

Mercy Series – Part 1 of 4

Genesis 19:16 – ¹⁶ *But he lingered; so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and left him outside the city.*

Genesis 19:19 – ... ¹⁹ *your servant has found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness [mercy] in saving my life; but I cannot flee to the hills, for fear the disaster will overtake me and I die.*

Exodus 34:6-7 – ⁶ *The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty, but visiting the iniquity of the parents upon the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."*

This is the first in a series of four studies on Mercy. The series will focus on the Mercy of God and how he helps us understand it. God's Power, Wisdom, Presence, and Goodness all contribute to this attribute of Mercy.

The first two verses quoted above are two of the earliest occurrences in the Bible of the words *merciful* and *mercy*. The first – *merciful* – is [chemlah](#) (khem-law') and our equivalents would be mercy, compassion, or pity. The second – *mercy* – is [hasdekā](#) (chas-de-kah') and is more in the sense of kindness or lovingkindness, one of the thirteen attributes of God identified in the writings of Moses by many ancient Jewish scholars. In scripture in both Old and New Testaments, God's Mercy is always present, always available, and always generously dispensed.

I have heard more than one homilist say, "Justice is when you get what you deserve. Mercy is when you get what you don't deserve." Mercy is acting with generous and unmerited compassion or forgiveness toward someone who deserves punishment or harm and is subject to the power of the person(s) who have the authority and power to enforce that punishment.

God certainly has the power! He created us and everything in the known universe as well as everything we don't know about because it is so far beyond our understanding. We know of our Creator as the Omnipotent God – all powerful. What does that mean anyway, "all-powerful?" This expresses the concept of a Divine Being with infinite, limitless, unchangeable Power. Now, those three adjectives are all pretty similar in meaning, so I want to supply you with some connotative meanings that clarify why I used all three.

First, Infinite: God's power is never-ending because it is Eternal; he does not exist in or through time, rather, it exists only in him in totality. For God there is no present or past but only NOW and all of NOW is "contained" in him but he is not contained in time. Infinite is also Vast – immeasurable, multidimensional, incompressible inestimable. There's no way to guess how big or how small God's power is for it has no boundaries except those imposed on it by the will of him who possesses it.

Second, Limitless: In the attributes assigned to God, this connotes something that is inexhaustible, dimensionless, completely boundless, and – most commonly – infinite. For God, there is no measure of any aspect or aggregate of aspects. Whatever he wills is what is.

Third, Unchangeable: The connotation here is of something or someone that is consistently harmonious with Self and Creation, steady, reliable, and uniform in every action. God's motivations always match his actions and vice-versa. God does what God does because God is what God is. His Power is inalterable, yet his Power changes anything and everything he will to be changed.

When we use our personal power – mental, physical, or spiritual – we require using our mind, body, and spirit cooperatively. If we chose to do what is right and just, our intellect and will direct our body to perform what our spirit desires. When we act against our intellect, will, and power we choose to ignore the desire of our spirit; we sin. We "know" intellectually and spiritually the difference between right and wrong. Whenever we use the Gift of Free Will to refute or ignore that knowledge, we sin.

In God, the entirety of these three aspects of human activity – intellect, will, and power – happen together in such perfect balance that they are in total accord with every act of God. You've probably heard or participated in the sophomoric – and yet essential – arguments about God's omnipotence: "If God is All-Powerful, can he create a stone mountain so huge that he cannot move it?" My answer was always, "Why would he do that?" Some folks take that kind of argument more seriously than I do, so I look to people way smarter than I am and let them explain it. My favorite contemporary explanation is from C. S. Lewis in [The Problem of Pain](#). I'm going to put the whole quote here:

"His Omnipotence means power to do all that is intrinsically possible, not to do the intrinsically impossible. You may attribute miracles to him, but not nonsense. This is no limit to his power. If you choose to say 'God can give a creature free will and at the same time withhold free will from it,' you have not succeeded in saying *anything* about God: meaningless combinations of words do not suddenly acquire meaning simply because we prefix to them the two other words 'God can.' ... It is no more possible for God than for the weakest of his creatures to carry out both of two mutually exclusive alternatives; not because his power meets an obstacle, *but because nonsense remains nonsense even when we talk it about God.*" (emphasis added)

Another more succinct way of saying this is, "Stupid questions have stupid answers, and are therefore irrelevant." God's omnipotence is axiomatic – self-evident, patently obvious, unmistakably and clearly True. And this is the common thread we will follow in this series. Whatever is of God is True. Omnipotence comes from the Latin *Omni Potens* – All Powerful, not merely Infinitely Powerful but All Power Full. There is no power outside of the Power of God for he is Power and holds and contains in his Being all the Power there is. In the past we used the Identity Symbol (\equiv) to try to convey the essence of God. You may be tired of this already, but let me set it out one more time (and you'll probably see this in the next three messages, too).

