

#1

MAN'S GREATEST PRIORITY

PSALM 100

I am sure that anyone ^{who} ~~that~~ reads the Bible with an open heart cannot help but see, at least over a period of time, that the Bible is not only a revelation from God, but also ~~it's~~ a revelation of God. There is not a book in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation — which does not have as ~~its~~ primary objective to teach us about God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. In the light of this when we read any passage of Scripture, whether privately or publically, we ought to ask, "What is there in this passage that I ought to learn about God?" When we finish our reading we ought to ask, "What has the Lord shown me about Himself and how should this affect my heart and my life?" [#] ~~How~~ Tragically, this is a subject which many of us as Christians neglect, until God, through circumstances of various kinds, compels us to do otherwise. This past week in the mail I received a list of the 100 Best Sellers among Christians. As I looked through the titles, I realized more than ever why the church of the 20th century is like it is today. You can see by looking at the list of books that Christians are interested in light things. There was very little to indicate that they were interested in solid truth. A few books on the list ~~were books that~~ were not even Christian books, but books of a secular nature; and yet ~~books which~~ Christians are buying ^{ahead} of other books which are Christian. I found ~~that~~ the book list ~~was~~ an alarming commentary on the condition of the Church today. [#] One book however that seems to hold its place among the Best Sellers ~~and if I remember correctly it was 66th on the list for this month~~ is James Packer's book ~~which I know many of you have read~~ entitled Knowing God. If you haven't read it I would strongly recommend that you do ~~read it~~. And you ought to encourage other Christians to read it. It has remained a best seller for several years now. It is the kind of reading that will build you up in the faith. ⁱⁿ ~~And the~~ ^{-not} In the very first chapter of Dr. Packer's book, he refers to a 20 year old preacher ~~and he~~ ^{mentioning} ~~doesn't mention~~ him by name, who back in 1855 stood before his people in London and spoke to them about knowing God. Perhaps you could guess that he was referring to Charles Haddon Spurgeon. At 20 years of age, Spurgeon's language would have honored a

man who had been in the ministry for 50 years. It is hard to imagine that a young man of only 20 would have such insight into the Word of God as God gave him, ~~and~~ I am sure that this was because God had a very unusual ministry for him. In the more than 60 volumes that have been printed of Spurgeon's sermons, this message to which Dr. Packer refers is the first message in the first volume. It is a message which Spurgeon preached at the Old Park Street pulpit in London before the Metropolitan Tabernacle was built. I won't read the whole quotation which is given by Dr. Packer; you can do that as you read the book for yourself. ~~If you have read the book you might want to go back and review it. But in referring to this~~ the gist of the quotation was this. Young Spurgeon said that the knowledge of God will not only improve our minds, it will greatly humble us, it will expand our thinking and, ~~then finally, he says~~ it is greatly consolatory. And then after these remarks he made this quotation which I read. ^(indent) "And there is in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound. In musing on the Father there is a quietus for every grief. And in the influence of the Holy Ghost there is a balsam for every sore. Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea. Be lost in His immensity and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know of nothing, ~~said the 20 year old Spurgeon,~~ which can so comfort the soul, so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief, so speak peace to the winds of trial as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead." ~~And then he concluded these remarks by saying,~~ "It is to that subject that I invite you this morning." ^{(the} In the following weeks I would like to bring a series of messages dealing with ~~the~~ ^{the} theme; The Knowledge of God. We will be looking at some of the attributes of God that are given to us in Scripture. But where do you begin with such a subject ~~and how do you deal with a subject~~ that is so vast that no one has ever ~~really~~ been able to comprehend fully all that is given to us in the Scriptures? ^{about it} ~~now~~ ^A After a great deal of praying and a great deal of looking through the Scriptures and examining different passages of Scripture, I believe the Lord has led me this morning to Psalm 100. There are seven commands

given to us in this Psalm. First, I

~~that the psalmist gives to us in this 100 Psalm things which we as the people of God should do without fail.~~

~~And I am in the center of these, #4 is the one I want to focus attention on and then go both directions in the Psalm before that and ~~and back at the other commands.~~ The one that I am especially~~

concerned about this morning is the one that you have in verse 3. "Know ye that the Lord, he is God." Now I don't suppose that that is news for any of us this morning.

