

GOD – HIS EXISTENCE, HIS CREATION AND HIS NATURE

Goal of Lesson – To explain the existence, nature, and character of God and how to have a relationship with him. This lesson also answers the question, "Where did I come from?"

1. His existence – The Bible says in **Hebrews 11: 6**, *"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."* We will all believe in something so it is a matter of choice what and, in the case of God, who we will believe in. There is a lot of evidence for the existence of God as we will see but there must be faith combined with the evidence to make it complete. This passage tells us that we not only need to believe that God exists but that he will reward those who seek after him. He will do this because he is a God of love and a God who keeps his promises.

The Word of God says in **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 men are without excuse."* His power is seen when we look at the moon, stars and consider the whole universe. He must have more power than we can even imagine to create all we see.

Example concerning design: If you were to be walking along an ocean beach and come upon an elaborately built sand castle what would you conclude about how it got there? Would it make any sense to say it just randomly appeared? If common sense tells us that someone with intelligence built the sand castle, then why can we not look at the moon, stars and the whole universe and by common sense conclude that there must have been a master designer of great power and skill who made it all?

The New living translation of Psalm 19: 1-6 pronounce, *"The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world. God has made a home in the heavens for the sun. It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding. It rejoices like a great athlete eager to run the race. The sun rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat."*

Some people say they can only believe in what they actually see. Well, this is a good place to start. Start with yourself and ask how you could have come into existence without an intelligent being existing. How could the sperm of the man and the egg of the woman create life? There must be a life force beyond just the physical part. Why are you able to think, dream, remember, and plan for the future if you were not created by an intelligent being? How could all the universe come into existence and hold together without an intelligent being?

Think of the information in the DNA. Where did it come from and why is it so organized?
How could information come from non-information?

2. His Creation - God created the world (universe) ex nihilo (out of nothing). The Bible assumes God's existence and starts by saying, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1: 1).

A Biblical theology of creation is summarized in the four basics
of reality contained in Genesis 1:1:

1. "In the beginning" –the "when" of creation
2. "God" –the "who" of creation
3. "Created" –the "how" of creation
4. "The heavens and the earth" –the "what" of creation¹

(**Creation "ex nihilo"**– "Christian theology from the beginning has understood the origin of all things in terms of *ex nihilo* creation. *Nihil* is the Latin word for 'nothing, nothingness,' and *ex nihilo* means literally 'out of nothing.' " In *The Faith Once for All* by Jack Cottrell, page 101. "Creation ex nihilo involves both origination and dependence," page 102. See these other Biblical passages: John 1: 1-3; Romans 4: 17; Hebrews 11: 3.)

Genesis chapters 1-2 outline the process of God's creating everything: earth, plants, animals, birds, insects, the heavenly bodies, climaxing with his creation of man and woman (Genesis 1:26-31; 2: 7). Where did we come from? We all were made in the image of God and came from him. Everything comes from God and is sustained by God.

3. God's Nature – First of all, we need to understand that God is spirit as John 4: 24 says, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and truth." This means that he does not have a limited body like humans. He can be everywhere at once. This is called in theology "Omnipresence." *Omni* is a Latin word meaning "all."

God is **one** according to Deuteronomy 6: 4 but exists in three persons as we can see from 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 lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.' "*

God is **eternal, immortal and invisible** according to **1 Timothy 1:17**, which says, *"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."*

¹ These four points were taken from Richard M. Davidson at: http://www.aiias.edu/ict/vol_26A/26Acc_433-442.htm

What does **2 Samuel 7:22** tell us about God? It says, *"How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears."*

What does **Malachi 3:6** tell us about God? God says in this verse, *"I the Lord do not change. So you, descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."*

What does Psalm 139:7-12 tell us about God's presence? *"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. If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you."*

How many characteristics of God can you find in Psalm 89: 5-14?

