



HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD

(6 BIBLE STUDIES)

EXAMINATION

BIBLE STUDIES

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THE SMALL PRINT

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Your Commitment

I would encourage you to make a commitment to attending your group regularly. I realise that sometimes there are things that get in the way, but do prioritise studying the Bible with other. This will involve sacrifice, and effective use of your time, but I really believe that in doing so you will get the most out of studying the Bible and praying together in your small group.

Your Contribution

What you put into the group is going to determine what you get out of the group. I encourage you to contribute honestly to the discussion and workings of the group. I understand people come from different backgrounds with unique personalities & life experiences. But, we all have a big part to play, so I encourage you to be fully present and take ownership of your group.

Your Preparation – Topical Studies

These materials are primarily for use in preparing and/or leading the group discussions but they will also be useful in keeping your thoughts together in one place. The materials firstly provide you with a series of passages so that you can identify and highlight recurring themes and note down your own thoughts and questions. Secondly, the materials include questions designed to provoke thought and help you think through what the passages meant both at the time it was written and also what it means for us now. Because these studies are topical there is a much stronger progression of thought (than there would be in a passage based study. The dangers of such studies are that discussion can move quite far from the Bible. Yet this it is still the best way of covering broad subjects like this.

I would really encourage you to make use of these materials, as doing so will help you contribute and get the most out of the group discussions. The materials are however only “tools”, they are there to help you and not to restrict you or force you to think in a certain manner. I want to see God speaking to you through these passages and if the questions or notes do not help you, then don't use them!

I have included within these materials an introduction to the book. Make of this what you will, but I hope that it is helpful in getting you started with these studies!

Your Leadership

Here are some useful pointers in how to lead your Bible study group. Be aware that included in this study guide are more questions than you can possibly ask and/or answer in one session. They are not designed to be used rigidly, and there will rarely be a need to ask every question! Make sure that you spend some time praying at the start and ensure you read & re-read the passages as much as possible. In relation to the passages, then consider the suggested questions with an open mind. There is rarely “a single right answer” and I would encourage you to share your thoughts with your group.

I have also included a number of quotations from relevant Christian literature, most of which are readily available online if you want to do further thinking or study. My prayer is that as you study together you would grow to love Jesus and experience Him more deeply.

I would appreciate your feedback and suggestions on how to make these materials even better!

Steve McClure, Spring 2019

In this series we will try to explore the character of God. Specifically, we will be focusing on the character of God the Father, though many of the aspects we look at will relate to the Godhead more widely. Even with the best minds we can only ever begin to scratch the surface of a theme like this. As we dip our toes into this topic, we hope it will deepen our convictions about God, and allow our understanding of His character to transform our lives in practical ways. The six sessions will grow our knowledge of a God who is both our Almighty Father God, but who also loves, knows, and cares for us personally. The studies are framed around some uncommon words which help us to grasp the greatness of our God. In reality they cannot do justice to the nature of God's character!

1. **Indescribable** – The first session picks up on the idea that we simply do not have the right words to use to describe our God. The focus here, is on the supremacy of God, and how all of Creation declares His majesty. He alone is worthy of our worship!
2. **Incomparable** – The second session shifts our focus to our absolutely unique God – He is beyond comparison to anything, and anyone else. Moreover, God is described as a Jealous God who rightly deserves our worship. Why then do we so often devote ourselves to spiritual adultery.
3. **Uncontainable** – The third session begins a mini-series on God's Sovereignty, Wisdom and Love. As we think of God as uncontainable, we will see that God cannot be controlled or restrained. No, He alone is Sovereign, and in control of everything going on around us. We will wrestle with the relationship between how our freewill interacts with His Sovereignty.
4. **Unfathomable** – The next session shifts our focus from God's Sovereignty to His Wisdom: His thoughts and His ways are simply beyond our comprehension, despite our best efforts! Hindsight is always helpful, but sadly not available in the moment. We will think about the big picture of what God is seeking to do in, and through, our lives.
5. **Immeasurable** – Fourthly, God is without limit, and cannot be measured. Paul prays for the church in Ephesus that they would be able to grasp the length, depth, width and height of the love of God. The love of God knows no bounds! We wrestle with how the love of God motivates, and directs, all that He is doing in our world. We see how His Sovereignty, wisdom and love work together.
6. **Unchangeable** – James writes that God the Father does not change unlike shifting shadows. No, He is the same yesterday, today and forever. In this final session, we will explore the unchanging nature of God: how He remains true to His character, and is therefore fully trustworthy in everything.

