

Journey Seven

Omniall infinitude™
begin - return - continue

M. A. Helland



*Bright, White
and
Right*

*"**OMNIALLINFINITUDE™** builds a bridge on which my head and my heart can shake hands. It combines deep principles with ancient practices, and is a pathway to knowing God in order to love Him. I encourage you to walk the path; cross the bridge."*

*Dr. Jim Altizer
Azusa Pacific University*

Bright, White and Right

journey elements

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what comes to your mind?

Bright, White and Right

We think of bright lights and sparkling diamonds,
Star Bright, Star Light, first star I see tonight.
The brightest star stands out in a crowd
The ones with all the bright ideas and the bright futures
They wake up bright and early, all bright eyed and bushy tailed, ready to greet the bright morning sun,
hoping all the while to be one of the Best and the Brightest.

We work hard to brighten our smiles and keep our eyes clear and bright.
We wear bright colors and seek those bright moments in the brightest spot on the stage,
Showcasing our brightest hour.
Looking on the bright side, our futures look bright and breezy.

Sometimes it's too bright, too white...it hurts our eyes and we must look away.
It's so bright we are blinded, like high beams shining in our eyes as we drive.
Where are those sunglasses...to protect our precious eyes?

White lights, too bright, too clean, too revealing...showing all the dirt, like white pants or white carpets.
Purity, white as snow, a starting over point, a clean slate; like a new piece of white paper.
White sheets, white clouds, white knights on white horses.....
Happy white, virginal white, like brides with white roses.

We look for the white line in the middle of the road to keep us safe,
And then go to white sales looking for white elephant gifts.
Sometimes we tell white lies, raise a white flag, or play white noise,
Preparing to perform a white glove test.

White-collar workers use white boards and write white papers.
We hang on for the white-knuckle ride and then get off looking white as a ghost.
Some people will say black is white and then bleed you white...all the while whitewashing their pasts.

Angels are white, pure, good and holy.
Doctors wear white, sterile, clean, healing, granting new beginnings.
White is right, perfect, true.

We are told to "Do it the right the first time".
And that's a step in the right direction because we all know the customer is always right.
We need to get off on the right foot, to get our heads screwed on right.

All so we will be on the right track, going the right way, and not the wrong way.
Are we in our right minds? Will we hit the right notes?

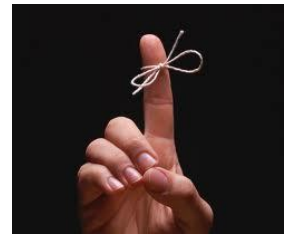
If we're lucky we might be at the right place at the right time – and find Mr. Right.
He can be our Right Hand Man.
And hopefully he will not see right through us and catch us dead to rights.
After all, we do have God given, inalienable rights, starting with the right to life.
We can walk right in and step right up.

But not without Jesus..
So bright, so white, so right
We would never see God without Him.
So attractive, so pure, so perfect
He shines into our dark souls and warms our cold hearts.
The Bright, White, Right, Light in the Darkness.

remember

Hebrews 7: 26

"Such a high priest meets our need - one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens." NIV



Use the space below to help you memorize the verse above.

For additional background on the *remember* element, see the [appendix](#).

Now write out the verses from:

Journey 1: **Psalm 145:3**

Journey 2: **Exodus 3: 14a**

Journey 3: **Revelation 1:8**

Journey 4: **Jeremiah 29:11**

Journey 5: **Joshua 1:9**

Journey 6: **Psalm 145:8-9**

read

John 14-17



Please read all the above chapters through completely on three separate days, once from a **modern translation** such as the *NIV* or *NAS*, once in a **modern paraphrase** such as *The Message*, and then **once again with a pad and pencil** by your side as you record your thoughts and observations. It is also helpful to **read the selections aloud**. As you read, underline words that describe who God is or names He is called.

This element is about **reading what it says** – try to put aside any preconceived ideas about what you think it says, or what you may have concluded based on other studies or classes. We are not saying those ideas are wrong, but for this Element, we just want to read it as if for the first time. Please **read for the storyline** – and see if you can then faithfully retell it in your own words.

First Reading: Modern Translation – which one did you use?

Second Reading: Modern Paraphrase – which one did you use?

Third Reading: Reading Notes

John 14:

John 15:

John 16:

John 17:

Descriptions of God:

Names Used for God:

journal

7.1 Dead Right

Jesus died.

God sent His One and Only Son, Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, to earth with the distinct purpose of making Himself known.

And Jesus died. He was put to death, crucified.

Jesus was a real human being, a historical person.

And because He was called only things God would be called,
Did things only God could do,
Fulfilled prophecies only God could fulfill,
And embodied attributes that only apply to God.....



We know Jesus is God.

God's Man confirmed by God's signs
God's Answer to the problem of evil and sin
God's ultimate Promise that came true.

And God let Him die.

Why did He come at all?

To Testify to the Truth – as a **Prophet** – about Himself, God, mankind, and sin
To Fulfill the Law and the Prophets – as the **Messiah King**
And to Seek and Save the Lost – by providing the final solution to the problem of sin
Granting us access to God and salvation from sin
And a new life now and forever.
He is our **Priest**.

And He has access.

Prophet, Priest, and King....and He died. Why?

Because God had a solution in place all along. Blood sacrifices atoned for sin.

The blood sacrifice of the perfect, righteous, pure, holy Jesus, through His death, paid the penalty for all mankind's sins for all time. No one else could do it.

No longer is an earthly High Priest necessary to gain access to God.

In Jesus, our Priest became our sacrifice and took our punishment – death.

Then He rose again and now sits in Heaven giving us direct access to the Father.

He has access.

We can't get through to God without HIM.

Your turn:

List some places you can't go or things you can't do without special access.

List some ways you can gain this kind of access.



analyze

Chapter Nitty Gritty

For this exercise we will do a deeper analysis on one of our Reading chapters for this journey. **Read John 17** completely through at least three times. Write down and divide what is going on into the three categories below.

What Jesus did for the Father:

What Jesus is praying for the Father to do:

What the disciples did, what they know, and what they will do:

journal

7.2 Whiter Than White

Pure white.

Absolutely clean, no blemish, pure, virginal, innocent...

Doctors wear white coats because it symbolizes hope and healing

White ribbons denounce violence against women

Good guys wear white hats, white sheets give you pleasant dreams.



There are more shades of white paint than any other color. And they all look white until you put one next to the other...add a drop of pink, or yellow or blue, and the white becomes Cloudy Day, Downy, Snowdrift or Fog.....a pretty name to cover up the impurity.

Too much white is hard to handle

It's hard on the eyes – we are forced to look away

It's austere and uncomfortable and sterile

Pure white light will blind and destroy

It's so hard to keep clean – like white pants, white carpets, white shoes, and white cars

It shows everything, reveals everything

Just like the Holiness of God

God starts at Holy, Holy, Holy.

His singular attribute of sinless perfection, untainted, spotless and pure,

Set so far apart from us that we could never ever, ever, ever reach Him on our own.

So far beyond our comprehension, unattainable by man, unapproachable to us...



Sin and Sinners cannot come into His Presence.

That's why Adam and Eve were barred from the Garden.

The closer we get to Him, we are undone, just like Isaiah, Moses, and John, as His holiness produces moral shock as our true sinfulness and unworthiness is revealed.

He is too bright to be seen, and if we saw Him, we would surely die.

That's why He hid Moses in the cleft of the rock as He passed by.

Unfortunately, unholiness is so natural for us, we don't even notice it. We consider sin more like a crime where there are degrees and only the really bad ones count. We have excuses and rationalizations for everything else.

His holiness is why He hates sin – all sin. We, on the other hand, only hate some sins, put up with most and some we love and defend.

His Holiness sets Him so far apart from us that there is nothing we can do to gain His acceptance and access on our own. Even worse, He is not just separated from sin, His Holiness demands hostility towards it.

And yet, we are promised that though our sins are scarlet, they will be as white as snow.
It all depends on our access.

Your turn:

Name some sins we might excuse, love and defend.

List some pure, unblemished, clean things and how we try to keep them that way.





investigate

Holy, Righteous, and Just

Define: Write a brief definition next to each of the above words using a regular dictionary, not a Bible dictionary. (Click on any word to link to dictionary.com)

∞ [Holy, Holiness](#)

∞ [Righteous, Right](#)

∞ [Sanctification](#)

∞ [Just, Justice](#)

∞ [Pure](#)

∞ [Beautiful](#)

∞ [Fair](#)

∞ [Equity](#)

∞ [Morality](#)

∞ [Spotless](#)

∞ [Untainted](#)

∞ [Worthy](#)

∞ [Virtuous](#)

∞ [Blessed](#)

∞ [Honorable](#)

∞ [Awesome](#)

∞ [Sacred](#)

Now write your own definition for **Bright, White and Right below:**

Review:

Next to each verse below note Who or What is Holy and What Responses are expected to Holiness.

