

"How Big is Your God?"

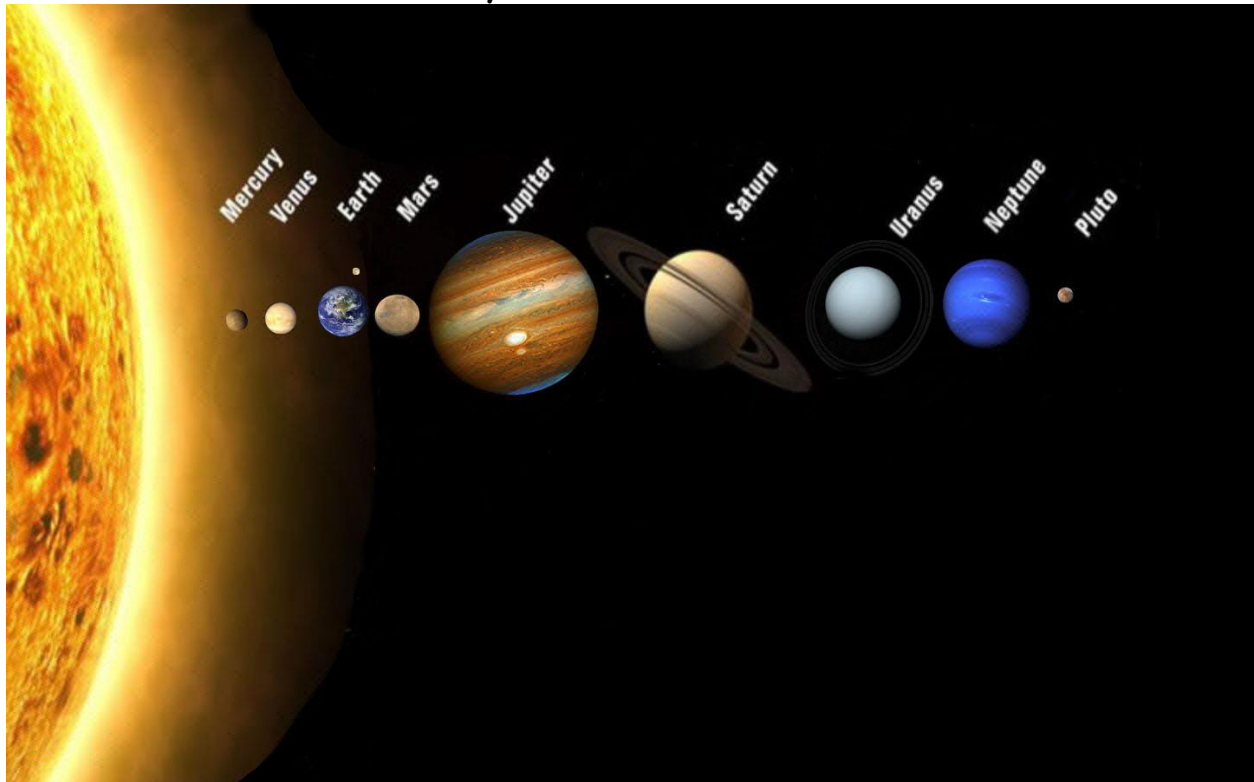
Sunday Morning, June 5, 2022

Read Colossians 1:15-23

For the past year I have been struggling to comprehend how great our God is, and how amazing it is that He would care about us as much as He does.

We will begin this morning with an Astronomy lesson like you had in high school. Except back then they didn't know a 1/4 of what we know today

We will start with our Solar System



Our Solar System

- This picture shows the planets in order, but the scale is way off
- Sun - Marble - 0.5" in diameter - Put it on the pulpit here
- Mercury = 3 feet from the sun
- Venus = 6.5 feet from the sun
- Earth = 8.2 feet from the sun - To scale, it is the size of a grain of sand
- Mars = 13 feet from the sun
- Jupiter = 42.6 feet from the sun

- Saturn = 79 feet from the sun
- Uranus = 161 feet from the sun
- Neptune = 250 feet from the sun
- Pluto = 328 feet from the sun
 - That's over a football field including the end zones
 - That would be almost to the Georgetown Square from here

Our Solar System is just a fragment of our Milky Way Galaxy

- How many of you have marveled at the number of stars visible on a dark night?



