

GOD OF FOREVER

ABOUT THE DEVOTIONAL

God of Forever, a devotional by Haylee Williams, is an eight-week study that draws out the truth of God's character through the pages of God's Word. With a primary focus on Scripture, *God of Forever* is an excellent introduction to the Trinity and to the unchanging constancy of God. Looking closely at the united will and essence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, this devotional seeks to dispel the misunderstandings surrounding the love and omnipotence of our Lord. Our prayer for this devotional is that it helps you to grow in knowledge, worship, and desire for God and his Word.



The God of Forever

Copyright © 2021 by Haylee Williams

Published by Hosanna Revival

4 Kovach Drive, Unit 430

Cincinnati, OH 45215

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except as provided for by U.S. copyright law.

Cover design: Hosanna Revival

First printing 2022

Second printing 2024

Printed in China

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

All emphases in Scripture quotations have been added by the author.

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-954053-06-9

*"The Scriptures of the Bible are the
foundation and substance
of weight and value
- John 7:17"*

For Crossway Baptist.

*You are an exceptional, biblical example
of what Christ calls the church to be.*

I am eternally grateful to all of you.

Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Scriptures of God are my only
ground and substance in all matters
of weight and importance."*

- John Knox



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	08
WEEK ONE <i>What is the Heart?</i>	12
WEEK TWO <i>God's Perfect Plan of Salvation</i>	
WEEK THREE <i>God of Forever: Immutability</i>	
WEEK FOUR <i>The Heart of the Father</i>	
WEEK FIVE <i>Jesus Christ, the Son of God</i>	
WEEK SIX <i>The Heart of the Holy Spirit</i>	
WEEK SEVEN <i>God's Response to Sin</i>	
WEEK EIGHT <i>Our Response to the Heart of God</i>	
CONCLUSION	
RESOURCES	

*All trust in God
till soul and body
I have not shown
I have not shown
I have not shown*

INTRODUCTION

The heart of God is an unfathomable concept. As humans, it is hard to fully understand it because of our limited view of him, but we do learn snippets about God's heart through various avenues in our lives and culture. The Bible tells us that "God is love" (1 John 4:8), but culture has twisted this truth to mean something it does not. Consider also how culture claims that God's character has changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Our families, backgrounds, and experiences all play a role in the way we view God. Even our denominational differences give us differing pictures of the heart and mind of

W E E K O N E

*I'll trust in God's unchanging Word,
till soul and body sever. For though all
things pass away, His Word shall stand
forever." -Martin Luther.*

WEEK ONE | INTRODUCTION

What is the Heart?

If the purpose of this devotional is to more accurately and deeply understand the heart of God, it is helpful to first define what the heart is. Is the heart merely our emotions? Can we boil down our heart to what we desire and enjoy? Culture views our heart as the center of our emotions: from where feelings of love, sadness, joy, heartache pour. But Scripture's definition of the heart is much more robust than a cultural understanding of the heart. The Bible defines our heart as the very essence of who we are, the whole of our being: our thoughts, desires, affections, emotions, and, most importantly, our minds. Our minds are

WEEK ONE | DAY ONE

What is the Heart? | Read 1 Corinthians 4

Before we begin looking at the heart of God, we must start with an understanding of the heart as it is defined in Scripture. First Corinthians 4 expands our understanding of the human heart by giving us insight into how God judges our hearts. Paul begins by explaining that he is a servant of Christ. His primary purpose is to serve Christ and to do the will of God. He deeply desires that he would be found faithful—not by any measure of man, or even of himself—but by God, because only God has the authority to pronounce judgment.

Paul goes on to say that God will “bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart.”¹ Paul gives us the best definition of the heart. If a heart has this purpose, then it is not merely about emotions; it also includes the desire and will of a person. Because we are judged by the purposes of our heart, it must also include the actions we take in response to our heart, as well.

¹ *1 Corinthians 4:5*



The heart is the whole picture of humanity and the whole picture of God. Although it may include feelings, it cannot be reduced to just that: it is the whole person. The heart is what makes you *you*, and what makes God a good and gracious King! It is so important to hold a biblical and full picture of the heart, because it helps us see the magnitude of God's goodness. His faithfulness doesn't stem merely from his feelings toward us, but from his character, his being, and his nature. That is good news for believers! We can trust the heart of God because it is not fallible like human emotion; it is steady and rooted in his unchanging character, which we will learn about more throughout this study.

