



Christian Report

To Win...To Disciple...To Equip...To Win

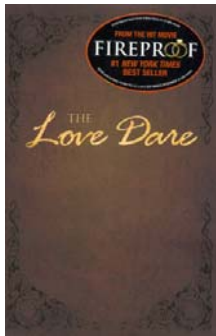
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Next Month



In This Issue:

- What is God Like? 1
- Monthly Book Offer 1
- Promotions 2
- CMF Week at WSS 3
- AMCF North American Conference 3
- Feeling Inadequate? 4
- New Members 4

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What is God Like? — by SGM Dan Cartwright, USA (Ret), CMF Board of Directors

“And this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” (John 17:3 NIV)

This is an introduction to, and the first in a series of articles offering answers from Scripture to the above question. To say that this is an important question, that deserves serious consideration, is a huge understatement!

I first learned something about God’s glorious attributes years ago from two main sources: Lutheran Catechism and reading the Bible for an “Advanced” English course as a senior in high school. Catechism provided sound doctrine (and large words) to describe characteristics of God found in the Bible. In reading the Bible for itself, I found out that what it said about God matched the big words I learned in Catechism. (As odd as it might sound in today’s scholastic environment, in those days it was permissible to write a paper about The Bible as Literature, my chosen subject.)

In addition to Scripture itself, a source of information for these posts is J. I. Packer’s book, *Knowing God*. Scripture

references, unless otherwise noted, are from the NIV and linked to their context in an online Bible. Please read them, read the context around them, and let Scripture speak to you. There are of course other, more exhaustive treatments of the *Attributes of God*; one of the most notable is Arthur W. Pink’s work, (http://www.eternallifeministries.org/awp_attrib.htm).

This article can provide only a brief glimpse into the awesome character of God and hopefully will whet your appetite to learn even more about the Creator of the universe and the One who sent His own Son to die so that you might live. The reason for these posts is two-fold. First, there seems to exist today, in American Christianity, a deplorable lack of knowledge concerning what God has revealed about Himself in Scripture. Most of what we hear from pulpits across the country speaks only of God’s love, and even that, for the most part, is described according to our concept/definition of love, not His.

The second reason is from Scripture itself. John 17:3 tells us that “eternal life is knowing God.” That can be a bit diffi-

cult to get our heads wrapped around, but it speaks of how our eternal life has a “right here, right now” aspect. How can that be explained in more practical, understandable terms? What effect does knowing God have on a person? J. I. Packer suggests four great effects:

1. Those who know God have great energy for God.
2. Those who know God have great thoughts of God.
3. Those who know God have great boldness for God.
4. Those who know God have great contentment in God.

We must ask ourselves, do we desire such knowledge of God? When you ask yourself this question, remember that it’s not a matter of knowing God so we can “become” great for God, it’s simply that really “knowing” leads to “having.”

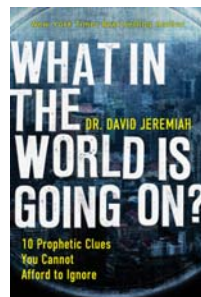
And lest I forget, when God sees knowledge of Himself in His children, it gives Him pleasure.

“For I desired mercy, and

(Continued on page 2)

Monthly Book Offer — *What in the World Is Going On?* — by Dr. David Jeremiah

Understand the 10 Most Essential Bible Prophecies! The Bible has much to say about the end times. Yet it is hard to piece together all that information in a way that gives a comprehensive picture of what that time period will look like. That’s why so many theories abound. And that’s why New York Times best-



selling author Dr. David Jeremiah has written *What in the World Is Going On?*, a unique book that cuts through the hundreds of books and numerous theories to identify the essential 10 most important Bible prophecies. There is no other prophecy book like this. You’ll find it the ultimate study tool for understanding the future. And

this book will also motivate readers to live a more holy life and make greater efforts in evangelism. If Bible prophecy has always been a mystery to you, Dr. Jeremiah’s book will help you solve the mystery.

