

Core Class: Biblical Doctrines: WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

September 26, 2021

God is the highest source of information about himself. That makes sense, for if there was a higher source of information about God, then God wouldn't be God. Therefore, it is important that any study of God look at what God says about himself — found on the pages of Scripture. (Grudem, Wayne. *Christian Beliefs* (p. 14). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.)

✚ GOD EXISTS

Scripture simply assumes God exists.

- Genesis 1:1: "In the Beginning, God..."

Scripture also tells us that all persons everywhere have a deep, inner sense that God exists,

- Romans 1:19 – 25 Paul writes that even for the wicked, this sense is "plain to them, because God has shown it to them." Although many today do not acknowledge that God exists, Paul says this is because "they exchanged the truth about God for a lie"

✚ GOD IS KNOWABLE

Not only does God exist, but he exists in such a way that we can know things about him and come to know him personally.

- We may never know God Fully – Psalm 145:3: "His greatness is unsearchable," too great to ever be fully known. Psalm 147:5: "His understanding is beyond measure"
- We can know God Personally -- Jeremiah 9:24, "Let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me"
- We can know about God from what He tells us about Himself. For example, Scripture tells us God is love (1 John 4:8), God is light (1 John 1:5), God is spirit (John 4:24), and God is righteous (Rom. 3:26). (Grudem, Wayne. *Christian Beliefs* (p. 15). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.)

✚ GOD IS INDEPENDENT

God's independence means he doesn't actually need us or anything else in creation for anything.

- John 17: We see God the Father and Son existing in communion, fellowship, relationship and love.
- Acts 17:24 – 25: "The God who made the world and everything in it ... does not live in temples made by man,

God always was. He was not created; he never came into being.

Although God is completely independent, but he chooses to give us value, significance, meaning and purpose.

- Isaiah 43:7: "Everyone who is called by my name ... I created for my glory."
- Zeph. 3:17: God "will rejoice" over us "with gladness" and "exult" over us "with loud singing"

✚ GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE

- God is unchangeable in his being, attributes, purposes, and promises.
- What if ... God does change and becomes 1-2% evil?
- Mal. 3:6: "For I the LORD do not change"
- God is unchanging in his promises. Numbers 23:19: "God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind..."
- But ... What about Nineveh, Jonah, and Israel with Moses?

God's unchangeableness does not mean he will not act nor feel differently in response to different situations, nor does it mean God doesn't act or feel emotions.

✚ GOD IS ETERNAL

God, being eternal, has no beginning or end or succession of events in his own being.

- Psalm 90:2: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."
- Jude 25: "glory, majesty, dominion, and authority" were God's "before all time" as well as "now and forever"

God transcends the time that He created, and He rules over it. God uses time for his own purposes and chooses to enter into it for His Glory.

✚ GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

God is also present in every part of space; he is everywhere; he fills heaven and earth.

- **Psalm 139:7-10**

If God is Omnipresent, then why don't I feel it?

- **God chooses to reveal His presence more clearly in different ways and at different times.**
- **We may not recognize just how near and present He is at every given moment.**

✚ **GOD IS SPIRIT**

- John 4:25: "God is spirit"
- 1 Cor. 6:17: we are "joined to the Lord" become "one spirit with him".
- Rom. 8:16: As one spirit with God, his Holy Spirit within us bears witness to our status as his adopted children.

✚ **GOD IS INVISIBLE**

Because God is spirit, God is also invisible.

- John 1:18: "No one has ever seen God".

✚ **GOD IS OMNISCIENT**

In one simple and eternal act, he fully knows himself and all actual and possible things. He knows all things that exist and all that happens.

- 1 John 3:20: God "knows everything".

God is always, at all times, fully aware of everything. His knowledge never changes or grows. Nothing surprises him; nothing is hidden from him.

✚ **GOD IS WISE**

God is not only all-knowing but also all-wise. This means he always chooses the best possible goals and the best possible means to meet those goals.

- Rom. 16:27: He is "the only wise God"
- Job 9:4: He is "wise in heart"
- Job 12:13: and with him "are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding"

✚ **GOD IS TRUTH**

All his knowledge and all his words are both true and the final standard of truth.

- Jer. 10:10: "The LORD is the true God"

✚ **GOD IS GOOD**

God is the ultimate standard of goodness, he is also the ultimate source of all goodness.

- James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights"
- Luke 18:19: "No one is good except God alone"

✚ **GOD IS LOVE**

God eternally gives of himself for the good of others.

- 1 John 4:8-12: "...God is Love."
- Rom. 5:8: "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"

✚ **GOD IS LIGHT**

God is eternally pure and calls us to walk with him in His glorious light.

- 1 John 1:5: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
- 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

✚ **GOD IS HOLY**

- Isa. 6:3: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts"

✚ **GOD IS RIGHTEOUS AND JUST**

- Deut. 32:4: “All his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he”
- Isa. 45:19: He speaks the truth and declares “what is right”
- Proverbs 21:3: “To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.”

✚ **GOD IS JEALOUS**

God continually seeks to protect his own honor. He desires that worship be given only to himself and not to anyone or anything else. It is not wrong for God to continually seek his own honor, for it is an honor that only he, as God, deserves.

- Ex. 20:5: “I the LORD your God am a jealous God”

✚ **GOD IS WRATHFUL TOWARDS SIN**

God intensely hates all sin. God’s wrath burns hot against sin, and it is this wrath that will eventually consume those who reject Jesus and continue in their sin.

- John 3:36: “Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him”
- Rom. 1:18: “wrath of God,” Paul says, that “is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”

✚ **GOD WILL WHAT HE WILL**

God’s will is the ultimate reason for everything that happens. It is the way God approves and determines to bring about every action necessary for the existence of and activity of himself and all his creation. God’s will is how he chooses to do what he does and doesn’t do.

- Eph. 1:11: God continually “works all things according to the counsel of his will”

✚ **GOD HAS FREEDOM**

- Psalm 115:3: “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.”

Nothing can hinder God from doing his will. He is not constrained by anything outside of himself; he is completely free to do whatever he wants to do.

✚ **GOD IS OMNIPOTENT**

He is all powerful. He is able to do all his holy will. There are no limits on what he decides to do.

- Eph. 3:20: God “is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think”
- Matt. 19:26: “With God all things are possible”

God’s power is infinite.

✚ **GOD IS PERFECT**

- Matt. 5:48, “Your heavenly Father is perfect.”

This means God fully possesses all excellent qualities and lacks no part of any qualities that would be desirable for him.

✚ **GOD IS BEAUTIFUL**

- Psalm 27:4: David tells us that his single great longing in life is to dwell in God’s house for his entire life. One reason he gives for this longing is that he desires to “gaze upon the beauty of the LORD.”

✚ **GOD IS A UNITY**

Although some of God’s attributes may seem to be emphasized more than others, it is important to realize that God is unified in all his attributes. He is not more of one attribute than another. He is not divided into parts, and he is not one attribute at one point in history and another attribute at another time. He is fully and completely every attribute (even those not mentioned here) at every time. Scripture never singles out one of God’s attributes as more important than the rest.

- For example, “God is light” (1 John 1:5) and “God is love” (1 John 4:8). He is not part light and part love; he is not love during the day and light at night. He is, at all times and in all ways, both light and love. Each one of God’s attributes qualifies each other attribute.
- Each of God’s attributes represents one aspect of his character; they each provide us with a perspective on who he is. And they also provide us with some perspective on who he has made us to be. (Grudem, Wayne. *Christian Beliefs* (p. 27). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.)