

Our Infinite God's Greatness: The Importance of Understanding God's Sovereignty and Omnipotence

Thinking Rightly about God

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us," Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, 4.

"Only after an ordeal of painful self-probing are we likely to discover what we actually believe about God. A right conception of God is basic not only to systematic theology but to practical Christian living as well.....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." Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, Chapter 1

OUR VIEW OF GOD AFFECTS US

Sovereignty:

Job 42:2 I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted
Psalm 115:3 Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.

Omnipotence:

Jeremiah 10:12 It is He who made the Earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom

Q: How is an all-powerful ruler comforting? Q: How is an all-powerful ruler discomforting?

"Most Christians salute the sovereignty of God but believe in the sovereignty of man"--R.C. Sproul

"Sovereignty is a humbling doctrine—it reminds us that God is God and we are not. When we think we're ready to advise God on how to run the universe, he just looks at us and says, 'How many stripes do you have on your sleeve?' That's what sovereignty does. It puts us in the place where we feel free to say nothing about the way God runs the universe," Terry Crist *Awakened to Destiny: living the life you were designed to live*

OUR TENDENCIES—We want to Manage God

IMPACT OF LIMITED THINKING/RESOURCES

Fear

Insecurity

Control

Justice

Despair

Examples

RIGHT THINKING: REALIZE OUR NEED FOR SOMETHING GREATER THAN OURSELVES

How to Think Rightly?

Understand our Weakness and God's Strength

Understand our finite smallness and God's infinite Greatness

ISAIAH 40

WE are WEAK, SMALL, FINITE

Isaiah 40: 6 People are like grass. Their beauty fades as quickly as the flowers in a field. ⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fade beneath the breath of the Lord, and so it is with people.

Isaiah 40:15 All the nations of the world are but a drop in the bucket. They are nothing more than dust on the scales....¹⁷ The nations of the world are worth nothing to him. In his eyes they count for less than nothing—mere emptiness and froth.

Isaiah 40:22 God sits above the circle of the earth. The people below seem like grasshoppers to him! He spreads out the heavens like a curtain and makes his tent from them

Isaiah 40:24 He judges the great people of the world and brings them all to nothing. They hardly get started, barely taking root, when he blows on them and they wither. The wind carries them off like chaff.

Isaiah 40:30 Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion

GOD IS INFINITE, STRONG, GREAT

Isaiah 40:8 God stands forever...¹⁰ Yes, the Sovereign Lord is coming in power. He will rule with a powerful arm.

Isaiah 40:12 Who else has held the oceans in his hand? Who has measured off the heavens with his fingers? Who else knows the weight of the earth or has weighed the mountains and hills on a scale?

Isaiah 40:13 Who is able to advise the Spirit of the Lord? Who knows enough to give Him advice or teach Him?¹⁴ Has the Lord ever needed anyone's advice? Does he need instruction about what is good? Did someone teach him what is right or show him the path of justice?

Isaiah 40:15 No, for all the nations of the world are but a drop in the bucket. They are nothing more than dust on the scales. He picks up the whole earth as though it were a grain of sand.

Isaiah 40:16 All the wood in Lebanon's forests and all Lebanon's animals would not be enough to make a burnt offering worthy of our God.

Isaiah 40:18 To whom can you compare God? What image can you find to resemble him?²¹ Haven't you heard? Don't you understand? Are you deaf to the words of God—the words he gave before the world began?

Isaiah 40:25-26 To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal? Asks the Holy One. Look up into the heavens. Who created the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Because of his great power and incomparable strength, not a single one is missing.

Isaiah 40: 28, 29 Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.

WE NEED TO ALLOW THESE TRUTHS TO SINK DEEPLY INTO OUR HEARTS

“Since he has at his command all the power in the universe, the Lord can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for renewal of strength. All the Power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished fullness of His own infinite being,” Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, 73.

“Well may the saint trust such a God! He is worthy of implicit confidence. Nothing is too hard for Him. If God were stunted in might and had a limit to His strength we might well despair. But seeing that He is clothed with omnipotence, no prayer is too hard for Him to answer, no need too great for Him to supply, no passion too strong for Him to subdue; no temptation too powerful for Him to deliver from, no misery too deep for Him to relieve,” Arthur Pink, *Attributes of God*, 51.

RESULT OF THINKING RIGHTLY: Learning to trust our great God

Why might we trust such a God?

