



**BEHOLD YOUR GOD - WEEK 3**  
**Beholding God in the Bible**

**11. THE PRINCIPLES OF PLENTY**  
**(PROV. 3:9–10)**

If the world and everything in it truly belong to the Lord, why wouldn't this principle be true? This isn't the only time that the Lord promises Israel that he'll reward generosity (Deut. 15:10; Prov. 11:25; Malachi 3:8–12).

The promise is that if we give sacrificially the Lord will keep His word to take care of our needs. It's not a give 10% receive 10% guarantee. "It's an everything is Mine guarantee, so if you believe that about Me,"

God says, “Then you’ll feel free to give sacrificially.”

## **Opening prayer**

**Prayer for the persecuted church:**

Here

**Prayer for a local church:**

This morning we pray for our brother Dave Dick and Canyon Lake Community Church.

**Closing prayer**

# **INTRO: Here's What We Face**

## **WHAT THE PROBLEM IS**

We've been addressing the problem of our low and unworthy views of God, trying to remedy that by returning to the biblically revealed God.

It has been said that the Christian life consists of knowing God and making Him known. I believe that is the case, which is why it is so vital that what we speak about God is true.

**The only way to know God and the truth about God is by God's own self-revelation, the Bible. The only way you get to know anyone is if he or she reveals himself or herself to you. That's why today we're going to focus on beholding God in the Bible, asking ourselves again, "Is this the God I walk with?"**

**So much Christian teaching lends itself almost to a type of ancient Gnosticism focusing on the inward spiritual life. Somehow we're given the impression that knowing God consists of praying and then listening to our**

hearts, as if He will mystically reveal Himself to us.

God has revealed Himself through this ancient manuscript, through these ancient human authors, through the law and the prophets and more recently through His Son Jesus Christ. If you want to interact with God through prayer, open the Word and pray the Word. Open the Word and meditate. Open the Word and contemplate. Go to the Bible and ask, “God, what will you teach me about Yourself today?” Then read and respond in

prayer. That is a much more reliable way to know the God who is there than by listening to your heart.

The Word leads us to the God who is there. The Bible is not an end in itself. It is the means to know the Living God. And there is none like Him.

**BIG IDEA: The God of the Bible is incomparable.** There is no other god like this God. When people claim that all the religions should lead to the same God, such a

statement comes from basic theological ignorance. Allah is different in nature than the God of the Bible. Allah is singular by nature whereas the God of the Bible is Trinitarian by nature, which is a very different God. Buddhism has no deity per se. Hinduism has too many to mention. The all-roads-lead-to-God mentality willfully or ignorantly disregards the specifics that the various world religions teach about themselves.

- *Why Buddhism is True* - “It’s not about the content of the different world religions but about whether or not they transform you.”

But even if someone doesn’t believe the God of the universe has revealed Himself through human agents writing down His communications and His actions and what they mean to humanity, we still can’t get away from how the Christian gospel has influenced everything in the world, even other world religions. Of course, Christians will contend

**this is because the God of the Bible is incomparable.**

**When you examine the major world religions, the top five: Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism – these Scriptures (the Bible) have influenced all the major world religions. Islam comes 600 years after Christianity and it is undeniable historically that Muhammed was heavily influenced by his understanding of the Judeo-Christian faith.**

Buddhism 2,000 years ago was losing followers, because Buddhism was exclusively for Monks. That's a hard sell to the average person. But around 100 A.D., some Buddhists stemmed that downslide with a theological innovation: the doctrine of "bodhisattva." (boedy-sod-fa)

Bodhisattvas were enlightened beings who could have attained nirvana but purposefully chose to put it off in order to help others reach nirvana far more quickly than they

otherwise would. In early Buddhism, grace played no part and “merit” was everything, but bodhisattvas had so much accumulated merit that they could give great amounts to others and thus let them move up.

Revised Buddhism told how bodhisattvas take vows such as this one:

“I take upon myself ... the deeds of all beings, even of those in the hells, in other worlds, in the realms of punishment ... I take their

suffering upon me ... I bear it, I do not draw back from it, I do not tremble at it ... I have no fear of it ... I do not lose heart ... I take upon myself all the sorrows of all beings. I resolve to bear every torment in every purgatory of the universe. For it is better that I alone suffer than the multitude of living beings. I give myself in exchange. I redeem the universe from the forest of purgatory, from the womb of flesh, from the realm of death.”

Those ideas probably sound familiar because they are Christian concepts. A.L. Basham, in *The Wonder That Was India*, noted that “Features like this are not attested in Buddhism until after the beginning of the Christian era. The Suffering Bodhisattva so closely resembles the Christian conception of the God who gives his life as a ransom for many that we cannot dismiss the possibility that the doctrine was borrowed by Buddhism from Christianity.”

**As Christians, we contend that God has revealed Himself in His Word, but do we treat the Word as communication from God Himself about Himself?**

**Now, to say God is incomparable only becomes obvious when you begin to compare Him to something else. So, that's what we're going to do this morning.**

# 1. Divine Revelation Compared to Human Wisdom

## **HOW WISE ARE WE REALLY?**

Our focus today will be in the book of Job, said to be the oldest book in the Bible. Now, what is the book of Job about? If you've read it you will most likely say that it's a book about suffering. It is about suffering secondarily, but the book of Job is not primarily about suffering. It is primarily about the God of Job.

So, we're going to look at various sections of Job chapters 38-42 to behold the God of the Job.

## **Job 38:1-5**

**38 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:**

The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, the chaos, the tornado of human thinking with all it erroneous and contradictory and outright

**insane thoughts about God. Even in the midst of all that we can still hear a clear word about God.**

**I am often saddened and amused, simultaneously, at the thoughts people have about God, because of how narrow their thinking is, all the while believing their thinking is beyond the God of the Bible.**

- Egyptian slaves and pyramids and aliens**

But the good news is that even in the midst of the whirlwind we can still hear a true word about God.

