

The Perfect Couple!

There was a perfect man who met a perfect woman. After a perfect courtship, they had a perfect wedding. Their life together was, of course, perfect. One snowy, stormy Christmas Eve this perfect couple was driving along a winding road when they noticed someone at the roadside in distress. Being the perfect couple, they stopped to help.

There stood Santa Claus with a huge bundle of toys. Not wanting to disappoint any children on the eve of Christmas, the perfect couple loaded Santa and his toys into their vehicle. Soon they were driving along delivering the toys. Unfortunately, the driving conditions deteriorated, and the perfect couple and Santa Claus had an accident.

Only one of them survived the accident. Who was the survivor?

FEMALE ANSWER:

The perfect woman. She's the only one that really existed in the first place. Everyone knows there is no Santa Claus and there is no such thing as a perfect man.

MALE ANSWER:

So, if there is no perfect man and no Santa Claus, the perfect woman must have been driving. This explains why there was a car accident.

1 Chronicles 16:34 New Living Translation

³⁴ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. (KJV says "Mercy")

TITLE: GOOD IS GOOD

God is not a corrections officer or a military drill sergeant!

What is God's mercy?

Psalm 51:1-2 Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. NLT

The word translated "mercy" in the original language means "loyal, steadfast, enduring love."

The Bible also defines mercy; beyond forgiveness and withholding punishment. **God shows his mercy for those who are suffering through healing, comfort, the alleviation of suffering and caring about those in distress.** He acts from compassion and acts with mercy.

What does it mean that God's love endures forever?

It **expresses deep gratitude to a God who never fails to fulfill His promise.** God's love will endure forever. It will never end. While God remained faithful, the people of Israel seemed to forget about God sometimes.

Remember the song- Lord you are good and “His mercy endures forever” (KJV and NKJV) is also translated, “His faithful love endures forever” (NLT) and “His steadfast love endures forever” (ESV). Mercy, or loyal love, is one of the most prominent attributes of God’s character. By His very nature, He shows unstoppable, limitless, everlasting mercy, even to those who don’t deserve it:

“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy” ([Micah 7:18](#)).

The Lord [forgives](#) those who repent and return to Him: “You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love (mercy) to all who call to you” ([Psalm 86:5](#));

He does not hold our sins against us. God remains faithful because He cannot deny who He is ([2 Timothy 2:13](#)). He is “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities” ([Psalm 103:8–10](#)).

To the one who feels least deserving of His mercy, the Bible says, “The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning” ([Lamentations 3:22–23, NLT](#)).

There is no one in here who has not at some time or another developed a pre conceived, pre-determined concept of who God is to you. In some cases, people have recreated their concept of God to fit them.(golden calf)

“Any concept of God that is built from a preconceived filter will limit your ability to connect with him.

Those ideas that you accepted from others or you formed beforehand without all or at least adequate information. We all have them. Jesus shows us how he dealt with some of Peter’s preconceived ideas. Look at Matthew 16:15-23,
He (Jesus) said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

QUESTION....How does Peter go from being the man who can hear from God through the Holy Spirit regarding who Jesus is in one conversation, to the next conversation with Jesus being rebuked just as Jesus did Satan during his temptations?

We would all agree with Jesus that it is caused by Peter not setting his mind on the things of God. What caused that? May I suggest that it was Peter’s preconceived ideas regarding who and what the Messiah would be and do?

Peter was expecting a Messiah in the line of David, the greatest warrior king of Israel who would never die. He would overturn the Roman rule and lead victoriously, bringing Israel back to the golden years of King David. And Peter and the disciples would be an active part of that.

The only trouble was that these were Peter's preconceived ideas that were formed without all the information. As Jesus said, they were the things of man not of God. Peter, you are a hindrance to me. Wow, from a faithful follower and leader who 'gets it' to a 'hindrance to Jesus'!

What about you and me? How do our preconceived ideas make us a hindrance to Jesus and keep us from being the faithful fruitful followers who Jesus has called us to be?

- My sin is so terrible....God can't use me
- Good people aren't lost....we don't share Christ with them
- I am worthless....I cannot be used by Jesus in ministry
- Only people with certain dispositions struggle with sins like that....I am safe from those sins
- Lost people don't care about spiritual matters....no use sharing Christ with them
- Christianity is about me being happy....any struggle, testing or hard times cannot be God's will for me
- God can only use people with those talents and gifts....no use trying to minister to others
- God doesn't do miracles today like he did in Bible times....no use even praying

I'm sure each of us can add a few personal preconceived ideas to this list. How do we deal with our preconceived ideas?