If we want to grow in our relationship with God, then we also need to grow in our knowledge of Him. What we believe about God really matters. It seems to me that many people paint a picture of God in their minds, which represents the kind of God that they would like him to be. So, people think of God in terms of things like love, forgiveness and acceptance. People often ask 'how can a God of love allow suffering', or 'surely a God of love will allow me into Heaven'. The world's thinking about God is largely determined by what people think he should be like. The world certainly doesn't like to see God as the Judge of the world, and the sin of its people. Essentially, they cannot stand the idea of a holy God who does not permit impurity into Heaven.

People may also argue that God is not involved in His creation, and that He is detached from His creation. They seem to assume that God started the ball rolling, and then sat back and let events play out, rather than being invested in people's lives. People start with the assumption that what they can see is the way things are: if they cannot see God at work then they assume that that is because He is not at work. As Christians, we can fall into the same trap as we allow things people say to dictate what we think about God. Many of our ideas come from the world around us, or from other Christians. The danger is that we try to fit God into a box of what we would like Him to be, rather than the God who He is. Our ideas of God are often more to do with what we consider to be important, instead of being based on what He is actually like. Our wrong ideas of God are part of our idolatry, and it prevents us giving Him the worship that He is due.

Experience is a further influence on our thinking about God. For someone who goes through a hard time; perhaps losing loved ones; experiencing prolonged times of illness; or losing their jobs; etc, it would be very easy to build up a negative view of God. They may conclude that God does not love them or care for them, but once again our experiences do not reflect upon the very nature of God. God is who He is. We may not always understand why things happen, but God is still God, and He is still good. Experience can also be a very positive thing in helping us to understand the God who made us. We, who are in relationship with Him, experience Him through our lives, and as we get to know Him, we understand more fully who He is. Daniel endured much in His lifetime, and was greatly used by God. Yet a close reading of Daniel 9 shows that his prayer life was based, not on himself, but upon the character of God. The God whom he has experienced in his lifetime was the centre of His prayers. A genuine knowledge of God should lead to a radical reformation of our prayer lives. Our prayer lives can often be self-centred, but Daniel's prayer life was most certainly God-centred.

Andrew Wilson, in his excellent book *Incomparable: Explorations in the Character of God* writes that *"Theology fuels worship. We cannot worship what we do not know."* There is, therefore, much to be gained through a careful study of God's Character. Such study can, and indeed should, lead us into worship for that is what He rightfully deserves. I finish here with a further quote from Andrew's book in which he points out that a correct understanding of God's Character helps us embrace both the smallness of who we are, and by implication, the extraordinary reality of who God is.

"When we encounter God—uncreated, all-powerful, self-existent, maker of all things, uncontained, unbreakable, unfathomable, and infinite—we find perspective. We learn to embrace the smallness of who we are..."

Andrew J. Wilson, *Incomparable: Explorations in the Character of God*

My hope and prayer is that these studies will transform our understanding of who God is and fuel a growing thirst to go deeper in our relationship with Him. We must spend our lifetimes exploring this, and who God is, with our worship and adoration of Him.

To God be the glory

Steve McClure Autumn 2024

STUDY 1 – INDESCRIBABLE – GOD IS SUPREME

INTRODUCTION: We introduce the series by looking at God as indescribable, and supreme over all. We see His supremacy in creation, in the way that all of the complexities of our world hold together, and in the church. We see His glory, and yet this same glorious God is mindful of us, cares for us and wants a relationship with us. Our indescribable God is worthy of our worship and adoration.