This book is available free to our membership while they last. You may order this and other resources from the “Members Only” Resource page of our website or call the Home Office. ☩

(Continued from page 1)

not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.” (Hosea 6:6 KJV)

When you think about it, generally, the most we can know about other people is what they reveal to us. The extent and quality of our knowledge of them depends more on them than it does on us. Knowing God is no different. Only what God has chosen to reveal of Himself can be known, and that which God has chosen to reveal to us can be found in Holy Scripture.

Our quest to know God begins by understanding that God is our Creator and that we are a part of His creation (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 24:1). God said that man is created in His image. Man is above the rest of creation and was given dominion over it (Genesis 1:26-28). Creation is marred by the “fall” (Genesis 3:17-18) but still offers a glimpse of His works (Romans 1:19-20). This glimpse of God that we do have is available to all men—we are all born with the knowledge that God IS. By considering creation’s vastness, complexity, beauty, and order, we can have a sense of the awesomeness of God. However, considering how lightly and how often we use the term “awesome” in today’s culture, I don’t think it’s a nearly “big enough” word to begin describing God.

I remember when I was just a wee lad and we would visit my grandparents’ farm in Wisconsin. There weren’t any street lights, and I remember looking up at the night sky and all the stars with a feeling of “WOW, God made that!” filling my little heart with wonder at how BIG God is. *That was awesome.*

I also remember a church, nestled in tall pine trees across the road from Grandma’s house. I found an old photo of that church, dated back to around 1955. As if it were yesterday, I can still hear the hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy” resounding through the pines as we walked to church. *That was awesome.*

I can’t describe just how “BIG” God was to this 5-year-old, from just looking at the night sky and hearing a hymn. As we grow older and begin to read Scripture, our sense of God’s greatness looms even larger, or at least it should.

Face it: we don’t much care for hearing God when He speaks to us about our sin, our guilt, our helplessness, our weakness, our blindness, and our spiritual “deadness.” We would rather hear just the “good stuff” He might say about us. Nevertheless, knowing God involves listening to His Word and receiving it, as the Holy Spirit interprets and applies it to us and to the character of God. When we see our “true selves” in the blinding light of

Scripture, we can “know” God more fully, and might even have something to boast about.

“This is what the LORD says: ‘Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows 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

God is the Great I AM - Eternal and Unchangeable

“Moses said to God, ‘Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, “The God of your fathers has sent me to you,” and they ask me, “What is his name?” Then what shall I tell them?’”

“God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: “I AM has sent me to you.”’ - (Exodus 3:13,14).

God is eternal, meaning He had no beginning and that His existence will never end. He is immortal, infinite (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17). God is immutable, meaning He is unchangeable; this means that God is absolutely reliable and trustworthy (Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:26,27).

God’s life does not change.

Created things have a beginning and an end, however their Creator is from everlasting to everlasting.

“In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.” - (Psalm 102:25-27)

A small child will often ask, “Who made God?” Our answer is simple. He was always there. Children accept that answer more easily than adults, with the childlike faith that Jesus reminded His followers we all need. When Mom told this little 5-year-old that God was always there, that settled it—Moms don’t lie!

God’s character does not change.

The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament. Listening to sermons in many of today’s churches, one might come away with the idea that the God who destroyed His enemies, the enemies of His Chosen people, and those among people who would dishonor His Name, has somehow changed into a kindly grandfather who waits for us to jump into

His lap for a hug and a bit of candy. While God is certainly the giver of all good things to His children, His moral character is changeless, as James reminded dispersed followers undergoing trials and temptations (James 1:12-17 NKJV).



God’s truth does not change.

How many times have we had to eat our words because something that was said was not what was really meant, or something that we thought was truth turned out to be not true. God’s Word, however, spoken but once, stands as truth for all eternity (Isaiah 40:6-8).

God’s ways do not change.

The wages of sin is death, so Romans 6:23 tells us. It will always be so. This verse also tells us that God offers eternal life through His Son. It will always be so. God discriminates between sinners, causing some to hear the gospel message, while others hear the words but not the message (Acts 16:13-15). To some he grants the gift of repentance and faith, while others He leaves in their sin, demonstrating that he owes mercy to no one and that it is entirely an act of His grace that *any* are saved (Romans 9:15).

