

Worshipping an Unfinished Deity

11-02-22

I. Slide1a **Announce:**

A. Slide1b Month Of Giving: This week Sun-Fri.

II. Slide2a **Intro:** *Worshipping an Unfinished Deity*

A. Tonight: *Topical* on something I've been pondering. Finished w/Psalms for a while. Working on a Series right now.

1. This is Fridays Newsletter (quick devo) that is further *developed out* here.

B. Funny: *You're a power-tool in the hand of God. He's the Power & you're the Tool.*

III. Slide2b **THE STORY**

A. Last week Larry and I were on a walk in S/E Asia. I was snapping photos of things that caught my eye when we ran across a sign to a Hindu temple down on the beach. So we descended the stairs only to realize they were *refurbishing this temple*.

1. A Hindu family arrive at the same time we did, except they were there for a different purpose. I was taking photos of interesting shapes and figures, they were there to worship on what was now a construction site.

2. Larry had noticed they took off their shoes, even though, there was rocks and rebar, and sharp things everywhere.

B. My first thought was, "*wow, they are worshipping an unfinished deity*", which seemed very odd to me. I started thinking about that statement.

IV. Slide3 **WORSHIPPING AN UNFINISHED DIETY**

A. What seemed strange in the *physical realm* is absolutely certain in the *spiritual realm*.

1. Meaning that I don't, and can't have, a **complete** understanding of an *infinite God* ... with *my finite mind*.

2. Though I seek daily to know Him better and deeper, there is still so much that I desire to **learn about** my *Indescribable God*. Like Paul said, *Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!* 2 Cor. 9:15

B. Now let me say up front the difference is their god wasn't finished, **but** our God is. He is just *unfinished* in my mind.

C. *Slide4,5* Ps.145:1-3 (this Psalmist/David has *the awe of God*) *I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. 2 Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. 3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.* (or, is beyond our understanding or comprehension)

1. Paul Tripp said, You are attracted to whatever is **the awe of your heart**.
 - a) Have you lost your awe of God?

V. *Slide6a* **INCOMPREHENSIBLE YET KNOWABLE**

A. Each of us as individuals contain a variety of **characteristics** that comprise our **identity as human beings**. You may be described as *smart or funny, passionate or driven*.

1. And when we look at Scripture we see that **God** has several **characteristics or attributes** that help us to understand **His nature and identity as God**.

B. The **unknowable** God, has made Himself **knowable**.

1. *Slide6b* Our God is **Incomprehensible yet Knowable**.
 - a) God is known by self-disclosure ... by His revelation/unveiling.
 - b) God is known by General Revelation (creation), **and by** Specific Revelation (His deeds & Language).
 - c) *“God is not an idea or proposition but instead a living and free person who is completely other, or holy.”* Wayne Grudem; Systematic Theology

C. **Slide6c** God has 2 Categories of Attributes: **Unshared** (only belong to Him). **Shared** (found in people in a limited way).

1. **Unshared** - **Omniscient** (all-knowing). **Omnipotent** (all-powerful).
Omnipresent (everywhere present).

2. **Shared** - Spirit. Holiness. Love/Goodness. Truth. Justice/Righteousness.

D. His attributes are not merely *attributed to Him*, but qualities **Inseparable** from His very being.

1. **He is Creator** so He can't be contained.

2. **He is Self-Sufficient** so He has no needs.

3. **He is Intelligent** so He has a plan.

4. **He is the Sustainer** so we are dependent on Him.

5. **He made man** to instinctively long for **Himself**.

E. Whatever is transitory, temporary, short lived, momentary, fleeting, here today gone tomorrow ... will forsake us. **But** ... our God is the **Unchanging Rock of Ages** in whom we may find **shelter**.

1. The turning point in our lives is when we **stop seeking** the God **we want** and **start seeking the God who is!**

VI. **Slide7a** **HUGE IS A SMALL DEFINITION OF GOD** *anonymous*

A. Let's take it **One Step Further** - It is **not only true** that we can never fully understand God; **it is also true** that we can never fully understand **any single thing** about God.

1. **Slide7b** His **greatness** (Ps.145:3 *his greatness is unsearchable*).

2. His **understanding** (Ps.147:5 *Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure*).

3. His **knowledge** (Ps.139:6 *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it*).

4. His **riches, wisdom, knowledge, judgments, and ways**.

a) In Romans Paul, after a long discussion on the history of *God's great plan of redemption* says, *Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!* (inscrutable = *Indelineable/delineate*. Marked by being impossible to plot, travel, or trace to the end of; therefore, **incomprehensible**)

B. So if I can't fully know Him, should I just give up? **No**, it's true in any relationship (even your spouse) you try harder.

1. **Slide8** Maybe we cannot know Him **fully** but Jeremiah says we can know Him **Truly**. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the Lord.* Jer. 9:23,24

VII. **Slide9 TO THE UNKNOWN GOD** (unfinished deity)

A. In Acts 17:22,23 *So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.'* What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

1. **His spirit** was provoked within him when he **saw** the city was full of idols vs.16 (10,000 pop/30,000 idols).

2. As he shared about **Jesus** the Athenians were intrigued & wanted to hear more. Even after 800 yrs of Gk Mythology & 500 yrs of Gk Philosophy... they were still searching.

B. **Atheist**/no god. **Agnostic**/no knowledge (belief there simply isn't enough evidence to tell *whether there is a god or not* & if there is *what if anything do they want from us*)

1. Some put **agnostics** in 2 categories: A **closed agnostic** (we don't know, can't know, & *I like it like that*). An **open agnostic** (we don't know at

present, **but** we could know in principle if only we could discover how, **& I would love to know if we could**).

- a) **The 1st** we could also call *inconsistent agnosticism*, since it professes **absolute certainty** that we *can't know something*, **which is a problem because...how do you know for certain that you can't know something :)**
- b) **The 2nd** we could also call *consistent agnosticism*, being **agnostic** about **agnosticism** itself. **Thus** Paul imagines it's someone in this 2nd category who put up this altar *to an unknown god*. In fact Paul begins **& ends with ignorance** **& what God is doing about it**.

VIII.Slide10a **JOB WEIGHS IN**

A. In **Job 26**, Job explains many evidences of God's power over nature (**of things below, above, and on the earth**). *He wraps up the chapter with, **Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways**.*

1. They are only *meager indications* **or the outer fringe** of what He does.
2. **Again, God is incomprehensible yet knowable...**
3. There is our **speculation & His revelation**. **Speculation** is our attempt to comprehend God. **And Revelation** is God's communication w/us, w/clarity that is otherwise impossible. [The result? these 66 books]

B. **Slide10b** Job 42:5,6 *I had only **heard** about you before, but now I have **seen** you with my own eyes. I take back everything I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.*

1. **Msg, I admit I once lived by rumors of you; now I have it all firsthand - from my own eyes and ears! I'm sorry - forgive me. I'll never do that again, I promise! I'll never again live on crusts of hearsay, crumbs of rumor.**

C. **Questions for Contemplation:**

1. In **what areas** today do you want to know God in a **deeper** way?

2. When you get to **heaven** which attribute do you want Him to explain first about Himself?
3. Do you want to go on knowing God more and more deeply for all eternity? Why or why not? Would you like sometime to be able to know God exhaustively? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think God decided to **reveal** Himself to us?
5. Do you learn more about God from his revelation in nature or his revelation in Scripture?

D. Keywords: God, worship.