



Attributes of God

Lesson Focus

God's attributes are demonstrated in direct claims from Scripture and are also understood from the way God interacts with His creation.

Key Passages

Exodus 34:4–8, 20:5–6; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:7–21;
Psalm 90:1–6

What You Will Learn

- The necessity of using God's Word when identifying and/or explaining the attributes of God.
- Some of the attributes of God found in Scripture.

Memory Verse

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Prepare to Learn

Scriptural Background

What is God like? How can we presume to answer this question? Our God is incomprehensible—He can never be fully understood. In fact, as believers we anticipate an eternity of discovering new things about Him.

David said of Him, “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 145:3). And, “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all” (1 Chronicles 29:11). We can’t say it any better than the Apostle Paul, “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways” (Romans 11:33)! The glimpses of God we observe from His Word are far from complete.

Question 4 of the historic Westminster Shorter Catechism, penned

in the 1640s asks, “What is God?” The answer? God is a Spirit (John 4:24), infinite (Jeremiah 23:24), eternal (Psalm 90:2), and unchangeable (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17) in His being, wisdom (Psalm 147:5), power (Revelation 19:6), holiness (1 Samuel 2:2), justice (Psalm 7:11), goodness (Psalm 107:8), and truth (Deuteronomy 32:4).

When the Lord descended in the cloud to speak with Moses, He gave testimony to His very character—He proclaimed Himself as merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness, always truthful, forgiving, and at the same time, just—not clearing the guilty (Exodus 34:6–7).

Knowing God and knowing that He is perfect in every one of His attributes is imperative to maturing in the Christian faith. That is why we have incorporated teaching these attributes as part of this Bible curriculum, so the next generation will know, love, honor, revere, and fear the God of all creation!

Historical/Apologetics Background

Because there is no way to comprehend the vast depth of our holy God, we are at risk of conjuring up in our minds what we want Him to be. This is not acceptable. We can only begin to know who God is by the revelation of His Word.

One attribute of God is all-loving (1 John 4:7–21). But this attribute

has been skewed by many Christians and non-Christians alike. The tendency of many is to make God a type of butler—one who waits at our beck and call and exists in order to answer our demands for blessing and comfort. In our world today, we seldom witness the awe and wonder His very name deserves.

This attitude recks of misunderstanding the holiness of God. His holiness demands that He despise each and every sin committed. Knowing His frightful hatred for sin should bring us to a reverent and godly fear of the one who is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:28-29). Only true fear of the Lord will bring knowledge (Proverbs 1:7).

It is not until we fear God for who He is that we will humbly begin to understand the depths of His love—which is beyond all love. It is amazing that He would love us so much to send His only Son to die a horrible death in order to provide forgiveness to all who would believe (John 3:16). Because of the depth of His love, He was willing to offer the life of Jesus, who committed no sin yet was made sin for us, so that we could be made the righteousness of God (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

God is love, yes. But His definition of love goes way beyond the scope of ours. His love is demonstrated in the gospel—that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The gospel through Jesus Christ was God's plan from the very beginning. When God created Adam and Eve in the very good world, they saw God clearly. But when they disobeyed God, they were no longer welcome to walk with Him (Genesis 3:23-24). They were thrown out of the garden because God cannot dwell with evil or wickedness (Psalm 5:4). But ever-

then, God revealed His plan—His love—to redeem a people to Himself through the Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). Everyone who would repent of their sins and turn to the Savior would be forgiven and given an inheritance with Christ.

Others have wanted to see God as Adam and Eve did. We read that Moses was once bold enough to ask to see more of God (Exodus 33:18). And we know that Moses would die if He saw the face of God. However, Moses did get a glimpse of God's glory passing by as he hid in the cleft of the rock (Exodus 33:22-23).

Jesus came to reveal God to sinners. The Bible tells us that in Jesus, we know of God yet have not seen Him: "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known." (John 1:18). And Paul wrote to Timothy, describing God as the one "who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen" (1 Timothy 6:16).

God keeps Himself in unapproachable light. We cannot see Him as Adam and Eve once did. But He promises one day we will. And what a day that will be when His children will be like Him, for they will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2)! How we long for the day we will once again see God, talk with Him, and enjoy the fellowship that was originally intended but broken because of sin. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy,

he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.

Studying God’s Word

What is God like?

Take notes as you study the following passages.

Exodus 34:4–8

Exodus 20:5–6

Romans 5:8

1 John 4:7–21

Psalms 90:1–6

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Prayer Requests
