can be as well.
 - You shall be Holy, for I am Holy.
 - When I first read that I pictured God in heaven giving me a disapproving look, thinking something like ‘I have it all together Jason, what is wrong with you?’
 - But that is not the truth at all.

The truth is, God is saying, I am Holy and this is who I am.

- I am set apart from sin, death and this world.
 - I am pure and righteous.
 - And Jason because that is who I am, that is who you are going to be.

You see there is a principal in the Word that man becomes like what He worships. (Psalm 115:1-8)

The idols Israel was bowing to were deaf, dumb and blind – unable to do anything for them.

- And so God’s people were becoming as they worshipped.
 - Now the bad news is if I am going to worship an idol or any cheap substitute for God I become like the world.
- But if I will worship Jesus, if I will embrace who He is, then I will become Holy.
 - That is who He is.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God

#1 – Eternal

#2 – Holy

#3 – Unchanging

- This means He does not change.

In the Old Testament Malachi declares, **“For I am the LORD, I do not change;” – Malachi 3:6**

And in the New...

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” – James 1:17
God is the same yesterday, today and forever.

- I love that about the Lord because it shows me He will not go back on His promises.
 - He will not forgive sin one day, and not the next.
 - He is unchanging.
- I couldn't stand teachers in High School who were one of two things – moody, and inconsistent.
 - One day they were cheery and the next day the wrath of God – you would just wait to see which one was there - Others were inconsistent – sometimes homework was due, sometimes it wasn't. – That was hard to deal with.

God is unchanging.

- We know how we can approach Him.
 - Covered with Jesus.
 - And we can come boldly, not wondering what mood He is in.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God

#1 – Eternal

#2 – Holy

#3 – Unchanging

#4 – Omnipotent

“Who is this King of Glory? The Lord, the Lord, He is strong and Mighty.” – Psalm 24:8

- The Lord is Omnipotent is a fancy way of saying God is all-powerful.
 - There is nothing He cannot do.

Unless natural limitations make it so.

- For example – God cannot lie. – Oh I think He could if He wanted to – But that would deny His Holiness.
 - And remember these things are more than attributes they are perfections.
 - He is the perfection of Holiness, so He is unable to lie because it would deny that holiness.

Another stupid question you will run into is “Can God make a rock so big He can't lift it.”

- And I have had people get real excited like I'm stumped.
 - But the answer is easy – No He can't – there is nothing He can't lift, so He is unable to create something He cannot do.
 - There are self-limitations, contracting other perfections of God.

From Scripture we see this idea from the word, “Almighty.”

- It carries with it the idea of limitless power.
 - It is found 56 times in scripture.

The first is Genesis 17:1 – “The Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.”

And again this teaches simply that the God I serve is different than the god's of this world.

- He has not limit to His power.
 - I can come to Him and know He will act, and will do what is best.
 - And His power will enable me to walk before Him and be blameless.
 - I don't have to figure it out on my own – I can come to Him.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God

#1 – Eternal

#2 – Holy

#3 – Unchanging

#4 – Omnipotent

#5 – Omnipresent

“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend into heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in hell, behold you are there.” – Psalm 139:7-8

- God is Omnipresent - this means that God is everywhere.
 - To clarify more, this does not mean that God is everything.
 - The tree is God and the wolf is God – that is not true.

He is everywhere – but He is not everything.

- Omnipresent also does not mean God is spread really thin.
 - He is not like a cup of water spread evenly over this room.
 - He is everywhere with all that He is.

David makes this point in Psalm 139 when he makes the point that you cannot hide from the Lord.

- He is everywhere.
 - I think of that truth in the book of Jonah.
 - God called Jonah to go to the Ninevites, but he would not and then tried to run from God.
 - How foolish can you be?

We do this to though.

- We behave in ways we never would if we truly understood that God is with us at all times.
 - I behave differently when I'm with Pastor Rob than I do with my friends, not radically different but different.
 - But I need to remember that God is with me always!

That is bad news if you are in sin.

- But it is good news if you are serving the Lord!
 - He is never going to leave you no matter where you go.
 - That was what He spoke to Joshua, which is the reality for our lives. – Do not be afraid – for I am with you.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God

#1 – Eternal

#2 – Holy

#3 – Unchanging

#4 – Omnipotent

#5 – Omnipresent

#6 – Omniscient

“Known to God from eternity are all His works.” – Acts 15:18

- God is Omniscient meaning He knows everything.

I learn from this that it is foolish to try to hide anything from the Lord.

Don't we try to hide, even in our prayers?

- You come to Him about a person you like who isn't saved, but they are so close. Lord let them like me; I just want to lead them to the Lord.
 - But really you just think they are cute.
- Why are you trying to fool God?
 - He knows – Be honest with Him, you don't have really any other choice.

He knows everything.

- I am to be honest with Him and trust Him for what happens in my life.
 - I can know that He is going to do what is best for me.
 - How do I know that?
- He knows everything – He sees the end from the beginning – He knows what is best.
 - I love serving a God like that – imagine if we didn't – how troubling would that be?

He knows everything.

- I know what I do will never surprise Him.
 - We have this idea that we sin and God says, "I can't believe you did that." – no, that is what we say about ourselves.
 - God says "I told you that in you dwells no good thing" didn't you believe me?
- God knows everything about you.
 - And that doesn't give us an excuse for sin – We will still face the consequences.
 - But Satan brings the lie that we cannot come to God on our own when we have sinned.
- And that is just wrong – He knows what you did, He knew you would do it, and He loves you anyway!
 - Which leads me to the last perfections.

7 Perfections (Attributes) of God

#1 – Eternal

#2 – Holy

#3 – Unchanging

#4 – Omnipotent

#5 – Omnipresent

#6 – Omniscient

#7 – Love

"God is love." – I John 4:8

- Now there are a lot of things called love today, so what does that really mean?
 - Well for a definition I would simply say I Corinthians 13.

"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" – I Corinthians 13:4-8

- I look at this list and it makes me deal with what so often I identify as love.
 - Using someone because it feels good to you is not love.
 - Love isn't a feeling – it is choice.

And remember these are God's perfections.

- He is all that love is, and nothing Love is not.
 - He, like a parent will at times offer affection and at other times correction.
 - But they are both love.

We see this is scripture as first John boldly states, "God is love." – I John 4:8

- He is love - And that brings great comfort to my heart because I can relax that everything God does in my life is filtered through His love.

Well that doesn't seem very loving with what I going through right now.

- But one day you will see, one day you will understand.
 - That what you face, though it maybe because of sin, yours or others or maybe because we live in the fallen world with disease and problems.

Whatever you're facing, one day you will see that God will work it together for good.

- Why? – More than just He loves you, because He is love.