LIGHT \equiv GOD \equiv LOVE \equiv TRUTH \equiv WAY \equiv LIFE \equiv FOREVER \equiv JUSTICE \equiv OMNIPOTENCE

How does God's Omnipotence relate to his Mercy? He has the power to forgive because he has THE ONLY Perfect Justice. Justice? What *is* that word? The earliest root is from Old Latin – ious – which carries the connotation of a "sacred formula." The Hebrew word [tzedek](#) means "righteousness" or "justice" and is one of the attributes of the LORD the God of Israel. A related word is [tsedaqah](#) which is also sometimes referred to as the Jewish concept of charity; charity *is* righteousness. There is a passage in Hosea that can help us see this more readily. In [Hosea 2:19-20](#), God speaks to Israel through Hosea and says, "*I betroth you to me forever; I betroth you to me in tzedek (righteousness), and in mishpat (justice) and in chesed (kindness) and in rachamim (mercy). I betroth you to me with emunah (faith); and you shall know God.*"

Righteousness, Justice, Kindness, Mercy, and Faith are perfect *only* in God. In as much as we are created in his image, we also have these traits, but in us they are greatly imperfect. God's righteousness in us becomes our obligation and desire to do what is right and just (See [Micah 6:8](#) again). It is only because of God's great Justice that we have them at all. It is only because of God's great Love that we retain them. It is only in God's Kindness that he shares himself with us, in us, but though he inhabits his creation and the praise of his people, he is separate from and greater than these things. And because God is absolutely Just as well as absolutely Loving and Kind, he is also absolutely Merciful. Because he alone is all of these things at once, he is also Faithful for he can never deny or abandon what he himself has made or promised.

Share-A-Prayer

Cancer patients

Chemical addictions

Wars, insurrections, terrorism, violent crimes

Climate catastrophes

Persecution of the faithful

Disease, famine, ignorance

National leaders *in all places*

Pick *at least* TWO and pray about them daily from today through The Epiphany of The LORD.

Think-about-it: What if you woke up today with the only the things for which you thanked God for *yesterday*?

Mercy Series – Part 2 of 4

[Proverbs 10:16](#) – *The wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death.* [New International Version](#) (NIV)

[Romans 6:23](#) – ²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our LORD.*

[Isaiah 3:10-11](#) – ¹⁰ *Say that it will go well with the righteous, that they will enjoy the fruit of their actions;* ¹¹ *but woe to the wicked, it will go badly with him; for what he has done will be done to him.* [Complete Jewish Bible \(CJB\)](#)

In the first installment in this series, we looked at how God's Omnipotence means he alone possesses Perfect Justice, Perfect Love, Perfect Righteousness, Perfect Kindness, and all these perfections empower him to be grant us Perfect Mercy. These traits of God are also in us because we are created in His image, but in us these traits are corrupted, imperfect, and incomplete. God's Mercy fills up those imperfections and by doing that He makes us whole; he justifies us – He makes *us* just and righteous – by truly and completely removing our sins. Through Christ the atonement – the compensation for our sin (death) – is cancelled. That's right, cancelled. It is as if it were never there. How can this be? How can God say, ²⁵ *I, [even] I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. (Isaiah 43:25)*? What we owe because of sin is paid off by Him on our behalf; we are redeemed, bought back, forgiven the price for our sin – death.