Exodus 3:5-6

Exodus 19: 23-24

Deuteronomy 7:5-6

Psalms 24: 3-4

Psalms 33:21

Psalms 77:12-13

Psalms 96:9

Psalms 98:1

Psalms 99:9

Psalms 145:21

Isaiah 6:3-4

John 6: 68-69

John 14:26-27

John 17:11

I Corinthians 1:30-31

2 Corinthians 7:1

Ephesians 5:25-27

Hebrews 10:10-18

1 Peter 2:9

Read the following verses and note what you learn about *justice* and *righteousness*.

Psalm 96:12-13

Psalm 97:1-6

Isaiah 59:15-20

Matthew 12:18-21

Acts 10:34-35

Romans 3:25-26

Conclude:

List some Holy entities.

List some Holy responses.

How do justice and righteousness work together?

10 things

Bright, White, and Right

1. **Yahweh Ysidgenu** is the Hebrew word for God meaning “The Lord our Righteousness”. He is the One who has intervened on our behalf and brought us back into fellowship with Himself. This same word for righteousness is also translated honest, right, and just. The only righteousness we will ever have is that which Christ provides for us through his death and resurrection.¹
2. **Holy, Holy, Holy**, should probably be read as Holy, Holier, Holiest. It is the only attribute of God that is ever mentioned three times in a row.
3. **The only acceptable** response to the holiness of God is “Woe is me!” as we, for the first time, understand our true state and unfortunate fate. The only acceptable response to Christ’s gift of redemption, rescuing us from our unfortunate fate, is to say, “Here I am, Lord. Send me!”
4. **Holiness denotes** separation from anything sinful, impure or morally imperfect. In describing God it requires He be morally perfect on one hand and totally separate and free from evil on the other.
5. **Stephen Charnock** – “Holy, as a prefix to His name in the Bible, is used more often than any other attribute.”²
6. **God cannot not be Holy**, pure, moral, and separate from evil, he must act Holy which leads to His right and just behavior. He is always right, always does the right and fair thing.
7. **A.W. Tozer** – “God’s holiness is not simply the best we know infinitely bettered. It stands apart, unique, unapproachable, incomprehensible, and unattainable. The natural man is blind to it. Only the Spirit of the Holy One can impart to the human spirit the knowledge of the holy.”³
8. **Arthur Pink** – “God has often forgiven sinners, but he never forgives sin; and the sinner is only forgiven on the ground of Another having borne his punishment.”⁴
9. **J.I. Packer** – “But the character of God is the guarantee that all wrongs shall be righted someday...and no problems of cosmic unfairness will remain to haunt us. God is the judge, so justice will be done. Would a God who did not care about right and wrong be a good and admirable being?”⁵
10. **Apostle John** – “God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.” I John 1: 5. NIV
Jesus – “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12 NIV

Your turn:

Pick one or two of the above quotes or statements and share any insights or challenges it presents to you.

journal

7.3 Who says?

From the minute we're born we start measuring up, conforming to standards, being evaluated, learning right and wrong, good and bad, how to get along, how to get what we want, how to not get caught...



There are standards and tests and grades. We soon learn other people aren't perfect. We may mess up now and then, but all in all, we do more good things than bad. No one is perfect. We're much better than those other folks. We hope deep down inside that is good enough.

We're self righteous.....setting our own standards so we can save ourselves. Many seek to justify their decency or rightness through social causes, environmentalism, and political action. The religious add burdensome rules on top of God's revealed Commandments. We look at the list of things we don't do, instead of the good we should do.

God, however, is not measured by a standard of righteousness set up by man. He sets the standard and His righteousness stems from his holiness. It is the attribute that describes how he acts, how he always does what is right in accordance with his character and includes all his commandments, promises and actions.



It is His ability to possess all the good qualities, evident in his attributes, and to maintain them in perfect balance at all times.

So – good enough is not good enough for God. Perfection is required and He gets to set the standard for judgment – the perfect, eternal standard of what right actions look like. This always reveals iniquity, sin, missing the mark, no matter how good and right we think we are. His standards are so high, there is no way we can meet them on our own.



We think we just have to be better than the next guy. God says we have to be like Jesus. We figure we can just clean up our outer life, while what we do in private is no big deal and no one else's business. God says righteousness begins with an assessment of our hearts and all that we have hidden there.

God cannot and will not pass over wrong doing. He knows we need His help. He is always right no matter how it looks to us and we will never receive less from God than what is right.

The key is to realize we cannot save ourselves by setting our own standards and living up to them. But how do we live up to God's standards? Because He is the only righteous One, He is the only One who can show and tell us how to be righteous.

Jesus is willing to gift us His righteousness with new power and a new heart if we are willing to stop trying to save ourselves and let Him save us instead.

It comes with His access.

Your turn:

List some ways in your own life you have tried to save yourself by setting standards and then using them to judge yourself and others.

What are God's standards? How do you find out?

practice

Guidance

Learning to Listen and Do



Guidance is the flip side of Prayer. It is God communicating to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit with the ultimate goal of transforming our lives to be more like Christ's, to be conformed to the moral law He has already revealed to us in his Word. He is guiding us to carry out His will and plan for our lives.

Since the Holy Spirit is always with us, we are receiving guidance from Him all the time. Most of us need to learn to listen and recognize His voice, which takes practice in itself. He speaks to us and guides our thoughts, often without us even realizing. We need to be reminded to listen, to look to Him for guidance in the ordinary daily events and not just in emergencies or the big life changing decisions.

Your first assignment this week is to write the word "Listen" on a couple of 3 x 5 cards and put them where you will see them. Then Listen.



Guidance is the one spiritual practice that **is dependent** on many others. You will need to practice **prayer, meditation, study, confession, solitude and silence** to fine tune your spiritual senses to recognize the voice of God. His ultimate purpose is not to get you to do the right things, or to choose the correct path, but to make you into the right kind of person.

The next step is to decide that you want to be guided. So.....do you?

It all comes back to faith that God knows better than we do and can be trusted with our lives. We can start by learning to listen to the Spirit as we carry out the daily ordinary activities of our lives and interact with people. We aren't asking Him what we should do, we are asking Him if there is anything else we should do, how can we be Jesus' representative at this moment? What would He have us do? Then wait. If nothing, move on. But, if you do notice the Spirit nudging, respond with action.

Remember, it only works if you are willing to respond. Is there something you should have done, but didn't? Now's the time to do it.

Over time, we will get to a point where we won't even have to ask or listen, it will be obvious what the Spirit wants us to do. It all depends on our walking in the Spirit, and continuing our use of the spiritual practices, ultimately learning to say, "Not my will, but thy will be done."

Making Godly Decisions

Do we need to ask God for His input on every decision? Does He care what I eat for breakfast, or if I wear black or brown shoes? Does He care if I buy a car or where I go out to eat?

God cares about everything, but He is most concerned with our internal spiritual growth, our heart, our attitudes, that we reach our spiritual potential and bring glory to Him. With that in mind, He has already provided us with 100% of his moral law in the Bible. We need to know and understand what it says through meditation, memorization and study and then apply it to our lives. Just doing this will take care of most of our decision making problems.

For those areas outside His Moral Law, and there are plenty, it is useful to run through some of

the following criteria and scenarios before you make any decision.

1. **Common Sense:** Use common sense and good judgment – don't hold out for a "miracle".
2. **Personal Preference:** In areas where there are options of equal value, choose your personal preference. He has promised us the desires of our hearts.
3. **Pros and Cons:** Take into consideration any circumstances surrounding the situation. These could include open or closed doors (opportunities), cost, value, availability of others, supplies, time, etc. Make a list of pros and cons based on this information.
4. **Prior Experiences:** Also consider the results or experiences of prior similar decisions.
5. **Wise Counsel:** It is always helpful to get the opinion of one or more wise spiritual counselors. Make sure they have nothing to gain from your decision, and that they give you Biblical principles and personal experiences to support their counsel.
6. **Spiritual Expediency:** Search God's Word and look for the most spiritually expedient outcome. Don't be afraid to take risks for God.
7. **Check Emotional Bias:** Admit any emotional bias and make sure it does not impact the final outcome.
8. **Freedom:** Remember there may be equally good choices and others may not make the same decision as you.
9. **Responsibility:** Whatever you decide, take responsibility for it.



How does the Holy Spirit guide?

The Bible is full of examples of numerous ways the Holy Spirit guided believers. From the appearance of angels to a still small voice, God will use whatever He wills to communicate with us. The end game is that we gain the mind of Christ so we begin to think as He does, and are so guided. Here are some examples of ways believers have heard from the Lord.

- Dreams and visions
- Audible voice
- Word of Scripture captures your attention while reading
- Word of Scripture comes to your mind
- A thought or idea comes to mind
- You "feel" moved to do something
- Another person speaks to you
- You are moved to create something
- Conviction deep in your soul
- Can't get something out of your mind
- Wake up in the middle of the night thinking about it

Remember, whatever His leading, it will never conflict with the moral code presented in His Word. If it does, it is not from Him.

Finally, a few more things that might be helpful as we begin to deepen our relationship and rely on the guidance of the Spirit of God.