Milky Way - Sky view

- Every pin of light that you can see with the naked eye is in our galaxy, except for nine close galaxies.
- And if you think "WOW, I can see millions of stars", the truth is only 9,095 stars can be seen from Earth with the naked eye.
 - But that is from all around our planet. From any one location, on an extremely dark night, a human can only see about 4,000 stars.
- So, the Milky Way galaxy contains 100 to 400 billion stars and you can only see about 4,000 of them with the naked eye.

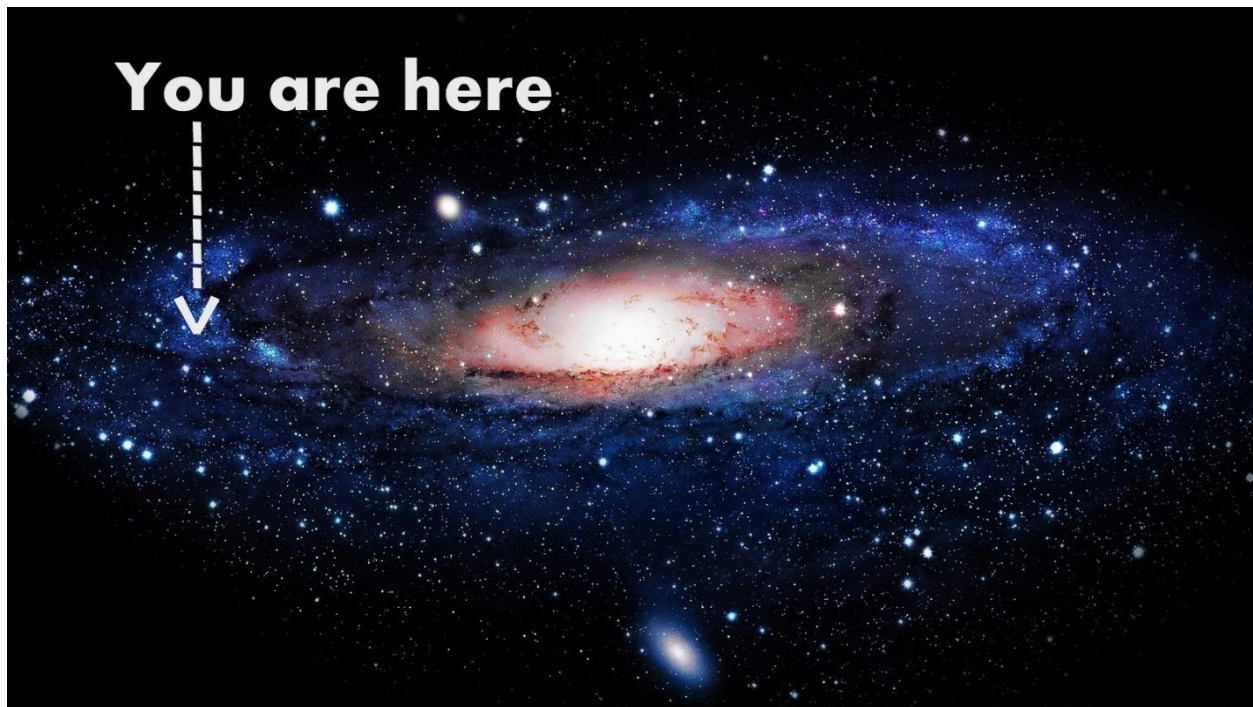


Image Depicting our Solar System's location within the Milky Way Galaxy

- Our Milky Way galaxy is about 100,000 light-years across.
 - Light travels at 186,000 miles per second
 - A light year is how far light travels in a year
 - This is a number we cannot comprehend
 - So, on our scale where this marble is the sun, and Pluto is in the Georgetown Square, our Milky Way Galaxy would extend 25 million miles - that is, from this pulpit to the planet Venus!
 - These distances relate to just our galaxy, but they are mind-boggling.