David also testifies to the magnitude of God's Mercy and Grace in Psalm 130:7: ⁷ *O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. We are "bought back" because of God's Grace. Now, in this passage the phrase "For with the LORD there is steadfast love" gives us some extra insight into how and why God does this. The phrase literally means "In God is found Covenant Loyalty." God is loyal (faithful, true, trustworthy, constant) to his promise; he will never break his word (see the discussion of intrinsic strength in last week's message). And then look at how that verse from Psalm 130 ends – "with him is great power to redeem." It doesn't matter what the price is for your salvation, God – through Christ **has got it covered!***

He is there with his unlimited mercy before we sin. He is there with his unlimited redemption after we sin. He is overflowing with tender, loving compassion and sympathy for each of us. He knows every living soul. He knows the "good, the bad, and the ugly" about everyone. Even though we don't deserve mercy, he makes it readily available in such abundance that we can never use it up. Although we are completely lacking in personal merits, he overlooks that and always tips the scales of justice in our favor. He forgives thousands of generations of sin because it pleases him to do so. Even people who are blatantly evil will be forgiven when they repent of their evil. Whether we sin willfully or unknowingly, in malicious rebellion or carelessness, he is immediately prepared to redeem us and make us righteous. No matter how many times we repent and then fail again, he forgives everything of which we repent, but never remembers how often that happens. Only he can do this because only he is Omniscient. He knows everything about you and me and us and yet he still loves you and me and us; sometimes even *I* don't love me, but *his* love never fails. **HIS LOVE NEVER FAILS.** That is because God knows every living soul more intimately than we know ourselves. That's what David tells us in [Psalm 139](#). I won't reproduce the entire text here, but I will ask you to read all of it. I'll get you started with the first 6 verses:

¹ *O LORD, you have searched me and known me.* ² *You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.* ³ *You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.* ⁴ *Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.* ⁵ *You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.* ⁶ *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.*

David often talks about meditating on God's Law. In other words, he finds it more worthwhile to contemplate God's words, works, and worth than to be troubled over worldly worries and woes. He knew what it meant to be dedicated – betrothed – to God. The result of that was

that God saw in David a man whose heart was like His own heart. David understood how God could have intimate knowledge of him because he had intimate knowledge of God.

But wait a minute! Isn't God's knowledge and glory so far beyond us that we can't possibly comprehend the magnitude of his might, power, and magnificence? How can any *earthling* have an intimate knowledge of God? You and I know plenty of people – often in our own families – who firmly believe that God is so far away, so detached, so irrelevant and uncaring that there's no point in getting to know him. After all, he is unknowable if indeed he's so powerful. I have heard people say, "What's the point of knowing God? If he knows everything about me, how come he hasn't fixed all the things that are rotten in my life? Why does everything have to be on *His* terms?"

Because, silly rabbit, HE is GOD and you are not! You don't even know how to save your own life, much less the life of every living soul in all of history. Here are four very important "omni" words: God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnibenevolent. There is only one way for God to be irrelevant and that is through active exclusion of God from our lives. When we deliberately turn our backs on God, when we declare him irrelevant instead of Omnipotent, pointless instead of Omniscient, "somewhere out there" instead of Omnipresent, and uncaring instead of Omnibenevolent, we are actively excluding God and refusing to accept the majesty and glory so near to us that we have to work *really hard* not to see it. God is Good, and he wants us to be Good in, with, and for him. He gives us a bazillion-gazillion chances to get it right, but we can never get it right if we actively resist and exclude him from our lives. God becomes interior to us, as he did to David and so many other millions and millions of saintly people through the ages, only when we obediently *include* him in our lives. Once we know him, we know where he is (everywhere in everything and everybody). Once we know where he is we know who he is (The Almighty Ever-living God – *El-Shaddai-Olam*). Once we know who he is, we know what he does – he loves us and redeems us with such generosity that it cannot even be described even in language that is *so high that I cannot attain it*.

There's just no way that God can be extraneous or irrelevant unless we actively exclude him from our lives. You know, people who exclude God aren't necessarily *evil*, but they **are cooperating with** evil. Here's the thing though: God, and only God, can bring good out of disaster, righteousness out of evil, joy out of sorrow, and peace out of strife and distress. There **are** evil people, and there **are** evil acts, but when God is brought into the picture, good comes from that evil; that good will not come if we keep God out either through denying him or failing to repent of our part in the evil that persists. That is the way of Redemption. God reaches out to help us reunite with him and we let him do that. Redemption is a supreme act of Mercy because it restores us to our rightful place in the presence of God – eternal life with him.

