**Meditate on the attributes of god**

*****Wednesdays with Watson is a weekly reading taken from Puritan writer, Thomas Watson (1620-1686).  This week’s selection is taken from The Christian on the Mount*:

The attributes of God are the various beams by which the divine nature shines forth to us; and there are six special attributes that we should fix our meditations upon:

***First, meditate upon God’s omniscience.*** His eye is continually upon us. He has a window open into the conscience; our thoughts are unveiled before Him. He can tell the words we speak in our bedchamber (2 Kings 6:12). He is described with seven eyes, to show His omniscience. “Thou numberest my steps” (Job 14:16) The Hebrew word signifies to take an exact account. God is said to number our steps when he makes a precise and critical observation of our actions. God sets down every step of our lives, and keeps, as it were, a day book of all we do, and enters it down into the book. Meditate much on this omniscience.

Meditation on God’s omniscience would have these effects:

It would be as a bridle to check and restrain us from sin. Will the thief steal when the judge looks on?

Meditation on God’s omniscience would be a good means to make the heart sincere. God has set a window in every man’s breast. “Doth not He see all my ways?” (Job 31:4). If I harbor proud, malicious thoughts, if I look at my own interest more than Christ’s, if I juggle in my repentance, the God of heaven takes notice! Meditation on His omniscience would make a Christian sincere, both in his actions and aims. Only a fool would dare to be a hypocrite before God!

***Second, meditate on the holiness of God.*** Holiness is the embroidered robe God wears; it is the glory of the Godhead. Exodus 15:1l: “Glorious in holiness!” Holiness is the most orient pearl of the crown of heaven. God is the exemplar and pattern of holiness. It is primarily and originally in God as light in the sun; you may as well separate weight from lead, or heat from fire, as holiness from the divine nature. God’s holiness is that whereby His heart rises against any sin, as being most diametrically opposite to his essence. Habakkuk 1:13: “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” Meditate much on this attribute.

Meditation on God’s holiness would have this effect: it would be a means to transform us into the similitude and likeness of God. God never loves us until we are like him. There is a story of a deformed man who set lovely pictures before his wife so that, seeing them, she might have lovely children — and so she had. Be that as it may, while by meditation we are looking upon the beams of holiness, which are gloriously transparent in God, we shall grow like him, and be holy as He is holy. Holiness is a beautiful thing (Psalm 110). It puts a kind of angelic brightness upon us; it is the only coin that will pass current in heaven. By the frequent meditation on this attribute, we are changed into God’s image.

***Third, meditate on the wisdom of God.*** He is called “the only wise God” (l Timothy 1:17). His wisdom shines forth in the works of providence. He sits at the helm guiding all things regularly and harmoniously. He brings light out of darkness. He can strike a straight stroke with a crooked stick. He can make use of the injustice of men to do that which is just. He is infinitely wise, he breaks us by afflictions, and upon these broken pieces of the ship brings us safely to shore.

Meditate on the wisdom of God.

Meditation on God’s wisdom would sweetly calm our hearts.

When we see things go badly in the public arena. The all-wise God holds the reins of government in His hand; and whoever the earthly ruler is, God overrules. He knows how to turn all to good, and His work will be beautiful in its season.

When things go badly with us in particular, the meditation on God’s wisdom would rock our hearts quiet. The wise God has set me in this condition, and whether health or sickness, His wisdom will order it for the best. God will make a golden cordial from poison; all things shall be beneficial and medicinal to me. Either the Lord will expel some sin, or exercise some grace. Meditation on this would silence murmuring.

***Fourth, meditate on the power of God.*** His power is visible in the creation. “He hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7). What cannot that God do who can create? Nothing can stand before a creating power! He needs no preexistent matter to work upon. He needs no instruments to work with as He can work without tools. It is He before whom the angels veil their faces, and the kings of the earth cast their crowns. He it is who “removes the earth out of her place” (Job 9:6). An earthquake makes the earth tremble upon her pillars, but God can shake it out of its place. God can with a word unpin the wheels and break the axle of the creation. He can suspend natural agents, stop the lion’s mouth, cause the sun to stand still, and make the fire not burn! Xerxes, the Persian monarch, threw fetters into the sea, as if he would have chained up the unruly waters; but God commands, “the winds and sea obey Him” (Mathew 8:27). If He speaks the word, an army of stars appear (Judges 5:20) If He stamps with His foot, a multitude of angels are presently in battle array; if He lifts up an ensign, and does but hiss, His very enemies shall be up in arms to revenge His quarrel (Isaiah 5:26). Who would provoke this God! “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31). As a lion, He tears in pieces His adversaries (Psalm 50:22). Oh, meditate on this power of God!