~~But just repeat that expression over and over again in your own mind and your own~~

~~heart because~~ But it's one thing for us to know this as a matter of teaching, ~~and~~ it's quite another thing for us to have entered into this as far as our daily living ~~and~~

~~our daily walk is concerned.~~ "Know ye that the Lord, he is God." ~~And you see~~ Once I understand that the Lord is God ~~with all that is involved in that expression,~~ that

He is Diety, that He is greater than I am, that He is sovereign over all of the circumstances of my life ~~then,~~ as Mr. Spurgeon said when he was a young man, ~~I will~~ find the cure for every trial and every sorrow and every difficulty in keeping ~~my~~ heart and

mind stayed upon such a God. ~~Now~~ Prior to this expression, "Know ye that the Lord, he

is God," you have three commands, ~~will you look at them.~~ First, "Make a joyful noise unto

the Lord, all ye lands." ~~That's the first one.~~ The second one, "Serve the Lord with

gladness." ~~Third one,~~ "Come before his presence with singing." ~~Then the fourth,~~

"Know ye that the Lord, he is God;" ~~the fifth one,~~ "Enter into his gates with thanks-

giving, and into his courts with praise." The sixth ~~one,~~ "Be thankful unto him," and

the seventh one, "And bless his name." ~~I would like for you to pay particular~~ attention as we begin this morning to the fact that ~~these are~~ commands that God is giving

to us. When we think of the one in verse 3, "Know ye that the Lord, he is God," it's not just a good suggestion, it's not something that you and I can do if we have the time

to do it. ~~But~~ Rather, ~~and~~ this is a divine command, to ignore it would be sin. To disobey it is

to grieve God, and to fail to obey God in this particular point can only have the worst possible consequences for you and for me. No one who knows the Lord would deliberately

deny ~~this statement,~~ ~~is true~~ but it is ~~evident in your life and my life that you~~ only our lives

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and I not only believe it but have entered into it when we can see the affect of

upon our daily circumstances. Now when we come to a statement like this in

Scripture, "Know ye that the Lord, he is God," it is very reasonable for us to ask

the question, how can I know that the Lord is God? Psalm 100 gives us several

ways, and these are the things that I want to consider with you this morning,

First, though, before I do as we look at this Psalm, let me mention something that is obvious and

yet perhaps it needs to be mentioned again and again. ~~And we must not overlook~~

this fact when it comes to the knowledge of God. ~~And that is this,~~ - that you and I can

only know God through His Word. Now let me explain in just a word or two what I

mean by that. One of the ways in which the psalmist here in Psalm 100 explains that

we know God is through creation. He says, "It is he that hath made us and not we

ourselves." I want to come to that in just a moment. But if you and I do not look

at creation through the Word, we may do like ~~lots of people~~ many during the history of the

world have done, and ~~And that is they might~~ identify God with creation in such a way

that they become pantheistic in their outlook, ~~or alternatively, end up~~ as those have who have

actually worshipped ~~my~~ creation. ~~Now~~ It is the Word of God that keeps my thinking straight

as far as creation is concerned, so that creation can help me in my understanding of God,

if I look at creation through what is revealed through the Word of God. Or take even

~~The Word is also crucial with regard to our knowledge of~~ the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. ~~this is perhaps one point where many have gone astray,~~

because sometimes people will say, "I am not interested in the preaching of the Word,

I am interested in preaching Christ." ~~Now~~ God's final and complete revelation of

Himself is in Christ. ~~there is no doubt about that~~ The book of ~~Hebrews~~ Hebrews begins with

that majestic statement that God Who in time past (thinking of the Old Testament in differen

ways and at different times) had spoken unto men, has in these last days spoken unto

us in His Son. And ~~in~~ the Gospel of John, which we have just completed, the Lord Jesus

makes a statement which no prophet of the Old Testament, ~~and~~ no apostle of the New Testament

could possibly make, ~~that~~ that ~~hath~~ He ~~hath~~ seen me ~~hath~~ seen the Father." (Jn. 14.9). So I

can't ignore the Lord Jesus Christ if I am concerned about knowing God. ~~The Lord~~

~~Jesus even in His prayer in John 17 said, "This is eternal life that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."~~ But how can

I possibly know about Christ if I do not learn of Him from Holy Scripture? I can't separate the living Word, the Son of God, from the written Word, the Scriptures which God has given to us. So if I want to be straight in my thinking about the Lord Jesus Christ, ~~then~~ I must think about Him as He is revealed in the Word. And the minute I get away from the way He is revealed in the Scriptures, then I can get into difficulty concerning my understanding of Christ. Now Psalm 100 is a part of the Word of God.

