

The
JOURNEY

STEP ONE

01
**WHO IS GOD
THE FATHER**

DIG DEEPER



The Bible portrays God with numerous characteristics or attributes, far too many to list here, so we will focus on summarizing some of the most prominent ones. Some of these characteristics could be the subject of an entire book. Our hope is that this introduction can spur a lifelong pursuit of knowing and understanding God.

One important tip when learning about God is that His attributes do not contradict, nullify, or diminish one another. A practical example of this is that some in the past have emphasized His holiness at the expense of His love. This leads to a false understanding of who God is. Today many emphasize His love at the expense of His holiness, which is a similar mistake. A biblical understanding of God leads us to see that He is forever fully loving and fully holy at the same time. He is always fully all of whom He is!

THE "OMNIS"

God Is Omnipotent (All-Powerful)

God is all-powerful and can do anything. Omnipotence comes from two Latin words: "Omni" means "all," and "potens" means "powerful." There is nothing too complicated, too difficult, or too much for Him.

One clarification: God can do anything that is consistent with His nature, and will not do anything inconsistent with His nature. In other words, God won't do something contradictory like making a rock too heavy to lift, or do something unloving. He won't be untruthful or be the author of evil. God's decisions are always in line with His character, and He has all the power to do whatever He decides to do.

- Matthew 19:26, *"Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'"*
- Genesis 18:14 *"Is anything too hard for the Lord?..."*
- Job 42:1-2, *"Then Job replied to the Lord: 'I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted.'"*
- Romans 1:20, *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse."*
- Jeremiah 32:27, *"I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?"*
- Hebrews 6:18, *"God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged."*
- Ephesians 3:20, *"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,"*

God Is Omnipresent (Near-To-Everywhere)

God created everything, but He is not part of His own creation—He exists outside His own creation. However, He is near all of His creation at all times.

Further, there is no place on earth, nor any place in space, nor anywhere else in the entire created universe where He is not near. What this means is that He is always near to us, will never be far from us, and we can never run away from Him or escape Him.

This is a great comfort to believers, especially in challenging times. It is also sometimes a cause of anxiousness for those who know the truth yet are straying from Him. Even when God feels distant, He is not. There is no hiding from Him, nor has He ever moved away from us.

A key distinction, in contrast to animistic religions such as some African or Native American beliefs, is that God is not part of His creation. He is not actually in the rocks, the wind, the fire, etc. He is separate from His creation, but infinitely near all parts of it at all times.

- Acts 17:27, *"God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us."*
- Psalm 139:7-10, *"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."*
- Jeremiah 23:23-24, *"'Am I only a God nearby,' declares the Lord, 'and not a God far away? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?' declares the Lord. 'Do not I fill heaven and earth?' declares the Lord."*
- 1 Kings 8:27, *"But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!"*
- Hebrews 4:13, *"Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."*
- Proverbs 15:3, *"The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good."*

God Is Omniscient (All-Knowing)

God knows everything: past, present, and future. He never sleeps and has no gaps in His knowledge. He created all things, sustains all things, and knows everything about all things.

Nothing can be hidden from Him, which is very encouraging for believers in times of trouble and for those

who cry out to Him for justice. This can also be a source of distress for those who know Him (or know He exists), yet are running from Him.

God not only knows everything, but He also understands everything. Any truth that science has discovered or will someday discover is merely a revelation of a portion of God's creation, which He already fully understands. As a result, we should not fear science conducted in a truly unbiased way. There is nothing we can learn that He does not already know.

He even knows the thoughts in our heads and the desires of our hearts.

God knows how everything is going to turn out, including the fully free will choices of people, which is admittedly part of the divine mystery of God. He knows the beginning and the end. Nothing takes Him by surprise or happens while He is not watching.

- 1 John 3:20, *"If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything."*
- Psalm 147:5, *"Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit."*
- Isaiah 46: 9-10, *"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'"*
- Acts 1:24, *"Then they prayed, 'Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen.'"*
- Matthew 10:30, *"And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."*
- Romans 11:33, *"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!"*

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES THAT PRODUCE THE GOSPEL

God Is Holy

God's holiness literally means that God is "separate." God's holiness means He is unlike us, or anything in His creation, and in a category of His own.

Holy also means He is pure. He is utterly clean, right, good, wholesome, morally supreme, and altogether worthy of our praise and worship. Because of this, He cannot participate in sin or be around what is sinful. This is not because God is strict or prudish, but because holiness is His very nature.

God's wrath is something that naturally happens when a perfect, holy God encounters human sin and disobedience. God's wrath against sin and disobedience is inevitable and expected—it's what happens in the meeting of perfection and imperfection. It is perfectly justified because His plan for mankind is holy and perfect, just as God Himself is holy and perfect. God, through Jesus' death on the cross, would sacrificially provide a way for sinful people to someday eternally be in the presence of a holy God.