Do you know someone who is actively excluding God from life, even perhaps people in authority who exclude God on your behalf but against your wishes? Pray for them – intercede on their behalf and offer prayers of repentance they refuse to offer. Know someone who is upset about or injured by a so-called "Act of God?" God is not the cause of those events. The Acts of God are what happens *after* disasters like that which happened in Sierra Leone (floods), Portugal (fires), Venezuela (economic crisis) , or – sadly – Charlottesville (hate-based rioting). Acts of God are what happen whenever we obediently include him in everything we do. That is how God's Mercy reaches those who need it most, through *our*

Spiritual and Corporal [Acts of Mercy](#). (For more information on the Acts of Mercy, see the [Aloha Friday Messages](#) from February 19 through April 4, 2010.)

How do we know God is, was, and always will be merciful? Because he is Omnipotent. How do we know we are eligible for and can obtain God's mercy? Because he is Omniscient, and knows how to reach us if only we let him in. here's a passage every Christian (even Catholic Christians) should memorize: [Titus 3:5](#) – ⁵ *he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water^d of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

Be good to one another this coming week, and keep an eye out for God's Mercy in *your* life! Who is merciful to you and to whom are you merciful? Which ones should have been merciful and were not, and who should have received mercy but did not? Who will you Bless with God's Merciful Love? Remember, "*Say that it will go well with the righteous, that they will enjoy the fruit of their actions.*"

Remember:

**LIGHT ≡ GOD ≡ LOVE ≡ TRUTH ≡ WAY ≡ LIFE ≡ FOREVER ≡ JUSTICE ≡
OMNIPOTENCE**

Mercy Series – Part 3 of 4

[James 2:13](#) – ¹³ *For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.*

[Matthew 6:14](#) – ¹⁴ *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you;*

[Psalm 107:1](#) – ¹ *O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.*

[1 Chronicles 16:34](#) – ³⁴ *O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.*

There but for the Grace of God ...

In the past two posts we have considered God's Mercy. We looked first at Mercy in the perspective of his Omnipotence which is characterized by his Perfect Justice, Perfect Love, Perfect Righteousness, Perfect Kindness, and all these perfections empower him to grant us Perfect Mercy. Because of his Mercy, we are completely cleared of our sins and thereby Justified through his Grace. Next, we looked at God's Mercy from the perspective of his Omniscience. He knows everything about us and our lives from the moment he spoke the first words of creation "Let there be..." up until the Day of Resurrection and beyond. Because he knows everything and everybody everywhere in every time and every place, he alone can render Perfect Mercy because he alone can know every circumstance of our existence. The result is called Universal Preventive Grace which is a term that describes the kind of Grace that is always present and available, even before it is needed; it is preceding its use in time or order; it is the natural antecedent for past, present and future instances. Today the "omni"

word is *Omnibenevolence*. As with the other omni words, the derivation of the word is more toward the idea of *completeness* or *all-inclusive* rather than infinitely [something].

Omnibenevolence is omni – all – and benevolence – goodness, generosity, compassion, kindness, goodwill, charitable, lovingkindness, as in a form of love characterized by acts of incredible and completely unexpected kindness. Recall that we said God is prepared to give us his Mercy before, during, and after our sin and if our hearts and minds turn from sin to repentance, his *Mercy* turns into his *Forgiveness*. If I were to try to visualize this phenomenon, I would say it looks like a sea of troubles on one side and an army of sins on the other. I am caught between (literally) the devil and the deep blue sea, and God's infinite mercy is surrounding the whole scene. The army of sin engages me, but as soon as I repent, God's Mercy transforms into God's Salvation and I am rescued from both the army and the sea. Sometimes the sea parts and I walk through safely; and sometimes the army parts – or even flees – and I escape unscathed. I am saved. God's Great Goodness is my salvation, and that is good.

I have a dear friend Karen who often says, "What a *Good God* we have!" And she is right. God has perfect power and perfect knowledge, and with those he dispenses perfect Justice tempered with Perfect Mercy, so it seems right to believe he is a Perfectly Moral Being capable of Perfect Goodness. He chooses to implement that goodness in and on behalf of the creatures he created to be beneficiaries of his Goodness. When it comes to implementing that goodness, sharing those graces that enrich our lives, he is extravagantly generous, even when we are not.

