

# **Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Sept 13, 2020**

## **Five Things You Should Know About God: God is Eternal and Unchanging**

**Pastor Temple, 10:30am**

### **Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)**

- Anything to share about personal events since you last met?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

**Opener:** A man asked God, “God what is a million years to you?” God said, “a minute.” Then the man asked God, “What is a million dollars to you?” God answered, “To me, it’s about a penny.” The man asked God, “Can I have a penny?” God answered, “Sure, just wait a minute.”

**Discussion Question:** How is our sense of timing often different than God’s?

### **Review the Sermon (15 min)**

Please read aloud the sermon scriptures, Psalm 90:1-4 and James 1:17 in the left column and save the right column of scriptures for later. Then discuss the questions which follow as time allows.

#### **Main Sermon Scriptures**

##### **Psalm 90:1-6**

**Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.**

**<sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**

**<sup>3</sup> You turn people back to dust, saying, “Return to dust, you mortals.”**

**<sup>4</sup> A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.**

##### **James 1:17**

**17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.**

#### **Additional Scriptures:**

##### **Genesis 1:1**

**In the beginning God...**

##### **Job 36:2**

**God’s years are unsearchable**

##### **Psalm 102:27**

**He is the same and His years have no end.**

##### **Psalm 121:4**

**[God] neither slumbers nor sleeps.**

##### **Revelation 4:8**

**[God] is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.**

##### **Hebrews 1:2**

**[God] made the ages**

##### **1 Timothy 1:17**

**Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- What kind of an impact do you think standing at the foot of a mountain and contemplating its age of 10's of millions of years would have on our perceptions of ourselves or our current problems?
- Was Karl Barth's idea that God does not exist in time but that time exists in Him a profound one for you? What do you think he meant when he said that God's perspective is one of an eternal now?
- Was the metaphor of God's viewpoint as seeing the entire river of time from a mountaintop a helpful one to you? Why or why not? How do you imagine how God sees time?
- How do you respond to Augustine of Hippo's statement- "It is not in time that You precede all times, O Lord. You precede all past times in the sublimity of an ever-present reality. You have made all times and are before all times."
- How does the timelessness of God affect our belief that He is trustworthy?

### **Other Related Readings (10 min)**

- Would a volunteer please read aloud the scriptures in column 2 as well. How do they reinforce the idea that God is eternal and unchangeable?
- AW Tozer once wrote, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." Do you agree with this point of view? Why or why not?
- The Westminster Shorter Catechism defines God as "a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." In what ways would God, as described here, be different if the words "eternal and unchangeable" were removed the definition and the way they qualify the later 7 characteristics listed not be present?
- In *Knowing God*, the late theologian and author J.I. Packer wrote "There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity." How has contemplating the eternal and unchanging nature of God in our discussion today touched upon our pride today?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)**

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- How has our discussion today affected the expectations we bring to God in our relationship with Him?
- Pastor Temple pointed out the difficult life had by the author of Great Is Thy Faithfulness, Thomas Obediah Chisholm, and yet he lived with such gratitude to God. How does contemplating the eternal and unchanging nature of God impact our gratitude for our lives and God's grace?
- A volunteer may conclude by reading aloud the final scripture in column two (1 Timothy 1:17) and then lead the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting