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Introduction

“We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18). Nothing shapes God’s children like true worship—in adoration beholding who He really is—and nothing stunts our spiritual progress like holding distorted views of God.

We may know how we ought to live and what we ought not to do. We may listen to great sermons and read wonderful Christian “how to” books. But lies about God will keep us from the life-giving depths of relationship with Him and will likewise keep us from becoming like Him. If we believe, for example, that God cannot love us, we will not be able to live in a deep relationship with Him. Furthermore, we will thwart His good intention to make us loving as He is loving.

Each of the readings in *Thank You, God!* names a common distortion of who God is followed by Scriptures describing the truth about God. They end with a prayer of reflection and thanksgiving.

1

God's Mercy

Distortion: God is constantly watching us for any misbehavior and quickly deals out punishment.

Truth: God is patient with our shortcomings and moved by our needs.

Psalm 103:10-14

¹⁰ He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor punished us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So great is His mercy toward those
who fear Him;

¹² As far as the east is from the west,

Thank You, God!

So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

¹³As a father pities his children,

So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

¹⁴For He knows our frame;

He remembers that we are dust.

Ephesians 2:4-7

⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.



Thank You, God, for Your mercy! You have not left us in our unhappy condition of alienation from You. In mercy, You devised a plan for our redemption, even before we had gone astray. In mercy, You moved

God's Mercy

toward us while we were moving away from You. Your own great heart was touched with our sorrows, with the desperation of our condition.

Yes, it was even by Your mercy that You allowed us to experience sin's sorrows. You let us feel the misery and wretchedness of going our own way, the emptiness of life without You, and the pain of estrangement and loneliness so that our hearts would cry out for meaning and communion again.

All humanity needs Your mercy for our waywardness and rebellion.

The church needs Your mercy for dimming Your glory and tarnishing our witness.

And we need Your mercy for our personal failings.

Thank You for extending kindness to the undeserving and provision to the destitute. Thank You that You are slow to anger, that You have given us a second chance . . . and a third . . . and more. Our lives without Your mercy would be barren and bereft of all goodness and joy and purpose. But by Your mercies, new every morning, we have hope!

Thank You!

2

God's Holiness

Distortion: God's holiness makes Him continually stern, unapproachable, and unappealing to humans.

Truth: God's sacredness is glorious and beautiful beyond description.

Psalm 96:1-9

¹ Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!

Sing to the LORD, all the earth.

² Sing to the LORD, bless His name;

Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.

³ Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.

Thank You, God!

⁴ For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised;
He is to be feared above all gods.

⁵ For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
But the LORD made the heavens.

⁶ Honor and majesty are before Him;
Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

⁷ Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
Give to the LORD glory and strength.

⁸ Give to the LORD the glory due His name;
Bring an offering, and come into His courts.

⁹ Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!
Tremble before Him, all the earth.

Psalm 99:1-5

¹ The LORD reigns;
Let the peoples tremble!
He dwells between the cherubim;
Let the earth be moved!

² The LORD is great in Zion,
And He is high above all the peoples.

³ Let them praise Your great and awesome name—
He is holy.

God's Holiness

⁴ The King's strength also loves justice;
You have established equity;
You have executed justice and righteousness
in Jacob.

⁵ Exalt the LORD our God,
And worship at His footstool—
He is holy.

1 Peter 1:13-16

¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."
