



# *What God is like*

"In the beginning God..."

This is how our story, the Bible, begins. God was already present before anything happened, and He is there at the end of the story calling us into the future. From one end of time to the other, He is the *LORD of ALL!*

Although God is beyond our reach, and we cannot by our own efforts understand who He is, He chooses to reach out to us, inviting us to know and relate to Him, the Maker of everything. He offers us eternity to know Him for only in the pursuit of Him will we find our ultimate satisfaction in life (John 17:3).

Gaining this knowledge of God is worth every ounce of sweat and effort we can give, because more than anything else, it will shape how we see the world, how we see others, how we see ourselves and how we choose to live.

Psalms 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I AM God". May you enter into these studies with a prayerful expectation that you will encounter the Living God, and as you do so, you will only become more alive yourself.

The studies are as follows:

<i>The God We Can Know</i>	Page 1
<i>The God of Power</i>	Page 3
<i>The God of Love and Grace</i>	Page 5
<i>The God of Peace</i>	Page 7
<i>The God who Knows Everything &amp; is Everywhere</i>	Page 9
<i>The God of Holiness and Justice</i>	Page 11
<i>The God who is Faithful</i>	Page 13
<i>Summary</i>	Page 15





# 1. The God We Can Know

You can learn some 'external' facts about a person by using your investigation skills, but to really know someone, they need to be willing to be open with you... they need to reveal who they really are.

The Bible paints a picture of a God who does just that with us. God longs to show us who he really is, and throughout the Scriptures we see a progression of God revealing himself to the world in a way that they can understand, building on the knowledge and experience of the previous generations. The story reaches its highest moment in the Gospels where God himself comes to earth in the person of Jesus, and through his death, resurrection and ascension the Lord gives us free access to know and approach him through his Spirit in us. This is Good News indeed!



## *Things to do/ Questions to consider*

Read through at least one passage from each bullet point below, and note down the things you observe about how God is revealing himself through:

- ❖ **The Bible** – 2Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, Psalm 119:130
- ❖ **His Creation** – John 1:1-5, Psalm 19:1-4, Isaiah 45:18-19
- ❖ **His Own Chosen People** – Exodus 6:1-8, and Exodus 33:12-34:9
- ❖ **Jesus Christ** – John 1:9-18, Hebrews 1:1-3, John 14:5-14
- ❖ **The Holy Spirit living IN us** – John 14:15-21 and John 16:5-15
- ❖ **Our promised future with God** – Revelation 21:1-7 and 22:1-6

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*  
*Jeremiah 29:11-13*

*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*  
*Hebrews 4:16*

- In what ways has God revealed himself to you thus far in your life?  
When have you felt the most free to approach him?

- Read the additional thoughts in the box on the right. As you consider these points as well as your answers to the questions above, write down any thoughts you have been particularly struck by in terms of how God reveals himself so that we can know him.

- **Spend some time praying:**

*Thank God for what you have learnt*

*Ask God to help you put some of these learnt things into practice*

*Ask God to help some of your friends know him better*

### *Some thoughts on God's revelation of Himself...*

John 1:3 the message of God is woven into the very fabric of the universe.

Exodus 6:1-8 As God comes and introduces himself to various people throughout the Bible, he continually builds on the knowledge of previous generations' and on what he has already revealed of himself.

Exodus 33:15-23 God wants to be known but there needs to be a humble attitude in approaching the Lord for, in every way, he is more than we can handle.

Hebrews 1:3: In Jesus we see, very tangibly, what God is like. He displays the glory of God and is the exact representation of his being. If we want to know what God is like, we look at Jesus.

By receiving the Holy Spirit, God's peoples' experience of him goes from being an outward or external relationship to an internal knowing and relating, closer than is possible with any other human.

Because of Jesus' death, God's people now have unlimited access to Him. Hebrews 4:16

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## ***Thought to finish***

From start to finish, the Bible tells the story of God who searches for lost people (Gen 3:9) and longs for real relationship with us (Rev 3:20). But sadly, the 'noise' in our busy lives regularly stops us from hearing and seeing the Lord of the Universe who is seeking us out. He calls to us, "Be still and know that I AM God" (Ps46:10) but too often our hearts have lost the sensitivity to feel and respond (Mat 13:13-15). Fortunately the Lord is persistent. He who raised Christ from the dead is able to give hearing to our ears, sight to our eyes, and feeling to our hearts so that we can see and know him.