God is *always* taking care of us, and – as we saw in the last post – the only way we can mess that up is to actively resist his care and his presence. Even in that circumstance, he still takes care of us; as Jesus said, "... *he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust;*" ([Matthew 5:45](#)) and he also says about the goodness of his Father "... *because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*" ([Luke 6:35](#)). That is something that is very hard for me to do; how about you? In both of these verses, Jesus is telling his listeners to love their enemies, the antithesis of what they have been taught for millennia, and that they should do this because it is what God desires, for *he himself* has forgiven and even blessed his enemies. We are created in his image; therefore, we should *strive* be good as he is Good. Sometimes I want to ask God, "Why do you allow poverty, famine, terror, injustice, cruelty, and indifference in the world? Can't you do something about all that?" But he might just ask me the same question. God is magnificently Benevolent; we are to be benevolent to the point where our benevolence becomes sacrificial. God is not served by, in, or through stinginess (See [Malachi 3:10](#)); but, he can and will even bless with incredible abundance those who are stingy with their gifts to him and to his creatures.

And you know, that's really the way God does things. He wants us to be like him – that's why he made us in his image and likeness – and he wants us to be as good to each other as he is Good to us. He wants to fellowship with us, to walk amidst us as a dear and trusted friend who can enjoy doing everything with us because what *we* do is what *he* does. That divine closeness was fractured in Eden, and we are slowly repairing that fracture every time we cooperate with his will – every time we do as Jesus commanded when he said, "[Love one another](#) as I have loved you." Paul gave us another example when he said in [Hebrews 13:16](#) – *Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.* God himself said, "[For I desire steadfast love](#) [mercy, lovingkindness] and not sacrifice,

the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. The sacrifices of adoration, thanksgiving, and praise are the kind of worship God desires. The sacrifice of obedience is what God expects when we worship. Those things are pretty hard to fake so he commands they come from our hearts and not just our lips. He doesn't want or need imitations of love, but rather love like his – steadfast, unwavering, and unconditional.

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and flattery is insincere or excessive praise, then we ought not try to imitate God's Omnibenevolence, but rather try to emulate it. An imitation is a cheap substitute and can even be a negative portrayal of something. When we emulate we try to match or exceed the qualities we perceive in the object of our emulation. In this case we endeavor to live in God's Universal Prevenient Grace – his tender mercies.

Through God's Omnipotence we are justified. Through God's Omniscience we are redeemed. Through God's Omnibenevolence, his Great Goodness, we have the gift of Salvation. If we look at the quote from the letter of James, the word *judgment* in Greek is krisis {kree'-sis}. It is the kind of Divine Judgment that includes accusation, condemnation, and *damnation as well as testimony, approbation, and exoneration*. It is *very serious* because it means a separation of the good and the evil, the sheep and the goats. In the same verse, the word *triumphs* means more than "wins the victory." It is katakauchaomai {kat-ak-ow-khah'-om-ah-ee} and it means to glory against, to exult over, to boast one's self to the injury (of a person or thing), to celebrate a victory by sharply contrasting the good against the evil, to get *down* and boogie because we won. When we are not merciful in our judgments, we will not be shown mercy; when we *are* merciful, the mercy we show trumps that judgment of condemnation, and brings us into the Light of his glory and grace (↔ Music Link ... you really should listen to this one.)

We know, then, that God wants us to be like him. He wants it so much he stacks the deck in our favor thereby making it ridiculously easy to become what he seeks and to do what he desires. All we have to do is repent, to be unselfish as he is. I heard something from or Pastor not long ago that really caught my attention. Eve and Adam stepped into sin and out of Paradise because of selfishness. Here's how I see it: The serpent appealed to Eve's love of God and told her, "He's trying to trick you. He doesn't want you to be like him. He knows if you do this you *will* be like him, and you can be his equal." Eve, selfishly, thought she could become more than what God had created her to be – perfect and eternal; she desired that unquantified "more" and took the knowledge offered. When she realized what she had done, she offered Adam that knowledge. He already knew she had broken God's commands, but he took what she offered anyway. Hence, it is Adam's sin because he partook even though he already saw and knew it was wrong.

Within the hour of that first sin, God had promised a Redeemer, "*for his steadfast love [mercy] endures forever.*" What a *Good God* we have!! Where would we be without his Merciful Grace? Where will we go if we choose to reject the Merciful Grace by showing no mercy? In his Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnibenevolence we have access to the fountains of Mercy poured out for us in the Blood of Christ. Choosing to be without mercy for others is choosing to be without God's mercy. Even then, he is merciful as well as just. Blesséd be God forever!