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____
- (6) _____
- (7) _____
- (8) _____

4. God's Character – He is just or righteous - Acts 17:31 *"For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."* **LOVING** – In Jeremiah 31: 3 God says, *"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."* Lamentations 3: 2, *"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail."* Psalm 40: 11, *"Do not withhold your mercy from me, O Lord; may your love and your truth always protect me."* Titus 3: 4, *"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit..."*

He is holy - 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."* 1 Peter 1: 15-16 – *"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.' "*

He is truthful – Titus 1: 1-2, *"Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness — a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time..."*

He is compassionate – 2 Corinthians 1: 3, *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort."*

He is full of grace - Romans 5:17- *"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."*

He judges sin - Psalm 5:5, *"The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong."*

He offers forgiveness - Psalm 130:4- *"But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared."* Acts 2: 38, *"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

How to have a relationship with God - The Bible clearly says that to have a relationship with God through Jesus you must:

- understand that you are a sinner,
- believe in Jesus, accept that he died for you and was raised from the dead,
- accept and confess him as your Lord and Savior, repent of your sins,
- and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins so that you can receive the Holy Spirit in your heart. These verses explain this.

Romans 3: 23-24 says: *"This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."*

John 14: 6 - Jesus said, *"I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"*

Romans 6: 23 says, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Romans 6: 3 says, *"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"*

In **Acts 2: 38** Peter told the people, *"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

Romans 10: 9 says, *"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*

Jesus said, *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" - John 5: 24.*

John 3: 16 says, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

John 10: 10 - Jesus said, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"*

1 John 5: 13 - John says, *"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."*

In connection with having a relationship with God, consider these eight spiritual truths:

1. God exists and wants to have deep fellowship with you (Genesis 1: 1; 3: 8; 12:1-3; John 15: 1-17; 17: 20-21; James 2: 23; John 14: 23).
2. Everyone needs a Savior because man is sinful (because of the fall), separated from God and cannot save himself (Romans 3: 21-26; Ephesians 2: 8-10).
3. Everyone needs love and forgiveness (John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 7-12; Acts 2: 38; 22: 16; John 8: 1-11).
4. You are not always going to be here and after death the judgment will come so you need to prepare for eternity (Hebrews 9: 27; Matthew 24: 36-44; 25: 1-13).
5. You need to give your life to God so that you can be forgiven and have purpose in your life (Ephesians 1: 7; Acts 22: 16; 1 John 1: 7; Psalm 138: 8; Ephesians 1: 4).
6. Jesus died for your sins, was raised from the dead and is God's only provision for sins (1 John 2: 2; John 3: 16; Acts 2: 38; John 1: 10-13; Romans 5: 9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:1-58).
7. By his grace God has given you a way to be saved – receive Jesus as Lord and Savior and be united with him through believing , repenting, confessing and being baptized. After you have received God's grace in this way, God promised that you would receive forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit in your heart (gift or baptism of the Holy Spirit). You will also be a Christian or Christ follower, in God's church, reconciled to God, redeemed, and clothed with Christ (**Galatians 3: 27**). All this is Christ's work in you (**Colossians 2: 11-12**).

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8 It is important that you continue to trust God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit every day in deep devotion through prayer, study of God's word, fellowship with other Christians and sharing your faith with

others (Proverbs 3: 5-6; John 14: 1-2; Romans 8: 26-27; Philippians 4: 6-7; Psalm 119: 97, 105; 1 Timothy 4: 16; 2 Timothy 1: 15; 3: 16; Hebrews 10: 24-25; Matthew 28: 19-20).

5. TO FULLY ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHO GOD IS WE MUST LOOK AT JESUS BECAUSE JOHN 1: 18 SAYS HE REVEALS THE FATHER.

What aspects of God, as demonstrated by Jesus, do you see in these verses:
The first three are answered for you to show you how to answer the others.

John 1: 14 – Answer: God is for us so much that he sent his son in the flesh to reveal himself to us. So, we see the care, love, and deep understanding of God through the incarnation of Jesus.

