

Faithwalkers – Saturday, May 7, 2016

“Know What You Believe” by Paul Little – Chapter 2 – “God”

Key Verse

Jeremiah 9:23-24" *Thus says the Lord, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises loving kindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the Lord "*

Good morning gentlemen, and welcome to this week's Faithwalkers!

Several weeks ago Greg asked if I might share on the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the book you have chosen to study, "Know What You Believe" by Paul Little and I am happy and blessed to be able to do with you this beautiful first Saturday of May Spring morning!

Little did I know when I accepted Greg's offer that I would be given a chapter with only a one word title and therefore, obviously, very little content to fill a half hour with.....I'm kidding!

Quite the opposite, in fact, he' given me a chapter on the one topic and one word that has filled more books and more conversations and more thoughts than any other in history...think about that for a while as we share this morning.

The author claims that "Increasing godlessness causes some people to urge us to agree simply to use the word God without even trying to define it lest we breed division."

And he's right....whether it be big "G" or little "g" God, the deceiver has increasingly tried to dumb down any distinction and definition of who or what we are referring to, be it animate or inanimate...for every religion has its gods, right, and so there must be something good and worthy to take away from each, isn't there, say the "enlightened" and non-judgmental of the world?

...but you, my fellow Faithwalkers, have been faithful to persevere in your walk and in your study, so that you may know that which you believe....and I thank God for your perseverance as you are each such an encouragement to me!

As Timothy 2:15, the motto of the AWANA children's program that I used to help lead, clearly instructs "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." ...or as the acronym AWANA stands for "Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed"

Chapter 2 starts with a quote from A.W. Tozer....

"What we believe about God is the most important thing about us."

Our belief or lack of it inevitably translates itself into our actions, our attitudes and our view of the world. ‘

“Faith, in Hebrews 11, is illustrated by what people did rather than what they said or professed”

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. <sup>2</sup> This is what the ancients were commended for.

<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did....

<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death....

<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, in holy fear built an ark to save his family.....

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham...obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ...

<sup>13</sup> All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. <sup>14</sup> People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham....offered Isaac as a sacrifice.

<sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac.....

<sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob...

<sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph...

<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses....

<sup>29</sup> By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land....

<sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell....

<sup>31</sup> By faith the prostitute Rahab....

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to

strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were put to death by stoning;<sup>[e]</sup> they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— <sup>38</sup> the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup> These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, <sup>40</sup> since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect

All these people by faith did all these things....

And all these people had faith in.....God.

Chapter 2 of the book you are studying, "What We Believe", is about that God.

The author starts by listing....

### **God's Natural Attributes**

God is separate from His creation – He is **transcendent**

He is not a slave to the natural law He authored but is independent and above it.

He can override it at will....for He is "the high and lofty One....who lives forever, whose name is holy (set apart)" Isaiah 57:15a

God is **immanent** (as opposed to eminent and imminent) – which means His presence and power pervade His entire creation – He exists within or is inherent to His Creation

He does not stand apart from the world as a mere spectator of what He has made....for as the last half of Isaiah 57:15 says – He is the One who dwells "with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit"

He is **Omnipotent** – all powerful, for nothing is impossible with God

CH Spurgeon - "Say not my soul, 'From whence can God relieve my care?'

Remember that Omnipotence has servants everywhere.

His method is sublime, his heart profoundly kind,

God never is before his time, and never is behind."

By His omnipotence He rules in the world of mind as well as matter, and all things happen as He ordains.

He is **Eternal**

He is **Infinite**

Now when I read that, I had to stop and ask myself why he listed both, since they didn't seem to be difference. What do you think? Are they? How would you define the difference between Eternal and Infinite?

One writer I looked up stated it this way....Infinity is a "non-quantifiable" value of three-dimensional space. Eternity is the "non measurable" length of the fourth dimension, time. So, infinity is about space, eternity is about time.

God is **Unchangeable** – or Immutable - He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow

He is **Omnipresent** - present everywhere at the same time, all-enveloping, ubiquitous, all-pervasive

He is **Spirit** – which is probably a prerequisite of the previous attribute, what do you think?

