

GOD AS REVEALED IN THE GOSPELS

I do not know. I do not know. What you are doing is raising the question as to whether the bishops in the Aaronic Priesthood . . . (inaudible) . . . for something but there will not be—they will always have the priesthood . . . (inaudible) . . . since we are talking about here. We talk about somebody serving as the bishop because he is a literal descendant of Aaron. And what we are talking about is the Presiding Bishop of the Church. We are not talking about bishops in general. We are talking about the man who holds the keys, the Presiding Bishop. There are two offices in the Church that are hereditary. One of them is the office of patriarch and the other is the office of Presiding Bishop. The old literal descendant of Aaron is automatically Presiding Bishop, providing he is set apart and called to it, just like the old literal descendant of Joseph is the presiding patriarch, the Patriarch of the Church, provided he is called and set apart to it. Now Elder Smith is that, at the present time. We do not know who the oldest descendant of Aaron is. But if we got that direct lineage which would have to come by revelation, then the free office of Presiding Bishop would go from father to son, like the office of Patriarch of the Church goes from father to son. And in that event somebody who served as high councilor could, I do not know that he would or that he would not—he could according to the revelation. People think in terms of ward bishops being literal descendants of Aaron and maybe a lot of them will be, I do not know, but what the revelation is talking about is, somebody who is the oldest literal descendent. It started out Aaron and his oldest son, and his oldest son and his oldest son and forever. Now when we know that lineage we will be back in the perfect order again.

Comment: Since a person in the Presiding Bishopric could function completely in that calling, if you look at a ward bishopric, since he is also the president of the ward, a literal descendant just holding the Aaronic Priesthood comes and pulls that president . . . (inaudible).

BRM: It does not seem like he does to me, since we have given him responsibilities to do that is more than just presiding over the Aaronic Priesthood and temporal affairs. We have made him a given job that requires, according to the Church's system, him to be a high priest, to preside over them.

Well, most of you, perhaps all of you have done it, this is the day our prospective is due, indicating an outline of the term paper.

I put on the board a subject that we have a tremendous amount of information about: "God as Revealed in the Gospels." Now you take that and after that first flush you look at it and you think to yourself, well, what is there in the Gospels that tells what kind of a being God is? We are just not in the habit of looking to the Gospels as the source of our information about God. He preached the sermon about what kind of being He is, and it is a nice place to start. The practical text in the 17th chapter of John is likely written of both the Father and the Son. And then you would probably start turning to other revelations; you would probably start turning to things that Paul said, or that are in the Doctrine and

Covenants or that are in the Old Testament, or we could go to Moses, and begin from then to explain what kind of a being God is, and if you ever get around to the Gospels you would probably come to such things as that, "I and my father are one," or, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and begin to make some explanations about them, sort of apologetically, as though you had something there that had to be explained away and clarified in the light of what other revelations say. Now, I suspect that about 98% of anything that is taught about God, from the scriptures, is taught from that kind of a perspective, and we sort of have the idea that is, despite Paul, that the nature of God is not revealed in the Gospels. Now you hesitate to speak in superlatives and say that the best knowledge of God is in one source or another, but in a very real sense, maybe not the overall sense, but in a particular sense, the best knowledge that we have ever received in any revelation as to what kind of a being God is, is right here in the Gospels, but it is given in such a way that we are not in the habit of approaching the subject, at least as Latter-day Saints, from this standpoint of the four Gospels.

Now this is a very comprehensive subject and there is a tremendous amount of reading material from our text in connection with this. So what we will just have to do this morning is open up the avenue of investigation and select a few of the passages that are involved for our consideration and point to where the others are found.

I put on the board this first heading: "God is Known Only by Revelation," and there are articles beginning on three different pages, at least, that concern us under that heading. And we just must have the concept that is here involved before us, if we are really going to research and discover what God is. There cannot be any question at all, you just start out with the proposition that God stands revealed or he remains unknown. There is just no way of knowing who God is except by revelation. You do not find him in the test tubes, you do not find him in the laboratory, you do not find him by research, you do not find him by philosophical inquiries, you find him by revelation and by revelation only, and if you do not get revelations you do not know who God is. Man cannot create God; man has to learn about God because God reveals himself. And without revelation there is no knowledge of God.

