

# Higher Thoughts & Higher Ways (3)

**Isaiah 55:8-9**

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts."

**Summary of Past 2 Weeks:**

- There Will Always Be Unanswered Questions from Our Perspective.
  - Unshakable Faith in the Goodness of God Will Always be an Essential Part of the Relationship (Abraham & Job).
  - God's Panoramic View of Life, Death, and Sin
    - Spiritual Life & Spiritual Death (not the physical)
    - Sin's ETERNAL Catastrophic Results on Individuals & Mankind
    - God's Work is Focused on Eternal Redeeming, Restoring, Reclaiming...
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## 1. The “Judgment” and “Mercy” of God Both Originate in Love

**Genesis 6:5-7**

The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart.

And the Lord said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth...” But Noah found favor with the Lord...

**The Holy Tension Between Judgment and Mercy**

← 2 Peter 3:9-10 →

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

## 2. God Calls Us Into the Commitment and Sacrifice of Overcoming the Evil in the World

Why do we celebrate these Holidays?

- Memorial Day & Veterans Day
  - Heroes: Laying Down Their Lives
- Hostages Rescued; Oppressed & Tortured Liberated

We Understand that there is Evil in the Hearts of Men and the World that Always Threatens

- There is Good Worth Fighting For in this World  
**Ecclesiastes 3:8** “*A time to kill; a time to heal....” “A time for war; a time for peace”*
- “*Evil triumphs when good men do nothing...*”
  - **Instead of Blaming God for evil, join Him in destroying it...with Good**

**Isaiah 61:1-4, 6**

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; 2 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. 4 Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, They will raise up the former devastations; And they will repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations... you will be called the priests of the Lord; You will be spoken of as ministers of our God.

**Eph. 5:11** Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.

**Ephesians 6:10-13**

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm... For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

### 3. You Are Not God: Arrogant Presumption or Humble Grappling

**Romans 11:33-34, 36.**

Oh, how

great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways! For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to give him advice? For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen.

- A Difficult Pastor I served under in my past
  - If I can have compassion and understanding on an imperfect man...how much more should we humbly recognize the infinite realities we are neither aware of or understand when we question/judge Almighty God?!

- Be careful of your **arrogant presumption** to call God into account...to imply you know better...

Romans 9:20-22

Who are you, a mere human being, to argue with God? ...God has the right to show his anger and his power, (but) He is very patient with those on whom his anger falls...