



The above picture was taken in downtown Orting, WA where we got to live for five years. During the summer, when it is mostly dry and clear, this towering view of Mount Rainier simply takes your breath away. This picture, though, does not even come close to doing this view justice. But gazing at this picture, you probably will not be surprised to learn that my Google picture album titled, Mount Rainier, has 185 pictures. My wife just rolls her eyes at me when I talk about it, but really, 185 is not nearly enough to capture the majesty of this mountain. People who have lived their whole lives in Western Washington will tell you that this view never gets old. Why? Well, for one, this mountain never looks the same twice. The time of the year; the time of the day; your position relative to the mountain, etc., all affect it's view. And do not get me started on sunrises and sunsets – Wow! If you want to see more pictures, just let me know and I will be happy to pull out my phone and show you.

But this mountain nestled in the Cascade Mountain range is so much more than its breathtaking beauty. You see, this mountain will someday blow its top and destroy the valley in which we once lived. Yes, Mount Rainier is an active volcano but that rarely gets any attention with those who have come to adore this view. For many, her power is just a story or something that will never be seen in their lifetime. And to be honest, I rarely thought about its pent up powerful potential. But do not make the mistake, for it is not a matter of “if” she will erupt but rather “when”. Mount Rainier is beautiful yet powerful.

What a perfect segway, do you not agree? Our awesome God is beautiful yet powerful. Scripture invites us to gaze at His beauty. Psalm 27:4 says, ***One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.*** The psalmist longs to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord, but not only that. The psalmist longs to probe the depths of the Lord; to inquire of the Lord, and it is that power, that knowledge, that depth of God, about which many people forget. Yes, it is easy to enjoy the idea of God, to look upon His outer attributes that are manifested in creation. But did you know that you are invited to inquire of His power; the depths of our awesome God. Yes, there is more to God than meets the eye. There is more to our Father than outward appearances. Our God is endless in power but it is not a power that will bury you in lahar and debris someday. It is a power that has destroyed sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is a power that has saved you and will redeem you from destruction, *where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.* This power, not something pent up and ready to blow, is something that has been revealed through the cross of Jesus.

Gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and know His power in Jesus Christ. Inquire and be reassured that His power; His compassion, grace and mercy, is big enough to forgive you. To gaze upon this awesome God of ours, is a beauty that blows away any image of Mount Rainer. To God be all glory – and beauty and power – always and forever, Amen.