

WHO IS GOD?:
A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING OUR CREATOR & KING

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WHY KNOWING GOD IS IMPORTANT:

It has rightly been said that:

> **"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."**
>
> **- A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy***

We believe this statement to be true because a right, or proper, understanding of God is fundamental and foundational to practical Christian living and true worship. In the same way that a foundation is vital to holding up a house or building, this proper understanding of God is the foundation of worship. We can give, serve, pray, read, sing, fast, and learn all we want, but if we don't understand Who it is that we're doing these actions for, then they're empty and devoid of any real depth and meaning. We cannot truly worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24) without first knowing Who we are worshipping as well as why He is worthy of our worship.



However, Scripture is very clear that God is incomprehensible (Is. 46:9-10, 55:8-9). In other words, we cannot ever fully understand any single thing about God. We can know something about His attributes, but we can never know them exhaustively because of both our sinfulness and His greatness.

Though we cannot understand God fully, we *can* understand Him truly. We may not have exhaustive knowledge of God, but through Scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit we have true knowledge of God. Though God is incomprehensible, He is knowable.

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HOW WE OBTAIN THIS KNOWLEDGE:

We believe that knowing God in any capacity is only possible through the Holy Spirit, because only the Spirit of God knows the fullness of the glory of God (1 Cor. 2:10-16). If we want to know God, then we need the Spirit to reveal Him to us. Therefore, people who are desperate to know God will first be desperate for His Spirit.

This resource, which is by no means an exhaustive list, is simply designed to point you to Scripture, outline some of God's attributes, and guide you in worship through each attribute. Our hope is that the Holy Spirit might use this tool to help stir up your affection for and bring deeper understanding about our Creator & King.

WHAT WE DO WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE:

As we prepare to look through this resource, first remember: knowledge isn't the end goal. Knowledge of God should produce obedience in us (2 Pet. 1:3), as well as proper worship. When we know more of who God is, it should lead us to worship Him all the more. Below are some Action Steps to take in order to apply this knowledge in your personal life:

- **Pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to give you understanding about who He is and continue to bring about transformation in your life**
- **Thank God that He allows us to know Him and that He is who He says He is**
- **Pray through and meditate over each of the attributes listed, a day or week at a time, and thank God for how that specific attribute has impacted you or how you've seen Him extend them to you**
- **Take one attribute a day or week and read through all the Scripture passages listed with each attribute to see how God describes Himself as well as how others reacted to God's nature**

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD:

Before digging into the attributes and characteristics of God, there are a few points, taken from a teaching series by Dr. David Platt, that we believe are important to remember as we endeavor to learn more about Him:

- **All of God's attributes are personal — they describe who He is**
- **All of God's attributes are practical — they help us understand how He acts**
- **All of God's attributes are perfect — Matt. 5:48**
- **All of God's attributes are permanent — Jude 25**
- **All of God's attributes are praiseworthy — Ps. 104:1-2**

In this guide, we use Dr. David Platt's resource again to separate our list into two categories: 1) God's Greatness & 2) God's Goodness

GOD'S GREATNESS

Deut. 10:17; 1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 95:3; Ps. 96:4; Ps. 145:3; Ps. 147:5

These specific attributes encompass God's overall greatness over creation

The INDEPENDENCE of God — God is both self-existent & self-sufficient
Ex. 3:13-14; Ps. 90:2; John 1:1-4; John 5:26 // Ps. 50:7-15; Acts 17:24-25

> *"For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself." (John 5:26)*

Self-existent: He was never created and never came into being, but rather has always existed. He is entirely independent of any external source.

Self-sufficient: He needs nothing from anyone or anything. He has no needs and is completely independent of any external source for anything (energy, sleep, place to live, food, etc.).

Worship Connection: God doesn't involve us in His mission because He needs us—He does it because He loves us. And He doesn't *need* to love us, but He chooses to; and that should make His love even sweeter to us.

The SPIRITUALITY of God — God is both spiritual & personal
John 4:24; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:15-16

> *"To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." (1 Timothy 1:17)*

Spiritual: He is not physical, not visible (1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:15-16), has no size or dimensions, is not limited to location, & is not destructible

Personal: He has personal names, feelings, thoughts, & He is alive

Worship Connection: God, as spirit, exerts *lordship* over creation, and God, as person, exhibits *presence* within creation. God doesn't just want to rule your life from afar, He wants to be intimately connected with you all the time. His lordship proves we can trust His rule; His presence shows we can trust His love.

The ETERNITY of God — God is both infinite & eternal
Deut. 33:27; Job 11:7-8; Ps. 90:1-6; Is. 40:28; Hab. 1:12; Rom. 16:26; Rev. 22:13

> *"The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms..." (Deuteronomy 33:27a)*

Infinite: God is unlimited, unlimitable, measureless, and boundless

Eternal: He has no beginning, no end, and is Lord over time

- God's infinite and eternal nature impacts every other attribute of His character; He will infinitely and eternally be exactly who He is.

