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5 attributes of god and their meaning

October 15, 2018 October 15, 2018/ Emmanuel Christian Church God has engaged all of His creation to love the Lord your god with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul and all your strength. This is worship. The whole being completely engaged in a lifestyle of total awareness and submission to the Lord Jesus. Our mind will grow weary and be distracted if we do not have an understanding of who and what we worship. When this type of decline takes place the result of the one called to worship is that boredom, disinterest, and idolatry lays it's deadly foundation. The list below attempts to put words to who and what God is. It is an attempt to put meaning to who we worship. It is an attempt How can you explain in language the Awesomeness of an unlimited God? Please look down the list and what you don't understand, dig in to a deeper knowledge of God. Learn of Him. As you do you will find yourself raptured in the presence of the Living God. Use your Bible, Call the Holy Spirit to His promise to teach you who your Lord is. Go deep. Pray every step of the way. Worship:Your Lord Jesus is...Infinite- Without measure, can't be calculatedImmense- Good as defined by who God isJustice- Correct in choosingMercy- Love in ActionGrace- God's ability and favorOmnipresent- Everywhere at the same timeImmanence- Fully presentHoliness- Completely separate from that which is unholyPerfection- Perfect can't get betterSelf-Existent- Always existed within Himself, no beginning or endOmnipotence- Unlimited power, nothing impossibleImmutability- Never changesOmniscience- Knows all things and is aware of all thingsWisdom- To know, to have experience, and have good judgement all together Sovereignty- Supreme power and authority Faithfulness- Loyal, constant Love- Jesus October 15, 2018/ Emmanuel Christian Church/ We have seen many of God's characteristics: he is a spirit, he is a person, he is immutable, he is immutable, he is eternal, he is omniscient, he is omnipotent, he is omnipresent, and he is merciful. In this lesson, we will look at four more characteristics of God, which are probably his most controversial characteristics. God is holy, God is wrathful, and God is sovereign. God is holy, God is wrathful, and God is sovereign. God is holy, God is wrathful, and God is sovereign. God is holy, God is wrathful, and God is sovereign. that God eternally gives of himself to others. This definition understands love as self-giving for the benefit of others. This attribute of God shows that it is part of himself in order to bring about blessing or good for others. This attribute of God shows that it is part of himself in order to bring about blessing or good for others. This attribute of God shows that it is part of himself in order to bring about blessing or good for others. out of this. Listen to what John said, "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:8). This means that it is impossible to truly know what love is unless we know God for he epitomizes love. This is part of the reason that, looking at the world today, nobody has a good definition of love. For some, love is an emotion. If you watch any romantic comedy, without a doubt, there will always come the big question, "Do you love him?" What does that mean? Does it mean having butterflies in one's stomach? Does it mean two people have a good time together? We can only know what love is by looking at God. Moreover, since God is love, he was living out this love even before he created the world and everything in it. In John 17:24, Jesus says this: "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see m Holy Spirit. In the Trinity, there has always been a perfect loving union between the members of the God-head. We must know the characteristics of love in order to better understand God, and also to better understand God, and should demonstrate it to one another. John, who is often called the Apostle of Love and in his Gospel was identified as "the disciples, if you love love one another." Similarly, Jesus said this: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). Supernatural love should mark believers. The world will know us by this love. In the New Testament, God's love is the type of love that the world should see in Christians. They should see a love that doesn't make sense. It is sacrificial; it is forgiving; it blesses one's enemies; it is unconditional. It is a phenomenal love by which the world should be able to identify a believer by. What does this love love that defines God? As the Trinity demonstrated love toward one another throughout eternity, Christians should also demonstrate this love. Its characteristics are as follows: Agape Love Is Practical God's love is practical. Listen to John again: "Dear children, let us not just words, and it certainly is not just feelings. It is an act of the will. It is practical. Scripture does not say, "For God so loved the world that he felt all gushy inside." No, he so loved that he gave his only Son. It was practical. Look at what else the Apostle of Love says: "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" (1 John 3:17). Can this be true love John questions? How can a man love someone and not meet their needs? Surely, the love of God does not live in a man such as this. The fiancée of Solomon declared that when they went out to eat, everybody could tell Solomon loved her. He pulled out the chair for her; he listened to her; he listened to her; he took care of her needs. She was the most important person in the room. His love was like a banner that everybody could see. Sometimes, a female dates a guy who mistreats her, neglects her, and yet, still tells everybody how much they are in love. That is not love; love is practical. God's love is a giving love that provides for his people. What else can we learn about God's love? Agape Love Is Sacrificial God's love is sacrificial. It cost him something. You can tell how much somebody loves you by how much they sacrifice for you. Is he or she willing to sacrifice time, money, hobbies, career, dreams, or friends for you? That is love. God so loved the world, he sacrificed himself. He sacrificed his Son. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son" (John 3:16). In fact, Christ demands that we love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrificial way. 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sacrifical way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrifical way. He said this: "A new command I give you: Love one another in the same sacrifical way. He said this: "A new command I gi therefore, we must be willing to die for one another as well. We see something of this sacrifice in the early church. In Acts 2, the wealthy sold all they had to take care of the poor (v. 44-45). This was a sacrificial love. It was a love that distinguished them from the world. It was agape. Are we willing to sacrifice time, job, and career in order to love God and people? True love is sacrificial. Agape Love Is Enduring As a Reserve military chaplain, when talking to struggling married couples, I often ask them, "What happened? How did things get so bad?" Sometimes, I get the answer, "Oh, Chaplain, nothing happened. We just fell out of love." "You fell out of love? You woke up in the morning one day and it was just gone?" This is how most people think about love. It is something elusive. It is something elusive. It is here one day and gone tomorrow, but that is not what Scripture teaches us about true love. Agape love is everlasting. Look at what Scripture teaches us about true love. It is something elusive. It is here one day and gone tomorrow, but that is not what Scripture teaches us about true love. Agape love is everlasting. the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (emphasis mine) Romans 8:38-39 If you have been saved and have received God's love, life can't separate you from it, death can't separate you from it, and even demons can't separate you from it. The past, present, and future can't separate you from it. Nothing will be able to separate you from the love of God. That is comforting. It tells us something about true love. It lasts because it is an act of the will. I will marry you, and I am going to choose to love you forever, no matter what. That is God's love. It's enduring even through failures and hard times. Listen to what Paul says: "Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, alw these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). Agape Love Is Selfless Listen again to what 1 Corinthians 13:5 says, "Love is not self-seeking" (emphasis mine). See, most love is selfish. It is about what we can get out of somebody. If you call me, I will call you. If you give, I will give back. Human love is very selfish. If I don't get what I want, then I don't love you anymore. If you hurt me, it's over. On the contrary, true love is all about the benefit of the other person. It is not self-seeking. Philippians 2:3-5 says this: Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Our attitude must be the same as Christ. It must be selfless instead of selfish. This was the mindset that led Christ to die on the cross for the sins of the world. It was a mind that cared more about others and their benefit than his own. True love is selfless. What else can we know about God's love? Agape Love Is Unconditional "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (emphasis mine)" (Romans 5:8). God loved us while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (emphasis mine)" (Romans 5:8). were no strings attached. Our love is conditional. "I will love you if you do not cheat on me. I will love you as long as you treat me well, but when you fail me, we're done." However, we cheat on God all the time. In James 4:4, he called the church "adulterers", but that didn't stop his love for them. He would always love them unconditionally, with no strings attached. Our love must be unconditional as well. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:1 Agape Love Is Judicial Some people have a hard time reconciling God's love and justice. But justice is an outworking of love. Listen to Hebrews 12:6; "Because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Everybody he loves, he disciplines those he loves, he disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Everybody he loves, he disciplines those he loves, he disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Everybody he loves, he disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Everybody he loves, he disciplines those he loves thos parents: "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him." Agape love is judicial. Agape love is judicial. Agape love is Emotional Sometimes, believers talk as though agape love is judicial. Agape love is only an act of the will. It is not; there are also affections that often come along with true love. However, emotions do not define love as many in the secular world would say. Listen to Philippians 1:8: "God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus" (emphasis mine). Paul said he loved the church with the same feeling Christ felt in his stomach for them. True love is emotional. "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15). Agape Love Is Wise Paul said this: And this is my prayer: that your love may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ. Philippians 1:9-10 A person can love anything, even something that is bad for them. Love is so powerful it must be guided by knowledge and depth of insight. He essentially says, "I pray for your love to be wise so you can discern what is best." Often "love" can lead us into things that are unhealthy for us and others, but agape love is a wise love. It is always seeking the best course of action for the other person and for ourselves. I see that with my wife in parenting. Because my wife loves our daughter, she is very zealous in getting rid of anything that might be harmful. "Oh, that's plastic and it has chemicals; let's use something else instead." You often see this wise and discerning love with parents. Agape love is not blind and it's not dumb. It's wise and discerning, seeking the best course of action for all. Application How should we apply the fact that God is loving to our lives? 