

God

How do you picture God? As a kind, gentle Santa Claus or grandfather figure, sitting in a rocking chair, waiting for someone to call for assistance, honoring the request without consideration of truth nor justice, then returning to His rocking, awaiting the next call? Many people picture God in this way and I will call this description of God the world's predominant view of God. You can see this attitude about God at any funeral. I do not think I have ever been to a funeral where a 'loved-one' did not say something like: "Mama is up in heaven looking down on us, watching out for us." When Mama's status as a Christian or a Christ-follower is uncertain, if Mama is not a 'Born-Again Christian,' she is not in heaven. This is the reason for this book: so that you can know, without a shadow of a doubt, where you stand with Jesus Christ!

Others see God as an angry, wrathful God; who makes unreasonable demands on people's time and resources, demanding perfection in their behavior. These people usually just do not want anything to do with God. They see Him as a problem in their lives; always telling them how to act and how to live. For the most part, God will not interfere in these peoples' lives, but will square accounts with them on Judgment Day. But you and I, as followers of Jesus Christ, can live in joy and peace in this life and spend eternity with Jesus.

Like any 'good' lie, both these descriptions contain elements of truth, but neither describe God accurately.

It is true that God wants to have a loving relationship with you; a loving, personal relationship. He has already sacrificed His only begotten Son so that you can have your sins forgiven. It is also true that God expects you to obey His Law, but ever since Sin entered the world in the Garden of Eden, we have been unable to live up to God's perfect standard; hence the need for Jesus Christ. God is the only one who could provide us the opportunity to join Him in heaven when we leave this earth – all we have to do is accept His Perfect Gift – Jesus!

It is also true that God has a plan for your life, wants to communicate with you and have a relationship with you. If you are not a follower of Jesus that relationship is now one-sided; God already knows everything about you and desires for you to get to know Him. God cares for you, He loves you. He knows all the circumstances of your life--where you come from and every person who has ever been a part of your life. God understands you completely.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:11-13)

And in the words of Jesus:

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:9-13)

God is anxious for you to get to know Him. God is our Creator, the One True God. Implicit in the Bible's opening verse is that God existed before the heavens and the earth:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)

God is an eternal being. He has always existed and will always exist; no beginning and no end. The psalmist said it beautifully:

***“Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”*** (Psalm 90:2)

God is not the only eternal being; each human being ever conceived has an eternal soul. Yes, that means you have an eternal soul. Your soul will live on after your time here on earth is finished -- after you die. Every person who has ever lived or will ever live has an eternal soul. This soul is what separates us from the rest of His creation. Remember, we are created in God's own image. Animals, birds, fish, trees, plants and all other parts of God's Creation here on earth do not have souls. Only human beings have souls. Your soul or rather, the final destination of your eternal soul is the driving force behind this book.

“Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

(Genesis 1:26-27)

It is God's nature to be eternal. There are other attributes of God that also challenge our ability to understand, but speak to the essence of our Creator:

Omniscient: All Knowing. An attribute of God alone. It is the quality of having all knowledge. God knows all things. I have recently come across the term 'practical atheism', which denies that God pays any attention to what people are doing. This term helps to explain why so many people behave as though there is no God. Do not be fooled. God knows and sees everything; it is best if you keep that in mind now and not find out on Judgment Day. He does not miss anything.

Omnipresent: All Present. An attribute of God which is to say that God is simultaneously present everywhere.

Omnipotent: All Powerful. Having unlimited or universal power, authority, or force; all-powerful.

These three attributes of God enable Him to know all things, be present everywhere at the same time and have unlimited power. As food for thought, these characteristics enable God to know each of us--all eight billion of us. He knows everything about each of us: Our name and hair color; when we were born and when we will die; our individual circumstances; EVERYTHING about each of us. He knows where we are and what we are doing at ALL times. There is nothing hidden from Him; He knows all things. God knows you better than you know yourself! You cannot hide from God. This should probably make you stop and think!

Following are two verses which attest to God's existence and power; I encourage you to read all of Psalm 19, written by King David and Chapter 38 of Job:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.”
(Psalm 19:1)

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone.”
(Job 38:4-6)

God has other characteristics: He is Holy, Perfect and Good. He alone is the standard of all Righteousness.

