

GOD's Solution To Life's Problems

Lesson 2 – Seeking To Know God Our Creator & His Character

INTRODUCTION

There are many opinions about what God is like. The purpose of this lesson is to study the Scriptures to learn and know the one true God.

“Plunge yourself in the Godhead’s deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest refreshed and invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead.” C.H. Spurgeon on January 7, 1855

I. SEEKING TO KNOW GOD OUR CREATOR

1. According to this verse, why should God receive glory and honor and power?

Revelation 4:11 – “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they existed and were created.” .

2. How did God create the world?

Psalms 33:6-9 – By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

3. How has God revealed Himself to us? In other words, how can you know that God exists?

Romans 1:19-20 – “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

Acts 14:17 – “Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

[TEACHER EXTRA – “When we look at a building, how do we know there was a builder? We can’t see him, hear him, touch, taste, or smell him. Of course, the building is proof that there was a builder. When you look at a painting, how can we know that there was a painter? Why, the painting is perfectly positive proof that there was a painter. Therefore, the way we know that there was Creator is by looking at creation even though you can’t see Him, hear Him, touch Him, taste Him, or smell Him.” Ray Comfort]

4. Why did God create mankind and all things? In other words, what is our purpose in life?

Isaiah 43:7 – “everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made.”

[TEACHER EXTRA - created for My glory means created to give God worshipful praise, honor, and thanksgiving.]

Isaiah 43:21 – “the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.”

Colossians 1:16 - “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

5. Since God is our Creator and rules the universe, how does He want us to respond to Him?

Acts 17:24-27 – “The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their

dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him." Hebrews 11:6 – "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." [Note the benefit of seeking God.] Isaiah 66:2 - All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. [Contrite means grieving and penitent for sin or shortcomings.]

6. In light of what the Bible says about God being our Creator, what might be some implications for our lives? In other words, what is the relationship between a Creator and what He creates?

Since God created us, we are utterly dependent upon Him for everything we have.

Since God created us, He has authority over us.

Since God created us, we have no inherent rights of our own.

Since God created us, He sets the standard of right and wrong in His Word.

Since God created us, we are His (He has ownership over us) and not our own to do as we please.

II. SEEKING TO KNOW GOD AND HIS CHARACTER

1. How important is it to know God? What did Jesus equate it to?

John 17:3 – "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

2. What do these verses teach us about knowing and understanding God and His ways?

Romans 11:33 – "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!"

Isaiah 55:9 – "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Psalms 147:5 – "Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure."

God is incomprehensible (unable to be fully understood).

"The doctrine of God's incomprehensibility has much positive application for our own lives. It means that we will never be able to know "too much" about God, for we will never run out of things to learn about Him, and we will thus never tire in delighting in the discovery of more and more of His excellence and of the greatness of his works." Wayne Grudem

3. What does God want us to boast about concerning knowing Him? What can we know about Him?

Jeremiah 9:23-24 – Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."

[TEACHER EXTRA - The passage teaches us that we can know God personally. Also, while we can't exhaust our knowledge of God, we can know Him truly in accordance with how He has revealed Himself in His Word.]

4. What is unique about God? What do the following verses infer about God?

1 Samuel 2:2 - "There is none holy like the Lord; there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.

Exodus 15:11 - "Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic (means greatness) in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?"

Habakkuk 1:13a - "You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong..."

Psalms 24:3-4 - "Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully."

[TEACHER EXTRA - The average person typically has a lopsided view of God's love and mercy that overrides His character traits. But here we learn that the Holiness of God does not look favorably toward sin.]

The above verses help us to understand the Holiness of God.

- 1) God is distinct, separate, and in a class by Himself.
- 2) God is absolutely morally pure and perfect (without sin).

The primary meaning of holy is 'separate.' It comes from an ancient word that meant, 'to cut,' or 'to separate.' Perhaps even more accurate would be the phrase 'a cut above something.' When we find a garment or another piece of merchandise that is outstanding, that has a superior excellence, we use the expression that it is 'a cut above the rest.' R.C. Sproul

5. In the following passages, underline the words that reveal who God is in accordance with each holy characteristic. Then, answer the application questions. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of God's characteristics, rather it is a taste of who God is.