So let me reject anything that is not a part of the Bible, but let me accept ~~any and~~ everything that I find in the Scriptures that has to do with God even though I may not be able to fully comprehend ~~it.~~ ~~everything that I find in the Word of God.~~ The knowledge of God ~~which we seek in the Word and which is revealed to us in Scripture~~ is given to

us in ^{Scripture in} different ways. We will see it in the names of God. We will see it in the works of God. We will see it in the words of God. We will see it in the attributes of God, ~~and as I have mentioned~~ we see it ultimately and perfectly in the Son of God Himself. ~~Everything~~ Everything that God intends for us to know about Himself has been recorded permanently for us in the written Word of God, ~~and I trust that the Holy Spirit will impress that upon your heart.~~ If we ^{encounter some thing is} ~~have these things that are~~ outside of Scripture

then let's look at ~~them~~ ^{it} through the light that is given to us in the Word of God, ~~and~~ ^{knowing} ~~that~~ ^{this} only as we do ~~this~~ can we have a correct understanding ~~of all of these things.~~ ~~A~~ search for God brings me to a search ~~of the Word of God, to the Scriptures~~

~~and~~ ^{and} what does Psalm 100 teach us about God, ^{and} about ways of knowing Him? I want to suggest from the Psalm this morning ~~at least~~ ^{six} ways in which ~~you~~ ^{we} can come to know God ~~and~~ ^{and} that the Lord is God, and then I want to conclude with one which is not in Psalm 100 but ~~one that~~ is needed to complete what we have here.

I. "MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD"

~~First,~~ First, ~~we~~ we learn to know God by praising Him. ~~That~~ That might sound like a strange statement to make, ^{but} ~~and yet~~ I am thinking not of the way we might normally

praise God, ~~because~~ ^T There are many people who are gathering together this morning supposedly to worship God and to praise God who don't even know Him. ~~They people~~

~~people~~ who don't touch a Bible, don't have much in the way of understanding of the Scriptures.

But it seems clear as you read this Psalm that one of the ways in which we come to know God in a greater way is by praising Him. ~~Now~~ ^T This is the dominant theme of the Psalm. ~~And I want you to~~ Look especially at verse 1 and ~~then look at~~ verse 4. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands." ~~Now~~ ^T This means that the Psalm was not ~~not~~ limited to the children of Israel, though it was primarily for them. ~~Now~~ ^W When the psalmist says, "all ye lands," his desire is that from all of the nations of the earth there should be a great swelling of praise and a joyful noise ascending to the God of heaven and earth. ~~Now~~ ^I In verse 4 he adds, ~~to this~~ "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving." ~~Now~~ ^I I don't know how you came to church this morning and ~~He~~ ^{He} of course is talking about the gates of the temple as the children of Israel would come bringing their sacrifices to the Lord, but there is a sense in which as we come to the house of God to worship the Lord, we are coming to ~~a~~ ^a place that has been dedicated to His service, where we meet together to hear the Word of God. ~~and~~ ^{We} We come from all of the trials and the business and the difficulties of our lives, as well as the blessings.

^B But as you entered into these doors this morning, a good ~~test as to where you stand~~ ^{spiritual test} ~~spiritually~~ is, ~~did you come~~ did you enter into these gates with thanksgiving? Did you enter into His courts with praise? Are you here this morning to be thankful unto Him and to bless His name? ~~Now~~ ^T That's why we ought to be here. ~~Now~~ ^T There may have been things in your life and my life during the past week that we don't understand.

I heard of a man this week who is having some real difficulties in his own life and he can't understand why God doesn't help him and why he hasn't seen his prayers answered. But regardless of what our circumstances may be, ~~if there is sorrow, if there is testing,~~ ^{or} ~~if there is~~ unanswered prayer, there is never any excuse for us not to come to the house of God ^{expressing} ~~to express~~ our praise ^{and} ~~and our~~ thanksgiving to Him ~~and to enter into His gates with thanksgiving and to be present in the house of the Lord to be thankful unto~~

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What does ^{praise} ~~the~~ have to do with knowing God?