SETTING THE SCENE: The dictionary definition of the word *Indescribable* is “*Something too intense, extreme or unusual to describe...beyond words*”: in what kinds of situations might this word be appropriate? How does it impact your understanding of God the Father?

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GOD’S INVISIBLE QUALITIES (ROMANS 1:18-23): In what ways do you see, and experience, *God’s invisible qualities* (v19-20a) made *clear*, and *plain*? Do you agree with Paul that this leaves people without excuse (20b)? How does Paul, in v18 & 21-23, explain why we find it so hard to see God?

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ALL HEAVEN DECLARES (PSALM 19:1-4a): David claims in these verses that the heavens and the skies speak to us: what does David say is their testimony? How have you experienced God through His glorious creation? What is the appropriate response to this incredible testimony of Creation?

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THE SUPREMACY OF GOD (COLOSSIANS 1:15-20): The meaning of supreme is: to be the most important, the greatest or the best. How does Paul describe the supremacy of Christ in these verses? In what ways does God the son, Jesus, help us to describe our "indescribable" Jesus?

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GOD’S CARE FOR HIS CREATION (PSALM 8): David contrasts God’s majesty (v1-3 & 9), with His love and care for those He has created. What most impresses you about the way that God seeks to have a relationship with us (v4-8, Additional Quotes 1)? How should this impact the way they live?

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DESCRIBING THE INDESCRIBABLE (EXODUS 3:14-16): What do you make of God's response to Moses' question about who had sent him to them? Why might the question of "*who is God*" have been particularly significant at a time when names often carried meaning?

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The Bible also describes God as love (1 John 4:8,16), Holy (Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2) and Hope (Romans 15:13): in what ways do these words help us understand that our indescribable God is the very source and definition of these things?

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SEEKING THE TRUE GOD (ACTS 17:24-27): These verses are part of an address Paul gave to the cultured pagans in Athens. How does Paul rebuke them for their idolatry, and gently point to how the true God works, in order that we might seek Him (esp. v27)? Why do we also seem to prefer a God in our own image, rather than the indescribable God?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: Why are we so eager to bring God down to our level? In what ways have we seen from this study that it is not possible to put God in a box? What are the key lessons for you from this study ,and what impact will they have on your daily lives? See Additional Quotes 2.

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Spend some time praying and worshipping our indescribable God. Think too about how these truths impact on the trials you are experiencing in your life just now, and in response, bring them to God in prayer.

MEMORY VERSES: COLOSSIANS 1:15-16

STUDY 2 – INCOMPARABLE – GOD IS JEALOUS

INTRODUCTION: We see the character of God implicitly within the Ten Commandments. The first two commandments describe a God who is Jealous (see also Deuteronomy 4:24, 5:9 & 6:15) and who is Spirit. He is nothing like our man-made idols, so how ridiculous it is to worship created things rather than our creator! In this study, we consider our rightful response to the *one true God*.

SETTING THE SCENE: The dictionary definition for *Incomparable* is “*beyond comparison; matchless or unequalled*”. In what context might you use such a word and how might it be a relevant word to describe God Almighty?

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CHARACTER OF GOD (EXODUS 20:1-21): What impresses you about the nature of the Ten Commandments, and the things that God includes within them? What aspects of God’s character do you see under-girding them? (e.g., “*do not murder*” arises from the idea that God is the Giver of life).

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In what ways have you experienced the character of God, as expressed in these commandments? How do they challenge, and/or affirm, your own notion of what God is like?

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RIGHTEOUS JEALOUSY (DEUT 4:23-24): What is your reaction to the idea that God is a *Jealous* God? How would you differentiate between the words jealous and envious? Why is God so vehemently opposed to idolatry? How would you define an idol in relation to God (Additional Quotes 3 & 4)?

