Let us here observe, that three things are necessary, in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith in God unto life and salvation.

**First**, The idea that he actually exists.

**Secondly**, A *correct* idea of his character, perfections and attributes.

**Thirdly**, An actual knowledge that the course of life which he is pursuing, is according to his will. For without an acquaintance with these three important facts, the faith of every rational being must be imperfect and unproductive; but with this understanding, it can become perfect and fruitful, abounding in righteousness unto the praise and glory of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We here observe that God is the only supreme governor, and independent being, in whom all fulness and **perfection** dwells; who is **omnipotent**, **omnipresent**, and **omnicient**; without beginning of days or end of life; and that in him every good gift, and every good principle dwells; and that he is the Father of lights: In him the principle of faith dwells independently; and he is the object in whom the faith of all other rational and accountable beings centers, for life and salvation.

In order to present this part of the subject in a clear and conspicuous point of light, it is necessary to go back and show the evidences which mankind had had, and the foundation on which these evidences are, or were based, since the creation, to believe in the existence of a God.

After man was created, he was not left without intelligence, or understanding, to wander in darkness, and spend an existence in ignorance and doubt-on the great and important point which effected his happiness,--as to the real fact by whom he was created, or unto whom he was amenable for his conduct. God conversed with him face to face: in his presence he was permitted to stand, and from his own mouth he was permitted to receive instruction--he heard his voice, walked bef6re him, and gazed upon his glory--while intelligence burst upon his understanding, and enabled him to give names to the vast assemblage of his Maker's works.

Secondly, we have seen, that, though man did transgress, his transgression did not deprive him of the previous knowledge with which he was endowed, relative to the existence and glory of his Creator; for no sooner did he hear his voice, than he sought to hide himself from his presence.

Having shown, then, in the first instance, that God began to converse with man, immediately after he "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and that he did not cease to manifest himself to him, even after his fall, we shall next proceed to show, that, though he was cast out from the garden of Eden, his knowledge of the existence of God was not lost.

The way by which mankind were first made acquainted with the existence of a God: that it was by a manifestation of God to man, and that God continued, after man's transgression to manifest himself to him and his posterity: and notwithstanding they were separated from his immediate presence, that they could not see his face, they continued to hear his voice.

Adam thus being made acquainted with God, communicated the knowledgewhich he had unto his posterity; and it was through this means that the thought was first suggested to their minds that there was a God. Which laid the foundation for the exercise of their faith, through which they could obtain a knowledge of his character and also of his glory.

We learn the following things respecting the **character of God.**

First, That he was God before the world was created, and the same God that he was, after it was created.

Secondly, That he is merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, and that he was so from everlasting, and will be to everlasting.

Thirdly, That he changes not, neither is there variableness with him; but that he is the same from everlasting to everlasting, being the same yesterday to-day and forever; and that his course is one eternal round, without variation.

Fourthly, That he is a God of truth and cannot lie.

Fifthly, That he is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted of him.

Sixthly, That he is love.

The real design which the God of heaven had in view in making the human family acquainted with his attributes, was, that they through the ideas of the existence of his attributes, might be enabled to exercise faith in him, and through the exercise of faith in him, might obtain eternal life. For without the idea of the existence of the attributes which belong to God, the minds of men could not have power to exercise faith on him so as to lay hold upon eternal life. The God of heaven understanding most perfectly the constitution of human nature, and the weakness of man, knew what was necessary to be revealed, and what ideas must be planted in their minds in order that they might be enabled to exercise faith in him unto eternal life.

Having said so much we shall proceed to examine the attributes of God, as set forth in his revelations to the human family, and to show how necessary correct ideas of his attributes are, to enable men to exercise faith in him. For without these ideas being planted in the minds of men, it would be out of the power of any person or persons to exercise faith in God so as to obtain eternal life. So that the divine communications made to man in the first ifistance, were designed to establish in their minds the ideas necessary to enable them to exercise faith in God, and through this means to be partakers of his glory.

We have, in the revelations which he has given to the human family, the following account of his **attributes.**

First, **Knowledge**. Act 15:18. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Isaiah 46:9,10. Remember the former things of old; for I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Secondly, **Faith, or power**. Heb. 11:3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. Gen. 1:1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Isaiah 14:24,27. The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

Thirdly, **Justice**. Ps. 89:14. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. Isaiah 45:21. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take council together: who has declared this from the ancient time? Have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior. Zeph. 5:5. The just Lord is in the midst thereof. Zech. 9:9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King comes unto thee: he is just, and having salvation.

Fourthly, **Judgment**. Ps 89:14. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. Deut. 32:4

He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without inequity: just and right is he. Ps. 9:7. But the Lord shall endure forever: he has prepared his throne for judgment. Ps. 9:16. The Lord is known by the judgment which he executes.

Fifthly, **Mercy**. Ps. 89:15. Mercy and truth shall go before his face. Exodus 34:6. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious. Neh. 9:17. But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful.

And Sixthly, **Truth**. Ps. 89:14. Mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Exodus 34:6. Long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth. Deut. 32:4. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment. A God of truth and without iniquity: just and right is he. Ps. 31:5. Into thy hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

By a little reflection it will be seen, that the idea of the existence of these attributes in the Deity, is necessary to enable any rational being to exercise faith in him. For without the idea of the existence of these attributes in the Deity, men could not exercise faith in him for life and salvation; seeing that without the knowledge of all things, God would not be able to save any portion of his creatures; for it is by reason of the knowledge which he has of all things, from the beginning to the end, that enables him to give that understanding to his creatures, by which they are made partakers of eternal life; and if it were not for the idea existing in the minds of men, that God had all knowledge, it would be impossible for them to exercise faith in him.

***Lectures on Faith – Lecture Numbers 2,3,4***