1. God's love should comfort us and remove fear because God will always do what's best for us. Listen to Romans 8:31-32: What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (emphasis mine) God has already given his best? If he closes the door for something, surely, it is out of love because he wants the best for us. Listen to what John said: "There is no fear in love. But perfect in love" (1 John 4:18). John says we should have no fear because of God's love. When love is perfected in our lives, it takes away fear. It takes fear away because we are convinced God loves us and is always working things out for our good (Rom 8:28). 2. God's love should produce the fruits of love in our lives. Those who have truly received love should naturally demonstrate it to others. We see this with children who are often bad kids. When they come from a background lacking love or filled with abuse, they often are abusive, unforgiving, and cold. But those raised in love, often are very loving. Scripture says this should be true of every believer as well. Look at what John says: Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.1 John 4:7-8 Everyone who loves like we have talked about is born of God and knows God. Whoever doesn't love is not from God. No matter what our background is, if we have been born again, the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts (Rom 5:5), and it will be our tendency to love, forgive, serve, and bless others. Yes, we are not perfect yet, but we should be growing in this because we have experienced love. Are you demonstrating love? God Is Holy What does God's holiness mean? John MacArthur said this: God is holy. Of all the attributes of God, holiness is the one that most uniquely describes Him. In reality, this is a summarization of all His other attributes. The word holiness refers to His separateness, the fact that He is unlike any other being. It indicates His complete and infinite perfection. Holiness is the attribute of God that binds all the others together. Properly understood, it will revolutionize the quality of our worship. 2 God's holiness is a summary of all his other characteristics. In fact, when the angels see God in heaven, they constantly declare his holiness. Isaiah 6:3 says this: "And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (emphasis mine). The fact that they say it three times means that it is emphatic; it is something very important that we do not want to miss. This is not only important because it is a primary characteristic of God, but it is also important because I am holy" (emphasis mine). What exactly does it mean for God to be holy? Holiness is a word that essentially means "set apart" and is closely connected to his righteousness. God's holiness is a picture of how righteousness is a picture of how righteousness. God's holiness is a picture of how righteousness. God's holiness is a word that essentially means "set apart" and is closely connected to his righteousness. God's holiness is a picture of how righteousness. God's holiness is a picture of how righteousness. God's holiness is a word that essentially means "set apart" and is closely
connected to his righteousness. God's holiness is a word that essentially means "set apart" and is closely connected to his righteousness. God's holiness is a word that essentially means "set apart" and is closely connected to his righteousness. God's holiness is a word that essentially means "set apart" and is closely connected to his righteousness. God's holiness is a picture of how righteousness. G sinned, he was kicked out of the garden, kicked out of the presence of God. Because Adam was not holy anymore, he could not dwell in God's presence. With Israel, God set up a very elaborate system of sacrifices, washings, and cleansings in order for the people of Israel to live in the presence of God. They needed to be different from all the other nations around them because God dwelled in the midst of them. These regulations were meant to demonstrate that God was holy, set apart from everything common. When Moses first met God on the mountain, God said to him, "Take off your shoes because you are on holy ground" (Ex 3:5). God's holiness is such a defining characteristic it must affect how we relate to him. Listen to what David said: "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened" (Psalm 66:18). David said that a person who is living in unrepentant sin, which primarily is a matter of the heart, affects the power of their prayers. God will not listen to the prayers of a person who wants to hang on to his sin and, yet, be intimate with God at the same time. In fact, this is what the writer of Hebrews said: "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness, no one will see God. Ultimately, without a righteous life, no one can have a relationship with God. Atonement Well, how does this work and how can man then come into God's presence since every man has sinned (Romans 3:23)? In the Old Testament, God set up a sacrificial system to teach man about something called substitution. Because God is holy and righteous, he must punish sin. Therefore, God would symbolically punish the sins of man on a sacrificed lamb so the people could enter his presence and worship him. In fact, many scholars see "substitution" implied in the very first death. After Adam sinned, God immediately killed an animal and clothed Adam and Eve (Gen 3:20). The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and therefore, someone had to die for Adam's sin. From the very beginning, God showed mercy to man by providing a substitute. However, the sacrificial animal could never take away the sins of the world; it was only a symbol of a future reality. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said this: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) Jesus was the perfect lamb that all the sacrificial lambs always symbolized. He was man's substitute. It was only through his righteous life and death that man could be holy, and therefore, truly have a relationship with a holy God. In fact, the death of Christ was applied to all the ancient saints who died before Christ lived. Listen to what Paul said: God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Romans 3:25-26 Revelation 13:8 says the same thing: "All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was applied to ancient saints from the very beginning of mankind. The sacrificial lamb was only a symbol of how God was going to save people through substitution. Justified by Christ's Death Because of Christ's death, God justified us, meaning he made us "just as though we never sinned because of Christ's death, God justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." We can be made as though we have never sinned because of Christ's death, but it is because of his sinless life that righteousness can be applied to our account as we put our faith in him (Rom 3:26). Paul said this: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5:21). Not only did Jesus take the punishment for our sins, but he became sin and gave us his righteousness. There is a sense that every time God sees us, he sees the righteousness of his Son. We have been made holy by the Son. This is the only way we can have a relationship with a holy God (Hebrews 12:14). Holiness Identifies Believers In the same way "holiness," being set apart, is a primary characteristic of God, it has now become a primary characteristic of every believer. In fact, in Scripture we are often identified by this holiness. We see this in the commonly used title "saints." In Scripture, believers often are called "saints" which means "holy ones" because they are now set apart as positionally holy in Christ. We are holy because Christ's righteousness has been accredited to our account. Listen to how Paul commonly greeted Christians with this title: Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send greetings. All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household. (emphasis mine) Philippians 4:21-22 Our identity is tied to Christ's righteousness and not to our failures. That is why God calls us saints, set apart ones. We must learn to identify ourselves and others. It also would change how we approach God. Our identification with Christ's righteousness should encourage us to approach the throne of grace with boldness to receive mercy and grace in our time of need (cf. Heb 4:16). We are set apart from the rest of the world as saints in order to know, enjoy, and represent God. Holiness Should Be the Practice of Believers Not only are we saints who are set apart as holy, but we must now seek practical holiness in our daily lives. It is both a matter of our position as saints and also a matter of our position as saint 16). Because God is holy, we must always seek to be holy in all our conduct. We must be separate from the world and godly in the same way our Lord is. If a person's profession of faith does not lead to a lifestyle of practice. Listen to what Christ said in Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (emphasis mine). Those who have encountered through God's grace is without effect. It affects how God sees us, and it radically changes the life of every true believer. Paul said this: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The believer's position in Christ changes him or her into a new creation. They now desire righteousness where they previously did not, and they start to practice a life that is pleasing to God. This does not mean they will never sin, for that will not happen until the believer has a new body, without the indwelling presence of sin. But the true believer has a new body, without the indwelling presence of sin. But the true believer has a new body, without the indwelling presence of sin. But the true believer has a new body, without the indwelling presence of sin. But the true believer has a new body, without the indwelling presence of sin. 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We must grow in holiness by studying God's Word. How do we practice this practice it not only by knowing who God is and who we now are, but by growing in the knowledge of his Word (2 Pet 2:3). Listen to how Jesus prayed: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth (emphasis mine)" (John 17:16-17). We are set apart to be different by the Word, that's how God sanctifies us. Why then do many Christians not live holy lives? Much of it can be attributed to not living and abiding in God's Word. This is how he trains us; this is also how he gives us strength to be righteous Many have problems stepping away from bad relationships or the entrapment of habitual sins. This power comes through his Word. Listen to what Paul said: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (emphasis mine)" (2 Tim 3:16-17). Most Christians are not equipped means to be ready and empowered. To be equipped means to be ready and empowered as we get into God's Word. 2. We must grow in holiness by the practice of righteousness. James 1:27 says: Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (emphasis mine) Religion that our Father accepts practices righteous deeds. Holiness by keeping ourselves from sin and the world. James 1:27 says: Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from the pollution of the world. (emphasis mine) The negative element of holiness is keeping oneself from the pollution of the world. (emphasis mine) The negative element of holiness is keeping oneself from the pollution of the world. 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We often don't like to talk about his wrath than it does about His love."3 What exactly is the wrath of God? Tony Evans defines the wrath of God as: "His necessary, just, and righteous retribution against sin." 4 Examples What examples do we see of God's wrath in destroying the earth by water in the Genesis flood (Gen 6 and 7). We see his wrath in the New Testament as well. In the early church, Ananias and Sapphira were both killed for lying about the profit made from selling their land (Acts 5:1-10). In Corinth, people were sick and dying because God judged them for dishonoring the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:30). We see his wrath through church discipline as the apostles and the early church handed people over to Satan, which seemed to mean kicking them out of the church (1 Cor 5:5, 1 Tim 1:20). Scripture says that, "God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day" (Psalm 7:11). How do we see God's wrath every day? 1. One of the ways God's wrath is seen is simply by handing people over to the sin they desire and suppress the truth by their wickedness" (emphasis mine). It says the wrath of God is being