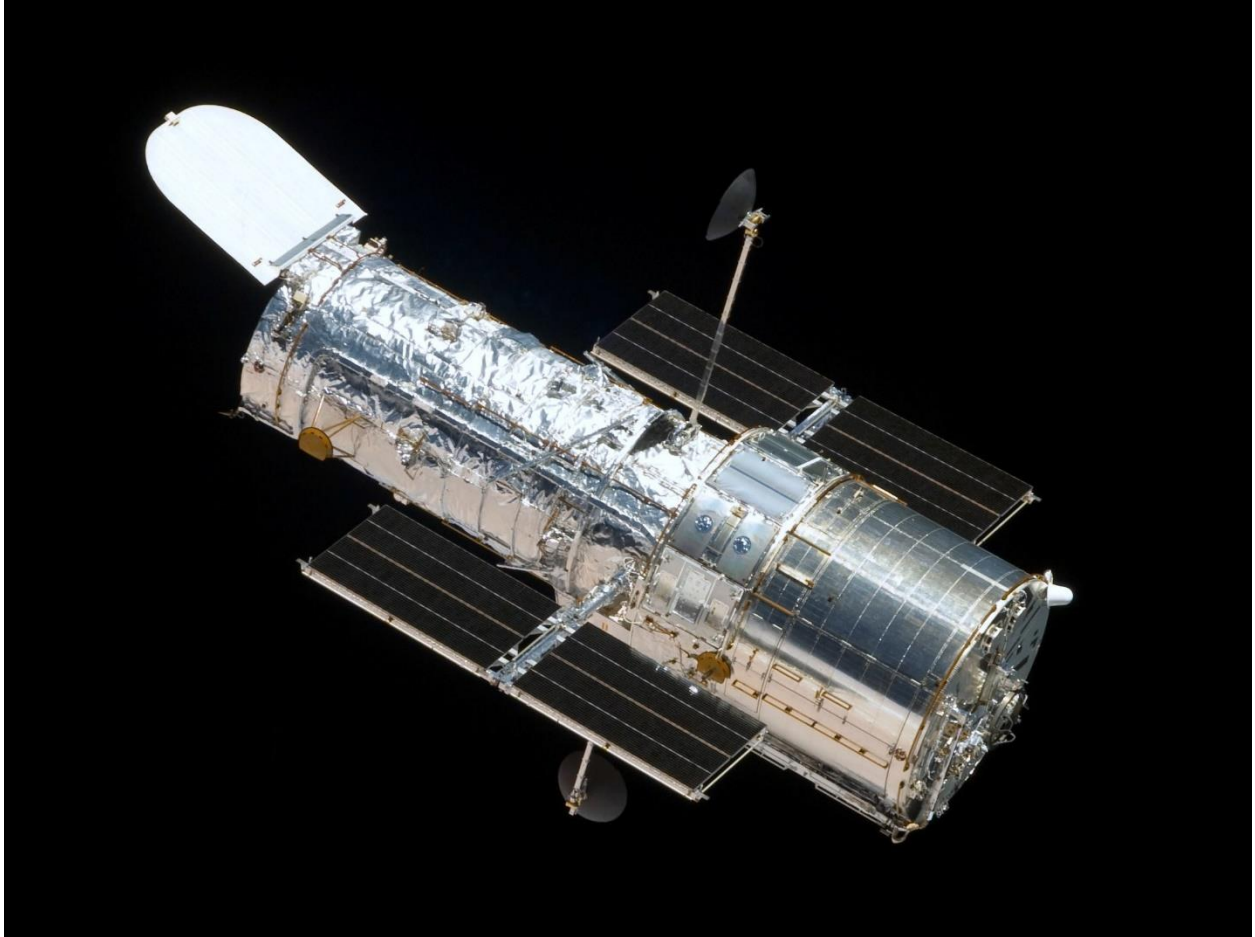
Our Sun compared to the superstar Stephenson

- This marble, our sun, is a very mediocre star. The largest known star in our Milky Way Galaxy is Stephenson 2-18. It was discovered in 1990. Its diameter is 2,150 times that of our sun.
- The picture above shows our sun in comparison to this superstar Stephenson
- And our whole galaxy was created by our God.