~~Him and bless His name. Now you say, "What does this have to do with knowing God?"~~

~~Right~~ Let me suggest some reasons why this is helpful for us. When we are thinking about thanksgiving and when we are praising the Lord it almost always keeps us thinking about what our blessings are. Now you might be weighed down with a great deal of difficulty ~~and problems and~~ as you look back over the past week, ^Y you might feel that there has been very little that has gone on that's been good, ~~And it's a week that~~ you are glad it's over, ~~and you had never seen it~~ and you hope you never ^{see} another ~~one just exactly like it.~~ ^{week} ~~Now~~ Your week may have been like that. But when you come

to the house of God, when you come to gather with the people of God, you are to come, according to the Scriptures, for the purpose of praising Him. The Word says "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." ^(1 Th. 5. 16, 17) We ^(1 Th. 5. 18) are not only to pray without ceasing but we are to rejoice evermore. ~~Now if I come~~

^{I may come} conscious of all the burdens, and yet I know that ~~as I come to the Lord~~ one of my reasons for coming ~~by divine command~~ is to ~~come to~~ give my thanksgiving to Him. ~~And what~~ **To obey God's command, I have to change my thinking,** ~~do I have to do. Obviously I have to get my mind changed in its thinking and start~~

to look at the things during the past week that I can recognize as blessings from God.

~~And~~ ^The minute I begin to do that I suddenly come to discover that instead of the past week being filled with everything that I would like to avoid, ~~I find that the past week~~

is like any other week in the year. ~~It is~~ a week in which God has literally loaded me with His blessings. ~~So I am made conscious of my blessings. And then as~~ ^A I look at

my blessings, I have to recognize where these blessings have come from. James tells us that, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and so the blessings ^{(James 1. 17),} ~~even the way the Lord~~ ^{has used} ~~may have used~~ my difficulties, ~~all of this~~ is the result of what

the Lord is doing. ~~And as~~ I can lift my heart in thanksgiving and praise to Him, but **I can also learn about God** ~~as I look at these blessings, and as I see the things that God is doing I realize that~~

God is known by the works which He performs, so that the very blessings which God gives to me, and the frequency of these blessings, and the way in which they continue to come week after week ~~after week~~ ^{— the} material blessings, ^{the} blessings of health, the

blessings of having enough food, ~~for our bodies~~, the blessing of being able to live in
 safety, not to mention ^{our many} ~~the many~~ spiritual blessings, ~~that the Lord gives us.~~ All of
~~these are not only blessings that have come from God but the very nature of the blessings~~
 -all help me to understand what kind of a God I have, ~~who daily cares for me in the wonderful~~
~~way that He does.~~ ~~You see~~ The nature of God determines the character of His blessings,
 so that when I recognize the blessings, this helps me to understand God. And the
 end result is that I praise Him. The psalmist said at the end of Psalm 50, "Who so
 offereth praise glorifieth me." ~~Whenever~~ Whenever you are glorifying God you are helping
 to manifest God, you are helping others to understand what God is like, ~~so that~~ In recog-
 nizing His blessings, you have a part of ^{God's} ~~the~~ great work ~~that God continues to do in~~
 making Himself known to men.

II. "SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS,"

~~Alright~~ Secondly, we learn to know God through serving Him. You have that in verse 2.

"Serve the Lord with gladness." ~~Every~~ Every Christian ought to be serving the Lord.

~~Now~~ Sometimes this service is in the church teaching Sunday School, ^{or} involved in the
 ministry of the church in some ^{other} way. The Hebrew expression that the psalmist uses

here is a word which means service of any and all kinds. It's a word which could

be used to describe bond service. It's a word that would describe bringing their

offerings and their sacrifices to the Lord when they came to the temple, and again

it's a command. ^{it is} ~~It is~~ an indication it is possible to know the Lord without serving

Him, but it's not possible to know the Lord and to fail to serve Him if you want

to be in the place of blessing. Every child of God is a servant of God, ~~Every child~~
~~and should~~ of God needs to be serving the Lord in some way, ~~and if you fail to serve the Lord, or~~