Remember:

LIGHT ≡ GOD ≡ LOVE ≡ TRUTH ≡ WAY ≡ LIFE ≡ FOREVER ≡ JUSTICE ≡ OMNIPOTENCE

Mercy Series – Part 4 of 4

Isaiah 7:14 – *Therefore Adonai himself will give you people a sign: the young woman* will become pregnant, bear a son and name him 'Immanu El [God is with us].* [Complete Jewish Bible](#) (CJB)

Jeremiah 23:23-24 – *Am I God only when near," asks ADONAI, "and not when far away? Can anyone hide in a place so secret that I won't see him?" asks ADONAI. ADONAI says, "Do I not fill heaven and earth? (CJB)*

Psalms 139:7-14 – *7. Where can I go from your spirit? From your presence, where can I flee? 8. If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol*, there you are. 9. If I take the wings of dawn and dwell beyond the sea, 10. Even there your hand guides me, your right hand holds me fast. 11. If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light"— 12. Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day. Darkness and light are but one. 13. You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. 14. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works! My very self you know. (CJB)*

* Sheol: Sheol is not the same as our modern conception of Hell. It is "the abode of the dead." It signifies the place where spirits of the deceased were gathered together in a dusty, dark, and silent place. The dead go down into it, some by volition, others are compelled to go; a few are awakened and go up or are taken up from it. The dead continue the activities employing them in their earthly life, but only as "shades," mere shadows of their physical form; they are the souls of the dead who merely exist without genuine consciousness or emotion.

Today we will look at the fourth "omni" word in our Advent series: *Omnipresence*. Some folks feel that it's a bit of a stretch to find Biblical evidence of this theological term, but I think the quotes we have at the opening get to the core of the idea pretty well. The thing we have to be careful about with the term Omnipresence is turning it into a sort of pantheistic cosmology, a belief that God and the material world – indeed the entire universe – are one and the same thing; a belief that God is present in everything in such a way that the Universe is God and God *is* the Universe. There is another philosophical viewpoint – more acceptable in my understanding called panentheism. While pantheism (without the "en" in the middle) asserts that "Everything is God for God is Everything," panentheism goes further to claim that God is greater than the universe; the universe exists within God, who divinely "transcends," or "permeates" and is thus "in" the universe but not identical to it. I want you to be able to look back at this paragraph to understand why this omni word came last in the series.

When I think of these words we have studied – Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnibenevolent, and now Omnipresent – I think the aspect of God's Omnipresence is the clearest demonstration of God's Great Mercy. We started with Omnipotence; God alone has the power to forgive because only God's perfect power makes Perfect Justice possible. Righteousness, Justice, Kindness, Mercy, and Faith are perfect *only* in God. We have these potentialities in our own beings because we are created in the image and likeness of God.

We next looked at Omniscience. God alone knows everything about us before, during, and after anything we say, think, or do. How? God is *God*, unless we deliberately and obstinately exclude God from our lives, thereby actively excluding God's magnanimous gifts and

refusing to accept the majesty and glory so near to us that we have to work *really hard* not to see it.

Next, we examined Omnibenevolence, God's Universal Perfect Goodness. As with the preceding two omni words, the "omni" meaning is closer in connotation to "ALL" (completely) than to "infinite." God is ALL GOOD. "*Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above,*" as we read in [James 1:17](#), so there wherever there is goodness, it comes from, with, through, and for God. This brings us to today's Omni word, Omnipresence.

To me, this is the greatest, and at the same time simplest, proof of the Mercy of God. He makes himself known to every living soul in every place, at every time, within everything that is good. No matter where you look, there is evidence of the presence of God. I imagine that some of you, Beloved, are saying, "How can that be?! How can you tell us God is present in the violence of school shootings, the horrors of war, the destitution of famine, unprecedented geological and ecological destruction, and the ravaging distress of disease? How is that Mercy?!" He is indeed present – in us, in those who suffer, in those who sacrifice something of their own life to preserve the life of another. When we try to assign blame to God for these things, we totally miss the point. These disharmonies in our life can be restored to harmony when we learn "*to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*"

[Micah 6:8](#)

God is so immensely, interminably merciful that his Mercy is beyond our comprehension – as is everything else about God. He is so Merciful that he places himself in everything around us, infuses himself into every aspect of our being, and does these things in such ways that even the least-attentive observer of Creation can see God's Omnipresence. It takes actively exerted effort to fail to see that Omnipresence. He is so merciful that he makes his existence entirely visible through the whole span of creation's time, space, and matter. He wants to make sure we don't miss finding him because, "Once we know where he is, we know who he is (The Almighty Ever-living God – *El-Shaddai-Olam*)." Almighty and Everlasting God! That is *my* God, not just because he is the *only* God, but because he has revealed himself by being Omnipresent! My God! That is so *AWESOME!* It is also so sweetly merciful.