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SPIRITUAL ADULTERY (EZEKIEL 16): If you have time, look at Ezekiel 16: what is the message of this chapter, and what are the repeated charges against God’s people? What is it that arouses God’s jealous anger, as mentioned in v38, 42? How do you respond to God’s rightful claim on your heart?

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BEYOND COMPARISON (ISAIAH 40:12-26): In what ways does this chapter help us to understand the comparison of God and creation (v12, 21-26), the mind (v13-14), the nations (v15-17) and our idols (v18-20)? If true, why do we so easily find ourselves guilty of comparing God to these things (v17,25)?

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THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU (ISAIAH 44:6-20, JEREMIAH 10:1-16): What further insights do these passages have for us, on why there really is no comparison between God and idolatry? Specifically, in what ways are idols: senseless, detestable, foolish, laughable and nothing?

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IDOLS FOR OUR TIME: Today's idols seem different to the images we've read about: what kinds of things are most likely to challenge God's rightful place in our lives today? God says: "He will not yield His glory to another or His praise to idols" (Isaiah 42:8): what are the consequences of our idolatry?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: What lessons stand out to you about the character of God from this study? What are the implications for our day-to-day lives if God is a jealous God? What steps do you need to take, in order to remove yourself from the grip of idolatry?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Spend some time praising God that He is Incomparable – nothing compares to Him, and there are none like Him. Acknowledge together God's righteous jealousy for our hearts, and ask Him to forgive our spiritual adultery and idolatry.

MEMORY VERSE: JEREMIAH 10:10

STUDY 3 – UNCONTAINABLE – GOD IS SOVEREIGN

INTRODUCTION: The next three sessions work together to provide a picture of God who is “completely sovereign, infinite in wisdom and perfect in love” (see Additional Quote 5). This session is about God’s Sovereignty, and the comforting knowledge that He is always in control, through thick, and thin. We will also think through some of the implications for when we diminish His Sovereignty.

SETTING THE SCENE: The dictionary definition of this next word, *uncontainable* is: “not able to be restrained, checked, or controlled”. What does this word communicate to you, and why might it help us build upon our understanding, and appreciation of God?

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GOD’S PURPOSES WILL ALWAYS PREVAIL (PROV 16:9, 19:21, 21:30, ISAIAH 46:9-11): How do these verses help us to understand how God works out His purposes? To what extent do you find these strongly stated truths a comfort and an encouragement?

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GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY (MATT 10:29, PSALM 33:10-11, 139:16, EPH 1:11-12 & ROM 13:1): How would you define what it means for God to be Sovereign? What specific areas do these verses highlight regarding the sphere of God’s Sovereignty over us? (See also Additional Quote 6)

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Jerry Bridges defines God’s providence as “...*His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people*”: to what extent do you agree? How do you understand the tension between God’s twofold objective, of His own glory, and the good of his people?

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SOVEREIGN OVER ALL (LAM 3:37-38, ECCL 7:14 & ISA 45:7): How do you understand God’s Sovereignty over the trials, difficulties & disasters we face? What do these verses have to say on these matters, and why are they so hard to stomach? What would you say is Satan’s role in these things?

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THE TEMPTATION TO DIMINISH GOD: What questions does the John Risbridger quote (Additional Quote 7) raise for you about the implications of inadvertently diminishing God? In what ways do you think we tend to find ourselves falling into that trap?

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OUR RESPONSIBILITY (PHIL 2:12-13, ACTS 4:24, 28-29, PSALM 127:1, ESTHER 4:11-14): How does the truth of God's Sovereignty impact our personal responsibility, i.e. if God is in charge does it matter what we do? Which of the verses here really bring this truth home for you personally?