So, as the writer of Hebrews tells us:

*"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts... See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness... "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts..." Hebrews 3:7-15*

**Today** is the day to respond to the One who wants to be known by us. How will you respond?



## 2. *The God of Power*

Power is measured by how much strength, ability, control and authority you have. As we read through the Bible, it becomes clear that God has maximum amounts of all of these, and so we can rightly call Him the All-Powerful, Sovereign Lord. There is nothing that can defeat him or his purposes; he can accomplish whatever he wills to do.

In all of this, however, he is no crazed and oppressive tyrant. Rather, he is motivated by love so that, not only is God all-powerful, but he uses his power for the good of his people!



### *Things to do/ Questions to consider*

Read through some of the following passages, noting down anything you see with regards to...

- ❖ The extent of God's power
- ❖ How God chooses to use his power
- ❖ What this power means both for his people and for those who are against him

Psalm 33

Exodus 14:29-15:18

Isaiah 40:12-31

Mark 4:35-41

Ephesians 1:18-23 and 3:14-21

Philippians 2:5-11

*"...for I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all my purposes.'"*

Isaiah 46:9-11

*"Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you."*

Jeremiah 32: 17

- When I underestimate God’s power, how does it affect my thoughts...

- ❖ about me?
- ❖ about others?
- ❖ about life in general?

*“I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard to me?”* Jer 32:27

*Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”* Mark 10:27

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* Philippians 4:13

- Taking into account what you’ve studied here as well as what you already know, write down any thoughts you have that particularly strike you in terms of God and his power.

- **Memorise a verse** to help you remember how the God of power can help you in everyday situations. (For example, Philippians 4:13)

### *Thought to finish*

God calls his people to be a part of his plan to free the world, and he gives them access to his power for the sake of this mission. But too often, we don’t grasp the reality of this and so we can be extremely limited by our fears.

This was true for Moses. When God called him in the desert and sent him to Pharaoh to free the Israelites from slavery (Exodus 3), Moses first response was “*Who am I* (a nobody, desert-wanderer) to go to *Pharaoh* (the superpower of the world)?” God replied “I will be with you”, and ultimately that would make the difference. Moses got there in the end, but it took him a while to trust God on this.



That was okay for Moses, but what might the Lord say to us? “*All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations... And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age*” (Mat 28:18-20). Like Moses, we have been sent on a co-mission with God to free those around us from slavery. Like Moses, we receive the same promise from the God of all power: “*I am with you always*”. If the All-Powerful Lord is really with us and on our side in this, what difference should this make for us? How will *you* respond?



### 3. *The God of Love & Grace*

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God loves people. This love for us is wider, longer, higher and deeper than we can ever get to the end of, and what it's like is well-described in 1Corinthians 13 (see box on the left). This love works itself out in *Grace*: the kind, open-handed, big-hearted, giving to others at a cost to self. Grace

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

is the undeserved gift of God that is motivated by love, and this is at the centre of what God is like. He alone chooses to show love and mercy to those who are undeserving and have no merit, and apart from this grace of God we cannot not be saved. Amazingly, he chooses to show this love and grace to you and me!



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#### *Things to do/ Questions to consider*

Read through some of the following passages, noting down anything you see with regards to...

- ❖ the nature of love
- ❖ some of the ways that God's love and grace are given to people
- ❖ what difference this love and grace makes for his people

Psalms 103

Isaiah 53

Matthew 20:1-16

John 1:14-18

John 15:9-17

Romans 8:28-39

1 John 4:7-21

*The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."* Zephaniah 3:17

- When I underestimate God’s love and grace, how does it affect my thoughts...
  - ❖ about me?
  - ❖ about others?
  - ❖ about life in general?

*“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.”*  
Ephesians 2:8-9

*“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”*  
2 Corinthians 8:9

- In what ways or situations have you felt most connected with God’s love and a recipient of his grace?

- Although my conscious mind may agree that God is loving and gracious, does my outward life demonstrate that he is? Take some time to think prayerfully about what I could change in my life to better reflect this reality.

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### ***Thought to finish***

In the business world, the market economy sets the rules, and the most basic rule is that you need to give something in order to get something. As they say, ‘There’s no such thing as a free lunch!’