Psalm 139:3

*“Thou compassest my path and my lying down.”*

CH Spurgeon - My path and my pallet, my running and my resting, are alike within the circle of thine observation. Thou dost surround me even as the air continually surrounds all creatures that live. I am shut up within the wall of thy being; I am encircled within the bounds of thy knowledge. Waking or sleeping I am still observed of thee. I may leave thy path, but thou never leavest mine. I may sleep and forget thee, but thou dost never slumber, nor fall into oblivion concerning thy creature. The original signifies not only surrounding, but winnowing and sifting. The Lord judges our active life and our quiet life; he discriminates our action and our repose, and marks that in them which is good and also that which is evil. There is chaff in all our wheat, and the Lord divides them with unerring precision.

He is **Omniscient** - knowing everything, knowing the beginning from the end

He is **Personal** – “Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.” John 15:4

He is **Self Determining** – without outside influence/input

Then the author goes on to describe....

### **God's Moral Attributes**

He is **Holy** – perfect which includes be **infallible** (without error)

I believe a more elaborate description of God's character is that is found in Galatians 5:22 (otherwise known as the Fruit of the Spirit)....He is the embodiment of:

Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Gentleness, Faithfulness, Self Control

And lastly, the author describes the...

### Trinity

**The Father** – the Creator who Originates

**The Son** – the Word who Reveals, Redeems, Intercedes, Advocates

**The Spirit** – who Executes, Convicts, Counsels, Instructs

The Father sent the Son to accomplish the work of redemption. The Son sent the Spirit to bring conviction and to apply to men what Christ had accomplished.

Creation is from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit

The Father is the One by whom the Son is begotten and from whom the Spirit proceeds.

“I will strengthen thee.” — Isaiah 41:10

Spurgeon - God has a strong reserve with which to discharge this engagement; for he is able to do all things. Believer, till thou canst drain dry the ocean of omnipotence, till thou canst break into pieces the towering mountains of almighty strength, thou never needest to fear. Think not that the strength of man shall ever be able to overcome the power of God. Whilst the earth's huge pillars stand, thou hast enough reason to abide firm in thy faith. The same God who directs the earth in its orbit, who feeds the burning furnace of the sun, and trims the lamps of heaven, has promised to supply thee with daily strength. While He is able to uphold the universe, dream not that he will prove unable to fulfil His own promises. Remember what He did in the days of old, in the former generations. Remember how He spake and it was done; how He commanded, and it stood fast. Shall He that created the world grow weary? He hangeth the world upon nothing; shall He who doth this be unable to support His children? Shall He be unfaithful to His word for want of power? Who is it that restrains the tempest? Doth not He ride upon the wings of the wind, and make the clouds His chariots, and hold the ocean in the hollow of His hand? How can He fail thee? When He has put such a faithful promise as this on record, wilt thou for a moment indulge the thought that he has out promised Himself, and gone beyond His power to fulfil? Ah, no! Thou canst doubt no longer.

O Thou Who art my God and my strength, I can believe that this promise shall be fulfilled, for the boundless reservoir of thy grace can never be exhausted, and the overflowing storehouse of thy strength can never be emptied by thy friends or rifled by thine enemies.

**So in closing, I hope that I have left you with something to ponder. I pray that I have scratched the surface for you of such an awesome topic and the One whom our thoughts should increasingly be focused on. Can I ask you a favour....when you get a moment later today or tomorrow, take a piece of paper, or do it in your head while you're driving, or start a conversation with someone, and do the**

**God A-Z (or as you Americans call it, A-Zee)....and think of an attribute of God for each letter of the alphabet.**

**Let me give you an example...and feel free to write these down as I go 😊**

**God is...**

**Awesome**

**Bountiful**

**Caring**

**Dad**

**Energizing**

**Fun**

**Glorious**

**Humourous**

**Incredible**

**Just**

**King**

**Lord**

**Majestic**

**Noble**

**Open 24x7**

**Perseverant**

**Quintessential**

**Ruler**

**Sovereign**

**Total**

**Understanding**

**Victorious**

**Wonderful**

**Xcellent (without the E)**

**Yearning**

**Zion (lives in)**

**“My King” – Dr. S.M. Lockridge**

My King was born King.

The Bible says He’s a Seven Way King.  
He’s the King of the Jews — that’s a racial King.  
He’s the King of Israel — that’s a national King.  
He’s the King of righteousness.  
He’s the King of the ages.  
He’s the King of Heaven.  
He’s the King of glory.  
He’s the King of kings  
and He is the Lord of lords.

Now that’s my King. Well I wonder if you know Him.  
Do you know Him?

