

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” John 14:6

# Who is God (Part 1 of 2)

Theme: Getting to know Him

## Introduction

Does God exist? What is He like? Does God care about me? What does He want from me? In the next two lessons, the basics of this topic will be considered. We will learn the most important thing in any person's life is God. However important learning about Him may be, the thing God is most interested in is your faith in Him. Faith in simple truths is all He asks.



## Bible Truth

### Qualities of God

God is not some mysterious deity that cannot be known or who changes over time. We can learn more in two verses from Jeremiah than from a thousand human words, **"Thus says the LORD: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight, says the LORD"** (Jer. 9:23-24). (Note: "man" is in italics and includes both male and females here.)

The very first things we learn are that God is knowable (even by the uneducated or those who are mentally challenged), that is, He does not hide Himself or deny us understanding of Who He is. In fact, He is a God that reveals Himself and makes Himself known. We can be sure as we start this study that He delights in

showing loving kindness, righteousness, and fair judgment. He is not angry with us, but desires to extend His grace to us. Already this sounds like a God anyone would want to know.

**Discuss the comfort of knowing that God delights in showing loving kindness rather than punishing and condemning everyone.**

### Basic Human Understanding of God

God designed us and gave us a human spirit. It is our spirit which gives us an internal awareness there is a God and gives us a desire to know Him. Thus, within each person is a basic understanding that God exists. No other creature possess a spirit, so no animal has any concept of God. This is the true difference between animals and humans. To be very clear, all humans have a human spirit; it is invisible, eternal, and very real. Even though the basic knowledge of God

exists, young people are often taught otherwise by those who have chosen to ignore or deny God.

The Bible does not spend a lot a time trying to prove God exists, because God knows that humans already have this understanding deep within, by His design. Yes, people have found ways to deny God's existence, but they really have to deny what is actually within them. This is willful ignorance, i.e., a person has to purposely deny the truth from God.

In addition to the basic understanding God has placed within each of us, God has three more ways of revealing Himself to us:

1. The natural revelation is the created world; from it each person can understand much about God. The Bible says, **"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech or language Where their voice is not heard"** (Psa. 19:13). This verse teaches that every person in the world (in all ages) has had an opportunity to know that God exists, by the testimony of the created world itself. The created world screams-out that there is a Creator, and that the wonders we see, and the order we observe, could not just have happened by accident or evolution. Then the Word further states, **"...because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse..."** (Rom. 1:19-20). From the natural revelation each person is able to understand:

- there is a Creator (God, not some force)
- God has unlimited knowledge and power
- God is knowable and understandable

- God's attributes are seen through creation
- God is eternal (not made but always existed)

2. The special revelation of God is His Word, the Bible. Through the Word we can learn all we need to know about God. So in addition to the testimony of the natural revelation, anyone can find out more by reading His Word. It is in His Word that we learn more of the personal nature of God and His plans for humans. It is through his Word we learn about Jesus Christ (the living Word) and His sacrifice, so we can have our sins forgiven. It is through His Word we learn of the third means of revelation, the Holy Spirit.

3. The Holy Spirit reveals the deeper spiritual truths to believers and helps unbelievers grasp what they must know in order to be saved (delivered from the penalty of sin [death] unto eternal life in Jesus Christ). He teaches us Biblical truths that would be hard to understand without some divine guidance (1 Cor. 2:12-14). All three ways of communication (creation, Word, and Holy Spirit) provide all the truth and information we need. God clearly says that all humans do have a chance to know about Him and are therefore without excuse. When a person realizes God exists and seeks Him, He will provide what they need.

**Discuss: God has revealed Himself to mankind in many ways. God says no one has an excuse for not believing; unbelief is a choice.**

### The Godhead

The term "Godhead" refers to the divine nature of God. It is in God that we live and move and have our being. The Westminster Catechism says, "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being..." He has always existed and always will; He is not dependent upon anything outside of Himself for existence. God is not limited by space and time. There is

one God, that eternally exists in three Persons (the Trinity). The Trinity consists of the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. Each of these Persons is God, and they are equal.

All three Persons of the Godhead are worthy of the same worship and obedience. All that exists (universe, matter, energy, angels, humans, etc.) were created by God alone (all three Persons), out of nothing, by the word of His mouth. **"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made"** (Jn. 1:3). All things continue to exist due to His sustaining power (Col. 1:17). All Persons of the Godhead are involved in our present life and in our glorious future (Deut. 6:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Isa 42:5; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:15-17; Rev. 10:6).

**Consider:** An analogy of the Trinity is you. You are a sort of trinity; that is, you are one person composed of a body, a soul (mind), and a spirit. Each of your three aspects is you, but distinct. There are weaknesses in this analogy, but the information to follow will help you better understand the Godhead.

**The Father:** God the Father is love and extends His love to all people. Before the formation of the world, God had a plan of redemption (rescuing us from sin) for mankind. He is executing that plan today, just as He has throughout history. The Father's justice demanded payment for sin because He cannot overlook or ignore sin's penalty. He sent His Son to pay the price for our sins (this self-sacrificial event shows His

love for us). It is by His grace we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ. The Father also answers our prayers according to His will and gives us peace in life's trials (Eph. 1:4; Rom. 3:24-26; Phil. 4:7).

**The Son (Jesus Christ):** Jesus Christ has always existed but came to earth in the form of a human (conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin), led a sinless life, and died on the Cross (as our substitute to provide for our redemption). **"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me' "** (John 14:6). Christ rose again after death and is now alive in Heaven. He revealed special truths for our age to the Apostle Paul after His ascension, has a present ministry of intercession, one day will personally return for the believers, and later will judge the world (Lk. 1:35; Phil 2:6-9; Eph. 3: 1-10; Rom. 1:3-4, 8:34).

