

# THE MAJESTY AND MERCY OF GOD

## Membership Class Agenda: 1.25.08-2.17.08

### 1. NHF Vision statement

2. unto the coming of the kingdom of Christ: our theology [Now and not yet]

3. in the entirety of our lives individual and corporate: our spirituality and ecclesiology [one and many]

4. to behold and broadcast the majesty and mercy of god: our missiology [here and there]

***New Hope Fellowship* exists to behold and broadcast the majesty and mercy of God in the entirety of our lives, individual and corporate, unto the coming Kingdom of Christ.**

**1Pet. 2.9** But [we] are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that [we] may declare the praises of Him who called [us] out of darkness into His wonderful light. **10** Once [we] were not a people, but now [we] are the people of God; once [we] had not received mercy, but now [we] have received mercy. **11** Dear friends, [we are urged], as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against [our] soul. **12** [Let us] live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse [us] of doing wrong, they may see [our] good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.

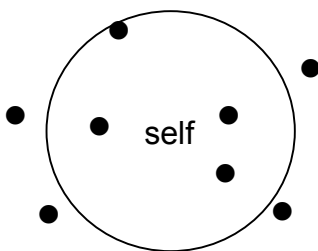
## THE HEART OF MISSIONS

Another quote from John Piper: “Worship is the fuel of missions. Passion for God in worship precedes the offer of God in preaching. You can’t commend what you don’t cherish.

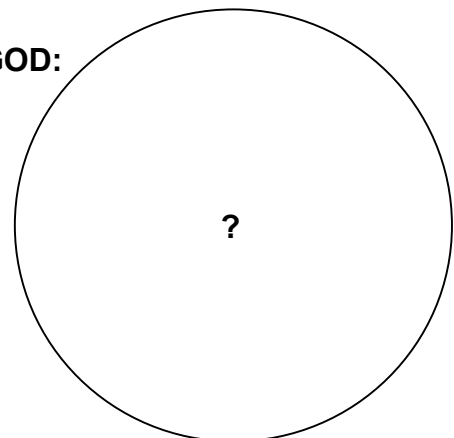
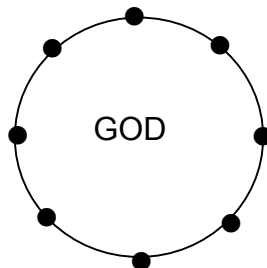
Missionaries will never call out, “Let the nations be glad!” who cannot say from the heart, “I rejoice in the Lord... I will be glad and exult in thee, I will sing praise to thy name, O Most High” (Ps 104:34; 9.2).” “When people are not stunned by the greatness of God, how can they be sent with the ringing message, “Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods!” (Ps 96.4).

I. We are told to love God with all our heart, our mind, and strength. What does God love with all His infinite heart, all His infinite mind, and all His infinite strength? If God must be the central unifying reality in our life, what is the central unifying reality in the life of God. What does God want?

**People:**



**GOD:**



**1) In the Beginning:** Genesis 1.27-28: (the first chapter of the Bible)

So God created man **in his own image**, in **the image of God** he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; **fill the earth** and subdue it. **Rule over** the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

cf. Numbers 14.21 “but indeed, as I live, **all the earth will be filled** with the **glory of the LORD**.”

**2) In His People Israel:** Exodus 4.23, 7.16, 8.1, 8.20. 9.13, 10.3

God’s people were made a people at the Exodus. The first part of Moses’ command to Pharaoh is renowned, “Let my people go!” But why? “So they may **worship Me**.”

cf. Isaiah 43.7,21: “Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the **ends of the earth**, everyone whom I have called by my name, and whom I have **created for my glory**, whom I formed even whom I have made.” ... the people I formed for myself will declare **my praise**.”

**3) In the Coming of Christ:** John 12:27-28: (cf. Rom 3.25)

“Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? `Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. **Father, glorify your name !**” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have **glorified** it, and will **glorify** it again.”

**4) In the End:** Revelation 22:8-9: (the last chapter of the Bible)

“I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, “Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. **Worship God !**”

God must be the central unifying reality in our life, because God is the central unifying reality in the life of **God**.

**Isaiah 48:9-11:** “**For my name’s sake** I defer my anger, for the sake of **my praise** I restrain it for you, so that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not like silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. **For my name’s sake, for my name’s sake**, I do it, for how should **my name** be profaned? **My glory** I will not give to another.”

But people don’t like to hear that so preachers don’t like to preach that. We have a tremendous inner resistance to that because we feel it makes God out to be selfish egomaniac. *Doesn’t He care about me?*

#### **ISAIAH MESSENGER OF MAJESTY**

**Isaiah 40: 9-12,18:** “You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, “Behold your God!”... Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance...To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to?”

## **ISAIAH MESSENGER OF MERCY:**

God answers that to His people, He is like: a lover (Isa. 43:4), mother (Isa. 49:15), husband (Isa. 54:5), shepherd (Isa. 40:11-12), the one near to them (Isa. 45:15)

However, this is not God's ultimate answer. It is this:

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*God's majesty is His mercy.*

**Psa. 27.1** The LORD is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid? **2** When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. **3** Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident. **4** One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. **5** For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

## **THE NEED FOR MISSIONS**

John Piper's quote has become axiomatic in modern mission: "Missions exists because worship doesn't." But, you could reverse it and it would still be true, "missions exist because worship exists everywhere." Everywhere people worship, but not the true God. What I love most about travel is that you learn the same thing about humanity everywhere you go, no matter what country, continent or hemisphere you go to: Humankind longs for God. It is universal and innate. But what most worship is unworthy of worship. No matter how lofty, it is but the creation of men. Nevertheless there is a need to believe, a desire for faith in the face of complete and utter lostness. I've seen countries where the people have nothing, even less than nothing. Their countries are wastelands without hope with precious little reason to have hope. Yet, these people expend all they have (their less-than-nothing) to erect structures, monuments, artifacts, anything they can imagine, to live out their need to worship—their need for a god—The God.

**Acts 17.16** While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

**Acts 17.22** Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. **23** For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. **24** "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. **25** And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

*Kierkegaard and the question of Actor and Audience.*