I was, as a mission president, standing in the foyer of Adelaide chapel in Australia and some of my missionaries came running up and said, "Won't you come over and speak to so and so, that we brought here?" They said, "Well, the mission president can just say a word to this fellow, and his whole attitude will change." So I said, "What is his problem?" "Well, he says he is an atheist. He does not believe in God." I was almost right there on him anyway, and so I turned around to speak to him for a few minutes, and he said to me, "There is no God," and he was quite belligerent and quite affirmative and determined in his opinion. I said, "Oh yes, there is a God." And he started to say, "Oh no, there is not," and because of his attitude I said, "Now just a minute. Look. We will let me do the teaching and make the statements and determine what things are, and not you." Now I said, "You say there is no God and you are just making a declaration. I say there is a God because I got a revelation from God, so I know whether there is a God or not, and you are just making an assertion." At this point he just became furious and he went off into a tirade and became abusive and profane.

Well, this is my personal experience with that kind of an atheist. People who talk in terms of atheists, generally, they think that they are dealing with someone who just says there is no God and he is impartial and he is reasoning and it is immaterial to him whether there is a God or whether there is not, but it suddenly got through to me out of this experience that a lot of these people, at least, who profess to be atheists are people who in fact have had (they do not know it) but in fact they have had same inspiration and revelation from the devil to tell them that there is no God, just like Korihor in the Book of Mormon—not a literal appearance of Satan, but the impressions come implanted in their mind, so that they feel like they have an obligation to go out and proclaim that there is no God. In effect, it is just pure substitute for religion in their lives.

Now the whole principle of knowing who God is, you have got to find somebody who has had a revelation. The fellow says to me, “There is no God.” Well, the answer to that is, “There is a God because I have seen him. I have felt the nail marks in his hands.” I am not talking about me, but I am talking about someone who is a witness in that sense. There is a God because somebody has seen God and can bear record and can tell us what he is. And there is no other way to find out who God is, except by revelation, by the testimony of witnesses who have seen and felt and handled and know and of course for the generality of it, the chief way that you know that is by the revelations from the Holy Spirit. Well this is the source of our knowledge of God and if you start out on that premise then you can make some progress. But if you do not start out on that premise you get debating and arguing and philosophizing as to whether there has to be a God or a first-rate cause or something else or whether there does not. And you do not ever get anywhere.

Let us just take a brief look at a couple of these. Look on page 77. And the heading is, “Who has Seen God?” This is one of these classical verses that the Devil makes great hay with. He has one of his ministers go up every few months and stand on South Temple at the south gate of the Tabernacle and pass out little pamphlets that say, “No man has seen God at any time.” Well, that is what the King James Version says, but our interest here is looking at the Inspired Version. “No man hath seen God at any time, except he hath borne record of the Son; for except it is through him no man can be saved.” Well, this is this glorious doctrine of intercession, mediation, advocacy. No man has seen the Father ever except for the sole purpose of having the Father say to the individual, “This is my Beloved Son. Hear him.” All things come to us through the Son. Now I mean no man has seen him since Adam was in the Garden of Eden, since he was cast out of the Garden of Eden.

Well, that is introductory—and one more thing, look on 465—one more thing is introductory. Now this is quite a remarkable thing. The Father and Son reveal each other. We are particularly concerned with the 27th verse. “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” Now that is a principle. That is an absolute, it is unvarying, eternal truth. That is what we are saying here. You cannot know God except by revelation. The only way anyone can ever know the Father is for the Son to reveal the Father. And the only way anyone can ever know the

Son is for the Father to reveal the Son. God is known by revelation and by that only and in no other way.

Now, this other passage is the Second Comforter passage: they will take up their abodes, that Christ will come to individuals, and that even he will reveal the Father, and so on. Now that sits as a foundation for the next thing, which is the great concept of the New Testament of the gospel part. But before we go on from this, any comment or expression about what so far we have introduced? I hope I did not cut this Priesthood discussion off, was there some more that should have been said about that?

Comment: You know, you answered my question.

BRM: All right, fine. Well, we need to go ahead with this if we can. Now, there is a foundation for us.

Now I'll take a second heading in this outline, and this is a really glorious thing. Before I put this on the board, somebody just tell me offhand how you would go about using the four Gospels to show what God was like. If you wanted to proclaim to the world what God was like, and to have some scriptures and some basics and something to refer to, and you were limited to the four Gospels, what would you do, what is your approach?

Comment: Find the quotes the author has made of what the Savior himself said about the Father.

BRM: Yes, you would do that. You would surely do that.

Comment: You would ask what the Savior did because it says He was in the exact image of God.

BRM: Find out what the Savior did because He is the image of God.

Comment: Show only one in unity; how all who would lead should be one and they are one, how they are one.

BRM: Yes, you would do that. You would do all of these things, I think. You would do all these things, and this is sort of the way people begin to approach this problem, but I rather doubt if any of these are fully expanded to the real concept that is involved. They are part of it, every one of them. There you have got only the four Gospels, and the problem is now, how do you present to the world what God is from the Gospels only? I think what we have got here—here again, you hesitate to start talking in superlatives, you have to sort of narrow the field when you use superlatives—but it just seems to me, that here we have got something in the New Testament that is the absolute, peak, paramount thing, illustration, the best instance that has ever been known of a teaching technique, of how to get a doctrinal truth over. Here, we have got here in the Gospels the best illustration, I think, that God ever devised to teach a truth. And the great truth he is going

to teach is what he is like, what kind of a being he is, and everything that these three suggestions and some more, that might be made, are woven into it.

Well, let me write down the head that says, "The Father Concept of God." The Father concept of God. Now I need, somehow, to find some kind of language, or some kind of an illustration, that will get through to us what is basically and fundamentally involved here. So I am going to write two little sentences here, that—I never heard them used in religion before, but they are sort of common, they mean something and yet they do not. Now, suppose I wrote down here this sentence. I am going to define a father: "A father is —" something. I think this other sentence I am going to write down is this. "A son is a —" Now what I want to do is dramatize a concept here about God. Well, what is a father? Right in the back of—I do not even know how to spell it. "A father is," "A son is." You want to try out a definition of what the father is?

Comment: Well, a father is a son, and the son can be a father, can't he?

BRM: All right, that is true. What is a father standing alone?

Comment: (Inaudible.)

BRM: What is a son standing alone?

Comment: The Father is the one after whom our bodies are patterned. We inherit everything that we have.

BRM: Yes, now we could have a lot of fun here, trying to define a father and trying to define a son, and you have some choices to make as to how definitions will run. But on the other hand, is there anybody who ever arrived at the years of accountability, who ever lived on earth, who did not know what father was? Independent of an ability to write it down. Anybody who does not know what a father is, raise their hand. Anybody who does not know what a son is, raise their hand. Now, do you begin to get what we are going to drive at here? All right, I will finish these statements. A father is a father. A son is a son. I am not through yet. A father is a father is a father. A son is a son is a son. Now what is that supposed to mean?

Comment: A rose is a rose.

BRM: A rose is a rose is a rose. All right. Any journalists here? You have probably got a definition of an editorial and it says, "An editorial is an editorial is an editorial." What does that mean by writing that on the board like that? If I put on the board, "A father is a father is a father," what I—yes?

Comment: It is chronological.

BRM: Let us talk in words I know.

Comment: It is only a description of yourself.

BRM: All right, what does that mean?

Comment: It is going in circles.

BRM: Going in circles? Well, yes, you are going in circles.

Comment: It means the very nature of the thing is itself.

BRM: The very nature of the thing is itself. We are dramatizing, or hoping to, the point that here is something that is so well known, that though it does not defy definition, it does not need definition. Nobody needs to define what a father is. To any intelligent person, nobody needs to define what a son is. You do not have to argue, you do not have to debate, you do not have to look in a dictionary, you do not have to do anything. You just have to take the concept that a father is a father is a father, and that is it. And a son is a son is a son. These are just some things that exist, that everybody knows. If you got in the law field you would not have to plead it in court. Nobody would ever have to put evidence on in the court to prove what a father was. The court would do what they call take judicial knowledge of it. It just assumes. No evidence is required. You do not have to tell the jury to consider that such and such is a father, it is just assumed, it is one of the eternal verities, and in an attempt to get over the idea as a basis for consideration here, that such is the case, I just write this little sort of nonsensical thing, “A father is a father is a father.”

All right, in the light of that approach, what is it that the New Testament does the Gospels, that is what we are talking about—what is it that the Gospels do that reveal the nature of God?

Comment: Teaches the Father is a God in relation to Christ.

BRM: Yes, it does that.

Comment: It teaches what the Father is, through the Son.

BRM: It teaches what the Father is, through the Son. That is precisely what this whole gospel setup is, the whole setup in the gospel is, is to let men know who the Father is because they come in contact with and know who the Son is. And that is how, primarily, God is revealed through the Gospels.