- Leviticus 11:45, *"I am the Lord, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy."*
- 1 Samuel 2:2, *"There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God."*
- Isaiah 6:3, *"And they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.'"*
- Isaiah 59:2, *"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."*
- 1 John 1:5, *"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all."*
- Revelation 15:4, *"Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."*
- Revelation 4:8, *"Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,' who was, and is, and is to come.'"*

God Is Love

God is love, and He loves us. This means that not only is God by nature love, but also that He has a profound love for us. He actively seeks our true happiness and well-being.

God is genuinely interested in us and cares about the details of our lives. He even knows the very number of hairs on each of our heads! Even His discipline is an act of love and concern for us.

He is also self-giving and active in His love. He shares His power and goodness with us in the bounty of the created world; He shares Himself with us through His Word. In the ultimate act of self-giving love, He gave us Himself in Jesus, who died on our behalf.

The Bible metaphorically describes God's affection for us as the tender affection of a perfect parent for their child and the care of a perfect shepherd for their flock. The love of God is boundlessly rich, deep, and personal.

- 1 John 4:8, *"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."*
- Psalm 119:64, *"The earth is filled with your love, Lord; teach me your decrees."*
- John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*
- 1 John 4:16, *"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them."*
- Colossians 3:12, *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."*
- 1 John 4:10, *"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."*
- 1 John 3:1, *"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him."*
- Hebrews 12:5-6, *"And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.'"*
- Matthew 6:29-30, *"Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?"*
- Luke 12:7, *"Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."*
- Romans 8:15, *"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"*
- Isaiah 40:11, *"He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young."*
- Isaiah 49:15, *"Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!"*
- Ephesians 5:25, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."*

God's Holiness And Love (At The Same Time) Produce The Essence Of The Gospel

The Christian faith is built on understanding God's love and His holiness, how they interact, and what this produced.

God is perfectly love and perfectly holy at the same time. Neither of these attributes of God is primary

over the other; they are both 100% who He is. It is helpful to remember that these two aspects are distinct: His holiness is not an aspect or expression of His love, and His love is not an aspect or expression of His holiness.

If sin had never come into the equation, God's holiness and love would have continued to peacefully exist together. But because sin entered (when Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden chose to eat the fruit), God's holiness and love came into opposition. God's love naturally wants to show mercy, grace, and forgiveness. However, His holiness requires Him to address sin with wrath.

But God's righteousness requires Him to be true to all aspects of His nature, and both love and holiness are fully His nature. So how can God fulfill both of these at the same time? God's solution was His Son Jesus coming to earth (fully human, fully God) and dying on the cross for our sin. This perfectly satisfies both His love and His holiness, and this solution was all God's idea in the first place: that God Himself would pay the ultimate price for our sin. This resolution is the very core of the Christian faith.

When people get confused about God's love and holiness, it leads to many serious mistakes. This includes our very understanding of Him, how we relate to His creation around us, heaven and hell, and even our salvation.

In addition, social justice issues for Christians can be wrongly decided because we mistakenly believe that God is only love and not also holy, or the other way around. This confusion has even led to some, again mistakenly, saying that the cross is simply a moral influence to guide and inspire us rather than how the Bible describes it—a loving and reconciling sacrifice that is necessary to satisfy God's holiness.

- Romans 6:23, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9, *"For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."*
- Romans 11:22, *"Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you..."*
- 1 Thessalonians 1:10, *"and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath."*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9, *"For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

OTHER IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES

God Is Creator

God is the Creator, and everything that exists is His creation. Creation has been defined as “that free act of God by which in the beginning He made, without the use of preexisting materials, the whole visible and invisible universe.”

Everything was made *ex nihilo*, or “out of nothing.” It was made without the use of preexisting materials. Before God began to create, nothing existed except God Himself—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. By a free will act of sheer creative power, God brought both matter and the spiritual world into existence.

The “invisible universe” is created as well and is the realm of spiritual beings—the angels. This includes both the righteous angels and the angels who sinned (2 Peter 2:4), who became the devil and demons. All of these are created beings, including the devil.

Why did God create us in the first place?

God created us to reflect His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 8:4-5).

God created humans for fellowship and relationship (Genesis 3:8; James 4:8).

God created to enjoy His own creation (Genesis 1:31) and to bring Him glory (Revelation 4:11).

God is Ruler

God rules over all of His creation, every part of it. As the creator and owner of His creation, He has that right. As ruler, God continually sustains us (even the very breath we breathe!) and everything else in existence as well. Another word you may hear for “ruler” is “sovereign.” These words simply mean that God is in control. Example: God can even intervene in weather events, should He choose to.