1. Often you will only get guidance when you need it and not before.
2. You will not always know and may never know all the circumstances or the reasons why.
3. Receiving guidance has nothing to do with spiritual maturity.
4. Guidance is not insider information, fortune telling, or a Christian horoscope– He is not going to tell us what is behind Door #3.
5. God's will is not always hitting the bull's eye or staying on a tightrope. If we stray, fall off, or

- miss the mark, He will come find us and lead us back. He is the Shepherd, and we are the Sheep.
6. Standing still is not an option. He expects us to decide, move on and mature. Saying No or deciding to wait is not standing still.
 7. Be careful not to confuse your own voice with that of the Shepherd.
 8. If you understand what you are supposed to do and then don't do it, the Spirit's voice is quenched.
 9. Spiritual maturity is recognized by the amount of time it takes us to respond to the voice of God.

Practice Guidance using the process below.

1. Identify the decision. If the decision does not qualify as common sense or personal preference continue on.
2. Continue to Pray for the guidance of Holy Spirit throughout the entire process.
3. What counsel does God's word provide?
4. Is there a deadline for making this decision?
5. Rate the importance of this decision. Consider the financial, moral, physical impact on yourself and others now and in the future.
6. Consider the pros and cons of your options.
7. Consult wise counselors.
8. Consider your prior experiences with similar decisions.
9. If possible, sleep on it, walk away from it, clear your mind.
10. Listen.
11. Decide.
12. Do.



Final Thoughts....

Sometimes decisions are obvious. They make sense, everyone agrees. It works out well.

Sometimes decisions are difficult. They go against conventional wisdom. People think you're crazy. And then it doesn't work out.

Sometimes decisions are easy and we make them difficult. We over spiritualize them and then miss them altogether. And the answer was right in front of our nose.

Sometimes decisions are to do nothing, to hold our tongue, not strike back, not send that email, not go to that party, to wait, to trust, to listen.

Sometimes decisions left unmade are opportunities lost, adventures put on hold, potential unmet. I love this story below. I have heard it many, many times and it always reminds me of how our miraculous, wonder working God often provides for us in ordinary, obvious, and personal ways.

A Decision Making Disaster

There once was a man who lived in a big house on a river. One day, during a horrible rain storm, the river starting rising. The wind blew, the water crashed against the levee and the levee eventually broke. The town officials sent out an emergency warning over all channels.

The man began to pray to God to rescue him.

The water began to cover his yard and the entire street began to flood. The local Fire Dept began emergency evacuation procedures, driving up and down the street, warning people to leave now while they could still drive their own vehicles.

They knocked on the man's house. He said he would be ok because God would miraculously rescue him.



But the water kept rising. The man had to move upstairs as the water filled the bottom story of his house. He continued to pray, with complete confidence that God would rescue him.

A police motorboat came by looking for stranded people. They saw the man looking out his window and urged him to step out the window and into their boat. "The river is still rising," they said, "but we can take you to safety."

He said he was fine. God had promised to rescue him. They should concentrate on helping others.

Eventually the man had to move up onto the roof of his home as the water filled his entire house. There was nothing to see but water, and the tops of trees and houses all around him. He continued to pray for God to rescue him.

A National Guard rescue helicopter saw him and hovered overhead. They lowered a basket and urged him to climb in. The water was inching up the roof. They told him to hurry, as the water would soon cover his house and sweep him away.



"No worries", he said. "I have faith God is going to rescue me".

The helicopter flew away, leaving the man all alone. The water covered his roof and swept him away and he drowned.

When he got to heaven and met God face to face, he said he had one question.

"God, I faithfully prayed for you to rescue me. But, you didn't and now I am dead. Why didn't you save me?"

And God said. "Son, I sent you a warning, I sent you a fire truck, I sent you a police boat, I sent you a National Guard helicopter. What more were you looking for?"

Personal Reflections on Guidance:

1. List some important decisions people make during their lives.

2. Name a couple of decisions you made with guidance. Where do you go for guidance?

3. Name a couple of decisions you made that significantly changed your life and that changed someone else's life? Did you get guidance for those decisions?

4. What kinds of decisions do you spend too much time contemplating? Why are these decisions more difficult than others?

5. What kinds of decisions do you ignore or put off? Why do you do this?

6. What do you do when people ask you for guidance?

7. How do you determine if you have made a good decision?

8. How do you seek God for guidance?

why?

Guidance

John White – “You may seek guidance, but God desires to give something better, Himself. Which would you prefer to have while driving through a strange city, a complicated set of instructions from someone on the sidewalk, or a kindly stranger who says, “Look, I’m on my way there right now. Let me hop in and I’ll show you the way.”⁶

Richard Foster – “God does guide the individual richly and profoundly, but he also guides groups of people and can instruct the individual through the group experience.”⁷

David – “Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth, and teach me for you are God my Savior and my hope is in you all day long.” Psalm 25:4-5 NIV

James – “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord.” James 1:5-7 NIV

John Ortberg – “Many people give little thought to spiritual guidance until they face a major decision....What they really want is not guidance...they want insider information so they can know which door to choose. They want to know beforehand which choice will lead to money, happiness, and success.”⁸

John White – “He wants us to know his mind. He wants us to grasp his very heart. We need minds so soaked with the content of Scripture, so imbued with biblical outlooks and principles, so sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s prompting that we will know instinctively the upright step to take in any circumstance, small or great.”⁹

Jesus – “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.” John 10:27 NIV

Sons of Korah – “For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.” Psalm 48:14 NIV

John Ortberg – “The problem is...that one assumes that whatever happens as a result of our passivity is God’s will. This is obviously not true. Try going out and sitting in the middle of an expressway saying, ‘I’m not going to move. I’ll just sit right here and if I don’t get run over by a car, then I will know it is God’s doing and not me acting in the flesh.’ We would consider such action stupid.”¹⁰

Solomon – “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

Your turn:

Pick one or two of the above quotes or statements and share any insights or challenges it presents to you.

Journal

7.4 Fair is Fair

That's not fair!

What we really mean is, I didn't get my way. I didn't get the same as you. Maybe we followed the rules perfectly and someone who cheated ended up with the prize. We earned it and they got it. Perhaps we got lost in the shuffle, missed the plane, lost the part, showed up late for the interview because of traffic.

Or bad things keep happening to us and our neighbors just seem to sail through life with no problems. Why me?

Or others were born with beauty, brains and money, and we weren't.



What is fairness? Equal rights, equal access, equal distribution, equal opportunity, equal outcome?



What about extenuating circumstances? How many chances do we get for it to be fair? How many do overs?

Governments and legal systems spend much of their time creating fairness by making and enforcing the laws, yet many still seem to be treated more fairly than others.

We want and think we deserve to be valued and treated fairly.

And God has taken us up on that.....**He is, in fact, the Fairest of them all.**

God's Justice or "Justness" goes hand in hand with His Holiness and Righteousness. His Justice is the enforcement of the standards of His Righteousness, which flow from the perfect moral and sinless perfection of His Holiness. Purity sets the standard and then the bright light of His Righteousness reveals the iniquity and evil of sin so it can be dealt with justly.

God's Justice is the power to do what is fair and to judge impartially with His Holiness and Righteousness. He demands sins be dealt with or else. Everyone receives what they deserve. Nothing escapes His notice.

While He feels anger about sin, He deals with it in ways that are always holy, good and just. It is the universal application of equity to moral situations.

His remunerative justice gives out rewards while his retributive justice metes out punishments.

God is Just. God is Fair. He sets the standards.



There are no special deals.
There is nowhere to hide.

Unless you have access to Jesus.

Your turn:

Name a time in your life you felt you were treated unfairly. How could this situation been handled fairly? Would others have felt they were treated unfairly if you were treated fairly?

List some areas where fairness is important to you.

inventory

U R Uniquely U

God has gifted each of us with strengths, experiences, talents, and personalities to carry out the plans He has for us. Each of us is unique. It is important to use everything He has given us for His glory. This is a process and we need to make sure we pay attention but not obsess over it. Get started by answering the questions below.

Have you spent most of your life trying to overcome your weaknesses or develop your strengths?

Would you rather root for the team from the sidelines, be on the team but on the bench, be on the team and on the field, or start a new team?

What are some things people love that you do, create, or are?

What unlocks your compassion?

If someone said to you "I know what you've done!" what would be your response? Would you take in it a positive or negative way?

When do you feel most alive?

What makes the time pass quickly?

Which question speaks the most to your heart right now:

Who can I trust?
Is there anything worth living for?
Does anyone care?

Do you have a dream? What is it?

If you answered No, did you ever have a dream? What was it?

Is it important to you to have a dream or purpose?



journal

7.5 The Back Story

Suppose that once upon a time, a good and loving God created people in His own image. Suppose He gave those people free will, so that they could make their own choices. Suppose He set them up in an idyllic environment, with plenty of food and sunshine and interesting things to do.

Suppose He imposed one restriction on them, warning them that if they violated the restriction, they would lose the gift of life He had given them.

Suppose they violated the restriction, for no good reason, just because they felt like it. Suppose that, instead of taking their lives, God made provisions for them and forgave them. Suppose that their descendants repeated the same pattern, over and over again.

Suppose that God bestowed gifts on one particular nation, so that they could know Him deeply and help others break the destructive pattern.

Suppose this chosen nation rebelled too.

Suppose that, time after time, God forgave this nation, delivered them from the messes they'd gotten into, and sent special messengers to communicate to them. Suppose these people killed the messengers.