We must admit that all of us have them and that they do influence how we live. We need to realize that they hinder our following Jesus. Each preconceived idea keeps us from setting our minds on the things of God. Then we must let the Word of God speak into each idea and be willing to let go of our ideas so that we can truly follow Jesus. Jesus used this incident with Peter as a teaching moment to say that the way to glory is suffering, to follow me you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and lose your life for Jesus sake. Let's take an honest look at our preconceived ideas and make sure they are not hindering us from following Jesus.

A.W Tozer said, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us"

More important than, “What do you think about God” is “Who is he to you?”

When I say GOD. What comes into your mind? Because whatever comes after God comes after your heart!!

Our mind’s understanding of God sadly is shaped or can be by outside forces.

MEDIA: The **April 8, 1966**, cover of Time magazine was the first cover in the magazine's history to feature only type, and no photo. The cover—with the traditional, red border—was all black, with the words "Is God Dead?" in large, red text.

HOLLYWOOD: Has a hidden agenda. However, there has been some amazing inroads in that mission field.

CLASSROOMS: By the time they get to university their concept and perception of God has been chipped away for so long, they barely and rarely acknowledge that God exists. However, there is a movement marching forward with a mission of mercy. **GOD’S NOT DEAD FRIENDS**

ACT OF GOD: God is blamed/Why would God allow

RELIGION: Man has many ways, but the Bible says there is only 1 way to heaven and that is through Jesus.

Aren’t you tired of performing? Practice never will make you perfect when it comes to your relationship with God. Don’t fall for the trap of working *for* your salvation. *We work because of* our salvation.

John 9:4 We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work.

PARENTS: How many of your parents had you on drugs when you were kids? They drug you out to church...

MOSES: No Charlton Heston is not Moses!!! God spoke to him from a bush and Moses had a confrontation with Pharaoh. God gave Moses directions to led the children of Israel to the promise land. Pharaoh followed in hot pursuit and got swimming lessons!

There is a perception that any kind of authority figure is trying to kill us and limit us. People as well have a concept of God that way.

Way too many people have a Pharoah filter. It takes someone like Moses to come along and break that fear and free you from a slavery, poverty mindset.

God comes along and wants to speak to the children of God but they saw the thunderings and lightning from the mount and said, "Moses you go hear from God for us and tell us what he says!" NO! Don't rely on others to hear from God for you!!

Exodus 33:18 And he said, please show me your glory" What he was saying was show me your fullness, your goodness, your mercy, your never ending, loving in-depth compassion.

Exodus 34:6-7 ⁶ The Lord passed by before him and proclaimed: "The Lord, the Lord, the **compassionate** and **gracious** God, **slow to anger**, and **abounding in loyal love and faithfulness**, ⁷ keeping loyal love for thousands, **forgiving iniquity** and transgression and sin. But he by no means leaves the guilty unpunished, responding to the transgression of fathers by dealing with children and children's children, to the third and fourth generation."

Compassion is linking and connecting with you in a deep emotional way.

You can't lean into your own self-righteousness outside of God. You do not have the capacity to do that.

Hebrews 1:1-3 New Living Translation

1 Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. **2** And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance,

and through the Son he created the universe. ³ The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.

THE LORD Yahweh: Self existent one. Whatever I am, I will be. He is constant and consistent. 24/7.

“For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe” (1 Timothy 4:10).

YAHWEH-JIREH [*yah-way-ji-reh*]: "The Lord Will Provide" ([Genesis 22:14](#)) – the name memorialized by Abraham when God provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

YAHWEH-RAPHA [*yah-way-raw-faw*]: "The Lord Who Heals" ([Exodus 15:26](#)) – “I am Jehovah who heals you” both in body and soul. In body, by preserving from and curing diseases, and in soul, by pardoning iniquities.

YAHWEH-NISSI [*yah-way-nee-see*]: "The Lord Our Banner" ([Exodus 17:15](#)), where *banner* is understood to be a rallying place. This name commemorates the desert victory over the Amalekites in [Exodus 17](#).

YAHWEH-M'KADDESH [*yah-way-meh-kad-esh*]: "The Lord Who Sanctifies, Makes Holy" ([Leviticus 20:8](#); [Ezekiel 37:28](#)) – God makes it clear that He alone, not the law, can cleanse His people and make them holy.

YAHWEH-SHALOM [*yah-way-shah-lohm*]: "The Lord Our Peace" ([Judges 6:24](#)) – the name given by Gideon to the altar he built after the Angel of the Lord assured him he would not die as he thought he would after seeing Him.