If we are serving the Lord, we may be failing to serve the Lord with gladness. I don't

know what your ministry is, but when you come to that ministry, when I come to my ministry,

do we do it eagerly with the joy of the Lord in our hearts, ^{appreciating} ~~anticipating~~ the great

privilege ~~that it is~~ of being able to serve Him? ~~"Serve the Lord with gladness."~~ But

~~you know~~ Serving God is one of the greatest means that He uses to teach us to know Him.

cite

Let me ~~just cite~~ one example in Scripture. ~~Some of you have read this over and over again but you remember~~ when Moses came back ~~into the land of~~ ^{to} Egypt to lead the children of Israel out of ~~the land of Egypt~~ and to take them into ~~the direction of~~ the promised land, ~~and~~ everything was ~~just~~ working perfectly. Everything was going according to the plan, ~~the plan~~ that Moses had in mind until he went to Pharaoh and faithfully gave Pharaoh the Word of God, ~~and told Pharaoh~~ ^{that} the Lord ^{had} said, "Let my people go that they may serve me." And Pharaoh met him with a great big no. "I am not going to let the people ^{go} ~~in~~ who is the Lord?" I don't know Him. You don't have enough to do, that's the reason you are making this particular request, ~~and~~ ^{care} suddenly this work that looked like it was going to be taken of in short order just fell apart. And the officers of the children of Israel were in trouble. ~~It looked like the whole thing had been set back.~~ ~~It would have been better, in fact~~ ^{that} Moses told the Lord, it would have been better if he had never come, ~~it would have been better if he had~~ ^{or} never opened his mouth, ~~because of all of the difficulties that had taken place.~~ Do you remember what God said to Moses? He said this, and the rest of the time in Egypt and really you could say all the time that they were in the wilderness was a result of this. Here is Moses, he had come back to serve the Lord, he'd come back to do the will of God. He had come back because he knew that this was the Lord's will for his life and yet when it all falls apart and he goes to the Lord and he said, "Lord why did you send me and why is it that you haven't let the children of Israel go?" ^{He said,} The Lord said this, "Now thou shalt see what I will do ^{to} Pharaoh." ^(Ex. 6:1) ~~And you see~~ ^I if everything had ~~just~~ run smoothly, and Moses had gone to Pharaoh and said to Pharaoh, ~~the Lord sent me to tell you let my people go.~~ ^{and} Pharaoh instead of saying 'No' had responded by saying 'when', Moses would have missed some of the greatest lessons that God had to teach him concerning ~~the knowledge of God Himself.~~ It was in those difficult days that followed, when it seemed that the Word of God meant absolutely nothing, that Moses was to learn that God was a God who could not fail. ~~and~~ ^{He} learned by the way God dealt with him what God was actually like. Therefore, if we serve the Lord under difficulty, ~~if we serve the Lord~~ ^{and} against obstacles, and we all

use
single
quote
marks
for
paraphrases
like this

do ~~not~~ "We wrestle not against flesh and blood" ~~but~~ let's serve Him with gladness, knowing that He not only has appointed us to this service but ~~knowing~~ that in the midst of the service with all of its difficulties, God is going to be teaching us things about Himself that we can only learn in that way.

III. "COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH SINGING"

~~Let me give you a third way. The second part of verse 2 says, "Come before his presence with singing."~~ We not only learn to know God through serving Him, but we learn to know God through fellowship with Him. ~~don't we.~~ ~~Now~~ You can come before His presence with singing in a group as we are here this morning, or you can come before His presence with singing as an individual. I doubt if any Christian makes any great progress in the things of God ~~and in knowing God as long as he is~~ ^{if he} is in the company of other people all of the time. That is one ~~thing, one~~ difficulty about the Christian life today. We feel that we have to be with other people most of the time. I would like to remind you of Jacob this morning to illustrate this. Jacob returned home ~~you remember~~ after ^{twenty} 20 years. He had a large family. He was surrounded by his family continually. He was anticipating meeting Esau and he didn't relish the idea because the last he knew, Esau wanted to kill him. But Genesis 32:24 says this, "And Jacob was left alone." ~~And~~ ^{This aloneness} you remember ~~that~~ leads up to the account of Peniel where Jacob wrestled all night with the man at least he didn't know who he was wrestling with originally and then he came ^{a man he later realized was} to the discovery that being left alone, he was wrestling with God. ~~And~~ ^{His own summation} of that night ~~and the affect of that night upon him was this.~~ ^{was} "I have seen God face to face and my life has been preserved." And so he called the name of the place Peniel. Before you came to this place of public worship this morning, did you have a time by yourself when you entered into the Lord's presence with singing? ~~If~~ [?] If you couldn't sing audibly, at least the joy of the Lord was in your heart. Have you already had time with the Word? [?] If somebody came to you ~~where you are~~ this morning and said, "Could you tell me what you have learned about the Lord or what you have been reminded about concerning the Lord from your time with Him this morning?" [?] would you have anything to say?

