

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT GOD

The Nature of God

GOD IS CREATOR

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1 NIV)

GOD IS DIFFERENT FROM HIS CREATION

He alone is immortal. (1 Timothy 6:16)

He is incorruptible. (Romans 1:23, 25)

GOD HAS MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO HUMANITY (John 14:7, 1 John 5:20, Psalm 19)

Humanity's only sources of knowledge about God are in the ways he makes himself known. He makes himself known through general revelation (such as the powerful beauty of nature) and specific revelation (such as the Bible).

GOD IS UNCREATED SPIRIT

God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth. (John 4:24 NIV)

GOD DOES NOT HAVE A PHYSICAL BODY OF FLESH AND BONES

He is invisible. (1 Timothy 6:16)

GOD IS DIFFERENT FROM ANGELIC SPIRITS AND PEOPLE'S SPIRITS

He has authority over all these spirits. (Hebrews 1:3-4)

GOD IS A PERSON

He is a real person who has relationships with other persons.

Characteristics of God's person:

- Intellect (Psalm 139:1-4)
- Emotion (Judges 2:18)
- Free will (ability to choose) (Ephesians 1:9-11)
- His names listed in the Bible

GOD IS UNLIMITED

"Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable." (Psalm 145:3)

- In his existence – He has always existed. No one gave life to God nor does he need some outside source to remain in existence. (Exodus 3:14)
- In reference to time – He is not held by the restrictions of time. (Genesis 21:33, John 1:1, Deuteronomy 33:27)
- In reference to space – He is not restricted to the confines of space. (1 Kings 8:27)
- In power – God's divine power is unlimited. (Job 42:2, Luke 1:37) There is nothing impossible for God to do that is consistent with his nature.
- In knowledge – God has unlimited knowledge. (Isaiah 46:9-10, 1 John 3:20)

GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE

Nobody can improve God, so he does not change. (Malachi 3:6) The Bible depicts his unchanging nature by describing him as “the rock”. (Deuteronomy 32:4)

GOD IS NEAR

God is personally near us. He is called Immanuel, “God with us”. (Isaiah 7:14, James 4:8, 1 Corinthians 3:16)

GOD IS HOLY

The basic idea of holiness is “separation.” God is separate from the rest of creation in that his person and nature are perfect. (Exodus 15:11) He is completely pure. (Deuteronomy 32:4, Zephaniah 3:5)

GOD IS JUST

Everything that God does is right. (Isaiah 45:21, Revelation 15:3) It is because he is just that God responds to sin with wrath. (Romans 1:18)

GOD IS LOVE

The essence of his being is love. Because he loves us, he wants to be in a relationship with the people he created. (1 John 4:8, 16 and Deuteronomy 7:8) It is from his love that we see God is gracious and merciful. (Ephesians 2:4) It is from his love that we see God is patient with us. (Psalm 86:15)

THE NAMES OF GOD: How God identifies himself gives us a picture of who he is. Therefore, he is:

- Yahweh – “I am” (the self-existing one – Exodus 3:14)
- Yahweh Jireh – (the Lord will provide – Genesis 22:14)
- Yahweh Nissi – (the Lord is my banner – Exodus 17:15)
- Yahweh Shalom (the Lord of peace – Judges 6:24)
- Yahweh Sabaoth (the Lord of hosts – 1 Samuel 1:3)
- Yahweh Maccaddeschcem (the Lord your sanctifier – Exodus 31:13)
- Yahweh Roi (the Lord my shepherd – Psalm 23:1)
- Yahweh Tsidkenu (the Lord our righteousness – Jeremiah 23:6)
- Yahweh Shammah (the Lord is there – Ezekiel 48:35)
- Yahweh Elohim Israel (the Lord, the God of Israel – Judges 5:3)

He is also called “Elohim,” which means “great power.” He is introduced as Elohim. (Genesis 1:1) Elohim is also used with other words. He is described as El-Shaddai (the mighty one standing on the mountain – Genesis 17:1), El Elyon (the most high God – Psalm 9:2), El Olam (the everlasting God – Isaiah 40:28), and El Roi (the God who sees – Genesis 16:13).

The third name of God is “Adonai,” which means “Lord.” This is a title of respect given to many authority figures such as kings, but God is uniquely the Lord of all. (Joshua 3:11)

ONE GOD: THREE PERSONS

The Bible teaches that there is only ONE God (Deuteronomy 6:4).

In the full revelation of scripture, we see him as three persons who are the one God.

There is the Father who is God,
Jesus who is God,
and the Holy Spirit who is God.

Scripture references that clearly show the three persons of God include: Matthew 3:16-17, 4:1-10; Luke 1:35; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:13-15; Acts 10:38, 20:21-23; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, 13:14; and 1 Peter 1:2. There are many Old Testament accounts that refer to the various members of the godhead, such as Genesis 1:2, Isaiah 59:20, and Isaiah 48:16. God is described in the plural “us” in various passages, such as Isaiah 6:8, Genesis

11:7, and Genesis 1:26.

Although it is true that the word Trinity does not appear in the Bible, it is clearly evident that God is three in one.

The Work of God

GOD THE CREATOR

Before creation took place, only the tri-personal God existed. (Psalm 90:2) He created the world from nothing. He alone is the Creator of all things. See Genesis 1 and 2, 1 Chronicles 16:26, Psalm 96:5, and Revelation 4:11.

Implications of creation:

1. God created the world because he wanted to. It was an act of his free will. (Revelation 4:11)
2. God created all things with a purpose, thereby giving meaning and worth to human existence. (Colossians 1:16-17)
3. God the creator is, therefore, the only thing worthy of worship. (Psalm 33:6-9, Romans 1:22-25)

GOD THE RULER

God is not only creator of the universe but also the ruler. He is in charge! He has not made the world and then left it to run on its own accord.

The entire universe is held together in reality by his awesome power (Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3).

Because God is Ruler, we know that:

1. God provides: He provides through the all-natural events (Matthew 5:45, 10:29; Job 38:31-33, Psalm 104:32, 147:4). He also controls history.
2. God preordains: He flawlessly carries out his plans (1 Corinthians 1:27-29; Ephesians 1:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:13).
3. God works miracles: He works contrary to the laws of nature in order to bring about his purposes (Luke 7:20-22 and John 10:25).
4. God answers prayer (Psalm 34:17; Acts 10:4, 31).
5. God's will is the highest form of living (Romans 2:18, Colossians 1:9-12, Psalm 19:8, Ephesians 5:15-17).
6. God has come up with a solution to evil: It was God's will to create free will in humans so that they would be created in his image. Evil was brought into the world when Satan convinced Adam and Eve to sin against God. God has responded to this problem by offering redemption that comes through Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:22).

GOD THE REDEEMER

God is the redeemer of humanity. As savior, Jesus has rescued us from our sins. (Matthew 1:21)

Humanity needed to be redeemed because all people have sinned. (Romans 3:23, Psalm 14:2-3) Nobody can keep God's law perfectly. (Galatians 3:11)

It is only through God's redemption that we can be separated from our sins. Humanity's own efforts are not enough. (Psalm 49:7)

We can be considered righteous before God if we accept that Jesus took the punishment for sin in our place. (Romans 3:24-26, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24)

God's redemption of humanity is illustrated in the Bible as cleansing us of sin. (1 John 1:7) We were slaves to sin, but God bought us back at the cost of Jesus, God's son. (1 Corinthians 7:23)

When we are redeemed, God equips us to live in a way that is pleasing to him. (Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 2:10)