revealed. But how is it revealed? As we read the chapter, it tells us about how God allows people to practice idolatry, sexual immorality, homosexuality, and all types of other sin. He gives a society over to their desires. Some of the worst discipline is to live in a corrupt society, with corrupt leadership, and corrupt people around us. God essentially says, "Okay, fine. Do what you want." Look at how the wrath of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decreed and depravity. that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. (emphasis mine)Romans 1:28-32 Sometimes God's wrath is experienced in that he gives us over to the sin we desire, and we, therefore, experience the consequences of that sin. 2. But the second type of wrath is seen in regular discipline for sin. We see this especially with Christians. Hebrews 12:10 says: "Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness (emphasis mine)." God disciplines his children so that they can grow in holiness. David said this: "It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees" (Psalm 119:71). It was through affliction that David learned how to obey it. God often disciplines people like a parent to deter them from sin and to promote righteousness. Certainly, we see this with government, which is a reflection of God's authority. Romans 13:1-4 says this: Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against the authority except that which God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no authority is rebelling against the authority against the authority is rebelling against the authority agains terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. (emphasis mine) Through government, God commends the righteous and punishes the wrongdoer. This is to be done in reverence of God who is the ultimate authority. We will ultimately see God's disciplinary wrath during the tribulation period. Sometimes, it is called the "wrath of the Lamb" or the wrath of Christ (Rev 6:16). Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mountains and the rocks of the mountains and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks of the mountains and the rocks of the mountains and the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks of the mountains and the rocks of the mountains and the rocks of the mountains. can stand? (emphasis mine) Revelation 6:15-17 Revelation 3:10 describes the tribulation further. It says: "Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth (emphasis mine). The tribulation will be a time of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth (emphasis mine). The tribulation will be a time of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth (emphasis mine). will go through. God will bring his wrath on the earth in retribution for all the sins that have been committed. 3. The last type of wrath is "eternal wrath." John 3:36 says, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever
rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him" (emphasis mine). The wrath of God abides on the unbeliever. Mankind is under a form of wrath right now for not believing in the Son, but one day, this will become an eternal wrath. Revelation 20:15 says this: "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (emphasis mine). This judgment is eternal. It will be the final display of God's wrath, as rebellious mankind, Satan, and his angels are tormented throughout eternity (Matt 25:41). This wrath will have varying degrees of punishment based on the amount of knowledge one had and also the amount of knowledge one had an also the knowledge one had an also what his master wants will be beaten with much, much will be demanded; and from the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much will be demanded; and from the one who has been given much will be demanded. do not obey it, will have a greater judgment and those who don't know God's will and disobey, will have a less strict judgment. There will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell, in the same way, that the way is the same way as he mentions those who had received the knowledge of the truth but rejected it. Listen to what he says: If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (emphasis mine) Hebrews 10:26-31 Those who had received the truth and then ultimately rejected it through apostasy will receive a greater punishment from God. Applications How should we respond to the wrath of God? 1. God's wrath should create a holy fear in us. Scripture says, "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). He is not only a God of love but of wrath, and therefore, we should fear and revere him. Hebrews 12:28-29 says, Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire. (emphasis mine) 2. God's wrath should encourage us to cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God [or fear of God]. (emphasis mine) We must pursue holiness because we fear God. Those who do not fear God, will not. 3. God's wrath should be modeled by believers. Not all anger is sinful. Sometimes, it is sinful for us to not be angry about things that are happening in the world. To not be angry would be to fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). In Mark 11, Christ went into the temple, used a whip, and flipped tables because the leaders were cheating people and dishonoring God. He said: "Is it not written: "'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers'" (Mark 11:17). There is a righteous anger that must be developed in the life of those who follow Christ and who are seeking to imitate him (Eph 5:1). How do we discern if we have a righteous anger or a selfish anger (James 1:19-20)? Certainly, we can learn to distinguish by a careful study of Christ. When people were being cheated and God was being dishonored, he was like a lion. He pulled out the whip and was aggressive with a righteous anger. But when he was dishonored, he was like a lamb to the slaughter. Let's look at 1 Peter 2:21-23: To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. (emphasis mine) When Christ was treated unjustly, he turned the other cheek, and was silent. But when others were mistreated, he demonstrated righteous anger. Certainly, there is a place for defending our rights and going to the