Worship Connection: We can be comforted knowing that our God will never cease to exist and will always be there to carry us.

The OMNIPOTENCE of God — God is all-powerful

Ps. 147:5; Is. 40:28; Jer. 32:17; Matt. 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 1:37; Rom. 1:20; Eph. 3:20; Rev. 1:8

> ***"Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you." (Jeremiah 32:17)***

- God has infinite power to do all things in His holy will. His power extends over all creation (Gen. 17:1) and throughout all history (Acts 17:26; Ps. 115:3)
- However, God *cannot* deny His character (2 Tim. 2:13) or deceive His people (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18)

Worship Connection: No problem you have or face is too difficult for God to handle. Rather than trying to do things in your limited strength, give it to the One who never grows faint or weary.

The OMNIPRESENCE of God — God is ever-present

Ex. 3:11-12; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 46:1; Ps. 139:7-10; Pro. 15:3; Is. 41:10; Jer. 23:24; Zep. 3:17; Heb. 4:13

> ***"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good." (Proverbs 15:3)***

- All of God is always present (Jer. 23:23-24; Ps. 139:7-10; Acts 7:48-50)
- God cannot be contained or described by spatial dimensions
- God is present everywhere, but distinct from everything

Worship Connection: God is always accessible, which means you are never alone.

The OMNISCIENCE of God — God is all-knowing

Job 21:22; Job 37:16; Ps. 69:5; Ps. 139:1-6; Ps. 147:5; Is. 40:13-14; Matt. 6:8, 31-32; Matt. 10:30; Luke 12:7, 29-30; Rom. 8:29; Rom. 11:33-34; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 3:20

> ***"for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything." (1 John 3:20)***

- God has all knowledge and all wisdom at all times (Job 37:16; 1 John 3:20)
- God possesses perfect knowledge: He knows Himself, us, and all things perfectly — All things actual (Heb. 4:13) & All things possible (Is. 46:9-10)
- God knows everything at every moment: He never learns, discovers, ponders, is never surprised or amazed, and never forgets*—He simply knows.

Is. 43:25 - God does not forget, but instead **chooses not to remember*

Worship Connection: God knows you better than anyone else and He still loves you perfectly. You are known, seen, understood, and completely loved by Him.

The IMMUTABILITY of God — God is unchanging

Job 23:13; Mal. 3:6; 2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 13:8; James 1:17 // Ps. 33:10-11; Is. 46:9-11 // Num 23:19; Ps. 89:34-37; Is. 40:8

> ***"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)***

- God's perfections are unchanging *(first verse section above)*
- God's purposes are unchanging *(second verse section above)*
- God's promises are unchanging *(third verse section above)*

Worship Connection: Nothing you ever do can cause God to change in His relationship to you. You are secure.

GOD'S GOODNESS

Ex. 34:6; 1 Chron. 16:34; Ez. 3:11; Ps. 25:8; Ps. 27:13; Ps. 31:19-20; Ps. 33:5; Ps. 34:8; Ps. 69:16; Ps. 100:4-5; Ps. 107:8-9; Ps. 119:68; Ps. 143:10; Ps. 145:5-7, 9; Nah. 1:7; Mark 10:18

These specific attributes encompass God's overall goodness to us

The HOLINESS of God — God is exalted & worthy

Ex. 3:1-6; Lev. 11:44-45; Lev. 19:2; Lev. 20:26; 1 Sam. 2:2; Is. 6:3; Is. 57:15; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:8

> *"...'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!'" (Revelation 4:8b)*

- God is perfectly unique (1 Sam. 2:2)
- God is completely separate (Ex. 15:11)
- God is absolutely pure: untouched by sin (Hab. 1:13; James 1:13) and intolerable of sin (Heb. 12:14)

Worship Connection: Understanding God's holiness reminds us of how broken we are as people and how impossible it is to "measure up" on our own. But thanks be to God that He provided a Savior, mending our brokenness and setting us apart.

The JUSTICE of God — God is fair & right

Deut. 32:4; Job 34:12; Ps. 33:5; Ps. 89:14; Ps. 99:4; Is. 30:18; Is. 61:8; Rom. 12:19

> *"The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he." (Deuteronomy 32:4)*

- God is always fair (Rom. 2:11) and always right (Deut. 32:4)
- The judgment of God is: authoritative (John 5:24-27), eternal (Ps. 73:16-17), and irreversible (Rev. 20:11-15)

Worship Connection: For those in Christ, God will bring about justice on your behalf (Ps. 37). Whoever you feel has wronged you, whatever situation you feel needs to be fixed, give it to the Lord—you can trust Him.