God is also in constant control of everything that happens. This control is not to be confused with overruling the free will decisions of human beings. In order to respect the freedom of choice God Himself created in us, God does not actually cause anyone to make a certain choice. However, He is very much involved in influencing human decisions. An important application of this is that while God is creator and in control, God does not cause sin or evil.

Understanding the will of God also helps us understand God as ruler.

- God’s preceptive will. This refers to what He wants from us. We find this in the teachings of Jesus and other places in the Bible (Mark 3:35, Matt 7:21). God wants us to choose these things but doesn’t force us to. Example: It is God’s will that we abstain from drunkenness and sexual immorality (Romans 13:13).

- God's purposive will. This is speaking of His eternal plan and purpose for His creation. This is and was His plan from the beginning—and He will carry out this plan however is necessary (Hebrews 10:7-10; 1 Peter 1:18-20). An example of this is bringing about the birth of Jesus and His sacrifice for our sins.
- God's permissive will. This is talking about the things that, though God is in control, He allows to happen (even if contrary to His preceptive will). Sin is a good example of God's permissive will. He's still in control—He doesn't want it, but He chooses to allow it.

The two extremes to avoid in understanding God as ruler:

- Thinking that God somehow created the universe and set it into motion, and then left to let it run according to its own laws without further interference or control. This is commonly referred to as deism, and it is not a biblical idea of who God is.
- Thinking that everything that happens in the ongoing world is actually caused by God—even the free will (and many times sinful) decisions of human beings. This (a form of occasionalism) is not a biblical idea of who God is either.

- Acts 17:28, *"For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'"*
- Matthew 5:45, *"...He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."*
- Acts 10:29, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care."*
- Acts 14:17, *"Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy."*
- Acts 17:25, *"And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else."*
- Colossians 1:17, *"He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."*
- Psalm 22:28, *"for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations."*
- Daniel 5:21, *"He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like the ox; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and sets over them anyone he wishes."*
- Ephesians 1:11, *"In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,"*
- Psalm 103:19, *"The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all."*

God is Spirit

God is not made up of physical matter, and has no physical body as we have.* God is also not made up of the same stuff as the observable universe around us He created. He does not have any of the limitations of physical/material things.

God is, by nature, invisible to us. This means that His true essence cannot be seen by the eyes of created beings. However, God appears to angels in a human-like form in a seemingly permanent theophany (God appearing as man, Rev 4). God has appeared and will again appear to human beings in visible form (e.g., Gen 3:8; Ex 24:9-11; Rev 22:3-4). However, these are deliberate images of God He creates for our convenience, not His true essence.

Spirit is associated with life—God is described as “the Living God” around 30 times. God being alive is in contrast both with all false gods (who are lifeless nothings) and with living creatures, whose life is a gift from God. Angels (though non-human) and human spirits are “persons” as well; this is part of our being created in His image.

The other part of God being spirit is the fact that He is personal (has person-hood), which means at least four things (Cottrell, *The Faith Once For All*, 68).

- He has rational consciousness (He is a thinking being). Thus, we can speak of His mind, His knowledge, His understanding, and His logic.
- He has self-consciousness. This means God has an awareness of His own conscious existence and identity. His very name is “I AM” (Exodus 3:14).
- He has self-determination, or free will. This means that anything God does will be freely chosen by Him, and not imposed on Him from outside Himself.
- He has relationships with other persons (within Himself, with angels and demons, and with humans).

*Biblical references to God’s bodily parts (face, eyes, ears, feet, etc.) are anthropomorphic, which means that God is spoken of figuratively in human terms in order to make His actions and attitudes concrete in our minds.

- John 4:24, *“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”*
- Psalm 42:2, *“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”*
- Hebrews 3:12, *“See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.”*
- 1 Timothy 6:16, *“who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.”*
- 1 Timothy 1:17, *“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

- Colossians 1:15, *"The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation."*
- Exodus 3:14, *"God said to Moses, 'I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I am has sent me to you.'"*
- Deuteronomy 4:28, *"There you will worship man-made gods of wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or eat or smell."*

God is Three in One

GOD IS ONE

There is only one God, and there are no others. One of our main purposes is to honor, worship, and glorify the Creator as the one true God.

GOD IS THREE

God is One, but He is also Three. This is called the Trinity.

There is no actual term in the Bible called the Trinity, but only the concept of the Trinity. This concept is that God is three "persons" who share one essence (or substance).

A "person" here is generally defined as a thinking, willing center of consciousness. That God is three "persons" means that within the one divine nature are three individual centers of consciousness. Each of the "persons" is fully conscious of Himself as distinct from the other two as existing in eternal interpersonal relationship with the other two. We call these three "persons" the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Though they are three, these persons are nevertheless one God who is one shared and undivided essence. This means there are not three separate Gods. The totality of divine substance (the whole of 'whatever it is to be God') belongs to each of them. The main implication of this is that each is equally divine. In whatever sense the Father is divine, so also are the Son and the Holy Spirit. All the attributes of divinity belong equally to each of the three.