When you came ~~here~~ this morning, did you come here primarily to meet with Him, not to meet your friends, ~~or~~ ^{not to} attend ~~the~~ ^a certain Sunday School class or even to be in this service? ~~you came here to enter into His presence with singing~~ Just as Jacob saw God face to face when he was left alone, so you and I by the grace of God can have that experience time and time again, ~~when~~ in the quietness of our own rooms, we can take ~~the Word of God and as we take this precious book which God has given to us,~~ ^{and} we can there gaze upon the glory of our God and Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ, ~~as we see Him in the Word and we~~ ^{We can} come from those times knowing that we too have seen Him face to face.

IV. KNOW YE THAT THE LORD, HE IS GOD"

A fourth way that we know the Lord is through creation. The third verse of our Psalm ~~Know ye that the Lord, He is God.~~ says, "It is he that hath made us and not we ourselves." ~~You know some of the Scriptures~~ ^{These} are very obvious, in fact ~~these first~~ two expressions seem to be self evident truths, ~~and~~ yet God has put them in the Word because He intends that the very fact that they are true should mean something to us. "Know ye that the Lord, he is God," on the one hand and "it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves." ~~Now~~ I could go to other passages of Scripture ^{such as} ~~this morning for example Psalm 19, where we see~~ "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." And we could ~~not~~ think of all the vast reaches of the universe, if such a thing were possible for us ~~this morning~~. Or I could take you to Romans chapter one, and ~~I could~~ show you that the testimony of God in creation is so evident to all people of all generations that no one is without excuse. ~~But~~ I just want to narrow it down ~~this morning~~ to this one statement that the psalmist makes about you and ~~about~~ me. We are the creatures of God. Guided in our thinking by the Word of God, what have ~~you~~ ^{we} learned about God from the fact that He made ~~you?~~ ^{us?} Since He did that, ~~and since He's capable of doing that, could you go on a step further from that and~~ ^{we should} never doubt that God ~~is~~ ^{is} capable of fulfilling the promises that He has made. If God had the wisdom to make these bodies of ours ~~and we're still~~ ~~discovering things about these bodies of ours,~~ can you ever doubt the wisdom of God

as you contemplate the miracle of your very being, ~~body, soul and spirit?~~ You and I haven't done this, ~~we are not self made people~~; God made us. ~~So that as you contemplate yourself and as you contemplate people in any day and generation, man made in the image and likeness of God. The very handiwork of God. You see if you and I are neglecting even this aspect of creation, if we are failing to look at man as he is revealed to us in the Word of God, then to some extent we are deficient in our knowledge of the Lord Himself. There seems to be some connection in this passage between the fact that when you know that the Lord is God, then you really see man for what he is. And Perhaps our tendency today to put man on such a pedestal is because we have lost sight of what the Scriptures teach us concerning God Himself.~~

IV. "WE ARE HIS PEOPLE"

Fifth, ~~we~~ learn to know God through salvation. "We are his people and the sheep of his pasture," ~~and I wish I had the whole time this morning just to deal with this one aspect of the truth. This is undoubtedly, apart from the coming of the Lord Jesus, the greatest way in which God has made Himself known — By His work for our salvation, past, present, and future. All of the aspects of it. "We are his people and the sheep of his pasture." So that when I look at the wonders of salvation, and I see that God has dealt with us in infinite grace. God, through his Son, has provided a finished work. God has removed my sin, because of his love for me. God has ordained that one day we're going to stand in His presence conformed to the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus. And when you see the truths of salvation as they are revealed to us in the Word of God, then the very nature of salvation itself is a revelation to us of the kind of God that we have. If we are His sheep then obviously He is the shepherd. And if He is the shepherd, then He is the One that I can look to to provide for me to care for, and protect me just as the shepherd takes care of his sheep.~~