Two more items in our Astronomy lesson

The Hubble Telescope

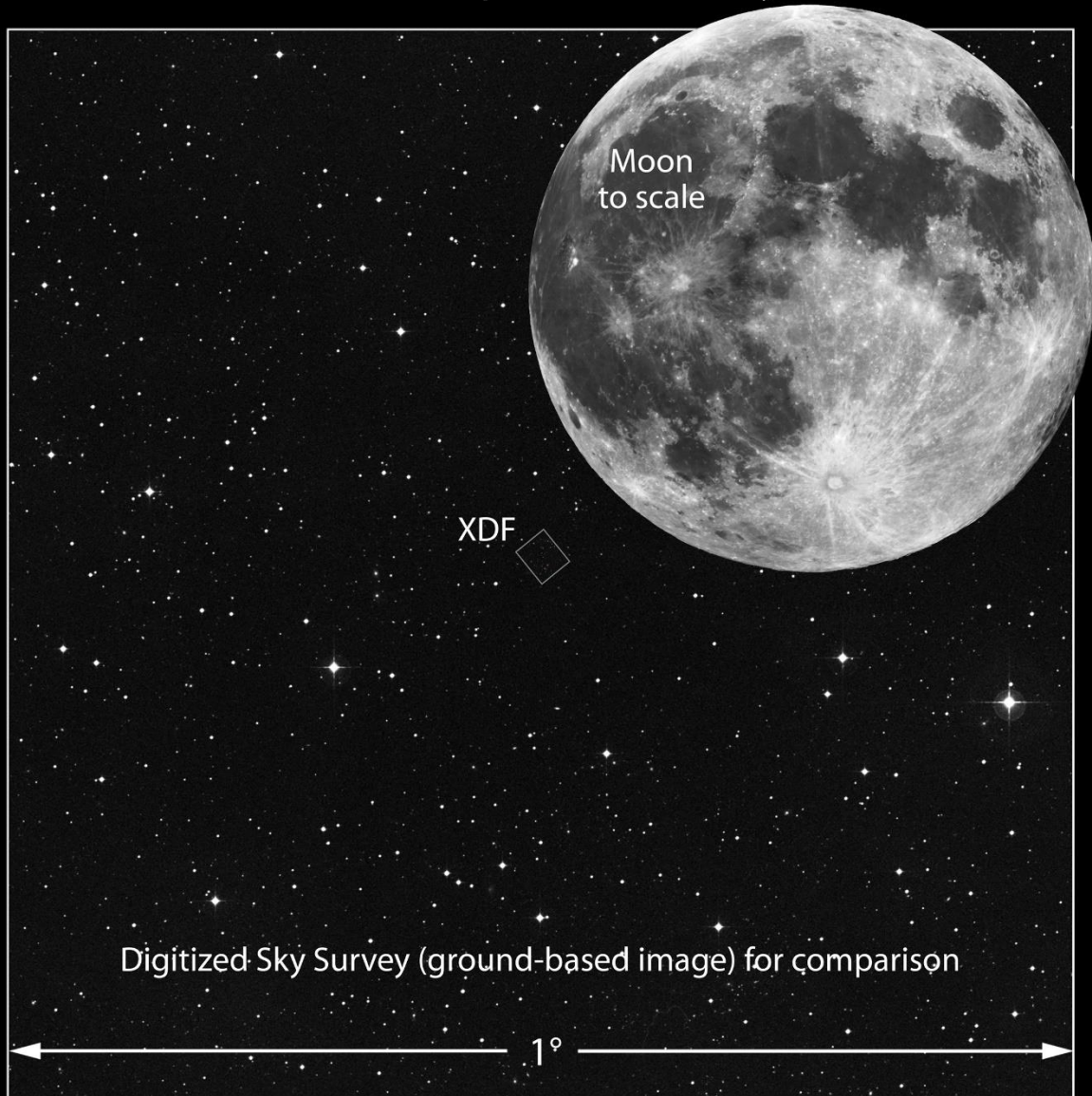
- It was launched on April 24, 1990.
- It is 14 feet in diameter and as long as a school bus.