John 3: 16-18 – Answer: We also see the deep love of God by his giving his only Son to us so that we might believe in him and have eternal life. We also see that God is a God who wants to save instead of condemn.

Mark 1: 40-45 – Answer: We see that God is compassionate on those the world casts out and are afraid to touch. God touches the untouchable. God cares about our loneliness, feelings of shame and sickness.

Mark 2: 1-12 _____

Mark 2: 13-17 _____

John 8: 31; 10: 7-10; 5: 24 _____

John 8: 45-47 _____

John 5: 1-15; Mark 7: 9-13 _____

John 8: 1-15 _____

John 8: 26-27 _____

1 John 4: 10-12; Acts 2: 36-39 _____

John 3: 18; 5: 28-30; Luke 13: 1-8

Luke 4: 14-27 _____

1 Peter 4: 12-19 _____

Luke 23: 34; Romans 5: 6-8 _____

Luke 23: 39-43

John 2:12-25

Mark 4: 1-20; 7: 17-23

1 Peter 2: 19-25; 3: 13-17; 2 Timothy 3: 10-12

2 Corinthians 13: 4 _____

Matthew 28: 19-20 _____

ANSWERS TO THE VERSES ABOUT JESUS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND WHO GOD IS.

John 1: 14 - God cares that we know him through the human nature of Jesus.

Mark 2: 13-17 - God's love for all people, even those who are considered to be the worst sinners. Levi was a hated tax collector, but Jesus called him to follow him anyway. Jesus even had table fellowship with sinners so he could bring them to God.

John 3: 16-18 - God wants to save people, not condemn.

Mark 1: 40-45 - God cares for the ones society shuns.

Mark 2: 1-12 - God cares for the sick, both spiritually and physically.

John 8: 31; 10:7-10; John 5: 24 - God desires that people have true freedom and have life abundantly both here and eternally.

John 8: 45-47 - God considers it important to tell the truth even if people do not listen

John 5: 1-15; Mark 7: 9-13 - God cares about people more than religious commands or activities.

John 8: 1-15 - God cares for the everyday physical needs of people.

John 8: 26-27 - God desires that people seek eternal life instead of just working for food for this life.

1 John 4: 10-12; Acts 2: 36-39 - God's incredible love for the whole world as seen in his sacrifice of his Son on the cross and His giving us a way to be saved.

John 3: 18; 5: 28-30; Luke 13: 1-8 - God tells us the truth about eternal punishment and heaven even if it is hard to hear.

1 Peter 4: 12-19 - We see through the sufferings of Christ that God cares about our sufferings because the sufferings of Christ give us a deep way to understand our own sufferings.

Luke 23: 34; Romans 5: 6-8 - God is full of love, grace and forgiveness.

Luke 23: 39-43 - God is concerned that people have second chances

John 2:12-25 - God does not always fit our categories.

Mark 4: 1-20; 7: 17-23). God's emphasis on the heart more than the outward things

1 Peter 2: 19-25; 3: 13-17; 2 Timothy 3: 10-12 - God speaks openly about how difficult the way of Christ will be. In other words, God does not just speak of how good things are going to be in our lives if we become followers of Jesus. He is clear in letting us know that persecutions will come.

2 Corinthians 13: 4, "**For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.**" God's power is seen in his turning weakness into strength like he did when he turned the weakness of the cross into victory and power by raising Jesus from the dead.

Matthew 28: 19-20 - God has a concern for the lost and that all nations hear the gospel.

Recommended books on the subject of God:

If you would like to read a very good book on God and his nature the book called *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer is great. Another good book is, *You God is too Small* by J. B. Phillips. This book explains about some false conceptions of God and then explains what an adequate view of God Isaiah If you would like to go even deep on this subject of God please read the book, *Great is the Lord*, by Ron Highfield (2008). *The Jesus I Never Knew*, by Phillip Yancey. Note: For the answers to the above verses see appendix-3.