- 1. How have you misunderstood the heart as it is revealed in Scripture?
From where do you believe these misunderstandings have stemmed?*



2. Describe some ways you have seen culture twist an accurate description of the heart. How does this compare to what you just learned about the heart?

WEEK ONE | DAY TWO

God's Heart is Not Like Ours | Read Jeremiah 17:5-13; 1 Samuel 16:6-13

God's heart is different from ours in many ways. This is both a good thing and a bad thing. It's a good thing because, unlike us, God is good and holy, but it is a bad thing because we aren't good and holy like God. Jeremiah 17 paints a true but disheartening picture of the heart of humanity. Verse nine specifically gives us a clear explanation of the human heart: "desperately wicked" and "sick." Outside of the goodness of Christ, we forsake what is good, we love what is evil, and we are sinners from birth. That is not good news. In contrast to our hearts, however, God's heart is perfect. In 1 Samuel, God, in his goodness, looks at David's heart, not his outward appearance as humans are often tempted to do. God is pure in his motives and judges rightly and justly. Having God on the throne is so much better than having a sinful human on the throne. We wouldn't want a Savior with a heart like ours. We want a God who is upright and pure, just, and loves always. We want a God who is not finite like us and swayed by emotions. God's differences from us are one of the reasons we know we can trust him!



One of the important things affected by a sinful heart is our view of God. Throughout this study, we must keep in mind that our sinful tendencies hinder us from clearly seeing and discerning the character of God. It is an exercise in obedience to tune our hearts to the true nature of God as it is revealed in Scripture without superimposing our own opinions or perspectives on the Bible to make God fit into the mold we've conjured up in our own minds.

This doesn't mean that every part of us is different from God. In Genesis 2, we learn that we are made in God's own image. We share some characteristics with God in that we were made to reflect his glory here on earth. By his grace, we can be conformed to this image and grow in godliness (Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:3-7). We cannot expect that we will ever be omniscient or omnipresent like him; but we can expect that as we seek God, study his Word, and come to know him more deeply, the Holy Spirit will empower us to grow in godliness and greater reflect the true heart of God to those around us.

WEEK ONE | DAY THREE

God's Heart is Holy and Righteous | Read Psalm 34

One of the primary reasons we read Scripture is to know the God we claim to love, because it is impossible to love someone we do not know. Now that we have a better understanding of the heart, and how it is not merely the epicenter of emotions, let's explore the heart of God based on who the Bible says he is. Psalm 34 illustrates that God is righteous and he desires righteousness from his people.

God's holiness means that he is good.

He is morally perfect.

He is righteous and set apart.

His works are good.

In Psalm 34, God's goodness is displayed in his nearness to the brokenhearted (v. 18), his care for the righteous (vv.15, 17, 19), and his condemnation of all that is wicked (vv.16, 21).



Our culture doesn't like to talk about God's holiness. Modern culture has often painted a false picture of the nature of God which pits his righteousness against his kindness. Some people say things like, "love covers a multitude of sins" (which is a biblical truth), but what they really mean is, "love pretends that sin doesn't exist." Because their view of God cannot reconcile God's love and kindness with his holy righteousness, they view them as being on opposite ends of a spectrum. But God's kindness does not simply "sweep sin under the rug." His kindness is meant to convict us of sin and lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4).

In Psalm 34, we see that God's righteousness actually compels his kindness! He judges the wicked, but he also gives abundant care to and delivers those who take refuge in him. The issue we sometimes have with God's holiness isn't a God problem; it's a human problem. We don't like the idea that justice is done by the Lord, but if we truly understand the holiness of God, appreciate and even love that he is a righteous judge. We will explore this concept more deeply in the upcoming days.



*1. Have you been resistant to the truth that God is a holy God?
What fears do you have about a God that is perfectly holy?*

*2. How does God's holiness provide comfort when we see injustice
taking place in our world?*

WEEK ONE | DAY FOUR

God's Heart is Loving | Read Psalm 23

Psalm 23 is such a sweet Psalm. As David tends to his flocks as a shepherd, he reflects on the kindness of the Lord as our Good Shepherd. The theme ringing throughout this psalm is the utter love of God for his people. In this loving psalm, we see God's desire for his people to be righteous—and the way he leads us in that direction. Why would God help us to be righteous? One reason is “for his name's sake” (Psalm 23:3). God leads us “in paths of righteousness” for the sake of the glory of his good name, but as the loving Shepherd of our souls, he is also deeply concerned with our good (Romans 8:28). God is concerned with the righteousness of his people, but his concern goes hand in hand with his great love for us. It is out of his great love that God calls us to live righteously, because he knows that apart from him, our souls will only know want and thirst and fear and hunger—everything for which our Good Shepherd provides.