Suppose the people turned their backs on God, invented other religions, and worshiped idols they carved out of stone, and animals and mountains and rivers and streams, instead of God.

Suppose, in an ultimate act of redemption, God Himself came to them in a human body as the Son of God, not to condemn them, but to redeem them.

Suppose instead of welcoming Him, these people rejected, tortured and killed Him. Suppose that God accepted the death of His Son as payment for the sins of the very people who put Him to death.

Suppose that God offered His Son's murderers complete forgiveness, transcendent peace, and eternal life as a free gift.

Suppose God said, "I demand only one thing from you in return, that you honor my Son, who gave His life for you."

If God said all that, would you be willing to say, "God, you aren't being fair. You haven't done enough. I want another option"?

The wonder is not, Why is there only one way?
The wonder is..... Why is there any Way at all?¹⁶

Adapted from R.C. Sproul, Reason to Believe, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982, 41-43.
As seen in The God Questions by Hal Seed and Dan Grider, Outreach Publishing, 2006, p. 69-70.



Your turn:

List some things people think God should be or do to be fairer (from their human perspective). How does one's perspective and context determine their view of what is fair and just?

adventuring

How about lunch?

Ok, this should be easy. Call someone you've been meaning to call and just haven't got around to it. You know who it is. Anyway, call them and go out to lunch.

But, go somewhere new, somewhere you wouldn't normally go for whatever reason, maybe too expensive, too earthy, too ethnic, too fast, too slow, too far away, whatever. See if you can enjoy just being with your friend and not distracted by everything else.

Report back as usual. Bon Appetit!!



journal

7.6 The Bright White Light

One of the most amazing proofs God has provided for His existence is light. It is one of the most remarkable possessions we have and yet we rarely think twice about it - until the lights go out.



Throughout the Bible light has always been associated with God's holiness and righteousness. His first creative word in Genesis was to call forth light in the midst of darkness and it became the primary element in both the physical and spiritual realm. (Gen. 1:3)

Without light, the rest of God's amazing creation would be invisible and life would be impossible. It is a necessary energy for our mental, physical and emotional life. Without it we would die.

Physical light is energy, power, a force necessary to see things, for weather, for heat, growth, for life itself. It provides us most of our knowledge, necessities and comforts. Atoms absorb light and give off light as energy or heat. It causes necessary life sustaining chemical changes within cells such as photosynthesis.



It is the only thing in the universe that does not change under any circumstances. The speed of light is always the same. It can travel through a vacuum, even though sound cannot, which is why we can see stars but not hear them.

Light, by itself, brightly shining, would be of little value to anyone if God had not also created in His universe the ability to respond to it. Even single celled animals and earthworms move away from it. Bugs are drawn to it. Plants bend towards it. Man and animals respond to its warmth, beauty and guidance.

But light cannot be seen until it interacts with matter. How things look depends on what happens when light hits them. Colors and beauty are revealed!

Light reflecting off matter would still be useless if God had not provided the ability and organization to tap this valuable energy. Almost as remarkable as life itself is the instrument God gave us to process this light - the EYE - and the ability to use it - our SENSE of SIGHT.

The EYE is the most sensitive instrument to light ever created. Scientists have not been able to match it. It can detect the faintest glow, 1/1000 of a candle bright, and see stars billions and billions of miles away. The way eye muscles automatically open and shut to focus became the model for the original camera. Eyelids that reflexively shut and tears to wash away irritants provide protection. Blinking keeps our eyes lubricated and our eyelashes catch dust and irritants. All without any thought on our part.

Light zooms through space, bounces off something and shoots into our eye. The 127 million rods and cones, lined up on the retina in the back of the eye, send an electronic message to the brain over our optic nerve. This nerve is made up of 1 million fibers, 25 times larger than the nerve to the ear. The optic nerve takes the message to the brain's visual cortex, which processes 1 billion messages a second.

And we see. We can now see the light.....

All the time unconscious that any of this activity is going on...bouncing light waves, encoding cells, firing messages, decoding messages and reassembling again them in the brain, all billions of times each second.

If our eyes develop wrong, it affects our perception of life. We can't see and the world is a blur. It affects everything we do. It's time for a trip to the eye doctor.

The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. Matt. 6:22

God's spiritual light is not unlike his physical light. The piercing bright light of His righteousness and holiness exposes the spiritual darkness in the human heart, revealing truth about God and Man and the solution to the problem that exists between them.

No one is born with spiritual eyes, we are all born spiritually blind. Jesus, as the Light of the World, will not just fix our old eyes, but give us brand new ones. (John 9)

He is our spiritual eye doctor.

Then we will no longer walk in darkness. It comes with His access.

God is light, in him there is no darkness at all. I John 1:5

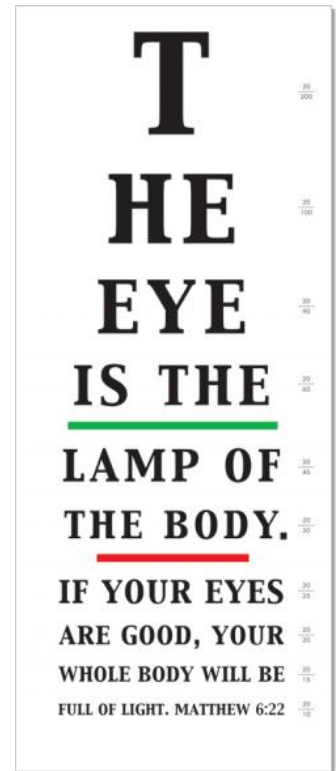
The Bright, White Light always shines.

Your turn:

How does physical light provide knowledge and comfort?

List some beautiful lights.

When and what kinds of lights do you notice?



Credit to Michael Noyes

lyrics

You might wonder why lyrics are included in a study like this.

I believe lyrics, or poetry put to music, as well as the accompanying music, have always been used by the Most High to impact our hearts and minds –

either by **our part in its creative process** –
 or through **our participation in its expression** –
 or through **our pleasure as a recipient** of its

sensory benefits.



Please try to access and listen to the musical versions on your own - **iTunes** and **youtube** are great online resources. If you are using the PDF version of this study and are connected to the internet, clicking on the song title will bring up a youtube video of each song. The lyrics presented will not always be spiritual in their original context – but much can still be gained from applying them to how they describe and point to the Most High God.

[Bless the Broken Road](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-vZlrBYLSU>

Words and Music by Marcus Hummon, Bobby Boyd and Jeff Hanna.

Performed by Rascal Flatts

Also covered by Selah, Carrie Underwood and originally by The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

© 1994, Careers-BMG Music Publishing Inc./Jeff Diggs Music

Youtube video uploaded by LyricStreet

I set out on a narrow way many years ago
 Hoping I would find true love along the broken road
 But I got lost a time or two
 Wiped my brow and kept pushing through
 I couldn't see how every sign pointed straight to you

Every long lost dream lead me to where you are
 Others who broke my heart they were like northern stars
 Pointing me on my way into your loving arms
 This much I know is true
 That God blessed the broken road
 That led me straight to you

I think about the years I spent just passing through
 I'd like to have the time I lost and give it back to you
 But you just smile and take my hand
 You've been there you understand
 It's all part of a grander plan that is coming true

Every long lost dream lead me to where you are
 Others who broke my heart they were like northern stars
 Pointing me on my way into your loving arms
 This much I know is true
 That God blessed the broken road
 That led me straight to you ¹¹

In 1994 after returning from his honeymoon, friends Bobby Boyd and Marcus Hummon got to talking about the circuitous route you take in life and how sometimes you think things are horrible and are never going to get better, but they lead you to something that ultimately is a lot better, whether it's a relationship, spiritual path, business or whatever.

Out of this conversation singer-songwriter Marcus Hummon co-wrote the song with Jeff Hanna (of Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) and Bobby Boyd. Nitty Gritty Dirt Band recorded it for the 1994 album *Acoustic*. Late winter of '94, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band was doing the record called 'Acoustic' in Colorado, and we recorded this simple, little song and we have played it almost nightly since we recorded it. Rascal Flatts toyed with recording it on their first album and they put it on hold for their second album. It had over 150 holds, and it got to be a running gag with us. In 2004, Brooks and Dunn had it on hold and they were about to cut it and I found out Rascal Flatts finally cut it. Then we got a call that said, 'Not only did we cut your song, but it's the next single!' I've been involved in songs that were fun little ditties that went up the charts, but the permanent impact of this song has been amazing. The favorite songs that you write aren't always the ones that also become the highest profile, so it was a total thrill for us.

Since then, many artists have recorded the song with Rascal Flatts's version being the highest-charting, becoming a #1 hit on the *Billboard* country music charts in 2005 and earning the songwriters a Grammy Award for Best Country Song.¹²

Your turn:

How can lost dreams, breaks in the road, wandering, and lost time all be signposts leading to God? Where is your broken road leading you?