Don’t try to mislead me.  
Do you know my King?

David said the Heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the firmament showeth His handiwork.  
My King is the only one whom there are no means of measure can define His limitless love.  
No far seeing telescope can bring into visibility the coastline of His shoreless supplies.  
No barriers can hinder Him from pouring out His blessing.

Well, well,  
He’s enduringly strong.  
He’s entirely sincere.  
He’s eternally steadfast.  
He’s immortally graceful.  
He’s imperially powerful.  
He’s impartially merciful.  
That’s my King.

He’s God’s Son.  
He’s the sinner’s savior.

He's the centerpiece of civilization.  
He stands alone in Himself.  
He's august.  
He's unique.  
He's unparalleled.  
He's unprecedented.  
He's supreme.  
He's pre-eminent.

Well, He's the loftiest idea in literature.  
He's the highest personality in philosophy.  
He's the supreme problem in higher criticism.  
He's the fundamental doctrine of true theology.  
He's the cardinal necessity of spiritual religion.  
That's my King.

He's the miracle of the age.  
He's the superlative of everything good that you choose to call Him.

Well, He's the only one able to supply all of our needs simultaneously.  
He supplies strength for the weak.  
He's available for the tempted and the tried.  
He sympathizes and He saves.  
He's strong God and He guides.  
He heals the sick.  
He cleanses the lepers.  
He forgives sinners.  
He discharges debtors.  
He delivers the captives.  
He defends the feeble.  
He blesses the young.  
He serves the unfortunate.  
He regards the aged.  
He rewards the diligent and He beautifies the meek.  
Do you know Him?

Well, my King is a King of knowledge.  
He's the wellspring of wisdom.  
He's the doorway of deliverance.  
He's the pathway of peace.  
He's the roadway of righteousness.  
He's the highway of holiness.  
He's the gateway of glory.  
He's the Master of the mighty.  
He's the Captain of the conquerors.  
He's the Head of the heroes.

He's the Leader of the legislators.  
He's the Overseer of the overcomers.  
He's the Governor of governors.  
He's the Prince of princes.  
He's the King of kings and He's the Lord of lords.

That's my King. Yeah. Yeah.  
That's my King. My King, yeah.

His office is manifold.  
His promise is sure.  
His light is matchless.  
His goodness is limitless.  
His mercy is everlasting.  
His love never changes.  
His word is enough.  
His grace is sufficient.  
His reign is righteous.  
His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Well. I wish I could describe Him to you,  
but He's indescribable.  
He's indescribable. Yeah!

He's incomprehensible.  
He's invincible.  
He's irresistible.

I'm trying to tell you,  
the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him,  
let alone a man explain Him.  
You can't get Him out of your mind.  
You can't get Him off of your hand.  
You can't outlive Him and you can't live without Him.

Well, Pharisees couldn't stand Him,  
but they found out they couldn't stop Him.  
Pilate couldn't find any fault in Him.  
The witnesses couldn't get their testimonies to agree.  
Herod couldn't kill Him.  
Death couldn't handle Him and the grave couldn't hold Him.

That's my King. Yeah!

He always has been and He always will be.  
I'm talking about He had no predecessor

and He'll have no successor.  
There was nobody before Him  
and there'll be nobody after Him.  
You can't impeach Him  
and He's not gonna resign.  
That's my King! That's my King!

Thine, Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory.  
Well, all the power belongs to my King.  
We're around here talking about black power and white power and green power,  
but it's God's power. Thine is the power.

Yeah.  
And the glory.  
We try to get prestige and honor and glory for ourselves,  
but the glory is all His. Yes.  
Thine is the Kingdom  
and the power and the glory,  
forever and ever  
and ever  
and ever.

How long is that?  
And ever and ever and ever and ever.  
And when you get through with all of the forevers,  
then, Amen.

**Let's pray.**

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**"Know What You Believe" – Chapter 2 – "God"**

**Key Verse**

*Jeremiah 9:23-24 "Thus says the Lord, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises loving kindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the Lord "*

**Table Questions**

1. To help each of us “set our minds and hearts to things above”, have each man at the table complete the following sentences in his own words...
  - a. God is...
  - b. Heaven is.....
  
2. What have you found to be the most effective way to keep your knowledge and understanding of God increasing during your life?
  
3. What have you “discovered” about God recently?
  - a. How did you discover it?
  - b. Why do you think you discovered it recently?