God is good. A great expression of God's goodness and love is the cross of Christ. When we don't understand what the Lord is doing, we can still trust that He is good.

God is unchanging: He is the same today as He was yesterday and He will be the same tomorrow.

God is to be feared and Scripture confirms this. For Believers this is usually displayed as an attitude of respect, reverence or awe. An unrepentant sinner, awaiting God's Judgment, should be terrified.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;

"A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." (Psalm 111:10)

God will never leave us nor forsake us:

"Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6)

God is perfectly Just and Moral; these attributes are also God's nature. It is not possible for God to be unjust or immoral. God has given us His Law, which we will talk about in a subsequent chapter. God cannot tolerate sin because of His Righteous character. Sin creates a barrier between God and sinners; a chasm between God and us. It should be your intention to Love what God Loves and to Hate what God Hates.

We are born with a Hunger and a Thirst for God. That's why the Romans and the Greeks worshipped mythical gods and why Native Americans carved elaborate totem poles to assist in the worship of their gods. Native Americans, as well as other societies around the world also worshipped the sun, moon and stars.

This Hunger and Thirst for God is called the "God-Hole" or a "God-shaped hole," a concept which states that every person has a void in his soul/spirit that can only be filled by God. This "God-shaped hole" is the innate longing of the human heart for something outside itself, something transcendent, something "other." This "God-Hole" is King David's inspiration for the following:

"As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42:1-2)

Anyone who does not have a personal relationship with God will likely look elsewhere to quench that thirst for God, that hunger for God that is missing. If you do not seek and find God, you will likely turn to other 'gods' to fill the God-hole. Satan is always ready to lead you in search of other alternatives: money, sex, drugs, alcohol, power, sports, food, hobbies, anything to keep you away from the one true God. The problem is that none of these substitutes offer anything but temporary, fleeting satisfaction; only God can provide lasting satisfaction.

Each human being is also born with a conscience which helps us recognize the difference between right and wrong in regard to one's conduct, coupled with a sense that one should act accordingly.

God's goal is to fashion us - to mold us into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ.

God expects us to wait on Him, to Trust Him and He will supply our needs when we obey Him.

It is also in God's nature to be Triune. God exists as three persons in one God.

God the Father created us, God the Son, Jesus Christ, came to earth to pay the penalty for our sins and the Holy Spirit serves as our Helper, our Counselor. Together, these three Persons in one God make up what is called the Holy Trinity; each of the three Persons being fully God, and in the case of Jesus, fully human. The term 'Holy Trinity' does not appear in the Bible, but is referred to early when God said:

"Let us make men in Our image, according to Our likeness...."

(Genesis 1:26)

In the New Testament, the Holy Trinity appears together at the Baptism of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew:

"When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in who I am well pleased."

(Matthew 3:16-17)

This is about all we are going to say about the Holy Trinity; it is a spiritual mystery that has fascinated scholars for thousands of years. How can three Persons exist in one God? We will have to be in Heaven before fully understanding.

You will see God referred to by other names as you read Scripture: Yahweh, I AM, Father, Holy, Lord, Love, Sovereign and Creator, etc.

Jesus also is known as the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, The Christ, Immanuel, King of Kings, Lamb of God, Lord, Lord of Lords, Prince of Peace, Son of Man, Great High Priest, Redeemer, Savior, Shepherd, Teacher, Truth and The Way, etc.

Names for the Holy Spirit include: Holy Ghost, Spirit of the Lord, Comforter, Counselor, Spirit of Truth, Helper, etc.

"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

(Romans 11:33)

Are you ready to meet Jesus when you leave this earth? My goal is to leave you with no alternative but to surrender your life, your heart and your soul to Jesus Christ. Jesus desires for you to be His discipline. To help you move in that direction we have talked about God's nature, attributes and characteristics.

My plan to get you to accept Jesus as your Lord and personal Savior is pretty simple. When you know more about Jesus, you will wonder how you have been able to live without Him!