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SOVEREIGNTY VS. OUR RESPONSIBILITY: We've seen that God is in control, and that we have responsibility; how do you reconcile these seemingly parallel truths? How might this balancing act be a helpful motivation for us in our daily lives? How does the following quote help you strike this balance: *"Work like it depends on you. Trust like it depends on God"*?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: How has this study challenged and/or reinforced your thinking about God's Sovereign work in our lives? In what areas are you struggling to trust that God is still Sovereign right now? How can we encourage one another to keep on believing and trusting God (Additional Quote 8)?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Spend some time worshipping God for both His Sovereignty, and how He continues to work out His purposes in our lives. Pray for one another that you would each continue to trust this Sovereign God in both the good times, and the hard times.

MEMORY VERSE: DANIEL 4:35

STUDY 4 – UNFATHOMABLE – GOD IS WISE

INTRODUCTION: In the Narnia books, C.S. Lewis describes Aslan the lion as: “not tame, but he is good”. Though we don’t always understand what God is doing, He is always working for our good. His thoughts and His ways are way above our understanding: if they were not, He would not be worthy of our praise. We will touch again on the tricky question of how to respond when things go wrong!

SETTING THE SCENE: The dictionary defines *Unfathomable* as: “not able to be fathomed, or completely understood; incomprehensible”. When and where might you make use of such a word? What relevance do you see it having to the character of God and in particular His wisdom?

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WHO CAN FATHOM? (PSALM 145:3, JOB 5:9 & ISAIAH 40:28): What do you think was meant by these verses, which all describe God’s: greatness, wonders and understanding, as unfathomable? Why do you think that this is the case, and to what extent is this what we might expect?

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GOD’S THOUGHTS & WAYS (ISAIAH 55:8-9): Despite all of our efforts to reduce God to our level, these verses clearly elevate God’s thoughts and ways beyond our own. In what ways are these verses both challenging, and also comforting, as we travel through difficulty and uncertainty?

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GOD’S WISDOM (PSALM 147:5, PROV 3:5-8): Wisdom could be defined as: “the ability to develop the best course of action or the best response to a situation.” What do these verses teach us about God’s wisdom? How might knowledge of God’s wisdom help us respond better when we’re struggling to understand what God’s doing?

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GOD WORKS FOR OUR GOOD (ROM 8:28-30): How do you respond to a verse like Romans 8:28? How do the following verses help us understand what Paul has in mind when he speaks of ‘good’ in v28 (See also 2 Corinthians 3:18)?

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JOSEPH (GEN 50:19-21): Joseph's words to his brothers are incredible, given all he'd gone through: in what ways is his story a great example of what we've been thinking about in Romans 8? What might it take for you to have a similar perspective on God's work in your own life (see Additional Quote 9)?

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GOD'S WAYS ARE UNFATHOMABLE (JOB 42:2-6): Three Psalms begin with the word "why", and Job asks "why" 16 times: why are we so fixated on this question, when Scripture repeatedly tells us God's ways are incomprehensible (Isaiah 55:8-9)? God's answer to Job is not "why", but "who"; what can we learn from Job's response to God here?

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TO HIM BE THE GLORY (ROM 11:33-36): Paul reflects on the wisdom & knowledge of God in these verses. What is it that leads Paul into worship here: exclaiming "*To Him be the Glory forever*"? In what ways does Paul's inability to fathom the character of God, help encourage you to worship also?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: In what ways has our study on the unfathomable nature of God encouraged you in your own walk of faith? How has the 'benefit of hindsight' begun to enable you to see some of the things you have gone through from a new perspective?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Thank God for His unfathomable Wisdom, and that ultimately, He knows best. Given that we often don't understand, ask God to help you to keep on trusting Him. In James 1:5 those lacking wisdom are urged to ask for it: spend some time asking God to bless you with wisdom.

MEMORY VERSES: ISAIAH 55:8-9

STUDY 5 – IMMEASURABLE – GOD IS LOVE

INTRODUCTION: We've seen that God is Sovereign, God is wise and now thirdly that God is love. John says He is the very source of love. We will see how that love is so vast in its height, depth, width and length that it cannot be measured. We will also see how God is a good, good Father who loves and disciplines us, for our own benefit.

