



"The truth, which is indestructible, has a way of accumulating against pride and arrogance, and then sweeping them from its path."
—Mark Helprin

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The Unique Greatness of Our God (Part Four)

For decades, economists have been debating whether it is better to macro-manage or micro-manage a nation's economy. There are arguments on each side about whether those with their hands on the controls of the economy—like the Federal Reserve Chairman or the Treasury Secretary—should fiddle with the larger elements of our financial system (the money supply and interest rates), or if they should tinker with smaller elements (such as narrow sectors of the economy or even individual industries). Many of us would prefer them to keep their hands in their pockets altogether!

The Bible, however, tells us that, far from being the unconcerned and inattentive Creator that the Deists envisioned, [God](#) is a micro-manager of His universe. Jesus, who knows the Father best, says of Him: "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will" ([Matthew 10:29](#)). Many of us have read over this astounding statement and not considered what it implies.

How many sparrows are there in [the world](#)? There are just 35 different species of true sparrows or Old World sparrows in the world, and many other species—mostly finches—are similar to them. But no one really knows *how many* of them there are; they are estimated to number in the multiple billions. Some individual *flocks* are thought to contain as many as 20 million birds! Nobody takes care of sparrows as God does! He keeps track of each one and either causes or passes on each bird's death. Men do not have minds with the ability to keep track of such "insignificant" details, but God

does—and He does not consider such information trivial.

By the way, this answers the old philosophical question: "If a tree falls in a forest, and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" The answer is "yes" because God hears it just as He knows every sparrow that falls to the ground.

And we think that He sometimes ignores *us*! As Jesus goes on to say, "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows" ([Matthew 10:31](#)). This is classic understatement. God has called each of us to be His very son or daughter and to rule with Him over the universe for eternity, and we think that He fails to keep track of us? Unlike His care of sparrows, He does not just cause or pass on our deaths—He causes or passes on *everything* we do and that is done to us. We have no valid reason to doubt His watchful care over us.

Jesus informs us in [Matthew 10:30](#) that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." This, too, is flooring! Have we ever wondered how many hairs are on our heads? *Encyclopedia Britannica* found a hair expert to estimate it: "On a human head, the average total number of hairs is between 100,000 and 150,000." For those of us who are losing ours, the figure is, of course, much lower, but many others with full heads of hair more than make up the deficit. To be conservative, we can say that the average head holds 120,000 hairs.

If we are to believe Scripture, God has numbered them all. We should add in the fact that the average person loses about 70 hairs each day. Some fall out, some break, and new ones are replacing them all the time. So not only does God have our hairs numbered, He is also aware of the plus or minus 70 hairs we lose every day.

Since Jesus is speaking to His disciples in this passage, we will discount everybody else in the world except His elect. Let us assume that there are 50,000 truly called and converted disciples of [Jesus Christ](#) on earth right now. How many hairs does God have to keep track of on His disciples' heads? Six billion plus or minus 3.5 million! Our God is truly beyond comprehension.

At this point, we are probably feeling rather small in comparison to God, and we should feel insignificant and unworthy in His presence. It is vital for us to see the incredible difference between God and us, for only when we see Him in this proper perspective can we truly say that we know the true God and truly appreciate Him and His care for us. If we are not seeing ourselves as a little speck of inconsequentiality in comparison to Him, we are not getting the right picture. He is everything; we are nothing. Unless we do not realize and acknowledge this, we have too much pride. We are puffing ourselves up

(see [1 Corinthians 4:18](#); [5:2](#)).

Because they really do not know the true God, the people of this world have a much greater problem understanding God than we do. Even if they know bits and pieces about Him, they really cannot appreciate Him and His awesome works. An article titled "Lost: Our Sense of Awe" by Tom Schaefer, who writes on religion and ethics, appeared in *The Charlotte Observer* on May 6, 1996. It makes interesting reading:

The sense of awe and mystery that could drop believers to their knees is mostly absent.

. . . Today, many believers have homogenized the Holy One. They conceive of God in ways that don't require their humble obedience or patient trust in adversity. That way, their spiritual digestive systems aren't upset. . . .

First, we have lost the sense of awe.

As science filled the void of knowledge once understood to be the domain of the divine, . . . God was pushed further into the corner. "Before long, God was put out of work altogether by the growing confidence that all things would eventually be explained through refinement in scientific theory," says [Donald] McCullough [President of San Francisco Theological Seminary].

Second, we are impatient with silence. We want—we expect—answers now. But the horrors of war, the tragedy of natural disasters, the frightening specter of disease leave many rejecting any sense of a beneficent providential deity. Too often we hear no reassuring voice, feel no strong arm lift us up.

Third, rampant individualism has infected our beliefs. God is shaped to fit our needs, to be no more than a foot taller than ourselves. "A God, who in any way threatens to lead us beyond our personal autonomy . . . will likely be reduced to a more manageable size."

. . . As McCullough notes: "We have fashioned gods to fit the contours of our desires and then bowed before them with religious abandon: the god-of-my-cause, god-of-my-understanding, god-of-my-experience, god-of-my-comfort, god-of-my-nation, god-of-my-success have been our particular favorites."

Only by rediscovering the holiness and majesty of God will we be able to

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face the sufferings and uncertainties of life with comforting hope.

And it must begin on our knees.

Humility—knowing our lowly place before God—is the key to grasping His true greatness. Next time, we will see in God's Word that mankind has little to brag about.

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[From Pride to Humility](#)

by John O. Reid (1930-2016)

John Reid asserts that God hates pride and presumptuous self-sufficiency but loves the person who is humble and trembles at His word (Isaiah 66:2). Satan is the father of pride. Pride consists of emphasizing our own personal endowments, accomplishments, or possessions, presumptuously trusting in our own deceitful heart rather than in God's direction. Two tests to reveal the presence of pernicious pride in ourselves consists of the way we treat others (especially members of our own family) and the way we receive instruction or correction from others. God resists the proud but accepts the humble. Humbleness produces sensitivity toward God, enabling us molded and fashioned by God into His purpose.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Abraham's One God](#)

by Mike Ford

The first commandment sets the stage for Mike Ford's review of Genesis 22, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. He suggests that God wanted to know one thing: Would Abraham put Him first and have no other god?

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