Now, probably none of you, maybe some of you did, but probably none of you know my father. Dad is away now, so he is not available to be seen or known to you, by some personal contact with him. But suppose that you wanted, at some occasion, to know what my father was like. Do you need a definition? Do you need somebody to sit down and say, “Well, Oscar W. McConkie was thus-and-thus-and-thus. He had a body of flesh and

blood. He had certain attitudes. He weighed a quarter of a ton. He was six feet four inches tall. He had certain characteristics and certain attributes. Now, you do not have to—you do not start approaching the problem like that, you just do not do it. You do not have somebody write an essay to describe Oscar W. McConkie, but what happens is this, I come down to you and I say, I am the son of Oscar W. McConkie. Now you never saw him, but almost by instinct you know he was a tall man, don't you? Just by instinct without any argument or any debate, you know he probably had a deep voice. You would be pretty safe in assuming that he was interested in the scriptures and he belonged to the Church and that he knew gospel principles.

Now you do this step everywhere. The son becomes a projection of the father. He projects the image of the father into the minds of people. Now it is not literally true in my case, but let us assume that it were, to get the point. I come to you and I say, I sure wish you knew my father. He was a great man. But you do not know him, you have not seen him, but I will give you a little help: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." All right, I think maybe this was true in mortality in a case, that would be Seth, wouldn't it? Doesn't the scripture say that Seth was of the express image of his father? All right, you did not see Adam. But Seth came to you and you think, "My, wouldn't I like to see the first man," but you cannot get to him, he is someplace else. And Seth says to you, "Well, do not worry, I believe everything my father believes, I speak all the words that my father spoke. I do wish you could see him, I would like to reveal him to you, but on the other hand, even so, he that hath seen Seth hath seen Adam, because I am just Adam's projection, his personality, his everything." Well now, this is true in a limited, minor degree where mortals are concerned, but it is true a hundred percent where the Father and the Son are concerned, because they are one. So what I am suggesting here is, that we just figure out some way to dramatize the concept, which is the whole concept of the gospel, that if you have seen the Son you have seen the Father and you know who the Father is.

Well, based on that now, let us just take a look at an isolated thing or two, and show that there is some problem here that we can investigate today, page 611. It is not a bad idea also to put yourself in the position that the Jews were in. The reason that we do not turn to the Gospels to find out what God is like is, I think this is the reason, that since the day of the Gospels a totally false and apostate concept of Deity has arisen, namely that he fills the immensity of space, he is a spirit nothingness, an essence, and so on. Now in order to understand the gospel accounts, you have to put yourself in the position the Jews were in, which was, the vaguely personal God. Nobody questions that. These Jews just automatically believed that God was a holy man. He had been talking to Abraham and to Moses and to all the rest and it had not so much as entered their minds that he was a spirit essence. Their conflict in the realm of God was, is he a holy resurrected man, or is he an idol made of brass as in the globe over here, placed by Ahab and Jezebel. Their problem was not choosing between the true God and the spirit essence like ours is, but between the true God and an idol. So it is just implicit and wholly in their minds that God is a man, and as a consequence, having that background and being in that situation when things like this occur, they know what is involved. This 611 reference, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How

then doth David [being inspired of the Holy Ghost, say, the Father said unto the Son] Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

Now, this is just one of a thousand illustrations in the New Testament, maybe not literally a thousand, but hundreds and hundreds, where you start using language that does not need definition but everybody knows what they are talking about. Whose son is he? Well, he is the son of David. Oh, whose son is he? Well, he is the Son of Elohim. And so in the minds of everyone automatically is the fact that God is a holy man.

Well, I will write some of these down. That "What think ye of Christ" passage; page 143, probably the most powerful, at least the most famous verse ever written, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now when Jesus said that nobody questioned what was involved. A father is a father is a father. Under this general heading now, we can make some subheadings that will help us out. We could make a subheading that we call "Jesus' Teachings on this subject of God," and what we get is this kind of a recitation of things. There is a passage where he teaches his Father's doctrine; one where he talks about many mansions; one where he talks about doing the will of the Father; one where he tells this business about his Father being the husbandman; one where he talks about the fact that the Father honors the servants of Christ; one where he says he is going to ascend to his Father: "I ascend unto my Father"; let us see, this is the one, My Father, and your God, "my God, and your God." "I ascend unto my Father"; the voice of the Father speaks on the occasion of his baptism; we have the account on the Mount of Transfiguration where the Father is in the cloud, apparently, and speaks; we have Jesus cleansing his Father's house on two different occasions. Well, this is not all by any means, but I just pick out articles that are on the subject that Jesus talks about the Father. Maybe it is obvious, but the Father is the Father is the Father.