But in the bigger reality of God’s world, this is not the way. The rules to life are derived from the character of God – of who God is – and the most basic rule is love and grace. God continually takes the initiative to do good to us, not because we deserve it, but because it is in God’s nature to love. The grace of God is a form of reckless generosity that doesn’t calculate what might be gained in exchange for doing something nice; rather, to be loving and generous is what God does, just because! It may make no sense to the business world, but it makes the world of difference to us. Does this make sense to you?







## 4. *The God of Peace*

Peace is more than just the absence of conflict. It is a total and complete state of well-being, a unity in relationship, a wholeness of fellowship.

At the Creation of the world, the Lord took the formless and empty earth and created order, beauty and meaning out of the chaos. But as the first humans rebelled against God, the Fall sent humanity into a spin of angst, selfishness, war and guilt as they fought against God, against each other and against themselves. Only the God of peace could bring *reconciliation* out of the mess; only he could overcome this state of war with an everlasting peace that truly prevails.



### *Things to do/ Questions to consider*

Read through some of the following passages, noting down what they tell us about God's peace and reconciliation and any implications this has for the way we relate to...

- ❖ God
- ❖ Each other
- ❖ Ourselves and our inner life

Isaiah 9:1-7 (c.f. Matthew 4:12-17)  
Romans 5:1-11  
Romans 8:5-11  
Romans 12:14-21  
2 Corinthians 5:14-21  
Philippians 4:4-9  
Colossians 1:15-23

*"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."*

John 14:27

*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:7

*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility*

Ephesians 2:14

- What do you think is the significance of Jesus' death for our experience of peace?
- Are there any recurring moments or situations in your life in which you experience a lack of peace?
- Can you recall some time(s) when God has given you an experience of his peace in your life? What do you believe made it possible for you to experience this peace and how did it make a difference for you?

*In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, LORD, make me dwell in safety.* Psalm 4:8

*The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever.  
<sup>11</sup> The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.* Psalm 29:10-11

*You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.* Isaiah 55:12

*But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.* Isaiah 53:5

*Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.* 2 Thessalonians 3:16

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.* Colossians 3:15

- **Memorise a verse** to help you remember and enter into God's peace, especially during those times you feel a lack of peace. (For example, Philippians 4:6-7, Matthew 11:28-30)

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### ***Thought to finish***

Peace is not just the lack of noise; it is the presence of God's rest in our lives. For too long, we spend time busily pursuing things that promise happiness and meaning (money, jobs, clothes, houses...) but that leave us unsatisfied. In an unexpected way, the place where we find lasting contentment and well-being is through an execution: Christ brought us peace by way of his humiliating and excruciating lonely death on the cross... *'by his wounds we are healed'* (Isaiah 53:5). He calls us to not waste our valuable lives chasing smoke and mirrors. Instead, we're invited to lean on him who disperses the fog and cleans up the clutter of our lives as he gives us the very real gift of His peace. But to receive this peace we have to let go some things that are dragging us in the wrong direction. What are you willing to let go of?





## 5. The God who knows everything & is everywhere

The opening line of the Bible tells us that God created the heavens and the earth. Not long after, the LORD of All got his hands dirty and created the first human being from the soil and breathed into the man the breath of life (Gen2:7). God's act of creation, however, didn't end at the Beginning. Rather, God continued – *and continues* – to keep everything going, including keeping people alive, moment by moment. He is ever-present with each one of us, whether from the past, the present or the future. He sees us, knows us, and is as close to us as every breath we take.



*"Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD.*

Jeremiah 23:23-24

*"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."*

Isaiah 6:3

*Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of every human being. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.*

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

*"Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.*

Revelation 22:12-13

### **Things to do/ Questions to consider**

Read through some of the following passages and the ones in the box on the left, noting down what they tell us about what God knows and where God is, and any implications this has for the way we relate to...

- ❖ God
- ❖ Each other
- ❖ Ourselves and our inner life

Job 28:12-28

Psalms 139

John 1:1-5

Acts 17:22-28

Colossians 1:15-20

- What is our response when we realise that God knows the secrets of our hearts?

*From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

Matthew 4:17

- Although my conscious mind may agree that God is always with me, does my outward life demonstrate that he is? What specific emotions, attitudes or actions might show that I am aware that God is with me?

*Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

Hebrews 2:18

*Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can human beings do to me?"*

Hebrews 13:5-6

- Given that the Lord is always present and already knows all about me and what is going on in my life, how might this positively affect my prayer life?
- In the busyness of life, it is too easy to forget that the Creator of the Universe is right there with you. **Memorise a verse** to help you remember the Lord's presence with you and his knowledge of you (For example, Hebrews 13:5-6, Isaiah 41:10, Psalm 139:23-24)

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## *Thought to finish*

The Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life on earth. They regularly show Jesus praying in a variety of settings and they communicate how very closely Jesus experienced the Father's presence right there with him (e.g. John 8:29). So when Jesus cried out from the cross, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*" (Mat 27:46), it was a truly Hellish moment of separation from the Father for him.

*Jesus said, "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."*

John 8:29

*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

Ephesians 2:13

That moment, however, opened up the possibility of a new closeness to the Lord *for us*. God sustains all life and so is already ever-present and all-knowing with all of Creation. But through Jesus, we can have a special relationship – a family relationship – with the Lord who is not only 'ever with us', but is also 'ever *for us*'! He knows all the bad we have done, but loves us and stays with us anyway.

Let us therefore make the most of this bond with our ever-present, ever-loving Lord. Let's not try to live in secret, on our own without his help and presence, because that makes for a lonely and Hellish life. Instead, let's find ways to help us remember and realise that God is with us and is our Helper. With him on our side, ultimately nothing can go wrong.

## 6. The God of Holiness & Justice

The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia describes holiness in a general sense as being the 'separation from all that is human and earthly'. It describes the 'absoluteness, majesty, and awfulness of the Creator in his distinction from the creature.' God really is separate, uniquely 'other' and beyond anything else we know.



Holiness, however, describes more than just the 'otherness' of God. It is a way of talking about the purity of the character of God, and this is something that the Lord calls us to aim for: "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19:2). We can't resemble God in His 'otherness', but we can reflect his likeness as loving, righteous and just people.

*"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory!"* Isaiah 6:3

*"I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst."*  
Hosea 11:9

*"You are to be holy to me because I, the LORD, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own."*  
Leviticus 20:26

*And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it.*  
Isaiah 35:8

*Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*  
2 Corinthians 7:1

*Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.* Hebrews 12:14

*But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."* 1 Peter 1:15-16

### **Things to do/ Questions to consider**

- Read through the following passages plus the ones in the box on the left, noting down what they tell us about holiness.

Exodus 3:1-14

Psalm 15

Isaiah 6:3-7

- If fear or reverence is the right response to God's holiness, how might we express that?

*This is what the LORD says:  
"Let not the wise boast of  
their wisdom or the strong  
boast of their strength or  
the rich boast of their  
riches, but let those who  
boast boast about this: that  
they understand and know  
me, that I am the LORD,  
who exercises kindness,  
justice and righteousness on  
earth, for in these I delight,"  
declares the LORD.*

Jeremiah 9:23-24

*"I hate, I despise your  
religious festivals; I cannot  
stand your assemblies. Even  
though you bring me burnt  
offerings and grain  
offerings, I will not accept  
them. Though you bring  
choice fellowship offerings, I  
will have no regard for  
them. Away with the noise  
of your songs! I will not  
listen to the music of your  
harps. But let justice roll on  
like a river, righteousness  
like a never-failing stream!*

Amos 5:21-24

*Yet the LORD longs to be  
gracious to you; therefore  
he will rise up to show you  
compassion. For the LORD is  
a God of justice. Blessed are  
all who wait for him!*

Isaiah 30:18

*Your arm is endued with  
power; your hand is strong,  
your right hand exalted.  
Righteousness and justice  
are the foundation of your  
throne; love and  
faithfulness go before you.  
Blessed are those who have  
learned to acclaim you, who  
walk in the light of your  
presence, LORD. They  
rejoice in your name all day  
long; they exult in your  
righteousness.*

Psalms 89:13-16

*He has shown all you people  
what is good. And what  
does the LORD require of  
you? To act justly and to  
love mercy and to walk  
humbly with your God.*

Micah 6:8

Justice is a deeply-rooted characteristic of the Holy Lord. Read through the following passages plus the ones in the box on the left, noting down what they tell us about the Lord's interest in justice.

Isaiah 42:1-4

Isaiah 59:1-16

Although my conscious mind may agree that God is holy and just, does my outward life demonstrate that he is? Take some time to think prayerfully about what I could change in my life to better reflect this reality.

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### ***Thought to finish***

When Moses asked to see God's glory, the Lord said Moses could see his goodness, but said he couldn't see the glory of the Lord's face and live (Exodus 33:18-23). Like staring into the sun, the pure brightness of the Holy Lord would be too much for him – Moses would only be consumed by the overpowering fire.