Be Still

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nUuBjz4Vhc>

Words and Music by
Isaac Slade, Joseph King, David Welsh and Ben Wysocki
Performed by The Fray
© 2011, EMI April Music, Inc.
Youtube video uploaded by Noisca

Be still and know that I'm with you
Be still and know that I am here
Be still and know that I'm with you
Be still, be still, and know

When darkness comes upon you
And colors you with fear and shame
Be still and know that I'm with you
And I will say your name

If terror falls upon your bed
And sleep no longer comes
Remember all the words I said
Be still, be still, and know

And when you go through the valley
And the shadow comes down from the hill
If morning never comes to be
Be still, be still, be still

If you forget the way to go
And lose where you came from
If no one is standing beside you
Be still and know I am

Be still and know that I'm with you
Be still and know I am ¹³

The Fray's vocalist Isaac Slade penned this lullaby for his little brother Micah after he'd called him at four in the morning complaining that that he was having a hard time sleeping. The next morning Slade got out of bed, grabbed a guitar and started playing a comforting song for his brother. He told *Denver Westword*: "I didn't really write it; I just started playing it. The melody and the lyrics just kind of fell into place. It's only happened like that with maybe that song 'Happiness' - and that's probably it. It never really comes that easy. And this one just kind of downloaded from somewhere. And I hadn't finished it completely. I only had

two or three verses. I wrote it in, like, ten minutes and was playing it to my wife.

After breakfast Slade drove to the studio got out his phone and went over the lyrics. He recalled: "I sang it a couple of times, kind of hammering out the lyrics, pushing pause and record and pause and record. I finished it and texted the guys on my way and say, 'Hey, I got a lullaby I want to record. It's probably not going to fit the record, but I want to record it for my little brother and send it to him.' Because basically, I had no idea what to say. So I took one pass at it, and all the guys walked into the room and they all said, 'That sounds important. Do it again.' So they all laid down around my piano. I'll never forget them laying on their backs with their eyes closed and the lights turned down low at ten in the morning. I laid down a second take, and that made the record."

The song appears to be written from God's point of view, with the Lord comforting Micah and telling him "If no one is standing beside you/Be still and know I am."¹⁴

Your turn:

According to these lyrics, what are the benefits of Being Still? How does Being Still help you to remember? How does Remembering help you to know I Am? How does knowing that someone is with you help you not to be afraid?

I Refuse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B1Lv8k5pEc>

Words and Music Benjamin Glove and Joshua David Wilson
Performed by Josh Wilson
 © 2010, Sparrow Records
 Youtube video uploaded by *Josh Wilson*

Sometimes I just want to close my eyes
 And act like everyone's alright
 When I know they're not

This world needs God
 But it's easier to stand and watch
 I could say a prayer and just move on
 Like nothing's wrong

But I refuse
 Cause I don't want to live like I don't care
 I don't want to say another empty prayer
 Oh, I refuse

To sit around and wait for someone else
 To do what God has called me to do myself
 Oh, I could choose
 Not to move but I refuse

I can hear the least of these
 Crying out so desperately
 And I know we are the hands and feet
 Of You, oh God

So, if You say move
 It's time for me to follow through
 And do what I was made to do
 Show them who You are

'Cause I don't want to live like I don't care
 I don't want to say another empty prayer
 Oh, I refuse

To sit around and wait for someone else

To do what God has called me to do myself^{f L SEP}
Oh, I could choose
Not to move but I refuse^{f L L SEP SEP}

To stand and watch the weary and lost
Cry out for help^{f L SEP}
I refuse to turn my back^{f L SEP}
And try and act like all is well

I refuse to stay unchanged^{f L SEP}
To wait another day, to die to myself^{f L SEP}
I refuse to make one more excuse

'Cause I don't want to live like I don't care
I don't want to say another empty prayer^{f L SEP}
Oh, I refuse^{f L L SEP SEP}

To sit around and wait for someone else
To do what God has called me to do myself
Oh, I could choose^{f L SEP}
Not to move but I refuse

I refuse
I refuse ¹⁵

Your turn:

Is there something you know you need to follow through on but have been waiting for someone else to do?

List some things that by your words and actions you refuse to do.

List some things you now refuse to no longer do?

Righteousness is defined as doing right. List some ways you can choose to do right.

more cool stuff

The Long Road Back

Jesus died and rose again. He's God.
We know this.

But we're still asking the question,

"Why did Jesus have to die?"

Here's Jesus' answer.

"This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many."

Mark 14:24, Matthew 26:28, Luke 22:20.

To worship a Holy and Righteous God, one must completely remove any obstacle that stands in the way. Jesus was the only One who could do that for mankind.

Which only brings up more questions:

What obstacle?
What covenant?
Why blood?
Why sacrifice?

The Long Answer – God in Pursuit

The Long Answer begins back in Eden.

We will never fully understand just how horrible the rebellion of Adam and Eve was to God. He had provided them with perfect lives, in the perfect place, with perfect communion with Him.

And in Genesis 3, they threw it all away.

Because God is holy, righteous and just, He had no choice but to remove them from His Presence and His Garden, where they no longer had access to the Tree of Life. Mankind now had a sin problem separating them from a holy God. Pain, struggle, division, strife and death became their new reality.

God, as only HE can do, mercifully sets in motion the process of redemption, reclaiming and recreating His Chosen People and Nation, as well as the rest of mankind, the Nations of the World and all of creation. He used Covenants, sacrifices, priests and the shedding of blood.

- **Covenants** are solemn commitments, guaranteeing promises or obligations taken by both parties and sealed with an oath. God always takes the initiative in any Covenants he makes. He sets the terms, the promised blessings, the conditions for continuing the covenant, the sign of celebrating the covenant and the community under the covenant. And HE never breaks His word despite our human faithlessness.



- **Sacrifices** were God appointed modes of how guilty men could offer acceptable worship to Him. Every sacrifice was vitally connected to the heart and spirit of the worshipper offering it. While some may have been made as thank and praise offerings, most were made to atone for sins and to put the person back into a right relationship with God.
- **The High Priest** and the tribe of Levi were set apart by God to be holy, as He is holy. It was their responsibility to act as an intermediary between the people and God. They were to preside over the complex system of sacrifices and the care and upkeep of the tabernacle and temple. The people could not approach God directly.
- **The shedding of blood** was the only way sins could be forgiven. (Lev. 17:11, Hebrews 9:22) Blood represents the life or spirit of a creature as well as containing the essence of who they really are. This explains why animal blood used for sacrifices must be from perfect or unblemished and clean animals. The shedding of blood represents death and God's deliverance through substituting the blood of the sacrifice in place of your own to pay the penalty for the sin.

God's response to our horrible sin was to **covenant** with His people on His terms because he loved and was loyally committed to them. The Israelites were to become a Kingdom of Priests. He gave them the Bible, the Temple, the Priesthood, the Prophets, the Covenants and the Messiah. He has protected them throughout the ages and although the Covenants themselves do not solve the sin problem, they point to Jesus who does.

Yet, through it all, God never falters on his promise in Jer. 32: 28: "I will be their God and they will be my people." His wisdom provided a way back that worked for our Good and His Glory.

Early Covenants

Eden

Sin and Banishment came because Adam and Eve broke the **Edenic Covenant** (Genesis 1:26-31; 2:16-17) when they ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God provided the first sacrifice when He killed some animals in order to provide clothing to cover their nakedness.

Adam

In Genesis 3, even, before God escorted them from the Garden, He provided a way back to the Tree of Life through the promise of One of Eve's offspring, who would crush Satan and death and redeem mankind. But this would take thousands of years to play out. This is called the **Adamic Covenant**.

God also declared to Adam what man's lot in life will be now that sin is in the world. There would no appeal as the outcome of the arrangement is entirely based on God and His sovereign control.

- Women are promised pain in childbirth
- Men are promised the necessity of hard, unsatisfying work.
- The relationship between the man and the woman would be forever strained and both their lives would be filled with sorrow and death.
- The worst result was the spiritual death they both experienced on the day they ate the fruit.
- Finally, a flaming cherub was placed at the entrance to the Garden as a testimonial to the restriction of the covenant.



In Genesis 4, **sacrifice** is instituted as part of the process of reacquiring access to God. Abel's sacrifice was accepted, but Cain's was not, because of his lack of faith. (Heb. 11:4) So Cain gets mad and kills Abel. Then he is banished, marked by God, moves to Nod, gets married, builds a

city that goes downhill, and begins the practice of polygamy, his offspring continue to take vengeance into their own hands as society becomes extremely wicked.

Noah

By Genesis 6, God has had enough. The earth is in a state of total depravity. Every person, except for Noah, is only all evil all of the time. God chooses Noah, the only righteous man left on earth, to build an ark, which he faithfully does over the next 120 years. Noah and his family and the animals are all saved from the flood. All wickedness is washed away, the world can start anew.

Noah's first act when he leaves the Ark is to build an altar and **sacrifice** to God one of each of the clean animals and birds he had taken with him on the Ark. He knows he is still a sinner, though God in His grace choose to save him from the flood.

In Genesis 9, God makes a Covenant with Noah, known as the **Noahic or Rainbow Covenant**.