Now we could make ourselves another heading. This is an approach that we use a little, but not as much as we might: "Jesus' Claims to the Father." And under this heading (there are a lot of them) are reading materials: the Lord's prayer, "Our Father, which art in Heaven"; he is praying in connection with the time that he has raised Lazarus, 527; he spent all night in prayer (we referred to this yesterday) before he called the Twelve; page 763 and 765, the great intercessory prayer, one of the greatest recorded things that we have; in the Garden of Gethsemane he is praying to the Father; page 818, on the cross, he is praying to the Father, speaking to the Father, "Thy will be done," in that reference.

Well, I want to go on to a third heading, but just to show that there is such an abundant accumulation of evidence on this Father concept of God, I put that with the pages on the board. Now this is pretty simple—it just happens to be a perspective from which we usually do not approach the subject. Before I go on to the next heading, any comment or question about this now? We want to read something expressed that really bears on this subject. Some things are so obvious, that you almost do not talk about them sometimes. This is one of those things that is just obvious and as a consequence it gets buried and overlooked and we do not use it like we ought to use it. We just drill into ourselves this Father concept. We have come up right from the gospel source with this idea of what God

actually is. Well, this concept, now, that is introduced in the way we have done it, is taught and wrapped together perhaps, under this heading: “The Son: Prototype of the Father.” Now this is somewhat the same thought content as to what we have been saying. Page 730, let us look at that one.

I said one day, a good experience for you to test yourselves, see how you interpret, is to take some of these things and paraphrase them in their own language, and see if you came up with an amplified concept. Now, this is the passage that, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,” he has already said that. And now Philip wants him to show him the Father. Well, just to get the idea that I am talking about across, look at how I have chosen to paraphrase this beginning on the middle of page 731. Now this is paraphrased, beginning with the seventh verse, “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith . . . Lord, shew us the Father.” Jesus says, “Have I been so long with you . . .” and so on. Now in essence what he is saying is this: “If ye had known that as the Son of God, I am in the express image of his person, and that I possess his character, perfections, and attributes, then ye would have known the Father, for he is manifesting himself to you through me; and you may now, therefore, say that ye know him, for he is in all respects as I am; and since ye have seen me, it is as though you had seen him.” Now I think that is the thought content a misspelled word I just discovered—“have seen him. Philip saith unto him, [Lord], Show us the Father himself, so we may say we have seen him as well as his Prototype, and then we will be satisfied. Jesus saith unto him, Philip, after all your association with me, have you not come to know that I am the Son of God, and that the Father is manifesting himself to the world through me? Surely by this time you should know that he who hath seen me hath seen the Father, as it were, for I am so fully and completely like him. Why, then, do you ask for that which you are not now ready to receive, by saying, Show us the Father?” Now I do not know how many people have summarized this thought, but what I have read in the paragraph above, it says, thus God was in fact manifesting himself to the world. B.H. Roberts wrote a lot about that and one of his great approaches was that God was in Christ: manifesting himself to the world. And I guess the same thing—it does not matter a whole lot. But that is the concept. God was in Christ manifesting himself to the world. And that sort of summarizes what is involved.

Well, here are some more references on this overall concept: this, the sermon where he says, “I am the Son of God, I and my Father are one;” and also says, “My Father is greater than I”, and in this passage he repeats that, “My Father is greater than I;” here is his passage to Peter, “I am the Son of man,” in effect, I am the Son of God; why men must honor the Son; man is resurrected, judged, assigned his glory, by the Son; Jesus gained power over death from his Father. You almost weaken your argument by having such a multitude of evidence, but on the other hand, it strengthens the argument, to the point that you begin to wonder how any intelligent person could suppose what the apostate priests say in the light of the fact that just page after page and chapter after chapter you are getting this portrait.

A couple of them we might read. Let us take a look at these two. Look on page 467, the two or three that are profitable to call a special attention to, because they ask some

clarifying things that the world has not before had. This one, we want to look at the Inspired Version account. Note what the Prophet has done. “All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth [that] the Son is the Father, and the Father is the Son, but him to whom the Son will reveal it.” Now here is an insertion. It is new, and as far as the language reads, it is just the opposite of what we have been saying, isn’t it. It sounds like the sectarians would like the Bible to read like we say the Inspired Version reads. “No man knoweth that the Son is the Father, and the Father is the Son, but him to whom the Son will reveal it.” Well, what is that? This is just purely and simply our doctrine that the Messiah is the Father, and that he is talking about himself. On the next page, I have just taken occasion to list the three senses in which Christ is the Father, as we take them from the document that the Brethren have published.

