

Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

The Perfect God

Key Verse: "As for God, his way is perfect" 2 Samuel 22:31

By perfection we mean that is God complete not only in quantity (abundance) but in quality (excellence) as is expressed in three moral attributes; truth, love and holiness. He is perfect in Himself and to Himself and in his dealing with mankind He can be no other. To not be perfect in his dealing would be to not be perfect in Himself. By default this perfection demands perfection in our response. *'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.'* Matthew 5:48. See also Deuteronomy 32.4, Psalm 18.30 & James 1.17.

God is Perfect in Truth

We think of truth as a correct statement. It is more. It is integrity, wholeness of being and acting. Deuteronomy 32.4 *"The Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he."* To us truth is correctness in the areas of law, logic, mathematics, morals or religion. We cannot add God to this list because all these disciplines have their origin in Him. (To go a little deeper, Truth is God's nature and God's knowledge in conformity.)

God is inscrutable, that is we can not search him out logically. *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"* Romans 11:33 also *"... in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God..."* 1 Corinthians 1.21

However, Jesus Christ, is the exposition of the nature and love of

God, God's revelation of Himself to mankind. *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* John 1:14. Also John 1.17 & 14.6. Men who turn their back upon Jesus Christ, unwittingly or otherwise turn their back on the truth. Such an act can only lead to error and grotesque distortion. You may have your feet on the road that leads home, but your destination depends upon which way you turn your face.

Truth is an attribute of the Father John 4.23, the Son John 14.6, and the Holy Spirit John 16.13.

God is Perfect in Love

What we have said about truth, we can say about love, in that *'God is Love'* See 1 John 4.7-21. We find it hard to think of love apart from its expression, but John's appeal for us to love one another is made on the basis of Love as an absolute attribute of the nature of

God. Think of distilling oil from the fragrant lavender plant. The aroma of the plant is in its oil. We understand the loving nature of the eternal God by His goodness toward those who are His children. Yet the two are separate. Lavender has fragrant oil. Extract all the oil from the lavender and the plant would lose fragrance. However we cannot exhaust the love of God, for it is the nature of the eternal God to be, not just have love.

The love of God is seen in His acts of favour and care, but much more; *'in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.'* 1 John 4:9 (Look up these references on the 'love of God'; Romans 8.39, 1 John 5.3 & Jude 1.21 and feed your heart on them.) *'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son ...'* John 3.16. See also Romans 3.5.

God is Perfect in Holiness

Holiness is an attribute of His nature
Holiness is more than purity, for we

only understand purity when it is compared with impurity. Driven snow is pure but our tread mars it. God is altogether pure, incapable of impurity. *'The LORD of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness.'* Isaiah 5.16.

Holiness is the perfection of rightness. What is possible to mathematics is impossible to perform in perfection. He is the absolute square. As the concept of level and plumb excludes all other, so holiness excludes all else as inadequate. The best mankind can do is approximate perfection.

However Jesus is made unto us righteousness, 1 Corinthians 1.30. As He comes to His own to dwell, He does so in all the attributes of the godhead. We will never know perfection in ourselves. Our righteousness is by faith in Him. *'As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."'* 1 Peter 1.15&16. He is our holiness

The third verse of Reginald Heber's (1783-1826) great hymn 'Holy, Holy, Holy' seems to sum up these concepts so simply:

Holy, Holy, Holy, Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Bibliography: Strong A H, Systematic Theology 1907 Twentieth Edition 1958

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Sundays 10.30 am

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