**2 “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?”**

Have you ever had a friend come to you in trouble? Have you ever had someone come to you looking for counsel? What a grave responsibility. Because we are either moving

people toward truth and reality or we are moving them toward confusion and darkness. The counsel of some leads you further away from the truth about God. We want to make sure our counsel moves people closer to the Living God, who then says to Job:

### **3 Dress for action like a man;**

In other words, take a defensive stance because I'm about to hit you with the truth and you're going to feel it.

**I will question you, and you make it known to me.**

God is going to ask Job a few questions. And in asking Job a few questions, He is asking us a few questions, beginning with this one:

**4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?**

**Tell me, if you have understanding.**

**5 Who determined its measurements—surely you know!**

**Or who stretched the line upon it?**

Even lengthy debates about the genesis of the universe, often end with one side or both, saying, “Well, the bottom line is that none of us were there.”

This leads us to:

## **2. God Compared to His Creation**

### **THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS UNCHANGING**

The world is ever changing. History is a record of how much things change. God, as revealed in the Scripture, cannot change from within, nor can He be altered by anything outside Himself. This is the attribute of God which we call immutability, which simply means He does not change. Neither His perfections, thoughts, desires, purposes, determinations, judgments, etc. nothing about Him changes in any respect.

Because He cannot change, the scriptural descriptions of God are as valuable for life's choices this very moment as they were two thousand years ago. That's why we can learn about what God is like right now by reading these stories from 2,000 and 4,000 years ago.

## **Job 23:13-14**

**13 But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back?**

**What he desires, that he does.**

**14 For he will complete what he appoints for me, and many such things are in his mind.**

## **Psalm 102:25-27**

**25 Of old you laid the foundation of the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your  
hands.**

**26 They will perish, but you will remain;  
they will all wear out like a garment.**

**You will change them like a robe, and they will  
pass away,**

**27 but you are the same, and your years have no end.**

The doctrine of immutability (that God does not change) saves us from revising God. This is another reason that we give for the God of the Old Testament being the exact same God as the New Testament. God in the New Testament is not a new and improved God. He's the same God more fully revealed in Christ. Throughout the entire Bible we find God slowly revealing more about Himself.

But you'll find His mercy the same in the Old Testament as in the New. His power is the same. His mind is the same. His love is the same. His promises are the same and His threats of judgment are the same.

He does not change.

### 3. | God's Power Compared to Human Power

**HOW STRONG ARE WE REALLY?**

In American history, we find a self-critical line of thinking. In this element self-criticism, it holds out the American ideals that everyone is endowed with inalienable rights from their Creator, that there is a right to the pursuit of happiness and the freedom of religion and so forth. Then the self-critique is how we either live into these ideals or how we betraye these ideals by enslaving people or slaughtering unborn babies or stepping on religious freedoms, etc.

**This self-critical wing in secular America is traced to the prophetic line of the Bible. In the Bible, God calls His people to certain laws and the Old Testament prophets confront the people of God when they fail to live out these laws. It's very much the same. Detailed arguments have been made to show how so much in secular America finds its roots in Christian thought.**

**This is why Christians have always maintained that America is only great insofar as she embraces the God of the Bible. Secularism**

has values but they do not transcend death. Christian values have meaning beyond death. This is because God is unchanging and also because nations are here for God's purposes.

Nothing is more humbling than God's description of the nations through the prophet Isaiah where the nations are described as a drop in a bucket and less than nothing before Him.

**Job 40:1-14**

**40 And the Lord said to Job:**

**2 “Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?**

**He who argues with God, let him answer it.”**

**3 Then Job answered the Lord and said:**

**4 “Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you?**

**I lay my hand on my mouth.**

**5 I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.”**

**6 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:**

**7 “Dress for action like a man;**

**I will question you, and you make it known to me.**

**8 Will you even put me in the wrong?**

**Will you condemn me that you may be in the right?**

**9 Have you an arm like God,**

**and can you thunder with a voice like his?**

**10 “Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity; clothe yourself with glory and splendor.**

**11 Pour out the overflowings of your anger,  
and look on everyone who is proud and  
abase him.**

**12 Look on everyone who is proud and bring  
him low**

**and tread down the wicked where they  
stand.**

**13 Hide them all in the dust together;  
bind their faces in the world below.**

**14 Then will I also acknowledge to you  
that your own right hand can save you.**

In other words, if you could do all of these things, then you could save yourself. But you cannot do these things thus you cannot save yourself. You need a Redeemer.

**4. Have you been telling the truth about God?**

**WHOSE THOUGHTS ARE YOU COMMUNICATING?**

**Job 42:1-7**

**42 Then Job answered the Lord and said:  
2 “I know that you can do all things,  
and that no purpose of yours can be  
thwarted.**

Can we even begin to admit this much as Christians? That none of God's purposes can be thwarted or stopped? That's one of the points of the book of Job, that God even uses evil for His own good purposes. Nothing is beyond His control.

**3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'**

**Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,**

**things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.**

**4 'Hear, and I will speak;**

**I will question you, and you make it known to me.'**

**5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;**

**6 therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."**

He's moving from secondhand knowledge of God to knowing God for himself. This is what happens when we return to a biblical view of God. God becomes greater and our elevated views of self are brought low.

**7 After the Lord had spoken these words to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite:  
“My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.**

**Content matters. What we say is true about God matters. Who we say God is matters. How we say God is matters. What we say God does or does not do matters. Have you been telling the truth about God? The only way to know that, the only way to have our misconceptions cleared away and our wrong thoughts about Him corrected is to engage Him through this book.**