Comment: Is there any other way that the Father is greater than the Son’s kingdoms and dominions?

BRM: “My Father is greater than I.” He is greater in kingdoms than dominions, but he is not greater in knowledge. Now we have the one statement that the Son knows all things. He knows everything that the Father knows because the Holy Spirit reveals to him everything the Father knows. This is Section 93 of the Doctrine and Covenants. You cannot get language that is plainer than that.

Comment: I think he also at this time would be exalted if he was not to have had a resurrected body.

BRM: That is true. It was after he got the resurrection, where he said, “All power is given me in heaven and on earth.” That is in the 28th chapter of Matthew after the resurrection. Before that, he was in process of working out his salvation. But after the resurrection, he also said, “I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God.” So the Father everlastingly is his God, even though he is resurrected and glorified and knows all things, which is the prototype again, for what all exalted beings will be like.

Well, this particular one is an added concept that is known, really, and understood only by the Latter-day Saints. Page 765 is the passage about how the Father and the Son are one, but our time does not let us stop for that. But that is that 17th chapter of John, and that is quite a glorious discussion. And what about the Divine Sonship of Christ, on page 443? One I think we ought to take which is not quite on our subject, but which bears on it, is on page 152. Let us open our books to that, so that if you are not already aware of what that passage says, you will be. These, of course, are the reading assignments. We get this many one day and a few another, but these passages are the reading assignments in connection with this discussion.

Now in this “God is a spirit” business. The 24th verse, read the 23rd first. “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in

truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” Then our Bible says, “God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” Now be realistic. This is not the source of the concept that God is a spirit. This is a scripture that the world found as an afterthought, to justify what they hold in their creeds—that God is a spirit. Now it is just marvelous what one mistranslated verse can do in the way of mischief. What this actually says is, “The Father seeketh such to worship him . . . (inaudible) . . . For unto such hath God promised his Spirit. And they who worship him, must worship [him] in spirit and in truth.” Now that is what Jesus really said, obviously, although if you wanted to make an argument, which you can do—everybody does it and it is not the finest thing in the world—at least it is an argument. You could say, well, God is a spirit, in the sense that man is a spirit, and the spirit is an entity, an individual, has substance, and so on.

Well, I will put what is more to complete the outline, see what is involved. The fourth heading that we would take would be “God’s Character, Perfections, and Attributes.” Now you recognize that language. I just picked that up because that is the Prophet’s language in the *Lectures on Faith*, how he talks about what God is, and reasons and establishes the fact that if we are going to become like God, for one thing, and if we are going to believe in him and have faith, to the point of life and salvation, we have to accept not only that he is, but the true knowledge of his character, perfections, and attributes, included in which are the fact that he knows all things, and has all power, and so on.

Well, the references on this are page 231, 73, 75 and 145, where various things are discussed that indicate things about his character, perfections, and attributes. And it occurs to me that I have not scratched the surface in suggesting pages there because without the definite discussions of the subject implicit in a whole host of things, like a lot of parables and a lot of other discourses, or the fact that God has the attribute of love, or he has the attribute of mercy, or justice, or something else.

Well, that is our outline, and we have not much talked about it, but I would hope that we would catch the perspective that we do not shy away from the Gospels where the knowledge of God is concerned. Maybe you do not approach it like this in a sermon because you almost cannot preach a sermon on this subject and marshal very much of the evidence without talking a couple of hours, or a long period of time. And so you start preaching about God and you think, well, I will preach about him from the first chapter of Hebrews, because it says he is in the express image of Christ, and the express image of his Father’s person. And that is a criticalized headline version of a concept, and that is all it is, really, is a headline version of a big doctrine, and the big doctrine is this thing that starts in the first of Matthew and ends up at the end of John. And if you really want a concept of what God is like, provided that you will believe that a father is a father is a father and just take words for what they say, you cannot escape the conclusion that is just laid out for you in the four Gospels. God is revealed as far as scriptures are concerned, in the Gospels themselves, as well, and perhaps better than he is revealed anywhere else.

Well, this is an avenue of investigation. This is an approach to a doctoral subject. We will take up, beginning next Monday, the subject of Christ being his own personal witness that he is the Son of God.