I am reminded of a Daddy who keeps his children safe by making sure the house is sound and capable of protecting them. He clears pebbles, stones, twigs, discarded candy and gum, stray paperclips and rubber bands, and any other obstacles or dangers from the sidewalk, the playground, the back yard, or the aisle in the grocery store to protect them from possible injuries. He buckles them in when they ride in the car and then double-checks the latch to make sure it will hold. He sits up with them at night when they are sick or have a bad dream. He is also like a Mommy who gathers her child into her arms for every skinned knee or pinched finger. She prepares meals from formula or breast-milk, to pizza and pot-roast with such love that you can actually taste it in what she makes. She flies in the face of anyone who unjustly persecutes or blames her child, forcing them to back down. And when the child has children, those children share in the extended love of Gramma and Grampa whose love transcends all the love their children and grandchildren experience.

If you do that for hundreds of millions of cycles, you might pick up on the first three notes of the Eternal Symphony sung to God by the Angels of God and the Thee Holy Children in the Fiery Furnace and written down by the prophet, Daniel: "*Bless the LORD, all you works of the LORD! Praise and exalt Him above all forever!*" (See [Daniel 3:51-90](#)) This passage is

considered apocryphal by most non-Catholic denominations, so I encourage you to read it at the link in the line above or at [this link](#). The Daddy and Mommy conceive, protect, nourish, nurture, educate, cherish, love, correct, and bless their child to save the child from injury, loss, pain, and death. God does that completely for everyone all the time everywhere. He gave that kind of restorative caring a name: SALVATION.

God's Omnipresence is the stem of the shamrock, the base of the tetrahedron, the Foundation of the Ages. Because he can be Everywhere-All-That-Is-Can-Be, he is Omnipresent. Because he is Omnipresent, he can be Omnipotent for he *is* All Power That Is Everywhere for All Time. And again, because he is Omnipresent and Omnipotent, he can be Omniscient for he *is* All Wisdom, Knowledge, and Glory in All Places At All Times for All Causes. Finally, because he is Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient, he can be and forever is Omnibenevolent because his Perfect Justice, Perfect Love, Perfect Righteousness, and Perfect Kindness are shown to us every moment of our lives every place and direction we look, every time we hear, everywhere we live and move and have our being. "*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?*" ([1 Corinthians 6:19](#)). Yes, he even lives in you and me! If you know that, then you know him. (Check out the CJB translation using that link.)

Beloved, he's right in front of you, all around you, right beside you, right *inside* you. From the earliest days of my youth, I knew that, but never understood it until around 1967 when I *really heard*, as if for the first time, the ancient hymn [O come, O come Emanuel!](#) (↔ Music Link) I often offer special thanks to God for my friend Mary Jane McBride who took me to a Christmas Novena hosted by Seminarians in Denver that year which ultimately led to my conversion) This verse from one of my favorite contemporary hymns sums up the whole series:

The mystery of Your presence LORD,
No mortal tongue can tell;
Whom all the world cannot contain
Comes in our hearts to dwell.

From [You Satisfy the Hungry Heart](#) (↔ Music Link) *Composer: Robert Kreutz; Text Author: Omer Westendorf*

That's right. HE *is* Emmanuel and he *is* with us Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnibenevolent, and Omnipresent for he and only he is *'Immanu E!* Blesséd be God forever!

Whatever, whenever, wherever, whoever, however, if ever, forever —
at your service, Belovéd!

Please pray with us [here](#) at *Share-a-Prayer*.

[Share-A-Prayer](#)

EI Shaddai-Olam, we ask that those who fear they cannot or should not be forgiven will find that your Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnibenevolent, and Omnipresent Mercy exceeds all their fears and will therefore know your salvation. we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, Our LORD, who lives and reigns with God, the Father Almighty, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, the LORD, the Giver of Life. AMEN.

Remember:

**LIGHT ≡ GOD ≡ LOVE ≡ TRUTH ≡ WAY ≡ LIFE ≡ FOREVER ≡ JUSTICE ≡
OMNIPOTENCE ≡ OMNISCIENT ≡ OMNIPRESENT ≡ OMNIBENEVOLENT**

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