Like Moses, we too could not survive the overwhelming gaze of the Lord. But through Jesus, we have a mediator who makes relationship with the Lord possible. Through Jesus we enter the family of God and we start to take on the family likeness, with holiness and justice being foundational characteristics. These are not just 'religious' attributes – they are ways of seeing and living that affect every area of life. Yes, we regularly fall short, but this is no reason to give up. The Lord urges us onwards to be more *Holy* and *Just* because we are made for a higher calling; we are made for a better way of living and interacting with others. Therefore, let us not give up! *'Though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again'* (Proverbs 24:16). Let us strive on!



## 7. The God who is Faithful



*'Many claim to have unending love, but a faithful person who can find?'*

(Proverbs 20:6). In our world today, there is no shortage of promises. Whether it's politicians, advertisers, romantic suitors, 'how-to' book authors, 'we must get you over for dinner' acquaintances, or many others in between, there are plenty of people promising us something that they don't always deliver on. In this climate it's easy for us to become a little cynical and weary.

But when it comes to dealing with issues of eternal and ultimate significance, the stakes are too high; we can't afford to be let down. The trouble is that we all have to believe something – and someone; there is no 'fence' to permanently sit on. So who will you rely on to tell you what is true? Who will you trust to fulfil what they promise? Joshua confronted the Israelites of his day with a question which could equally be asked of us: *"If*

*Joshua said, "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed." Joshua 23:14*

*Solomon said, "Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses." 1 Kings 8:56*

*Balaam said to Balak, "God is not a human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? I have received a command to bless; he has blessed, and I cannot change it." Numbers 23:19-20*

*'the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones. But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me." "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me." Isaiah 49:13-16*

*servicing the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15). Let us also positively answer this question and trust him, for ultimately he alone is faithful.*

### **Things to do/ Questions to consider**

- Read through the following passages plus the ones in the box on the left and over the page. As you consider this theme of God's faithfulness, what are some of the big ideas that come through?

Joshua 21:43-45

2 Corinthians 1:16-22

Hebrews 6:12-20

- God is faithful to what he promises, but does that mean our lives will be trouble-free? Read the following verses and note what is and what isn't promised.

John 12:27-28  
 2 Corinthians 4  
 Hebrews 5:7

- Read Romans 4:16-25 and Hebrews 11.  
 As people realise the reliability and dependability of the Lord, this has an impact on what they do and how they live. As you better understand the Lord's faithfulness is there anything about your life you would like to change?

*If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.* 1 Timothy 2:13

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* 1 John 1:9

*May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.* 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.* 2 Peter 3:9

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### ***Thought to finish***

In our world, there are too many random events happening beyond our control for us to be absolutely certain that we can deliver on our promises. Only someone with ultimate power over all time and space can do that, because they alone have the ability to guarantee outcomes. The Lord God *has* that power.

There are many things he doesn't promise us in this world – for example, being always healthy, wealthy, happy, treated justly and never lonely. Jesus was dearly loved by the Father and yet he never received promises of these things, but instead his life was marked by suffering. Should we who follow him expect any better treatment or different promises?

But the Lord does promise to love us, to be with us, to be on our side, and ultimately to take us home to be with him. He sees the beginning from the end and has the power to deliver on these promises. And so we're invited to say with the Apostle Paul, *"I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor 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."* (Romans 8:38-39). He is faithful and he will do it. Amen!





## 8. Summary

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### *Things to do/ Questions to consider*

Go back over the studies and briefly note down the main new things you have learnt, or the things you already knew but have been freshly reminded of ...

- About yourself...

- About your world...

God may have got your attention on one or two things you need to do as a result of going through these studies. You will have the best chance of succeeding in these things if you tell someone else about them and, if possible, if you practically plan when you will do these things.

Write these things down somewhere that will help you to act on them!

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### *Thought to finish*

To be supreme in power, love and grace; to be the ultimate source of peace, holiness and justice; to know everything and be everywhere... this is the Lord, the Maker of all things seen and unseen. It is a humble privilege to begin to know him who with a dogged determination personally seeks us out for relationship. That he should love and care for us seems like too much for us to ask... so it is just as well that we are called to follow the One who chooses to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). He is the Lord, and this is Good News.

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah 9:6