- He promises never again to send a cataclysmic flood, no matter what happens.
- The seasons will continue as nature's stability is restored.
- He restores His intentions to bless.
- Man can now eat meat – but not the blood, because Blood is the Lifeforce within man. Pagan peoples thought you could increase the Lifeforce within you by drinking the blood of animals. Life comes from God and is to be treasured and accounted for.
- Capital punishment for taking another man's life or murder is ordained, thus establishing government as society was called upon to execute judgment.
- Mankind is commanded to respect and protect the sanctity of life.
- The covenant with Noah also promised that the Messiah would come through the line of his son, Shem.
- The seal of the covenant was the rainbow, which we still see to this day.



More Wickedness

Although human beings deserve punishment for their wickedness, God withholds ultimate destruction for now. He recalibrates moral and ecological life to begin again as He had intended it originally. Yet man is still sinful and people continue to resort to their own sinful efforts, even with this incredible Do Over.

By Genesis 11, it's now obvious that man is the problem, not his environment. Refusing to populate the earth as commanded, they all migrate east to Babylonia and build a great city, a symbol of human pride and idolatry. Seeking worldly fame and unity they endeavor to build a tower to the heavens, the **Tower of Babel**.

But God will not be disobeyed and confuses them with different languages, scattering them to fill the earth, much like Adam, Eve, and Cain were banished and scattered for their quest for autonomy. The tower is destroyed. Left unchecked, their solidarity and ambition would allow human wickedness to flourish in unimaginable ways.

Abram

In Genesis 12, Abram is called out by God to be the Father of a great nation, which God promises will bless all the peoples of the earth. Abram believed in One God while living amongst a society of idolaters who worshipped the powers of nature, having lost their knowledge of the one true God. This was the very same society that had tried to build the tower to the heavens years before. The original blessing of mankind would be restored thru Abram's obedience and his offspring.

King of Salem - Priest of God Most High

In Genesis 14, we are introduced to Melchizadek, the mysterious King of Salem, a place many believe became the city of Jerusalem. His name means "**king of righteousness**" and he is remembered as resembling the Son of God. (Hebrews 7) Jesus, the Messiah, was said to be a "priest forever in the order of Melchizadek" (Ps. 110:4)

In response to his blessing, Abram paid him a tenth of his goods, acknowledging him as a spiritual superior. This is the first mention of a tithe. He was also a Priest of God Most High. This is the first mention of priestly function. Priests had access and brought offerings to God on behalf of others. Prior to time of Moses, the head of the family, the oldest living male on the paternal side, had offered sacrifices. As the family grew in size and became a tribe, the head of the family was called a King.

Melchizadek was a priest appointed by God. He was not Jewish and predated the Levitical priesthood. His role was eternal, timeless, his priestly role not dependent on Jewish tribal genealogy.

Melchizadek, as a King and a Priest, was an archetype or foreshadowing of Jesus, our Royal High Priest who performs priestly functions for us through His direct access to the Father.

Abraham

In Genesis 17, God confirms an absolutely everlasting, unconditional covenant with Abram, the **Abrahamic Covenant** that is later reaffirmed to his offspring, Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5), and Jacob (Gen. 28:1-4,12-15). God's purpose is to prove that He will keep His commitment to Abram.

- He changes His name to Abraham.
- He institutes circumcision as sign that Abraham and his descendants belong to God, and are set apart as consecrated to Him (holy, only for God's use).
- He promises them the land of Canaan
- He promises to be their God forever.

It is only after Abraham is circumcised at 99 years old that He is able to have a child with Sarah. Circumcision is that private reminder that he belongs to God.

Blood Sacrifice

In Genesis 22, God asks Abraham to **sacrifice** His only son, Isaac, as a burnt offering. Now as horrible as this sounds to us in our current culture, this was a common pagan practice during Abraham's time. At the very last second, God stops Abraham and provides a substitute offering in place of Isaac, a ram that immediately appears in the bushes. God reaffirms his covenant with Abraham, as he has now proved his faith and withheld nothing from God.

Isaac and Jesus have much in common.

- Sons born out of promises made years before
- Born to women who could not have conceived apart from a miracle
- Both firstborn sons, greatly love by their fathers
- Both traveled to the top of Mt. Moriah also known as Mt. Zion
- Both carried wood to their sacrifice
- Both willing to lay down their lives in obedience to their fathers
- Their fathers both felt agony at killing their innocent sons
- Isaac was figuratively brought back from the dead. Jesus was literally brought back from the dead.

So in Genesis alone, before Moses and the Law, we see the concepts of faith, sacrifice, substitutionary offerings, the importance of blood, and priests, well in place as part of God's solution to the problem of sin.

The Old Covenant

Let's skip ahead over 400 years to Exodus 12 and The Passover. (Isaiah 53:5-8, I Cor. 5:7)

The nation of Israel, now in Egypt and under the leadership of Moses, is introduced to the idea of fulfilling justice by providing a **substitutionary payment** for their sins.

- Each family was to slaughter a perfect lamb and put its blood on the top and sides of their doorposts (notice put over door, not under door)
- Then they were to cook the rest of the lamb and eat it in haste, be ready to go, with coats on and bags packed.
- Because the blood covered their homes, the Lord passed over them with the plague that killed the first born males of all Egyptian homes, including Pharaoh's.
- And as a result - Pharaoh let them go – they gained their freedom from slavery and death.

The Law of Moses

In Exodus 20, God establishes **The Old Covenant** through the Law of Moses beginning with the 10 Commandments and following with over 600 other commands that pertain to Jewish moral, ceremonial, and civil life. Israel was to be a Holy Nation – light to the world and means of blessing all peoples, a kingdom of priests offering access to the nations to worship their God.

The law spoke against idolatry and for the pursuit of holiness and righteousness. The only way to see God was to pursue holiness. God's justice revealed that sins could be forgiven if certain conditions were met. Ultimately, Law revealed man's sinfulness, while the Tabernacle and all that went on in it illustrated how a Just God could satisfy the demands of his Holiness and Righteousness and reinstate a relationship with His people. Lev. 11:44-45, Deut. 14:1-2, I Peter 1:15, Ps. 24:3-4, Heb. 12:14, Ps. 89:14, Ps. 145:17, 1 Peter 3:18, Rom. 3:26, I John 1: 9

The Day of Atonement (Covering)

The Law of Moses established **Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement** (Lev. 16, 23:26-32), the most serious day of the Jewish year. On this day, every year, the Israelites as a nation, made peace with God, by confessing their sins as a nation. God granted forgiveness, but only until the next year.

At-one-ment means making peace with God.

God had selected the tribe of Levi to be the priests in charge of the Temple. Out of this tribe a High Priest was chosen, who dealt each year directly with God.

Aaron, Moses' brother, was the first High Priest. Only He could enter the Holy of Holies – the holiest place in the Tabernacle/Temple where the Ark of the Covenant was kept - and only on The Day of Atonement. The Holy of Holies was hidden behind a veil or thick curtain – separating God and access to Him from sinful man.



If the High Priest entered any other time of year, He would die. The tabernacle was the only place the High Priest could go to meet with God. God required a sanctuary be created where He could dwell with His people.

The High Priest would put the blood of a goat on the altar, and then pray the sins of the people over another goat. Then this second goat would be led off into the wilderness carrying with it the sins of the people (scapegoat). (Heb. 10:3-4)

The Davidic Covenant



Up to this point we have seen God's faithfulness through his Covenants with Noah, Abraham, and Moses. The sinners of Noah's time after the flood were allowed to live and increase on the earth. Out of these, God called a righteous man, Abraham, and his descendants became a nation. This nation was freed from slavery in Egypt and settled in the Promised Land with the Law of Moses as their standard.

Through David, God took a loose group of tribes in the Promised Land and turned them into an empire with a **King** from the royal tribe of Judah. This covenant with King David promised another King, from David's line, who would rule over all people for eternity. This King is Jesus.

The Temple

The mobile Tabernacle was eventually replaced when David's son, King Solomon built the stationary and glorious Temple in Jerusalem and it became the focal point of religious life and ceremony, permanently housing the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant. The Temple was the only place sacrifices could be made.

Solomon's first Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. Construction of a new temple was completed in 516 BC. (Book of Ezra). This Second Temple was renovated by Herod around 20 BC and was the Temple in place during Jesus' earthly ministry.

This second temple was missing the Ark of the Covenant, the Urim and Thummim, the holy oil, the sacred fire, the Ten Commandments, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod.

In 66 AD, the Jewish population rebelled against the Roman Empire. Four years later, in 70 AD, Roman legions under Titus re-conquered and subsequently destroyed much of Jerusalem and the Second Temple.

An Islamic shrine, the Dome of the Rock, has stood on the site of the Temple since the late 7th Century AD, and the al-Aqsa Mosque, from roughly the same period, also stands on the Temple courtyard. They are still there today.

The Solution to our Sin Problem: *Blood*

So before we move on to Jesus, let's see where we are.

The Old Covenant required the sacrifice of perfect animal, the spilling of blood that covers and washes away or purifies the confessed sins of the worshipper. Access to God was only allowed to the High Priest and only on One day of the year.

We saw the importance of **sacrifice** and **the shedding of blood**. Blood sacrifice was always necessary for the cleansing and forgiveness of sin. Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the entire Hebrew nation experienced the necessity and blessings of the shedding and covering of blood.