God’s purposes do not change.

“One of two things causes a man to change his mind and reverse his plans: want of foresight to anticipate everything, or lack of foresight to execute them. But as God is both omnipotent and omnipresent, there is never any need for Him to reverse His decrees.” (A.W. Pink)

The plans of God stand firm forever... (Psalm 33:11). Whatever God does in time, He planned from eternity; and whatever He planned in eternity WILL be carried out in time.

God’s Son does not change.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) Jesus is able to, and will save all who come to Him—all that the Father gives Him (John 6:37-40).

This fact is the strong consolation and assurance for all God’s people. †

Promotions

COL William King, IV, USA
LT Bryce Klaput, USN
CH(LTC) Lane Stockeland, USA

CMF Week at White Sulphur Springs July 31 through August 7, 2009

Register now to attend CMF week at White Sulphur Springs Christian Camp and Conference Center. The topic for our studies will be "Intimacy or Isolation: Choosing God's Plan for Your Marriage." Our speaker will be the Reverend Mr. Larry Hoskins, Th.M, Senior Pastor, Grace Church Aurora, Colorado, Vice Chairman, CMF Board of Directors. Our Mentors-in-Residence will be Dick and Sue Price, CMF Camp Lejeune Ministry.

Summer Family Camp is the primary ministry of White Sulphur Springs. Families, singles, young and old come to-

gether for a week or weekend to worship God, listen to His voice, and fellowship with other believers from the military society. Adults enjoy speakers and relevant discussions during the mornings and evenings, while youth of all ages attend programs geared for their age group. Afternoons are unscheduled to allow families and friends to hike, bowl, canoe, play volleyball, read, or catch crawdads in the streams. Special activities include horseback riding, a hayride and campfire, an afternoon tea, a square dance, a picnic, and "dress-up" theme meals.

Discounts: WSS offers a 10% discount on lodging and meals for officers in grades O1-O3, and a 20% discount for enlisted members, midshipmen, cadets and other single undergraduate college students, and a 20% discount for combat returnees (within 6 months).

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Manns Choice, PA 15550

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office@whitesulphursprings.org
http://www.whitesulphursprings.org/

Click on "Prices & Registration"

Would Your Church Like to Strengthen Its Ministry to Military Families?

Attend the 2009 North American Regional AMCF "Helping Military Families" Conference.

Equipping Churches & Mobilizing Nations to Pray for & Minister to Military Families

You are invited to participate in this unique conference which features inspirational international speakers who will equip you to minister to and to pray effectively for military personnel and their families. Participants will also hear Steve Green in concert, attend military ministry workshops, and enjoy the beauty of God's creation in Estes Park, Colorado!

This one-of-a-kind event is sponsored by the Christian Military Fellowship (CMF), the Association for Christian Conferences, Teaching & Service (ACCTS), Officers' Christian Fellowship (OCF) and others.

Join the Wall of Prayer; go to the map at: <http://www.accts.org>

A Conference to Equip Leaders & Mobilize Churches to Pray for & Minister to Military Families

Where: YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, CO – 900 acres of Rocky Mountain grandeur with outstanding conference facilities (www.ymcarockies.org)

When: 17-21 August 2009. Check-in on Monday afternoon. Closing Ceremony Friday morning. Daily conference sessions - 9:00-11:30, 1:30-3:30, 7:30-9:00

What: Inspirational Speakers, a Steve Green Concert, and Workshops on Prayer & Military Ministry. This conference will equip you to help military families through the pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment phases of military life.