This psalm should make our hearts respond in worship to the goodness of God for his children. He restores our souls! We can't



help but see how God is abundantly loving.

If all Scripture is true and “breathed out by God” (2 Timothy 3:16), then we know this depiction of God is just as true as the one we read yesterday. God is righteous, God is kind, God gives refuge, and God executes justice. These things do not stand in contrast to one another, but live harmoniously throughout the whole of Scripture. As we continue in our study, we will see this theme of God giving abundant, undeserved grace, as well as his sovereign choice to punish the guilty. He is good in *all* things. We must trust Scripture when it says God is “faithful in all his works and all his words” (Psalm 145:13).

1. Have you struggled to understand the relationship between God’s goodness and God’s judgment? Take time now to pray and ask God to reveal himself to you through his Word. Ask him for a heart that fully loves him for his goodness and his holiness.



2. Reread Psalm 23 and consider committing it to memory. It's a wonderful passage of Scripture to hold in our hearts about the lovingkindness of God.

WEEK ONE | DAY FIVE

God is the Just Judge | Read Revelation 20:11-15

It is normal to avoid things that are confusing or uncomfortable. This may be why some of us breeze quickly over or never read the book of Revelation. The apostle John, the author of the Gospel of John, is also the author of the book of Revelation. The account in Revelation is a prophecy from God recorded by John to explain the details of the second coming of Christ. Although much of Revelation can be confusing, there are some important points that can be understood throughout. One of the main points of Revelation is that God is a just (or righteous) judge. He is not partial, he cannot be bribed, and he knows all hearts. This means that his judgements are always right and good—he is the Righteous Judge. As we read in this specific passage, the “him” who is seated on the great white throne is Christ. He is the judge who executes justice. He has the authority to separate the righteous from the unrighteous, and it is good for him to do so. We shy away from God as a righteous judge because we think his judgments are too harsh, but God’s holiness demands punishment for sin. As pastor and theologian R. C. Sproul once said, “The most



violent expression of God's wrath and justice is seen in the Cross. If ever a person had room to complain for injustice, it was Jesus. He was the only innocent man ever to be punished by God. If we stagger at the wrath of God, let us stagger at the Cross. Here is where our astonishment should be focused."² Because God is just, he required a perfect sacrifice to atone for the sins of humanity. Jesus, the Son of God, is that perfect and holy sacrifice, and with Jesus' death and resurrection, those who believe are welcomed into God's family for eternity. He does not condemn believers (Romans 8:1). This act of judgement in Revelation is displayed only against those who are evil—those who have not believed in the Son of God.

If you're reading this passage of Scripture for the first time, or beginning to understand the righteousness of God for the first time, it is heavy. Sometimes it's hard to swallow. None of what is written here was written with a nonchalant ignorance to the deep sadness of those who will die in their sin. It is always grievous to see people reject the grace of God, which compels us to pray

² R. C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 1998), 121.



and to share the gospel (we will cover the gospel more in depth in Week Two). But we also know that God is always good, and therefore doesn't cease being good when he executes justice. We do not need to make excuses for God's deliverance of justice: this is his world and we are his creation. We are to submit to his definition of good, not the other way around.³ If you are a believer in Christ, this justice has been satisfied through his crucifixion on the cross and you are free to experience the special grace provided to believers. This wrathful judgment will not be poured out on you, because it has already been poured out on Christ, the perfect sacrifice for sin. Because of his death, our debt is paid and he took the wrath we rightly deserved.

1. How does understanding God's deliverance of justice compel you to share the good news of the gospel with those who do not know the Lord?

³For a better understanding of this subject, see Romans 9.



2. With whom is the Lord calling you to share this gospel? Take some time now to pray for them.

Loving this Bible Study?
Continue your journey
through *God of Forever* at
HosannaRevival.com/God-of-Forever