**The Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit convicts the unbeliever of sin and the need for a right relationship with God. He comes into the heart (indwells) of those who believe in Christ; then He empowers, comforts, and equips the believer for service. He thus enables us to live a God-pleasing life. The Holy Spirit is instrumental in the transformation (renewal) of the believer's mind and in the process produces within us love, joy, comfort.... He also intercedes with the Father, that is, He pleads our case to the Father (Rom. 12:2, 8:26-27; Gal. 5:22; 1 Cor. 2:10-12).

## Life Applications

At this point you know enough about God to realize He exists and some of His important attributes. Next, it is important to understand that knowing about God is one thing, but what is really important is establishing a relationship with Him. The difference between knowing Him and having a relationship are two different things. The good thing is you do not have to search for God—He is wherever you are. He is very approachable, so that you can come to him in prayer without fear. Do not worry about there being a correct way to pray; it is what is in your mind/heart, not the words you say. Your relationship begins by having faith in Him. That's all!

**Discuss** the differences between knowing someone and having a relationship with them. For example, you may know a person at school, but what makes for a good relationship?

### Your Relationships

In many respects, what is required for good relationships with other humans carries over to your relationship with God. Here are five important factors for good relationships:

- 1. Personal connection:** for humans, a deep personal connection (a soul mate) is developed between you and another person by having a close involvement in her/his life. With God, a deep connection is based upon your faith in Him; so, it is what you personally believe. It is not a matter of which church you attend, in what religious ceremonies you have been involved, or the good things you have done (Eph. 2:8-9).
- 2. Love:** for humans, love is based upon mutual attraction and acceptance of the other person. Love is kind and desires the best for the other. Love puts the
- 3. Appreciation:** for humans, appreciation of another person's inner qualities builds a lasting relationship. With God, it is clear He has a deep appreciation for each person, just as she/he is. His desire is to accept each person, "...by which He made us accepted in the Beloved (Christ)" (Eph. 1:6b, parenthesis added). He sees our spiritual poverty, wants to save us from Hell, desires to provide a future beyond our dreams.
- 4. Commitment:** for humans, an inner decision to honor, love, trust, and be faithful to each other creates a commitment. This is an unconditional commitment that does not change when you are down or when one of you messes up. Commitment erases all fear and creates a bond of deep trust. With God, once you are saved your salvation is sealed by God. It is like putting a letter in an envelope and then sealing it. Your salvation is a sealed deal, a commitment which cannot be changed. Your life is held in His hands, and He is committed to holding you secure forever. "...having believed, you were sealed with the Holy

other first and keeps no list of rights and wrongs. True love creates trust; you can trust a friend in all things and reveal your inner thoughts and desires without fear of censure or rejection. With God, each of us is loved before we are born. He explains His deep love, **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"** (Jn. 3:16). Because of His love, you can trust God with your innermost fears; He understands and will not condemn you for them. In fact, His goal is to help you. He "has your back" in all situations and will be sure to keep your trust forever. Nothing can, **"...separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Rom. 8:39b).

**Spirit of Promise, who is the guarantee of your inheritance...** " (Eph. 1:13b-14a).

**5. Shared values:** for humans, shared values are the glue that will bond relationships, while the infatuation of a romantic relationship will fade away. Shared values enhance relationships, they are things like: importance of faith, what is truth, how do families act, how to manage money, need for honesty, how to provide support (example, encouraging one another)... With God, the believer is given the Holy Spirit to work in your mind to change you from within. The Holy Spirit

produces His fruit in your life, the things we all need: love, joy, goodness, etc. (Gal. 5:22). Thus, God creates in you a renewed mind which has the correct values (His), so that your relationship with Him is based upon shared values.

**Sharing:** Common interests are things like art, math, sports, music, and shopping. Common interests are fine, but of greater importance are the deeper shared values, as noted above. Who in your life has helped shape your values?

## Take 2 Heart

### Summary

God is unchanging, approachable, and can be known. God is a spiritual being that has always existed and always will. He is one God in three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). He is a God of love, kindness, and fair judgment. He has taken incredible care to reveal Himself through nature, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit. Each person has a human spirit and that spirit has an awareness of God and a desire to know Him more. Many of the things that create good human relationships are also those needed for a proper relationship with God: personal connection, love, appreciation, commitment, and shared values.

### Gospel

**"...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures"** (1 Cor. 15:3b). What you must believe in order to be saved is this: you are a sinner, sin has a penalty, that penalty was paid by the death of Jesus Christ in your place. Faith in Christ's death as your substitute saves you and begins a right relationship with Him.

Your faith is recognized by the Almighty God and by His grace you will be saved.

### Encouragement

For those of you who are unsure about Christianity, please realize God is very approachable and you do not have to fear that you may not say the correct thing. There is no right or wrong way to seek Him, just be honest. You can admit your deepest doubts or fears. Ask the Lord to guide your thoughts and to help you. The Lord rejoices in each teen that believes in Him. What God is looking for in establishing a relationship with Him is merely simple faith in Christ's death for your sins. You do not have to understand the doctrines, people, stories, or books of the Bible. You do not have to "clean up your act" before you come to Him; you will be accepted just as you are. A life-long relationship will begin when you first believe. You will become a new creation in Christ. This is most important decision of your life, thank you for making it.