Sacrifice and the shedding of blood was required in the wilderness, in Egypt, and in the Promised Land. Thousands of sacrifices a year were performed in the Temple.

Blood sacrifice was necessary to keep fellowship with God – it represented the life or spirit of a creature. The animals sacrificed were simple substitutions for sinful human lives. The

requirements necessary to obtain the needed forgiveness of sin, even if only temporary, were burdensome, mindboggling and overwhelming.

Innocent blood must be shed in place of the guilty blood. Only by the shedding of blood can sins be forgiven. Lev. 17:11

The New Covenant

The Jewish nation was looking forward to a **Messiah, a Savior** who would come and deal with their sin problem, once and for all, as well as to rule and reign over them – **a Prophet, Priest and King**.

- He would first suffer, then be raised up.
- He would come riding on a donkey and later come riding on clouds of glory.
- He would be rejected by his people, and then be a light to all nations.
- His power would bring deliverance from death, and cause the ends of the earth to worship the one true God.
- He was both priestly and royal, both a Priest and a King - like Melchizadek.

He had to come to earth before the Temple was destroyed because without the Temple, no sacrifice could be made for sins. He would be the last sacrifice necessary, the final act, by the only One qualified to provide the kind of permanent, lasting sacrifice that would satisfy the justice required by the holiness and righteousness of God.

Only one person was qualified to present His Life as a perfect requirement before God. No human blood or blood of goats or bulls, nothing, could satisfy the heart of God except the blood of His only begotten Son, Jesus. The standard was absolute. Within the blood of Jesus was the very Life of God – the perfect sacrifice. John 6:53-57

What did He say right before He died? “It is finished”.

He had come to die, and He gave up His Spirit all on His own. (John 19:30). Jesus paid the penalty for all mankind’s sins for all time. He had to die to do it.

This begins the New Covenant.

What happened in the temple when He died?

- The curtain separating the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple, was torn apart from the top down.
- No longer would anyone need to go through an earthly High Priest to gain access to God.
- Jesus Himself had become our High Priest – in heaven giving us direct access to the Father.
- The Priest became the sacrifice, took our punishment, finished the job, forever. Nothing else is needed.
- No more sacrifices.
- His death saves us from the punishment required for our sins.

Laws that were written on stone are now written on our hearts. Sins temporarily forgiven by the blood of animals now have been forgiven forever by the Blood of Jesus. An earthly temple is no longer needed as God reigns from his heavenly temple where Jesus sits at His right hand giving us access whenever we need it.



The **New Covenant is like a will** – promises become available to heirs, but only when the maker dies. It is now in full force and if you are an heir, you have access to it.

Instead of God coming to dwell in a Tabernacle or Temple, He comes to dwell in our hearts.

- Better than Noah, we are saved by grace and gain the promise of New Life in a world without sin and its effects.
- Better than Abraham, Jesus blesses and comes to all nations of the earth.
- Better than Moses, He fulfills the Law for us, covers us from God's wrath, conquers Satan, and journeys with us towards home.
- Better than David, He sits on a heavenly throne, ruling as King of Kings.

He comes to each of us individually and places His temple within us.

He makes us into new creations.

We become image bearers of Jesus to a dark world.

Because we are sinful we cannot do anything on our own that will bring us to a place where God will accept us.

We cannot work our way, try hard enough, mean well enough, be nice enough.

We can't be righteous enough on our own.

We need help, we need redemption, we need saving.

God is too bright, He can't see us.

But He can see Jesus. Jesus will grant us access.

The earthly Temple was destroyed and for over 1900 years no Sacrifices have been made nor has it been possible to make them – they are no longer needed.

The final sacrifice for all time has already been made. **It is finished!**

That is why Jesus had to die.

That is also why He is the only way to God.

Recapping the Covenants:

Edenic: God promises Adam life and blessing contingent on Adam's obedience to not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Adamic: As God escorts Adam and Eve from the Garden, He promises a Redeemer from one of Eve's offspring. Mankind will also experience spiritual and physical difficulties, strained relationships and death.

Noahic: Includes the promise of a Redeemer through the line of his son, Shem, and to never flood the earth again. Institutes government, restores balance of nature, and permission to eat meat, but not the blood. Commands respect for sanctity of life. Sealed forever by the sign of the rainbow.

Abrahamic: Changes name to Abraham, institutes sign of circumcision, promised to be their God forever and to give them the land of Canaan and to multiply his descendants.

Mosaic or The Old Covenant: Promises the Nation of Israel to be their God and challenges them to obedience to an external set of laws that revealed their sin and then provided a tabernacle, temple, priesthood and sacrificial system to reestablish relationship between a Holy God and His sinful people.

Davidic: Promised a King from David's royal line that would rule over people for eternity.

The Book of Hebrews – The New Covenant:

The Book of Hebrews is an excellent exposition on the superiority of Jesus and The New Covenant. It was written to Jewish Christians prior to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD. These believers were facing persecution not only from the Romans but also from the Jews and it was taking its toll on their faith. The writer of Hebrews reminds them of just why Jesus was the only one able fulfill the Old Covenant and institute the New. This is the only book in the New Testament that talks about Christ as our Royal Priest.

Christ Alone is Qualified because of Who He Is

- He is the God Man
- He is Greater than the angels, Moses, and Joshua
- He is a Priest in order of Melchizadek
- He is Greater than any Old Testament or Old Covenant High Priest

Christ Alone is Qualified because of What He Did

- The Blood of Jesus got the job done once and for all
- As High Priest He sacrificed Himself once and for all
- He Shed His own qualitatively extraordinary blood to purify the sins of all mankind – the Ultimate Blood Atonement

Christ Alone institutes the New Covenant by satisfying the requirements of the Old Covenant

- Available to all who respond by faith
- Law of God internalized in our hearts through Holy Spirit
- Sins forgiven and access to God restored.

The difference between the Old and New Covenants is accessibility to God.

- The OC required many priests, but the NC requires only ONE.
- The OC required repeated, daily sacrifices, while the NC required only ONE sacrifice on ONE day, once and for all.
- The OC only covered sins for a year, while the NC took away the sins forever.
- The sacrificial offerings of the OT were but shadows pointing to Jesus' greater and perfect sacrifice.



Jesus is better; not only better, but the best.

Only He is able to enact a New Covenant that provides a better pathway to God; in fact, the only pathway to God. He provides us personal access to God, and since we are no longer separated, the relationship between the people and God can become much closer and stronger.

"The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.

It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their heart. I will be their God and they will be my people.

No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Hebrews 8: 8-12, Jeremiah 31:31-34

Your turn:

1. Take some time to briefly define the following and then explain how they impact your lives today.

- Covenants:

- Sacrifices:

- Priests:

- Shedding of Blood:

- Substitutionary Payment:

- Atonement:

- Blood of Jesus:

2. How is the New Covenant better than the Old Covenant?

3. Why did Jesus have to die? How was He uniquely qualified for this role?

4. What does it mean to you that God provided a way back to Himself?

5. Share some real life examples of the Sin – Suffering – Salvation process from your own life.

6. What benefit is there to allowing people to experience the logical consequences of their actions or sins before stepping in to save them?

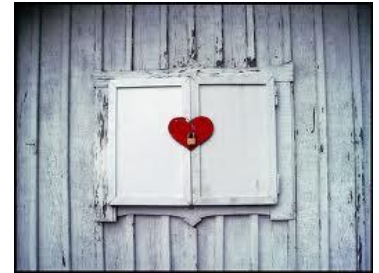
7. What are some examples of ways we try to save ourselves or others from the consequences of our actions or sins?

8. Would you die to save yourself? Would you die to save someone else?

journal

7.7 Nitty Gritty

1. **Jesus has access.** We can't get through to God without Him.
2. **No longer is an earthly High Priest** necessary to gain access to God. In Jesus, our Priest became our Sacrifice and took our Punishment – Death. Then He rose again and now sits in Heaven giving us direct access to the Father.
3. **God starts at Holy, Holy, Holy,** His singular attribute of sinless perfection, untainted, spotless and pure.
4. **His Holiness is why** He hates sin – all sin. We, on the other hand, only hate some sins, put up with most and some we love and defend.
5. **God's righteousness** is His ability to possess all the good qualities, evident in his attributes, and to maintain them in perfect balance at all times.
6. **Good enough is not good enough for God.** Perfection is required and He gets to set the standard for judgment – the perfect, eternal standard of what right actions look like.
7. **We think we just have to be better than the next guy.** God says we have to be like Jesus.
8. **God's Justice** is the power to do what is fair and to judge impartially with His Holiness and Righteousness. He demands sins be dealt with or else. Everyone receives what they deserve. Nothing escapes His notice.
9. **We want and think we deserve to be valued and treated fairly,** And God has taken us up on that.....He is, in fact, the Fairest of them all.
10. **God's spiritual light is not unlike his physical light.** The piercing bright light of His righteousness and holiness exposes the spiritual darkness in the human heart, revealing truth about God and Man and the solution to the problem that exists between them.
11. **Extra Credit Reading Recommendation:** The Sacred Echo by Margaret Feinberg and The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe, by C.S. Lewis.



closure

Because it matters what we think about God

We have come to the end of **Bright, White and Right**, the seventh of the 12 OmniInfinity™ Journeys. This journey has caused us to **Remember** "*Such a high priest meets our need – one who is holy, blameless and pure, and set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens*" and **Read** John 14-17.