Comforting
Power to combat fear
Power to sustain through trials
Power to forgive
Hope in the darkest situations

COMFORT

- Isaiah 40: 1 Comfort, O Comfort my people, says your God
- Deuteronomy 31:6 Be Strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.
- Jeremiah 9:11 For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord; plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

WE HAVE ACCESS TO HIS POWER

- Isaiah 40: 29 He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.
- Isaiah 40: 31 Those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.
- Ephesians 3: 20, 21 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen
- Ephesians 1:19-20 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same power that raised Christ from the dead.....

HOW CAN WE ACCESS THIS POWER?

- Understand who He is and who we are.... KNOW HIM...
- He works through weakness—surrender to Him— adopt His agenda

“It is always upon human weakness . . . not on human strength and confidence, that God chooses to build his kingdom; and he can (do this) not merely in spite of our ordinariness and helplessness and . . . infirmities, but precisely because of them. It is a thrilling discovery to make, and it can revolutionize our . . . outlook” James S. Stewart, quoted in Oswald Sanders, *Dynamic Spiritual Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1999), p. 204.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE PRACTICALLY?

- Meditate on His greatness/ Combat our fears and insecurities with truth

Romans 8:31 If God *is* for us, who *is* against us?

Psalm 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,/And in His law he meditates day and night.

³He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by ^bstreams of water,/Which yields its fruit in its season
And its ^cleaf does not wither;/And ^din whatever he does, he prospers.

- Difficult people and “Enemies”
He will set things right—There will be ultimate justice
Deuteronomy 32:35, Revelations 5

- Seemingly Hopeless Situations
Interpret Circumstances in light of Truth—He works through difficult circumstances

Genesis 50:20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for God in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

- Daily
Lean on Friends who will point you to Him and Commit to reminding each other

Identify underlying lies we are believing

WILL YOU TRUST HIM?

- Think about the last time you were hurting, worried, fearful, and you took control... What it would look like to trust God the next time?
- How will you meditate on Him?

REVELATIONS 5:11 ff

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.

There is No One Like God

Exodus 8:10 There is no one like Yahweh our God."

Exodus 15:11 "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?"

Deuteronomy 4:35 "Yahweh, He is God; there is no other besides Him."

Deuteronomy 4:39 "Yahweh, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other."

Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me"

Deuteronomy 32:3 "For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God!"

Deuteronomy 33:26 "There is none like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to your help, And through the skies in His majesty

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one!"

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go

1 Samuel 2:2 There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

2 Samuel 7:22 "You are great, O Lord God; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You"

2 Samuel 22:32 "For who is God, besides Yahweh? And who is a rock, besides our God?"

1 Kings 8:60 "Yahweh is God; there is no one else."

2 Kings 19:15 "You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth."

1 Kings 8:23 He said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart,

1 Chronicles 17:20 "O Lord, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You"

1 Chronicles 29:11 "Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.

Nehemiah 9:6 "You alone are Yahweh."

Psalms 18:31 "For who is God, but Yahweh? And who is a rock, except our God"

Psalms 83:18 That they may know that You alone, whose name is the LORD, Are the Most High over all the earth.

Psalms 86:10 For you are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God.

Psalms 89:6-8 For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, And awesome above all those who are around Him? O LORD God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.

Psalms 27:10 Even if my father and mother abandon me, Yahweh will hold me close

Psalms 73: 25,26 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Psalms 34: 8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

Psalms 135:5-6 For I know that the LORD is great And that our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps

Isaiah 37:20 "You alone, Lord, are God."

Isaiah 41:10 "Do not fear for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Surely I will help you. Surely I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Isaiah 43:10 "Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me."

Isaiah 44:6 "I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me."

Isaiah 44:8 "Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any *other* Rock? I know of none."

Isaiah 45:5 "I am Yahweh, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God."

Isaiah 45:14 "Surely, God is with you, and there is none else, No other God."

Isaiah 45:18 "I am Yahweh, and there is none else."

Isaiah 45:20-22 "Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They have no knowledge, Who carry about their wooden idol And pray to a god who cannot save. "Declare and set forth your case; Indeed, let them consult together Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me. "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other."

Isaiah 41:13 For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

Isaiah 46:10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Isaiah 28: 29 All this also comes from the Lord Almighty, whose plan is wonderful, whose wisdom is magnificent

Isaiah 43:11, "I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me."

Isaiah 46:9 "I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me"

Zechariah 14:9 "And Yahweh will be king over all the earth; in that day Yahweh will be *the only* one, and His name *the only* one."

Jeremiah 10:5-6 "Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, And they cannot speak; They must be carried, Because they cannot walk! Do not fear them, For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good." There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might.

Ezekiel 38:23 And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

1 Timothy 6:16He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him *be* honor and eternal dominion! Amen."

Revelation 4:11 "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."