Hubble Telescope

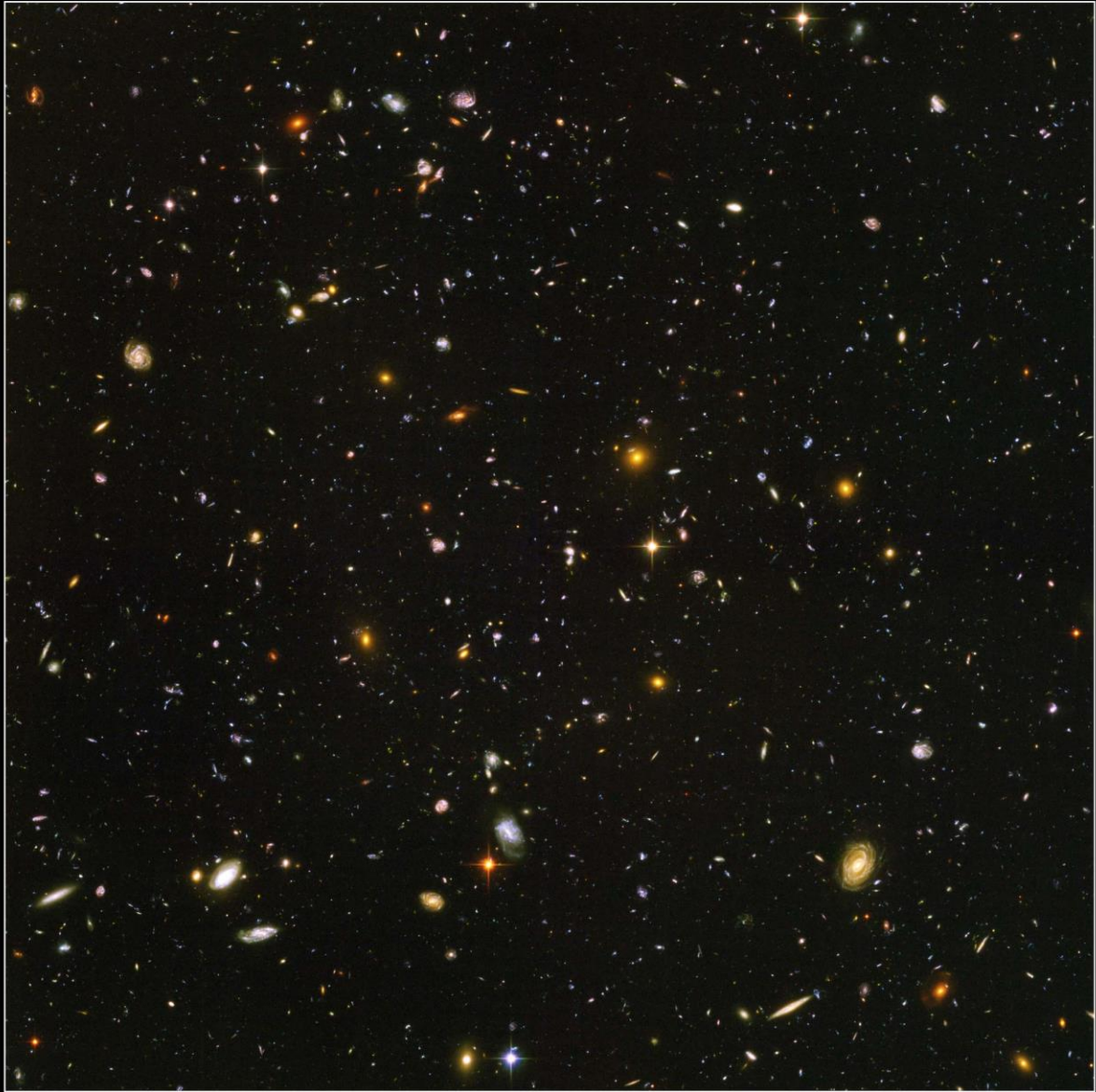
- It is powerful enough to see a firefly in Tokyo from Washington DC
- It has made more than 1.5 million observations since being launched
- On September 3, 2003, Hubble began pointing its camera at a small area in the night sky that was about a tenth the size of our moon. This area was chosen because it appeared to be complete blackness, with no stars visible to the naked eye.

Size of Hubble eXtreme Deep Field on the Sky



Hubble Extreme Deep Field area compared to our moon

- Hubble kept its camera pointed there for four months, collecting all the light it could. This is what Hubble saw.