Who: Conference speakers include:

Dr. Myles Munroe, Bahamas – internationally renowned author, lecturer, teacher, life coach, government consult-

ant, and leadership mentor who has written over 80 books

Dr. Richard Blackaby, USA - Pastor and President of Blackaby Ministries International, and the author of numerous books on Christian living

Pastor Rob Parker, Canada – Founder/Director of Canada's National House of Prayer

Gen Lee, Pil Sup, Korea – President, Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF)

LtCol (JDF, Ret.) Nestor Ogilvie, Grenada – Vice-President, Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF)

LCDR (USN, Ret.) Cal Dunlap, Executive Director, Association for Christian Conferences, Teaching & Service

MG (USA, Ret.) Bob Dees - Executive Director of Campus Crusade for Christ Military Ministries

Ch (MG, USA) Doug Carver – Army Chief of Chaplains (Tentative)

BG (CF) Dave Kettle – Chaplain General, Canadian Forces

Rev. Prince Bodie, Bahamas - Chaplain RBDF, President of the Association of Caribbean Military Christian Fellowships

LTG (USAF, Ret.) Bruce Fister – Executive Director of Officers' Christian Fellowship

BG (CF, Ret.) Larry Lashkevich – President of Military Christian Fellowship of Canada

ADCS (USN, Ret.) Bob Flynn - President/CEO, Christian Military Fellowship

How: Register at (<http://accts.org/naramcfc/>) or call the ACCTS home office at 1-800-487-8108.

How Much: There is a \$50 per adult non-refundable registration fee. The cost (lodging and meals) is between \$310 and \$420 per adult depending upon which lodging you select. Children 6 - 12 will cost \$72

each. Children 5 and under are free.

Important Information to Know:

- Fly to Denver. Drive, or take the shuttle bus to Estes Park (Estes Park Shuttle, phone: 970-586-5151)
- Rooms have queen or double beds, private bath, & Wi-Fi. Many are handicapped accessible. Take the picture tour link from our web
- Daytime temperatures average about 80 F, nighttime lows about 50 F
- Daily rate includes 3 buffet style "all you can eat" meals. Breakfast 7:00-9:00; Lunch 11:30-1:30; Dinner 5:00-7:00
- Dress: appropriate summer casual
- ATM, Snack Bar, and General Store/Gift Shop on premises

Pray for Our Military

- That training will fully prepare our forces
- That our military families will find spiritual support to help them cope
- That our military forces will operate safely
- That our enemies will find Christ
- That Christians will be able to witness and find other believers with whom to fellowship
- That our forces will have courage when required, and place their trust in God
- That young soldiers will mature into Godly wisdom and spiritual strength
- That our Commander in Chief and other military leaders will have Godly wisdom
- That our militaries will grow in faith during times of trial, and not become bitter or angry
- That our forces will soar on wings like eagles, run and not grow weary, walk and not faint
- That our troops will act with righteousness and justice at each step of their service
- That military marriages will stay strong, despite frequent deployments
- That the children of our deployed personnel will feel the presence of God in their lives
- That our wounded soldiers will be healed, both physically and psychologically
- That our veterans will find peace as they adjust to their "new normal"
- That our chaplains and pastors will find the strength to continue providing Godly counsel
- That our troops with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) will find the help they need
- That post-deployment reunions will be a joyful time for military families
- That churches with military members will recognize and minister to these needs

Feeling Inadequate? — You Are Not Alone — by Pastor Larry Hoskins, Th.M., CMF Board of Directors

He did not feel up to the task, and he is not alone!

Have you ever felt that way? Some time ago, I was visiting a men's group at another church. Knowing the church needed teachers (and that is not what this article is about), one of the men commented that he did not feel ready to teach because he did not know enough. As I heard him, I reflected on my own past. I had begun teaching when I was in the eighth grade with no formal training. Now, as a pastor, understanding a church's need for more men who would lead, I asked him how long he had been attending the church. "Five years," he responded. Trying to spur him forward past his reluctance, I smiled and said, "Couldn't you teach some of what you have learned in the past five years to some of those who are just starting to come? You're five years ahead of them!" The meeting ended, and I do not know what he chose to do. I do know that he felt inadequate and under-prepared.

Others have felt that same way. One good and godly man said to me recently when asked why he did not consider becoming an Elder, "I'm not sure I know the Word well enough to be an Elder." He has been around the church and under the instruction of God's Word for some time, yet he still feels inadequate. I think most of us have felt that way at one time or another.

In Exodus 3, after God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He told him He wanted him to go to Pharaoh to bring the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt. It was a monumental task, as later the nation was numbered at over two million people. Even though he had been raised in Pharaoh's court and had been groomed by the Lord for the position, after being a shepherd for the past forty years, Moses repeatedly argued with God:

But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" (Ex. 3:11)

Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" (Ex. 3:13)

Then Moses said, "What if they will not believe me or listen to what I say? For they may say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.'" (Ex. 4:1)

Then Moses said to the LORD, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in

time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." (Ex. 4:10)

But he said, "Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever You will." (Ex 4:13) [What he meant was, "Send the message by whomever you will besides me."]

Repeatedly, Moses brought up to God his apprehensions about himself and his concerns about how the people of Israel might respond to him. He was not considering that it was the Lord God of Israel who was speaking to him and directing him into a very specific ministry.

After all of these responses to the Lord (and in between each question, the Lord gave an answer to Moses to disarm his concerns), how did God respond to Moses' continuing sense of inadequacy and to his refusal to do what the Lord had clearly instructed him?

Then the anger of the LORD burned against Moses, ... (Exodus 4:14)

Moses taxed the patience of the Lord who became offended at his repeated refusals to bow to the command of the Lord.

Another great man, Jeremiah, likewise argued with God's calling upon him to be a prophet:

Now the word of **the LORD** came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations." "Then I said, 'Alas Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, because I am a youth.'" "But **the LORD** said to me, 'Do not say, 'I am a youth,' because everywhere I send you, you shall go, and all that I command you, you shall speak. (Jer. 1:4-7)

Why is it that we are so prone to see our own shortcomings rather than the nature and wisdom of God who calls us to be ministers? It was God who spoke to Jeremiah. It was God who created him in his mother's womb. It was God who had an omniscient, timeless awareness of him before he was even created. It was God who set him apart for this ministry. It was God who sent him to the people of Judah. It was God who directed Jeremiah to speak a very specific message to his nation. Who was Jeremiah to argue with him? Who are we? Does not He know our limitations before He draws us or commands us to minister? Why risk His anger by refusing to comply?

In a sense, we are right to consider ourselves inadequate. Humanly speaking, we do not have the resources to do the things God asks us to do. We can say with the Apostle Paul:

"Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. **Not that we are adequate in ourselves** to consider anything as coming from ourselves..." (2 Cor. 3:4-5a)

God's work had to be done God's way with God's resources and in God's timing. All of this requires a divine empowerment. We are not adequate in ourselves to do what God asks of us, but we are made adequate by Him, as Paul discusses when he continues the above passage:

"...but **our adequacy is from God**, who also **made us adequate** as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of **the Spirit**; for the letter kills, but **the Spirit** gives life." (2 Cor. 3:5b-6)

The central figure in our adequacy is the Spirit of God. Where He is actively at work, and where we are responsive to Him, there is life! That is why Jesus spoke of divine empowerment when He spoke of sending the Spirit just before He ascended to heaven:

"But you will receive **power** when **the Holy Spirit** has come upon you...." (Acts 1:8a).

Has God been tugging on your heart to start or to become involved in a specific ministry? Have you been arguing with Him because you see your own inadequacies — however real they may be? It is okay to be aware of your own inadequacies. We need to recognize our own weaknesses, and we need to have humble hearts. But it is not okay to be dismissive of the Power of God present in you through the Holy Spirit as if He has the same limitations that we do. He shares none of them. In fact, He makes us adequate when we ourselves are inadequate, and to quote the great poet Robert Frost, in "The Road Not Taken," "that has made all the difference." †

New Members

Mrs. Andrea Boyer
SN Jeff Dejager, USCG
Mr. Mark & Christi Hall
Sgt. D & Val Hoyt, Jr., USAF
Mr. Phil & Julie Jackson
SFC Brenda Jackson, USA (Ret)
Capt. Sean & Sheila Lovell, USAF
LCDR George & Sheila Mendes, CHC, USN
SFC Julian & Elvira Molinar, USA (Ret)
SSgt Chris Netzel, ANG
Pastor John & Catherine Richards
Mr. Tim Stanton
PFC Richard Whitney, USMC