authorities. Paul himself appealed to Caesar when he was being mistreated in prison (Acts 25:11). We have that right as well, but there is also a time to be silent and submit to harsh treatment (1 Cor 6:7). We must through prayer and wise counsel discern those times. However, we also must discern when to be righteously angry. Anger is a characteristic of God that has been given to us in order for us to seek justice in the same way he does. It is needed for us to faithfully pray against these things. We must develop a holy anger for it is a characteristic of God. God Is Sovereign Is God in control of all things and if so to what extent? This is one of the most controversial aspects of the characteristics of God. Christians are just robots. What exactly does the Scripture say about God being in control of everything, and how does this correspond with free will and the presence of evil and Satan in the world? Scriptures Teaches God's Sovereignty God is in control of all things. Listen to what Ephesians 1:11 says: "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" (emphasis mine). It does not say that God works some things according to the purpose of his will, but all things. Everything is working in conformity with the plan of God. This is a mystery, but it is clearly taught in Scripture. How do we see this sovereignty expressed and explained in Scripture? Romans 8:28 tells us something about his purposes in controlling all events. It says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (emphasis mine). God controls events in such a way that they always work to the good of his children. For this reason, the doctrine of the sovereignty of God gives Christians great confidence since nothing happens outside of his control. We know that Satan isn't in control, the government isn't in control, the government isn't in control, the government isn't in control. (emphasis mine) How else do we see God's sovereignty throughout Scripture? We see God in control of each man's time on the earth. Listen to what David said, "Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be (emphasis mine)" (Psalm 139:16). What about a chance death or a sickness that takes somebody away? David said these were "ordained." The word "ordained." The word "ordained." The word "ordained." The word that they were written out beforehand. We see God clearly described as in control of nature. What did Christ teach in Matthew 6 about nature? Jesus said that God clothes the lilies of the field and he feeds the birds of the air. Look at the birds of the air. Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly
Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Matthew 6:26-28 This might seem strange to us for we know all these things are not happen naturally. Natural processes happening apart from God's sovereignty; he is actually working in his creation and never losing control. We also see this in what Paul taught about Christ in Colossians 1:17: "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (emphasis mine). Is God a clockmaker that winds up creation and allows it to continually work on its own? Or is he somehow vitally involved and always in control of it? Paul says Christ is always holding everything such as casting lots which is like the rolling of dice. "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD" (Prov 16:33). It even declares that God is in control of kings and that he turns their hearts in whatever direction he wills. "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases" (Prov 16:33). 21:1). God is in control of disasters. Look at what Amos says, "When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the Genesis flood and sometimes not as with Job and Joseph. Either way, Scripture would say that God is in control of these events. God is in control of trials, each person's time on the earth, nature, random events, the heart of kings, and even disasters. God's Control of these events of men and evil. In fact, it would seem to indicate that God is the first cause of these things even though he cannot be blamed because of the secondary causes. The bird has food because he went and caught the food, but God ultimately provided it for him. Satan tempted man, but God was in control as seen in the story of Job. There are many causes. Wayne Grudem's comments are helpful: In this way it is possible to affirm that in one sense events are fully (100 percent) caused by God and f of each event works as an invisible, behind-the-scenes, directing cause and therefore could be called the "primary cause" that plans and initiates everything that happens (emphasis mine).6 In one sense, Scripture shows God as being the first cause of events simply because nothing can happen apart from his sovereign purpose and his sustaining power (cf. Eph 1:11, Heb 1:3). God sustains "all things by his powerful word" (Heb 1:3). However, again, Scripture would teach this without placing the blame on God for sin or evil (James 1:13). The sovereignty of God and, yet, human responsibility is a mystery, but Scripture teaches them both. It is a paradox—two seemingly contradicting realities Pharaoh's Hardened Heart Let's consider a familiar passage with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Moses asks Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go, even though, God had already predicted that he would harden Pharaoh hardened his own heart in Exodus 8:15. "But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that Holdened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later, it says that God hardened his heart in Exodus 14:8. "The LORD had said "the LORD had said" (emphasis mine). And later had been said to the LORD had said "the LORD had said" (emphasis mine). The LORD had said "the LORD boldly" (emphasis mine). Which is the first cause, God or Pharaoh? It teaches that both were responsible in some way or another. But since God is the sovereign, he is ultimately in control, and therefore, the first cause (cf. Prov 21:1). Why does God harden his heart? This is what Paul says about the event in Romans 9:17-18. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to have mercy on the heart mercy of the heart mercy of the heart mercy on the heart mercy of the heart mercy of th which was that his name might be proclaimed throughout all the earth. God was the first cause. In fact, we see that when Israel later entered Jericho, the people there were afraid. They had heard about God parting the Red Sea and his destruction of the Egyptians (Josh 2:10). Pharaoh's sin was used to bring glory to God. This might give us an answer to the question, "If God is in control, why did he allow sin in the first place?" In some way or another, God's characteristics and his glory are more powerfully displayed against the darkness. If there was no sin, then we would never fully know the concept of God's holiness and his anger against sin. We would never fully know his characteristics of patience, grace, or mercy. Now, the reality of God's sovereignty, as seen in him hardening Pharaoh's heart, might naturally provoke men to anger or resentment. Paul, in fact, expected that some reading his teachings about Pharaoh and God's sovereignty might respond that way. They would say, "How can God hold us accountable or blame us? For who resists his will?" But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?" Romans 9:19-21 Paul simply replies to their confusion with the doctrine of God's sovereignty. The Lord is God, he is the Creator, and he does what he wants. Who are you to say to the Creator, why democracy where people get to choose. In a true monarchy, the king is in total control and does what he wishes. This is what Psalm 115:3 says: "Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him" (emphasis mine). Now with that said, we can take comfort in all the other characteristics of God. He is all wise; he is righteous. He works all things out for the good. There is no better person to be in total control. That should comfort us. With that said, God's sovereignty somehow works together with man's free will, as we saw in the case of Pharaoh. God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and yet, Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Scripture says that even though God was in control and the first cause, Pharaoh was responsible—he made a choice. We make choices every day, and if we sin, we are to blame. But somehow with that reality, Scripture would say God was in control. The mystery is in how these two truths can coexist. It doesn't make sense to us; however, we can be sure they make perfect sense to God. This again reflects the law of concurrence; there are at least two causes. God acted and man acted. Which is the primary cause? Scripture would say God is, and therefore, there is a sense in which his will is always done (Eph 1:11). God's Sovereignty and Satan Now, here is the next question, we have looked at God's sovereignty in considering man's free will and specifically sin, but what about God's sovereignty over Satan? The Bible also teaches that God is in control of Satan. Let's look at a story with David against them, saying, 'Go and take a census of Israel and Judah'" (emphasis mine). This is the narrative of David counting all the soldiers in Israel and God punishing Israel because of David's pride. In the 2 Samuel narrative, it says God "incited David against them." However, when you look at the parallel passage in Chronicles, it gives a different cause behind David's census. It says in 1 Chronicles 21:1: "Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel" (emphasis mine). It says Satan incited David. Which one did it, God or Satan? They both did, but again, Scripture would say God is sovereign; he is the ruler who is always working out his plans on the earth. Therefore, he is the first cause. Satan is the second cause. Scripture would teach that God is the cause because nothing can happen apart from his sovereignty. However, the paradox is that Scripture would also teach that God cannot be blame of demons or mankind. We see a similar case in the story of Job. In chapter 1, Satan asked God for permission to touch Job, but when Job had lost everything, Job declared God was the cause of his loss. Look at what he says: Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised." In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing. (emphasis mine) Job 1:21-22 Job sees God in control of his loss and worships him. The author quickly adds, "Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing." In addition, we see another story that teaches this truth in Micaiah's vision that was shared with both King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat. Listen to the prophecy: Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD said, 'Who will
entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?' "One suggested this, and another that. Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.' "'By what means?' the LORD asked. "'You will succeed in enticing him,' said the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The LORD has decreed disaster for you." (emphasis mine)1 Kings 22:19-23 In this prophecy, God is pictured as looking for someone to entice King Ahab so he can be led to his destruction for all the evil that he had previously committed. Apparently, a demon approaches the Lord and says that he will entice Ahab by being a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets. God tells him to "Go and do it" and that he would be successful. Who enticed Ahab? The demonic spirit did. Who was in control? God was. Scripture clearly declares that God is in control of all things (Eph 1:11), and yet, there can be other causes such as Satan or man. Wayne Grudem gives a very insightful conclusion to our look at how Scripture teaches God's control over both man's sin and the devil. Listen to what he says: We must remember that in all these passages it is very clear that Scripture nowhere shows God as directly doing anything evil but rather as bringing about evil deeds through the willing actions of moral creatures. Moreover, Scripture never blames God for evil or shows God as taking pleasure in evil and Scripture never excuses human beings for the wrong they do. However we understand God's relationship to evil, we must never come to the point where we think that we are not responsible for the evil that we do, or that God takes pleasure in evil or is to be blamed for it. Such a conclusion is clearly contrary to and some Pentecostals. Wayne