Hubble Ultra Deep Field
Hubble Space Telescope • Advanced Camera for Surveys

NASA, ESA, S. Beckwith (STScI) and the HUDF Team

STScI-PRC04-07a

Hubble Ultra Deep Field

- This image is on the front of your bulletins and has over 10,000 galaxies. Every point of light you see is a galaxy, each of which has billions of stars.

The James Webb Telescope was launched on Christmas Day last year.

- It is way more powerful than the Hubble telescope
- We do not have any pictures from the James Webb Telescope yet
- But one's mind can only wonder how much more of God's creation we will be able to see through this telescope!



James Webb Space Telescope

What Are the Implications of this Astronomy Lesson?

Our universe is beyond comprehension. Billions of galaxies; Trillions of stars! It is incomprehensible how anyone cannot believe our universe must have been created by an intelligent God.

But our God is not just an incredibly infinite, powerful and impersonal essence. He is a personal God who cares about you and I. The Bible tells us not a hair falls from our head without His noticing it.

- Matthew 10:29-31 - "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."
 - Luke 12:6-7 says the same thing

As evidence of His caring for us, God chose to give us His instructions in written form. God used at least forty (40) different authors over a period of 1500 years to provide His Word to us.

- We will not digress into the arguments for the inerrancy of the Bible this morning
- My position is almost childlike - If my God could create this universe we have considered this morning, I believe He is totally capable of making sure that what He wanted recorded is what was written down.

There are many attributes of God described in the Bible to help us better understand what a great and wonderful God He is. This morning I want to consider just a few of them.

Attributes of God

Infinite - Beyond boundaries, No limits

Psalm 147:5 (ASV)

Great is our Lord, and mighty in power;
His understanding is infinite.

1 Kings 8:27 (ESV) - When Solomon was dedicating the temple he had built
But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!

All Powerful

Jeremiah 32:17 (ESV)

'Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

Isaiah 44:24 (ESV)

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: "I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself,"

All knowing

Psalm 147:5 (ESV)

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

1 John 3:20 (ESV)

For whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

Everlasting to Everlasting

Psalm 41:13 (NIV) - A Psalm of David

Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen"

Psalm 90:2 (ESV) - A Psalm of Moses

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Patient

Exodus 34:5-6 (NIV)

Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And God passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

Psalm 103:8 (NIV) - A Psalm of David

He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel:

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Merciful

Deuteronomy 4:31 (ESV)

For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

Romans 9:15-16 (NIV)

For he (God) says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

Faithful

Deuteronomy 7:9 (NIV)

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

II Timothy 2:13

If we are faithless, he remains faithful - for he cannot deny himself.

Just

Deuteronomy 32:4 (NIV)

He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

Jealous

Exodus 34:14 (NIV)

Do not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

Deuteronomy 5:9 (NIV)

You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

Holy, Holy, Holy

Isaiah 6:3 (NIV) - Isaiah's vision as he was relating his calling by God

And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Revelation 4:8 (NIV)

Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

And Lastly this morning, Our God is a Loving God

Isaiah 54:10 (NIV)

Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

1 John 4:7-8 (NIV)

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

God loves us so much that He reached out and **adopted** those of us who believe in Him to become His Children. The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Romans 8:14-17:

- "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

Each morning as I have my devotions, in my prayers I never cease to be humbled by the realization that I am talking not only to this incredible Creator of the Universe, but I am talking to Him as my Father.

- I just cannot comprehend that I have been adopted as a son by our infinite, all-powerful God!

As I conclude this morning, I want us to focus our attention on how this infinite God loved us so much that He sent Jesus to provide a path for our reconciliation and redemption.

One of the most famous verses in the Bible describes God's love this way:
John 3:16 (NIV)

- For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The lyrics to one of my favorite songs, "Ten Thousand Angels" by Ray Overholt, describes God's love for us and Jesus' desire to reunite us to Him.

They bound the hands of Jesus in the garden where he prayed
They led him through the streets in shame
They spat upon the Savior so pure and free from sin
They said, "Crucify him he's to blame"
He could have called ten thousand angels to destroy the world and set him free
He could have called ten thousand angels, but he died alone for you and me

Harry is going to lead us in the Lord's Supper in a few moments to celebrate that union.

Let us pray.