We **Analyzed** by looking at the Nitty Gritty of just one Chapter; **Investigated** God's Holiness, Righteousness and Justness; and **Practiced** Guidance. We took **Inventory** of our Uniqueness and went **Adventuring** by asking someone out to lunch. We were challenged in **More Cool Stuff** to look at *The Long Road Back* God provided ultimately through Jesus to restore our access to Him. And finally, **Lyrics** spoke to our hearts and souls as we pondered through music the impact of God's Holiness and Righteousness on our lives.

The **Journal** revealed Christ as not only our Savior, but as our **Prophet, Priest and King**. We can't regain access to God without Jesus. God's Holiness cannot allow any sin to come into His Presence – He is Whiter than White. He hates sin and our sin sets us so far apart from Him that **only Jesus can provide us the access** by making us acceptable once again.

We further discovered that **God sets the standards**, even though we think we set our own standards and then try to live up to them. While we try to be good enough, **good enough is not good enough for God**. He requires perfection and we can never be righteous enough to gain access. Jesus is willing to gift us His Righteousness and models the kind of life we should live. He gives us power and a new heart to accomplish this.

From our perspective, **none of this is fair**. We want it all, and expect equality and fairness in the process. We don't realize that **God is the Fairest of them All**, and sets the standard of Justice that demands He treat everyone equally using His perfect standards of Holiness and Righteousness. Everyone receives what they deserve. There are no special deals. **We are all in trouble**. We say God isn't fair, and yet forget how many ways throughout all time He has reached out to us and even provided Jesus to take the punishment we all deserve.

One of the most amazing proofs God has provided for His existence is light and it is often associated with God's Holiness and Righteousness. It never changes and none of God's creation would be visible without it. To process the revealing energy of light, **God provided man with the EYE and the SENSE of SIGHT** – both incredible in their intricacy and processing speed. **Physical light is a reflection of spiritual light** as it reveals the spiritual darkness in our hearts. As our spiritual eye doctor, Jesus will not just fix our old eyes, He will give us brand new ones. Then we can walk in the light instead of the darkness.

Now it's time to **think back** over this part of your journey and **reflect** on what you have discovered and learned. The sections below may help jog your memory. **Describe** the details of any areas that **apply** to you.

New Things I Learned

Old Things I was reminded of

Questions I have

Areas I was challenged in

First steps I took

Areas I would like to study more

“AHA!” moments

Dreams and visions



appendix



[About the Journeys](#)

- [About Remembering](#)
- [About the Practices](#)

about the journeys...

Welcome to **OmniInfinity™**.. a series of guided journeys leading to greater knowledge and understanding of the attributes of God and the Spiritual Practices necessary to gain this knowledge.

The only requirement is a willingness to learn and discover through a variety of activities. Some elements you may naturally be drawn to, some will challenge you, and some may be way out of the box for you. It is important to do them all, in order, completing one journey before moving on to the next.

There are twelve journeys or units, **each designed to be completed in two months** - either by yourself, with a friend or in a small group setting. It is important to remember we all start from different places, we start with what we know and move on from there, but we are all traveling together.

journey elements

The following elements make up each journey and should be completed in order. Some of the elements require some advance planning, so you might want to review the entire contents of each journey before you begin. Use the Table of Contents to check off your progress.

Remember: One or more Bible verses to memorize for each journey unit.

Read: Throughout the twelve journey units you will read some of the most profound and well loved chapters in the Bible.

Analyze: A variety of Bible Study methods will be offered to help you analyze in greater depth a section of the Reading above. The goal of this section is to familiarize you with various ways to greater understand God's Word.

Investigate and 10 things: Each journey unit focuses on a group of God's attributes, defining terms, and completing a directed investigation page.

Practice and Why?: Part of growing in our relationship with God is the intentional practice of skills that have helped Christians from the beginning. Each journey unit will focus on one or more of these with instructions for developing each discipline skill. Some Practices involve doing a specific activity, while others require we stop doing certain things.

Inventory: A personal inventory will be completed regarding areas related to the attributes and skills studied in each unit, reviewing your personal history and evaluating your current practices and beliefs.

Adventuring: This section guides you to venture out into the world with a specific assignment to observe, interact with or impact your surroundings and neighborhoods. The intent is to allow God to reveal Himself through nature, media and other people.

Lyrics: You are encouraged to read the included song lyrics as poetry for your inspiration, go online and listen to the actual recordings and then reflect on the questions that follow.

Journal and More Cool Stuff: The author has included some musings and further information pertaining to the subject of each journey unit for your consideration, personal response and reflection.

Closure: At the conclusion of each journey there is a place to recap where you've been, what you learned, new thoughts, challenges, growing pains.....

enjoy the adventure ...

about remembering...

Think of this exercise as a necessary foundation for future excellence – like practicing scales on the piano or doing wind sprints or swimming laps, taking your vitamins, or eating your vegetables.

We actually recall or remember all kinds of things we've memorized without really even trying. Can you think of any?



How about your phone number, email address, street address, zip code, social security number, birthday, names of your family, how to get to work, how to drive a car, that secret recipe...or how to spell or multiply, song lyrics, movie scenes, jokes, what someone was wearing, what car they drove, sports statistics, what chocolate tastes like, what the ocean smells like, and on and on.

Why do we remember what we remember?

Recollection is just the tip of the memory iceberg. Within our marvelous and mysterious brain the memory works in collaboration with us and the world – it uses all our senses and emotions. We associate smells, colors, places, rituals, symbols, landmarks, even people, with memories and when we sense the trigger, we remember.

There are tremendous spiritual benefits from Remembering Bible verses:

- Strengthens our faith
- Shapes how we view the world
- Makes God's Word immediately accessible
- Guards our minds.....and that's just for starters.

Experts say that we will forget more in the first hour after our memory event than in one day, and more in the first day than the first month...What we remember for one month, will probably stay with us.....so the idea is to remember regularly for one month and we've got it.

Here are some suggestions to help you get started. We all learn differently – so don't be afraid to try some of the more unusual methods. Not only do we need to remember the verse, **we need to remember to work on remembering the verse.**

- Write the verse on several post it notes or index cards and put them where you will see them such as the car, the bathroom mirror, the kitchen sink, a bulletin board, your computer screen saver, your cell phone, by your bed.....
- Make plans to spend five minutes, twice a day (usually as you get up and before bed) to review.
- Say it slowly, 15 times in a row, emphasizing each word.
- If you have already learned it in another translation, review that one. Once you know it in one, look it up in a couple of other translations to see what is different.
- Review it when you are waiting in line, or on hold on the phone.
- Sing it – make up a tune to go with it
- For extra credit, add the verse before and the verse after.

about the practices...

The Spiritual Practices put us in a place where we are better able to interact with our environment and God. God can then reach inside our spirits and transform them.

Just as our body needs to eat, breathe, exercise, drink, sleep, etc., so our spiritual self needs to make sure it is being sustained, cared for, and trained.

The results include spiritual growth, a life controlled by the Holy Spirit, evidence of the fruit of the spirit, and the ultimate goal, living life like Jesus did.

The Spiritual Practices are not:

- Meritorious laws that earn favor with God
- A way to show how spiritually mature we are
- Unpleasant or difficult

Instead, they are:

- Intentional
- Activities we do that when practiced allow us to do activities we cannot now do.
- Adaptable to work with our temperaments and gifts
- Adjustable according to the rhythm and seasons of our lives

There are two kinds

Practices of Abstinence - when we stop doing something that is perfectly normal to allow ourselves to focus more on God, His Word, and growing in godliness. These also help us resist our tendency toward sins of commission (when we do something we shouldn't do). We withdraw to breathe in all that God can provide to us, breaking the hold that the world has on our lives. Practices of Abstinence help ready us and create room for the Practices of Engagement.

Practices of Engagement - when we do certain activities that help us grow in Christ and obey his commandments. The Practices of Abstinence have opened up the time and broken up the preoccupations so we are now free to learn of, focus on, and practice those things that God commands us to do. These assist in keeping us from our tendency toward sins of omission (not doing the things we should do). We engage to breathe out all that God commands us. ¹¹

As their name implies, the Spiritual Practices are not one-time events, but skills to be learned and developed over time. So don't be discouraged in the beginning if you struggle with them or find them difficult. Make them a regular part of your life. In our Journeys we would rather **emphasize the actual practicing of the Practices** and not so much the reading about them.....and let you discover the benefits as they appear in your life.

credits

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2. Stephen Charnock, [The Existence and Attributes of God, Volume 2](#), Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005, page 110. Originally published by Robert Carter & Brothers, 1853.

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4. Arthur W. Pink, [The Attributes of God](#), Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1975, page 54. Another classic.
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so what now?

Continue your Omniainfinitude™ adventure with

- Journey Eight: Hot, Hot, Hot**
- Journey Nine: O Mercy Me**
- Journey Ten: To Die For**
- Journey Eleven: Up Close and Personal**
- Journey Twelve: Perfect Ending**