Grudem states the Arminian position this way: Those who hold an Arminian position maintain that in order to preserve the real human freedom and real human choices that are necessary for genuine human personhood, God cannot cause or plan our voluntary choices. Therefore they conclude that God's providentia involvement in or control of history must not include every specific detail of every event that happens, but that God instead simply responds to human choices and actions as they come about and does so in such a way that his purposes are ultimately accomplished in the world. However, it's difficult to come to that doctrinal conclusion because there are so many Scriptures on God's sovereignty which speak of "all" circumstances and not just some in his control such as: "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" (Ephesians 1:11). Everything is working in conformity to his "plan." They are not just happening and then he fixes them. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (emphasis mine)" (Romans 8:28). David said, "Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be (emphasis mine)" (Psalm 139:16). The author of Hebrews said, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (Hebrews 1:3). "I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things (emphasis mine)" (Isaiah 45:7). "Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and good things come?" (Lamentations 3:38). Mundane events like eating and drinking are under his control; random events, our future, and both disaster and good things come from him. His sovereignty is absolute, total, and comprehensive. If God ceased to be in control, he would cease to be God. His sovereignty is just as much a characteristic of him as his omniscience or omnipresence. With all that said, we must always realize there is an aspect of mystery with this doctrine. If we try to explain it without recognizing the paradox the apparent contradiction—then we are oversimplifying God for our own understanding. There are some aspects of God that we cannot be blamed for evil. How this works, we cannot be fully sure, but we must teach it and uphold God's right as the potter to do whatever he wants since he is king (cf. Rom 9:19-21, Psalm 47:2)). Application What are some encouragements from the fact that God is sovereign? 1. We can have comfort in the fact that God is sovereign plan (Eph 1:11). 2. We can have comfort in the fact that God can hear and respond to our prayers. Why do we pray if God is not sovereign and in control of all things? It is his sovereign to talk to the God who is controlling everything and ask for his perfect will to be done on the earth. Though he is sovereign, he has chosen to work through the prayers of his people. Ezekiel 22:30 says: "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none." 3. We can have comfort in failure and difficult circumstances. We can be comforted no matter how bad a situation is, or how bad we have failed, or what Satan has done. God is ultimately in control. We can see Joseph's comfort, and also how he comforted his brothers asked for forgiveness, he responded with, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." He saw God in control, and therefore, he took comfort and held no grudges. He also was calling for his brothers to take comfort in God's sovereignty, as he used even their bad intentions for good. A person that doesn't understand and trust God's sovereignty will be a person that holds tremendous grudges and may find themselves very fearful or anxious at times. They also may find it impossible to accept God's forgiveness for their failures. God's sovereignty gives us confidence and brings comfort to our lives. Conclusion Why is knowing the characteristics of God important? It is important so we can worship him and serve him properly. The more you know him, the more your worship will be enhanced and the better you can please him (John 4:23). What characteristics of God is immutable. God is immutable. God is immutable. God is immutable. God is eternal. God is omnipresent. God is omnipresent. God is omniscient. God is omnipotent. God is merciful. God is merciful. God is loving. God is loving. God is holy. God is sovereign. Review Ouestions What are characteristics of God's holiness mean? How do we see God's holiness demonstrated throughout Scripture? What ways should we demonstrate holiness? What does God's wrath mean? In what events in Scripture do we see God's wrath? In what events in Scriptures? Why is God's sovereignty such a controversial doctrine? What is the main difference between a Reformed understanding of God's sovereignty and an Arminian one? Which one do you lean toward? Prayer Prompts Pray for the church would demonstrate this love by serving one another, forgiving one another, and being patient with one another so that Christ will be glorified (John 13:35). Pray for Christians to trust God's sovereignty in all things, especially in trials. Pray for believers to be free of worry, fear, and anxiety as they trust God with their past, present, and future (Prov 3:5). Pray that God would guard their hearts and minds and give them peace that passes all understanding (Phil 4:6). Pray for God to move in the areas of religious and government corruption, unjust laws, trafficking, abortion, the persecution of Christians would faithfully pray over these issues (1 Timothy 2:1-2) and get involved as God leads (Matt 5:13). Pray that Christians would be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). Pray for them to separate from ungodly relationships, ungodly entertainment so that we can be lights to the world as Christ desired (Matt 5:14). Pray that Christians would be zealous for good works in order to honor Christ (Titus 2:14). Copyright 2014 Gregory Brown The primary Scriptures used are New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and King James Version. Holy Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, and Version (1984) unless otherwise than the New International Version (1984) unless otherwise than the New Inte Scripture quotations marked (ESV) are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version ® (ESV ®) Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. 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