YAHWEH-ELOHIM [*yah-way-el-oh-him*]: "LORD God" ([Genesis 2:4](#); [Psalm 59:5](#)) – a combination of God's unique name YHWH and the generic “Lord,” signifying that He is the Lord of Lords.

YAHWEH-TSIDKENU [yah-way-tzid-kay-noo]: "The Lord Our Righteousness" ([Jeremiah 33:16](#)) – As with YHWH-M'Kaddesh, it is God alone who provides righteousness (from the Hebrew word *tsidkenu*) to man, ultimately in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, who became sin for us "that we might become the Righteousness of God in Him" ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).

YAHWEH-ROHI [yah-way-roh-hee]: "The Lord Our Shepherd" ([Psalm 23:1](#)) – After David pondered his relationship as a shepherd to his sheep, he realized that was exactly the relationship God had with him, and so he declares, "Yahweh-Rohi is my Shepherd. I shall not want" ([Psalm 23:1](#)).

YAHWEH-SHAMMAH [yah-way-sham-mahw]: "The Lord Is There" ([Ezekiel 48:35](#)) – the name ascribed to Jerusalem and the Temple there, indicating that the once-departed glory of the Lord ([Ezekiel 8–11](#)) had returned ([Ezekiel 44:1-4](#)).

YAHWEH-SABAOTH [yah-way-sah-bah-ohth]: "The Lord of Hosts" ([Isaiah 1:24](#); [Psalm 46:7](#)) – *Hosts* means "hordes," both of angels and of men. He is Lord of the host of heaven and of the inhabitants of the earth, of Jews and Gentiles, of rich and poor, master and slave. The name is expressive of the majesty, power, and authority of God and shows that He is able to accomplish what He determines to do.

<p>COMPASSIONATE: Related to the word "Womb". A strong, deep emotional bond between a parent and a child.</p>

God says you are connected to a resource that sustains you and supply's everything you need. I am your shelter, your comfort, your secret place.

Luke 7:13 "When the Lord saw her, he had compassion and said do not weep."

In the Old Testament, whatever you touched turned to death. In the New, everything you touch turns to life. You carry life giving properties. Jesus touched death and the lady's son came back to life.

Jesus shows up with power and authority and not only sets the captive free, but brings life to everything that looks and smells dead!!!!

Ladies and Gentlemen, you are condemned to a life of victory. You are an overcomer, you are a winner who stands on the platform of promise that, "I will never leave you or forsake you!" GOD IS GOOD!!!! Might I add, He will never FORGET YOU!!

THE LORD IS GRACIOUS: Mercy is not getting what you deserve. Grace is getting what you don't deserve.

John 1: 14-16 ¹⁴ So the Word became human^[a] and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.^[b] And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. ¹⁵ John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.'" ¹⁶ From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another.

Wave after wave of grace. I'm sorry if you follow a God whose sole desire is to beat you into submission!! Picture waves and a Tsunami of Grace.

Grace: (Charis) Good will, loving kindness, favor. The merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection and kindles virtues.

Ephesians 1:6-7 New Living Translation

⁶ So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.^[a] ⁷ He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

Galatians 2:21 New Living Translation

²¹ I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.

You need to trust in that place of rest and relax in your righteousness! You are the righteousness of God by faith. If you rest in the grace of God, the Holy Spirit will bring it to manifestation in your life!!!!

John 8:10-11 New Living Translation

¹⁰ Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?” ¹¹ “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”

Your friends will accuse you more than Jesus.

When do you need faith, when do you need a friend that sticks closer than a brother? When do you need a father? When you don’t feel like a child, when you don’t feel you are approved, when you are not worthy, when you feel like a loser, a deadbeat, abandoned and orphaned!!!

You engage the grace of God when you declare things that are not as though they are!! Romans 4:17

God has the ability to create *ex nihilo*. This idea is brought out in translations that say that God “creates new things out of nothing” (NLT) or simply “creates new things” (CEV). The “nothing” in this context would be the deadness of Sarah’s womb (verse 19), and the “new things” that God creates would be Abraham’s offspring mentioned in verse 18. God gives life to the dead and creates something from nothing.

The other translations emphasize the decree of God—the fact that He “calls” or “summons.” When God speaks, it’s as good as done. He changed Abram’s name to Abraham (“father of a multitude”) while Sarah was still childless. God spoke of Abraham’s descendants when as yet there were none. God truly has the ability to speak of impossible things and, in the speaking, make them possible.