

GOD

First Things first

Take a minute to pray for God to guide you as you study...

Have you ever wondered who God really is? Maybe you've questioned if there really is a God, period! And then again, you hear things about Him that only confuse you, like, *"Why, if there is a loving God, does He allow bad things to happen to people?"* And if that isn't confusing enough, who is God? I mean, the Bible talks a lot about different parts of God, like Jesus, you've probably heard about Him...the Father, you know, the big God that sits on a throne in Heaven, and the Holy Spirit, the part of God that you can't see, but you've probably felt Him. Well, hopefully, you will get some answers and understand a little more about God, and what He's all about. Let's find out together through a few of these verses, so grab your Bible and see what God is really like.

1 John 4:8: "Whoever does not love does not know God, because _____ is _____."

This is probably the most important piece in your understanding of God...that He is all about love. In fact, without this piece, you'll never get a clear picture of Who He is and why we are here. He's a God that did whatever it took to be close to you.

Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God _____ the heavens and the earth."

So, He's the Creator, too! He spoke, and things started to happen. Light appeared. Our atmosphere appeared. Water appeared. Land appeared. Fish, birds and animals appeared. And finally, humans were created as God knelt down in the Garden of Eden, took some dirt, and shaped it into the form of a man. Then, He breathed into his mouth (kind of like CPR), and humans came to life! His life-giving breath caused Adam to become a living being. God is the Creator. He's the Author of our existence. He's the One behind our every thought, action and heartbeat. He is the Creator God! And because God is the Creator and we are created beings, we exist to worship Him.

Revelation 4:11: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive _____ and _____ and _____, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

We exist to worship God and praise Him for His incredible power. But, that sounds like a self-centered God that creates cheerleaders to cheer Him for how great He is, right? It's not like that. In fact, it's quite different than that, but we have to look at all the different pieces of God to get the big picture. Probably the most important point to remember is that God is a relational God that will do anything to be with you. The easiest way to see this is to look at how God is three unique persons. It doesn't make much sense, right? Well, check these verses out.

Matthew 28:19: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the _____ and of the _____ and of the _____..."

God is not just one person, but He is *three* connected and yet totally unique persons with specific purposes in how to relate to humans.

God the Father -

A lot of times, the Father gets a bad rap. A lot of that is because so many of us have had terrible fathers that were worthless and loveless. They didn't care about you. They were never around for you. Many fathers have mistreated and abused their children, and so when we associate our picture of what a father is with what we think God the Father is, we get a messed up picture! And then, when we read the Old Testament, and we hear of how God wiped out thousands of people because they didn't obey Him, it seems that He is an angry God that destroys anyone that won't agree with Him. It's easy to get that idea. But see if this helps you understand God the Father better.

(Read Isaiah 6:1-5 to see what Isaiah sees and experiences as he finds himself in front of God the Father.)

Isn't that a crazy experience? Isaiah finds himself standing in front of God the Father, and he instantly realizes that He is a

sinner! He's like, "Oh Snap! I can't be in front of Him like this!" His experience puts who God the Father is into a better perspective. Sin cannot exist around God. He's not an angry God that is constantly seeking revenge. He's a pure, holy, majestic, all-powerful God whose presence destroys sin. But at the same time, He is a gentle and incredibly loving God that wants to be around us too. Enter: Jesus.

God the Son, Jesus -

Because Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they could not be in the presence of God. Their sins separated them from being with God. So, because God is a relational God that can't stand being away from us, He did a very drastic and selfless action so that we could reconnect and be together. One of the most well-known Bible verses says it best.

John 3:16: "For God [the Father] so _____ the world that he _____ his one and only _____ [Jesus], that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Basic Point

God is a **relational** God that will do **anything** to be with you.

Can you even imagine what it was like as God the Father watched humanity sin, and He knew what had to be done? He knew that it was worth His Son dying in order for there to be a way for us to reconnect with Him. And then there is Jesus. He's the part of God that we feel like we know the best. We love Him the most because He died for us. But stop for a minute and think about that... **JESUS DIED FOR YOU!** Do you know anyone that you would die for? That is the most incredible love ever where Jesus gave up His life so that eventually we could be with Him. That's how much He loves you. God not only is the Creator God, but He is also a Redeemer who did whatever it took to save us from sin. But does Jesus' death mean He is any less of a God?

John 10:30: Jesus says, "I and the Father are _____."

John 14:9: Jesus again says, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the _____."

No, Jesus is fully God! And just to show how relational God is, Jesus became fully man at the same time so that He could experience humanity and eventually die for humanity too.

But there's another piece to God that you cannot miss. It's the piece that is **in** us and **with** us every moment of every day.

God the Holy Spirit -

The Holy Spirit may be the most difficult part of God to grasp because you cannot see Him. And even though you cannot see him, you may have *felt* Him in your heart. Most people would say the Holy Spirit is your conscience. He's the One that helps you know the difference between right and wrong, good and evil. He's the One that convicts your heart and helps you know what you should do. He is: God **IN** us! The Holy Spirit is powerful and moves through us to bring about God's will.

In the New Testament, all the disciples are gathered together praying, when, all of a sudden, the Holy Spirit comes into the room and anoints them to send them across the globe to tell others about what Jesus had done for them.

The Holy Spirit is a force inside you that directs you and guides you to serve God and serve others. God the Father couldn't stand for us to be alone without Him, so He sent the Holy Spirit [who is fully God as well], to live in us until the day when we can go to heaven.

John 14:16-18: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another _____ to help you and be with you forever— the _____ of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives _____ you and will be _____ you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

Trinity

So there are three persons that make up one God. Are you confused yet? It's something that humans have a difficult time understanding. Moses talked about it in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is _____."

He's one God with three unique persons serving three unique purposes and connecting with us in three unique ways.

It's kind of like an egg. All eggs are individual eggs, but each egg is made up of three parts. There is the outer shell, the egg white, and the egg yolk. All three parts make up one egg, but each part is different. The Trinity is three parts, individuals, but they make up one God.



Here's the reality: God is a relational God that wants to have a deep and growing relationship with you. He wanted you to see His power and incredible holiness as God the Father, but He also wanted you to see how much He loves you as God the Son, Jesus, and He even went one step further to build a constant relationship with us through God the Holy Spirit. He wants to always be in contact with us and is always communicating with us. He wants us to see Him for who He is, in His completeness. He wants us to see Him not only as the Creator and Redeemer, but as a personal Friend.

fundamental questions

1. How have you experienced God in your life?
 2. What are you doing to build a relationship with God?
 3. Describe what God means to you.
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And one last thing...

Knowing God is more than just something you read, it's something that you experience. That is how faith grows. It's when you allow yourself to be involved in a relationship with God that you truly experience Him and see for yourself what He is really like.

LESSON 2 - GOD/TRINITY

fundamental

learning to know God —