SETTING THE SCENE: The dictionary defines the word *Immeasurable* as: 'incapable of being measured; limitless'. What kinds of things might we describe in this way? In what ways might the character of God be described as immeasurable?

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BEYOND MEASURE (EPHESIANS 3:14-21): Paul has been writing about God's plan for the Gentiles, and it leads Him into prayer: what specifically does Paul pray for regarding the love of God in v17-19? What characterises someone *rooted and established in love*? How practically can we grow in grasping how wide, and long, and high, and deep, is the love of Christ?

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IMMEASURABLY MORE: How does the fact that God can do *immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine* (v20-21) encourage you? How much of a theme is God's glory in your prayers?

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THE NATURE OF LOVE (1 JOHN 4:7-16): How do you understand John's words here that *God is love* (v8 & 16)? In what ways does Jesus' death for us on the cross (v9-11) help us to comprehend the extent of God's love (Additional Quotes 10 & 11)? How does this motivate you to love others?

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PERFECT LOVE DRIVES OUT FEAR (v17-18): How does love being "made complete among us" give us confidence on the last day (v17)? What does John mean when he says that "*there is no fear in love and perfect love drives out fear*" (v18)? Why is fear so opposed to love?

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TOUGH LOVE (HEBREWS 12:5-7): What is the relationship between love and discipline in the example of a relationship between a parent and child? In what ways have you experienced God's discipline as being *for your good* (v10)? What is this harvest of righteousness and peace (v11)?

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NOTHING CAN SEPARATE (ROMANS 8:35-39): What do you think gives Paul such confidence that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ? Why do you think that he lists the things mentioned here? How would you describe your own confidence, and how might you grow in that confidence?

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NEW EVERY MORNING (LAMENTATIONS 3:19-24-31-33): In the context of Jeremiah's lament about the fall of his nation, what leads to his dramatic declaration of hope in v21, as explained in v22-33? To what extent is your hope focused on God and His character, as opposed to the situations and difficulties you face day by day?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: What are the things that this study has taught you about how immeasurable the love of God is? What things cause you to doubt the love of God for you? In what ways do these things encourage you to love those around you?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Spend some time worshipping God for the love that He lavishes on us, His Children. Ask God to help you to grasp the nature of His love more deeply, and to enable you to love those around you, because He has first loved us.

MEMORY VERSES: EPHESIANS 3:17b-19

STUDY 6 – UNCHANGING – GOD IS ETERNAL

INTRODUCTION: God does not change: He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. God will always be supreme, holy, wise, jealous & loving, because they describe His eternal character. This is the God who keeps His promises, and does not lie: He is 100% trustworthy, and will never let us down, leave us, or forsake us. Jesus describes eternal life as knowing God, the one true God.

SETTING THE SCENE: The word Unchanging is defined as: “constant, invariable or staying the same”. What things in this world would you describe as Unchanging? What questions do you have regarding the unchanging nature of God?

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YESTERDAY, TODAY & FOREVER (HEBREWS 13:8 & PSALM 55:19): What are the implications of the question as to whether God is unchanging (see also Additional Quotes 12 & 13)? To what extent would you agree that we see the same God revealed through the Old and New Testaments?

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GOD IS TRUE TO HIS CHARACTER (JAMES 1:17): How does James contrast the “Father of the heavenly lights” with “shifting shadows”? How does this illustrate how God remains true to His character? In what ways does this help us trust Him through difficulties?

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GOD IS TRUSTWORTHY (NUMBERS 23:19, 1 SAMUEL 15:29): Both Balaam (speaking to the Moabites) and Samuel (speaking to Saul) affirm God’s trustworthiness: within this context why was this a significant message to hear, and why might it be significant for us also (See Additional Quote 14)?

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GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES (JOSHUA 21:43-45, 23:14-16): Twice in these verses Joshua reminds God's people, who were now settled in the Promised Land, how God had kept every one of His promises to them. In what ways would this have encouraged them, and motivated them to persevere?