The concept of the Trinity is shown in the Old Testament during creation (Gen 1:26), in the Garden of Eden (3:22), and in the plural form of the word for "God" (Elohim).

But it's in the New Testament, when it talks about the deity of Jesus, that the concept of the Trinity becomes even more obvious. The Bible describes Jesus as distinct from God the Father and yet He was Himself God in the flesh. The same is true of the Bible's portrayal of the Holy Spirit as a divine person.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a mysterious thing about our faith. That God is one and three at the same time is beyond our ability to understand completely. We should never think it is absurd or contradictory, however. That would be true only if we thought that God is one and three in the same sense. But that is

not the case. He is one in one sense (He has one essence), and three in another sense (He contains three persons). (Above summarized from Cottrell, *The Faith Once For All*, 71-73).

- Deuteronomy 6:4, *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."*
- 1 Corinthians 8:4, *"So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that 'An idol is nothing at all in the world' and that 'There is no God but one.'"*
- 1 Timothy 1:17, *"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."*
- Isaiah 45:5, *"I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me,"*
- Genesis 1:26, *"Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'"*
- Genesis 3:22, *"And the Lord God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.'"*
- Matthew 28:19, *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"*
- 2 Corinthians 13:14, *"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, *"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work."*
- 1 Peter 1:2, *"who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:"*
- Romans 15:30, *"I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me."*
- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, *"Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."*
- Jude 20-21, *"But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life."*
- Matthew 3:16-17, *"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"*
- John 8:58-59, *"'Very truly I tell you,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I am!' At*

this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds."

- John 10:30, *"I and the Father are one."*
- John 10:37-38, *"Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."*

God is Good

God's goodness means He is absolutely perfect in essence and morally good in His actions. God desires to bless His people. God could have been powerful but not good, which would be reason to be terrified of Him. Or God could have been good, but not powerful, which would have left Him unable to help. But He is powerful and good at the same time, making Him completely worthy of our trust.

- Romans 8:28, *"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."*
- Romans 16:27, *"to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen."*
- Daniel 2:20, *"Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his."*
- Romans 11:33, *"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!"*
- Proverbs 3:19, *"By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place;"*
- Psalm 104:24, *"How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures."*
- Psalm 25:8, *"Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways."*
- Psalm 100:5, *"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations."*
- Matthew 10:29, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care."*
- Psalm 145:9, *"The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made."*
- 1 Timothy 6:17, *"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment."*

God Is Self-Existent, Infinite, Eternal, And Unchanging.

God is self-existent, meaning He exists independently and does not originate from anything else. He is also eternal, which means He is unlimited with regard to time. He is the "everlasting God," meaning He has always existed in the eternal past and will always exist in the eternal future. He is unchanging in His nature and is forever faithful.

- John 5:26 "For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself."
- 1 Timothy 6:16 "who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen."
- Acts 17:24-25 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else."
- Romans 16:26 "but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith—"
- Isaiah 40:28 "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom."
- Psalm 93:2 "Your throne was established long ago; you are from all eternity."
- Psalm 41:13 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen."
- Psalm 90:2 "Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."
- Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."
- 2 Peter 3:8 "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day."
- Hebrews 6:18 "God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged."
- Malachi 3:6 "I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."
- Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."
- Psalm 100:5 "For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations."

NOTE 1: The verses are all in the NIV. The Bible is the ultimate source of knowing who God is.

NOTE 2: For more commentary on who God is, see Dr. Jack Cottrell's "The Faith Once for All," particularly chapters 3 and 4.

BASIC DISCIPLESHIP STEP ONE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Ice Breaker Questions

Growing up, who was God to you? How did these ideas change as you got older?

When were you baptized under the water?

What was going on and what was that like for you?

Question 1 - *God is Omnipotent*

Is there anything God can't do? Why or why not?

Question 2 - *God is Omnipresent*

What does God always being near to everywhere, including you, make you think about?

Question 3 - *God is Omniscient*

Does the fact that God even knows the thoughts in your head blow your mind in any way?

Question 4 - *God is Holy*

If a friend asked you, "What's up with God's 'wrath'? That doesn't sound much like a good God to me!" how would you respond?

Question 5 - *God is Love*

If God loves us so much, why doesn't He give us what we want?

Question 6 - *God's Holiness and Love (at the same time) Produce the Essence of the Gospel*

Could there have been another way for salvation besides Jesus dying on the cross for me?

Question 7 - *God is Creator*

Why did God create us in the first place?

Question 8 - *God is Three in One*

How would you explain the concept of the Trinity to a friend who didn't know much about Jesus?

Question 9 - *God is Self-Existent, Infinite, Eternal, and Unchanging*

What do you think time is like for God?



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