Meditation on God’s power would be a great stay to faith. A Christian’s faith may anchor safely upon the rock of God’s power. It was Samson’s riddle, “Out of the strong came forth sweetness (Judges 14:l4). While we are meditating on the power of God, out of this strong comes forth sweetness. Is the church of God low? He can “create praises in Jerusalem” (Isaiah 65:18). Is your corruption strong? God can break the head of this leviathan. Is your heart as hard as a stone? God can dissolve it. “The Almighty makes my heart soft.” Faith triumphs in the power of God; out of this strong comes forth sweetness. Abraham, meditating on God’s power, did not stagger through unbelief (Romans 4:20). He knew God could make a dead womb fruitful, and dry breasts give suck.

***Fifth, meditate upon the mercy of God,*** Mercy is an innate disposition in God to do good, as the sun has an innate property to shine. (Psalm 86:5). “Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon God’s mercy is so sweet that it makes all his other attributes sweet. Holiness without mercy, and justice without mercy, would be dreadful. Geographers write that the city of Syracuse in Sicily is curiously situated so that the sun is never out of sight; though the children of God are under some clouds of affliction, yet the sun of mercy is never quite out of sight. God’s justice reaches to the clouds. His mercy reaches above the clouds.

How slow God is to anger. He was longer in destroying Jericho than in making the world. He made the world in six days, but he was seven days in demolishing the walls of Jericho. How many warning arrows did God shoot against Jerusalem before He shot off His destroying arrow? Justice goes by foot (Genesis 18:21). Mercy has wings. The sword of justice often lies a long time in the scabbard, and rusts until sin draws it out and sharpens it against a nation. God’s justice is like the widow’s oil, which ran a while and ceased (2 Kings 4:6). God’s mercy is like Aaron’s oil, which rested not on his head, but ran down to the skirts of his garment (Psalm 133:2). So the golden oil of God’s mercy does not rest upon the head of a godly parent, but is often poured on his children, and so runs down to the third and fourth generation, even the borders of a pious seed. Often meditate upon the mercy of God.

Meditation on mercy would be a powerful magnet to draw sinners to God by repentance. It would be as a cork to the net, to keep the heart from sinking in despair. Behold a city of refuge to fly to. God is the Father of mercies (2 Corinthians 1:3). Mercy as naturally issues from Him as the child from the parent. God delights in mercy (Micah 7:18). Chrysostom says that it is delightful to the mother to have her breasts drawn; and how delightful is it to God to have the breasts of mercy drawn! Mercy finds out the worst sinner; mercy comes not only with salvation in its hand, but with healing under its wings.

Meditation on God’s mercy would melt a sinner into tears. One man, reading a pardon sent to him from the king, fell a weeping and burst out into these words: “A pardon has done that which death could not do: it has made my heart relent.”

***Sixth, meditate upon the truth of God.*** Mercy makes the promise, and truth performs it. Psalm 89:33. “I will not allow my faithfulness to fail.” God can as well deny Himself as His Word. He is “abundant in truth” (Exodus 34:6). That is, if God has made a promise of mercy to His people, He will be so far from coming short of His Word that He will be better than His Word. God often does more than He has said, never less. He often shoots beyond the mark of the promise He has set, never short of it. He is abundant in truth. God may sometimes delay a promise, but He will not deny it. The promise may lie a long time as seed hidden under ground, but it is all the while a ripening. The promise of Israel’s deliverance lay four hundred and thirty years under ground; but when the time was come, the promise did not go a day beyond its reckoning (Exodus 12:41). “The strength of Israel will not lie” (1 Samuel 15:29).

Meditation on God’s truth would be a pillar of support for faith. The world hangs upon God’s power, and faith hangs upon His truth.

Meditation on God’s truth would make us ambitious to imitate Him. We would be true in our words, true in our dealings. Pythagoras being asked, “What makes men like God?” “When they speak truth.”