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GOD'S PROMISES FOR US TODAY (ISAIAH 43:2, HEB 13:5-6): What are the promises contained in these verses and, to what extent would you agree that they still apply to us today (see also 2 Corinthians 1:20)? To what extent would you say God has kept His promises to you?

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GOD IS ETERNAL (1 TIMOTHY 1:17, PSALM 90:1-6, JOHN 17:3): How do you understand the significance that God is eternal, and from *everlasting to everlasting*? What excites you about the idea in John 17:3 that our experience of eternity is grounded in knowing the one true God? What resonates, or jars with you, about the way that our forever purpose is described in Additional Quote 15?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: As we draw this series to a close, what have been the things which have particularly stood out for you? In what ways has this study of the character of God impacted upon your daily lives? What other attributes of God can you think of that we haven't touched on in this series?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Praise God that He is eternal and unchanging. Thank God for being trustworthy, and keeping His promises to you. Ask God to help you to continue trusting in Him, even when we don't understand what is going on around us.

MEMORY VERSE: HEBREWS 13:8

STUDY 1 – INDESCRIBABLE – GOD IS SUPREME

QUOTE 1: “Who on Earth are we that the awesome King of all eternity would spare a thought in our direction? Why would the God of yesterday, today, and forever- the One who was, is, and is to come-choose to bestow His loving attention upon the likes of us? The God of unspeakable glory is speaking to us in unmistakable words of love and grace.” **Matt Redman, Indescribable: Encountering the Glory of God in the Beauty of the Universe, © 2011 David C. Cook,**

QUOTE 2: “If God is indescribable, where does that leave us? It leaves us walking more humbly than we’ve ever walked before—bowed at the thought of such a mighty and mysterious God. It leaves us safe in the knowledge of His ultimate control—that the One who spoke these awe-inspiring, inconceivable wonders into being will never lose the plot or drop the ball. And it leaves us pondering just how much He—this creative God of hidden wonders—has in store for those who’ve chosen to love and follow Him.” **Louie Giglio, Indescribable, Encountering the Glory of God in the Beauty of the Universe, © 2011 David C. Cook,**

STUDY 2 – INCOMPARABLE: GOD IS JEALOUS

QUOTE 3: “Have you ever loved someone or something so much that you could not bear to see another with that person? That is Jealousy. God is a Jealous God, he desires so much of our time, love and energies that He cannot bear for us to be with another. He would rather die (and He did!) than for us to continue to be with another foreign beholder of our love and care.”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

QUOTE 4: “The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.” ... “I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God.”

A.W. Tozer, The Knowledge of the Holy, 1976, pages 10,11

STUDY 3 – UNCONTAINABLE: GOD IS SOVEREIGN

QUOTE 5: “In the area of adversity, the Scriptures teach us 3 essential truths about God – truths we must believe if we are to trust Him in adversity. They are ‘God is completely sovereign’, ‘God is infinite in wisdom’ and ‘God is perfect in love’. Someone has expressed these truths as they relate to us in this way: “God in His love always wills what is best for us. In His wisdom He always knows what is best, and in His Sovereignty He has the power to bring it about.” **Trusting God, Jerry Bridges, pg. 16-17**

QUOTE 6: “Nothing is a surprise to God; nothing is a setback to His plans; nothing can thwart His purposes; and nothing is beyond His control. His sovereignty is absolute. Everything that happens is uniquely ordained by God. Sovereignty is a weighty thing to ascribe to the nature and character of God. Yet if He were not sovereign, He would not be God. The Bible is clear that God is in control of everything that happens.” **Is God Really in Control, Joni and Friends, 1987, pg.1**

QUOTE 7: “We might be tempted to walk away from the idea of the Sovereignty of God. We might be tempted to try and diminish God, tempted to try and get Him off the hook for the awkward and nasty things in our lives. Here is a great lesson in life for us. It is precisely at those moments when life seems most uncertain and most fragile that we need to cling hardest to the doctrine of the Sovereignty of

God...What do you want really, when life is tough? Do you want a mighty God even though you can't understand Him or do you want a cut down little God who can't really help and who is no bigger than your own capacity to imagine? I want the mighty God, the Sovereign God. This is the bedrock for our souls. This is our comfort and the source of our strength...the Sovereignty of God."

