

What Everyone Should Know About God

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Introduction.

- A. In our ongoing discussion of evangelism, we spend a great deal of time emphasizing the importance of inviting our friends, neighbors, and co-workers to worship services. This is an important evangelistic tool, and it's something that we need to keep on doing. Even while we devote ourselves to this work, however, we need to recognize that no one approach is right for everyone. Some people may just absolutely hate the idea of going to a formal service, and as a result, would be much more comfortable with learning the truth from an in-home Bible study. We need to be able, then, not just to invite our friends, but to study with them if need be.
- B. Of course, the thought of leading a personal study fills many fine Christians with horror. They just can't imagine presenting information from the Bible to someone else for a whole hour. They know all those verses about sin and baptism and so on are in the Bible somewhere, but they can't for the life of them remember where, exactly, and they know that if they're put on the spot, they'll freeze up.
- C. There are a couple of ways to address this problem. First of all, both the elders and I would be delighted to have the opportunity to study the word of God with anyone. However, we are only a partial solution. In the first place, many people are uncomfortable studying the Bible with strangers. Second, what if the opportunity to study comes up when neither elders nor preacher are around? The point is, friends, that all of us need to be prepared to lead that study ourselves, simply because there may be no other way to have the study at all.
- D. With this goal in mind, for the next few Sundays, I'm going to be preaching a series of sermons that all of you can take the outlines from, go out, and use those outlines to have a study with someone. You don't have to remember the Scriptures yourselves, because all the ones you need will be there in the outline. There's not going to be anything fancy in these lessons, folks, but there will be more than enough Bible truth to save souls if we use it. Let's begin this process, then, by looking at what everyone should know about God.

I. God's Basic Nature.

- A. The first thing that everyone needs to understand about God is that **HE EXISTS**. Sadly, there are plenty of folks out there who would dispute this. Mostly, they're led by people who want to employ a pseudo-scientific kind of reasoning that says, "If I can't see it, it doesn't exist. I can't see God, so He must not exist." There are obviously a couple of big holes in this way of thinking. In the first place, it assumes that humanity now can observe everything that exists. Why would we think that? In 1269, no one had ever seen a plague bacillus, yet the disease that they caused, the Black Death, killed a quarter of the population of Europe. Can we honestly say that our powers of observation are any less fallible today?
- B. Second, though, even scientists accept the existence of things they cannot directly observe because of their impact on their environment. For instance, the smallest subatomic particle known to man is called a quark. Quarks cannot be seen even with an electron microscope, but we know they're there because of the way they affect other things. If we're willing to accept quarks based on indirect evidence, we should also accept God based on indirect evidence. Consider the words of David in **PSALM 19:1**. We're not talking tiny subatomic particles here. We're talking everything we see when we look up at the stars at night. How can we consider the beauty and the majesty of the heavens and say, "All of that came about by chance"? That makes as much sense as saying that the Mona Lisa is the result of an explosion in a paint factory. Logic tells us that somebody painted the Mona Lisa, and it tells us that when we see the heavens, we're looking at the handiwork of God.
- C. Along similar lines, everyone needs to know that **HE CREATED ALL THINGS**. This is just an extension of our last point. The creation implies a Creator, and we see that Creator defined in **GENESIS 1:1**. This is probably among the five best-known verses in the Bible, but it's still something that we need to think about and apply for ourselves. Here's why: If indeed humanity exists because we evolved out of the primordial ooze to our current level, there is literally no reason why we are here. We are a meaningless freak of nature, and that means that we can behave however we want. However, if we exist because we were created by God, things are very different. Intelligent beings make things for reasons, and it follows from that that if God made us, He made us for a reason. That means that we have a purpose, and are obliged because of our created status to live to fulfill that purpose. We can't just do whatever we want because God made us for His goals, not ours.
- D. We need to recognize that God's goals are very different, at least in part because His nature is very different. Whereas each one of us only has one personality, although God is also one, **HE CONSISTS OF THREE PERSONS**. These three persons are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We don't know all the details of their relationship with each other, but we know they are three and yet one because of passages like **2 CORINTHIANS 14:14**. In this passage, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are presented as different from one another, yet are treated as equivalent to one another in nature. Despite their differences, though, they are somehow still all part of the oneness of God. This is complex stuff, friends. Indeed, it is

probably too complex for our human minds ever to figure out, and there is no reason for us to figure it out. Let's just recognize what God's word teaches on the subject and let it go at that.