The LOVE of God — God *is* love

Ps. 86:15; Jer. 31:3; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 8:37-39; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:4; 1 John 3:1; 1 John 4:8, 9-10, 16, 19

> *"'I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.'" (Jeremiah 31:3b)*

- God eternally gives and shares Himself
  - God's love exists perfectly within Himself—i.e. the Godhead, or Trinity (John 3:35; John 17:24)
  - God's love initiates, or starts, with Himself—i.e. God loves us, not because we are lovely, but because it's who He is (Deut. 7:7-8; Rom. 5:6-10)

Worship Connection: God loves you in ways you cannot fathom. His love is not based on anything you've done, but simply on who He is. There are no conditions to His love: you can't earn it, and you can't do anything to lose it.

The INTEGRITY of God — God is true

Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Pro. 30:5; Jer. 10:8-16; 1 Thess. 5:24

> *"Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him." (Proverbs 30:5)*

- God always tells the truth
- God always proves true ***(He is faithful)*** – Ex. 6:2-8; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 32:4; Ps. 33:4; Ps. 36:5; Ps. 86:15; Ps. 89:8, 33; Ps. 91:4; Ps. 119:90; Lam. 3:22-23; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 10:23
- *Because of His integrity:* God is the final standard of truth & His Word is trustworthy

Worship Connection: Because of His nature, God *cannot* lie or be unfaithful. When other people fail you or deceive you, remember that God is for you. When He speaks, it is truth; when He acts, it is dependable. Nothing can change that.

The GRACE of God — God gives what we ***don't*** deserve

Gen. 3:21; Ex. 34:6; Ps. 86:15; Ps. 103:8; Ps. 116:5; Ps. 145:8; Is. 30:18; Joel 2:13

> *"Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful." (Psalm 116:5)*

*God's love is demonstrated in His grace and mercy toward His people

- The grace of God is God's love applied to our sin (Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Pet. 5:10-11)
  - God offers us His riches at Christ's expense—this involves no merit *in* us or compensation *from* us

Worship Connection: God could have stopped after canceling our sin debt with His mercy, but He chose to extend blessings and offer us riches as well. Similar to His love and mercy, there is nothing you can do to earn His grace and nothing you can do to lose it once you are in Christ.

The MERCY of God — God withholds what we ***do*** deserve

Gen. 3:21; Ex. 3:7-10; Ps. 86:15; Ps. 103:8; Ps. 145:8-9; Lam. 3:22-23; Mic. 7:18-19; Luke 6:36; Eph. 2:4-5

> *"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." (Psalm 103:8)*

*God's love is demonstrated in His mercy and grace toward His people

- The mercy of God is God's love applied to our suffering (Mic. 7:18-19)
  - Tender compassion toward the needy (Ex. 3:7; Matt. 9:27, 36; Heb. 4:16)
  - Strong comfort for the suffering (Ps. 86:3-6; 2 Cor. 1:3-4)
  - Deep concern for the hurting (Zec. 7:9-10; Jude 21-23)

Worship Connection: There is nothing that you have done that outlasts the mercy of God. Whatever sin weighs heavy on your heart—past or present—know that God is rich in mercy because of His great love for you. He forgives you; so you can forgive yourself too.

The WRATH of God — God *must* punish sin
Ps. 5:5-6; Ps. 45:7; Hab. 1:13; 2 Thess. 1:5-10

> *"The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers." (Psalm 5:5)*

- God hates all sin (Ps. 45:7; Hab. 1:13)
- God despises those who practice sin (Ps. 5:5-6)
- Because of His holiness, God **must** punish sin, but He didn't leave us hopeless...

Worship Connection: We can find extreme and immense comfort is this knowledge: We deserved the wrath of God (Rom. 6:23), but Jesus satisfied the wrath of God (Is. 53:4-6; 1 Thess. 1:10), so we could be saved from the wrath of God (Rom. 5:9).

The JEALOUSY of God — God is fiercely protective of His Name & His people
Ex. 20:5; Ex. 34:14; Deut. 4:24; Deut. 5:9; Deut. 6:15; Josh. 24:19; Is. 42:8; Eze. 39:25; Joel 2:18-19; Nah. 1:2

> *"(for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a Jealous God)" (Exodus 34:14)*

- God is deeply committed to His glory (Ex. 20:5; Is. 48:9-11)
- God is deeply committed to our good
  - His jealousy brings comfort: He will protect us (Joel 2:18-19; Nah. 1:2)
  - His jealousy brings hope: He will keep us (Eze. 39:25-29)
  - His jealousy breeds worship: He will draw us (Ex. 34:14; Hos. 2:10-16)

Worship Connection: What a comforting truth to know that the God who is perfectly and entirely self-sufficient has chosen to enter into an intimate relationship with us to the point of feeling jealous anger when we are unfaithful to Him! Praise the Lord that He has given His Spirit to help guide us in remaining faithful to Him.