John Risbridger, Sermon at Above Bar Church, 2015

QUOTE 8: "Sometimes our anxiousness to know the will of God comes from a desire to peer over God's shoulder to see what His plan is. What we need to do is learn to trust Him to guide us. Because God is sovereign, He is able to answer. Because He is faithful to His promises, He will answer."

Trusting God: When Life Hurts, Jerry Bridges

STUDY 4 – UNFATHOMABLE: GOD IS WISE

QUOTE 9: "God in His infinite wisdom knows exactly what adversity we need to grow more and more into the likeness of His Son. He not only knows what we need but when we need it and how best to bring it to pass in our lives. He is the perfect teacher or coach. His discipline is always exactly suited for our needs. He never over trains us by allowing too much adversity in our lives."

Trusting God: When Life Hurts, Jerry Bridges

STUDY 5 – IMMEASURABLE: GOD IS LOVE

QUOTE 10: "It may be difficult to provide a perfect definition for Christian love. But it is not difficult to find its supreme example. Christ's love for us is not grounded in our loveliness, but in his own character. His love is not merely sentimental, yet it is charged with incalculable affection and warmth. It is resolute in its self-sacrifice, but never merely mechanical self-discipline."

For the Love of God: A daily companion for discovering the riches of God's Word, D.A. Carson.

QUOTE 11: "There is such a love, a love that creates value in what is loved. There is a love that turns rag dolls into priceless treasures. There is a love that fastens itself onto ragged little creatures, for reasons that no one could ever quite figure out, and makes them precious and valued beyond calculation. This is love beyond reason. This is the love of God."

John Ortberg, Love Beyond Reason

STUDY 6 – UNCHANGING: GOD IS ETERNAL

QUOTE 12: "The major strategy of Satan is to distort the character of God and the truth of who we are. He can't change God, and he can't do anything to change our identity and position in Christ. If, however, he can get us to believe a lie, we will live as though our identity in Christ isn't true."

Victory Over the Darkness, Neil T. Anderson, © 2010 Monarch Books, p.35,

QUOTE 13: "The character of God is today, and always will be, exactly what it was in Bible times."

Knowing God Devotional Journal, J. I. Packer, Carolyn Nystrom, © 2009 IVP, p.76.

QUOTE 14: "Nothing can alter the character of God. In the course of a human life, tastes and outlook and temper may change radically: a kind, equable man may turn bitter and crotchety: a man of goodwill may grow cynical and callous. But nothing of this sort happens to the Creator. He never becomes less truthful, or merciful, or just, or good, than He used to be." **J.I. Packer**

QUOTE 15: "God is a spirit, whose being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth are infinite, eternal, and unchangeable...The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

Westminster Shorter Catechism.

MEMORY VERSES

STUDY 1 – INDESCRIBABLE – GOD IS SUPREME

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

Colossians 1:15-16

STUDY 2 – INCOMPARABLE – GOD IS JEALOUS

¹⁰ But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.

Jeremiah 10:10

STUDY 3 – UNCONTAINABLE – GOD IS SOVEREIGN

³⁵ All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him:

‘What have you done?’

Daniel 4:35

STUDY 4 – UNFATHOMABLE – GOD IS WISE

⁸ ‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ⁹ ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.’

Isaiah 55:8-9

STUDY 5 – IMMEASURABLE – GOD IS LOVE

¹⁷ ...And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17b-19

STUDY 6 – UNCHANGING – GOD IS ETERNAL

⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.

Hebrews 13:8