V. "THE LORD IS GOOD"

A final thing we ~~can~~ can learn from Psalm 100 is that ~~The last one that you have in Psalm 100 indicates that we learn to know God through~~ verse 5 reads, His providential dealings in our lives. ~~And I am referring to the last verse. "For~~

the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth^{to} and the word truth here ^{probably} ~~probably~~ is not a reference to the Bible but God's faithfulness, his faithfulness endures to all generations." ~~Now it is true that the truth of the Word endures to all generations, but truth in Scripture is often used to speak of faithfulness. So I have here that the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting and His faithfulness endures to all generations. Now~~ The Lord is good in the sense that He could never be bad. His mercy is everlasting because it can never be exhausted. ~~You know~~ God's mercy is just as plentiful today as it was in the very beginning. And His faithfulness endures to all generations. ~~Now you see~~ ^T that's the reason the Bible doesn't have to be revised. When I see His faithfulness to Abraham, ~~I see His faithfulness to Moses, I see His faithfulness and to David,~~ I don't have to cry out and say, 'Lord, did they use it all up?' ~~But~~ I know it is there, because what God was ~~in faithfulness~~ to them, He will be to me and ~~He will be to you. Because~~ ^N Neither His goodness, nor His mercy, nor His faithfulness can ever be exhausted. ~~How did the psalmist know this. Well he knew this as a direct revelation from God, but also~~ ^T he knew it because he could see it in the way God had providentially dealt with him in his life. Many of you listening to me this morning have known the Lord for many, many years. ~~And if you in capsule form~~ ^F From where you are this morning, ^{as you} ~~in your experience could look back upon your life and look at God's dealings with you, even though there may have been times of bitterness or times of misunderstanding, and times when you wondered why God didn't come to meet you in your need, some of you have gone through deep waters. Many of you have loved ones in glory today that you continue to miss even though the time lengthens since they were with you here on earth. But~~ wouldn't you take this as a capsule of the way in which God has been dealing with you? "The Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting and his truth endureth to all generations." God never fails us. ~~and I look at my circumstances in the light of the Word of God and I find that with all the passing of the years, there hasn't been one single change in God but what He has done He continues~~ ^W When I see Him doing good things; exercising

His mercy, faithful under every condition, ~~you see then~~ I understand even more what kind of a God ~~that~~ He is.

VII. "BUT THEN FACE TO FACE"

Finally,

~~Now the one that I want to add to this, and I do it just to mention it. I am~~

going to ask you to turn ~~if you will~~ to I Corinthians 13. Now when a person starts out as Mr. A.W. Tozer describes it in ^{"pursuit of God,"} ~~pursuit of God~~, he starts out in a pursuit that can never end here on earth. And it seems from what we have in Scripture that

eternity is going to be a continuing revelation of the greatness and majesty and glory of our God. ^{Verse 12 of I Corinthians 13 reads, "For now we} ~~Just the 12th verse of I Corinthians 13. "Now we see through a~~
~~see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face, now I know~~
~~glass, darkly. But then face to face, then shall I know even as also I am known."~~
~~in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.~~
~~Now you know the reason heaven is going to be heaven is simply because then~~ ^{OUR}

~~our~~ knowledge of God will have a perfection about it that it can never have while we are here on earth. We love what we know of Him. I trust that your heart hungers to know more of Him. ~~this morning, even as we take the cup and the bread this morning remembering our Lord Jesus Christ in His death our purpose is that our hearts may be open that we may learn more of Him. But isn't it wonderful, don't you see to think of our dear people who go to be with the Lord, that they are stepping from a realm that, regardless of what they know of the Lord, it's like looking through glass darkly, but then suddenly, "face to face," then they know the truth concerning God in His perfection and glory and wonder and they realize when they get to heaven that the things they have learned on earth are in perfect agreement with what they have seen when they see God face to face. I trust that you and I will have increasing hunger in our hearts to know the Lord, and to see Him in more of His fullness as he is revealed to us in this wonderful Book.~~