II. God's Characteristics.

- A. Now that we have grasped some core ideas about God, we can move on to understanding His essential characteristics. The first of these is that **HE IS OMNIPOTENT**. "Omnipotent" is just a fancy word meaning that God is all-powerful. This is a tough concept for us to get our minds around because we ourselves are limited by so many external factors: space, time, the weaknesses of our bodies, and so on. God, by contrast, is limited only by His nature. Look at what **PSALM 135:5-6** reveals concerning this. Basically, whatever God wants to do, He does. Create the universe? Fine. God can do that. Raise someone from the dead who has been in his tomb for thousands of years? Fine. God can do that. There's both an upside to this and a downside. On a positive note, this means that if we are right with God and need His help, He can literally move heaven and earth to intervene on our behalf. On a not-so-positive note, if we're not right with God and choose to rebel against Him instead, we don't stand a chance of succeeding in liberating ourselves from Him. Whether we like it or not, the God of heaven is the One who is always in control.
- B. Just as God is omnipotent, so too **HE IS OMNISCIENT**. This is just another fancy word that means "all-knowing." Computers are amazing these days. I can store a bewildering amount of data just on the hard drive of my little laptop at home. However, the most powerful supercomputer ever made can't even hold the thousandth part of the information that is in the mind of God. God knows how many grains of sand there are on every beach in the world. He knows how many stars there are in every galaxy in the universe. Indeed, He has even named all of them. He knows everything about the future; He knows everything about the past.
- C. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, He knows everything about each one of us as well. Look at how David depicts the understanding of God in **PSALM 139:1-4**. He knows what we do, He knows what we say, and He even knows what we think. Not even the tiniest details of our lives escape the mind of God. That can be quite comforting when we're looking for help from God, but it can be tremendously frightening when we think of the evil things we do and are forced to admit that God sees them. For good or ill, though, it is true.
- D. Finally, the Bible reveals concerning God that **HE IS OMNIPRESENT**. This just means that God is everywhere, and not just in a metaphorical sense, either. Sometimes in our lives, we talk about having so much work to do that we need to be in two places at once. Of course, because we have physical bodies, this is impossible for us to manage. God, on the other hand, isn't just in two places at once; He is in all places at once. God is simultaneously present on Times Square in New York City and on some frozen rock on the far side of Pluto. God created physical space, so He isn't bound by its constraints to be in any one location.
- E. Most importantly for us, that means that wherever we are, God is. Consider the way that David continues to describe God in **PSALM 139:7-8**. Sometimes, we feel the need to go on vacation, to "get away from it all." We go sit on a beach or the side of a mountain and enjoy the relaxation of solitude. Friends, we might be able to get away from everything else, but we aren't able to get away from God. He is present with us everywhere we go, and even if we succeed in hiding something from everyone else, we won't hide it from God.

III. God's Character.

- A. When we think about all of the power and ability that God possesses, it's kind of intimidating to think about all of that concentrated in the hands of just one Being. If God were so inclined, He could do whatever evil thing to any of us that He wanted to. Thankfully, though, we are protected by God's character. The first aspect of this that we need to grasp is that **HE IS GOOD**. Every single thing that God does is the morally right thing to do, and He will never work evil upon anyone because it is completely opposed to His nature. Consider what John says about God in **1 JOHN 1:5**. When John describes God as light, he doesn't mean that God lights up like a giant firefly. He means that God has none of the darkness of evil anywhere in His being. He is completely free from sin. He is completely free from evil desires. If that weren't so, friends, all of us would be in a lot of trouble, but because of who God is, we can rely on Him always to do what is right.
- B. Of course, there are times in our lives when that's not necessarily a reassuring thought either. There are plenty of folks who run around doing what is not right, and if God allowed evil to prosper, He wouldn't be a good God anymore. That's why we need to see also that **HE WILL JUDGE MANKIND**. Consider the words of the wise king Solomon on this subject in **ECCLESIASTES 12:13-14**. We have a responsibility to serve God and do good because the day will come when every act, whether it is good or evil, will be judged by God. This is different than the judgments of mankind. Those judgments are imperfect because we don't necessarily know all the facts or make good decisions when we have them. By contrast, God knows everything and knows how to decide rightly on the basis of the information He has. Unlike us, God is perfectly just.
- C. That's a good thing if we are aware that we have done only good, but it's a frightening thing if we know that we have done evil, which all of us have done. Thankfully, God, because of His love toward us has through His word told us of His plan for our salvation, which we'll be looking at through the next several weeks.

Conclusion. If you want to serve this God today, come to Him as His word requires.