[TEACHER EXTRA - The application questions are open ended to cause one to think. In other words, the goal is not to have an exact right answer but think through the implications of God's character.]

A. Sovereignty (supreme power or authority)

[God supremely rules (king) the universe. He is in complete control of everybody and everything.]

Proverbs 19:21 - "*Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.*"

Proverbs 21:1 - "*The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He will.*"

Philippians 2:13 - "*for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*"

Romans 8:28 - "*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*"

Job 42:2 - "*I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted (prevent from succeeding in or accomplishing something).*"

APPLICATION:

What do you think of the idea that God is in control of your life and ultimately in control of the entire universe? Does this truth raise objections in your mind? How does it encourage you?

God can be trusted and it is encouraging to know that nothing can happen to me without His good intention.

Gen. 50:20 - "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good..."

B. Omnipotent (almighty or unlimited power)

[God is all-powerful, and has strength to do all things.]

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

Matthew 19:26 - "*But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*"

Jeremiah 32:27 - "*Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?*"

APPLICATION:

Knowing God is Omnipotent, what does Isaiah 41:10 teach you concerning life's difficulties?

Isaiah 41:10 - "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

God is able to handle anything that comes our way.

C. Wisdom

[God's decisions always bring the best results through the best possible ways.]

Romans 16:27 - "*to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.*"

Psalms 104:24 - "*O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.*"

Romans 11:33 - "*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!*"

APPLICATION:

While we can't make sense of all God's decisions, how does 1 Peter 4:19 tell us to respond?

1 Peter 4:19 - "Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will **entrust** their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good."

D. Righteousness or Justice (morally right and fair)

[God always does what is right, and as Judge He is the final standard of what is right.]

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

Genesis 18:25c - "*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"*

Psalms 119:137 - "*Righteous are you, O Lord, and right are your rules."*

APPLICATION:

How do you think your standard of what is right and just compares with God's standard?

E. Immutable (unchanging)

[God never changes His nature or His purpose.]

Malachi 3:6 - "*For I the Lord do not change..."*

Hebrews 6:17-18 - "*So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us."*

Numbers 23:19 - "*God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?"*

Psalms 33:11 - "*The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations."*

APPLICATION:

How might it be encouraging to know that God never changes (His promises, His Word, etc.)?

God will always keep His promises.

God can be trusted to keep His Word.

F. Omniscient (knowing everything)

[God knows all things possible and actual. Nothing takes Him by surprise.]

1 John 3:20 - "*...God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything."*

Hebrews 4:13 - "*And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."*

Psalms 139:1-6 - "*O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it."*

APPLICATION:

How might it be comforting and challenging to know that God is omniscient?

It is comforting that God knows exactly how I think and feel even if no one else does.

It is challenging that God knows every bad thought or feeling and nothing is hidden from Him.

G. Omnipresent (present everywhere)

[God is present everywhere at all times.]

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

Psalms 139:7-10 - "*Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol (grave), you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me."*

Jeremiah 23:23-24 - *“Am I a God at hand, declares the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord.”*

APPLICATION:

How might it be comforting and challenging to know that God is omnipresent?

It is comforting to know that God is always with me no matter where I am.

It is challenging to know that God sees me at my worst, and that I can never hide from Him.

H. Love

[God is love which means He sacrificially gave of Himself to meet our needs.]

1 John 4:8 – *“Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.”*

John 3:16 - *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

Romans 5:7-8 – *“For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

APPLICATION:

How is God’s love different from our love for others?

God’s love is always sacrificial and always perfect.

I. Mercy, Grace, & Patience

[God’s goodness is seen by his mercy, grace, and patience.]

Psalm 145:8-9 - *“The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.”*

Psalm 130:3-4 - *“If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.”*

“God’s mercy means God’s goodness toward those in misery and distress.”

Wayne Grudem

“God’s grace means God’s goodness toward those who deserve only punishment.”

“God’s patience means God’s goodness in withholding of punishment toward those who sin over a period of time.”

APPLICATION:

How is God’s mercy, grace, and patience different from our mercy, grace, and patience for others?

Thinking Question

In light of these truths that you have studied, what did you learn that was new about God? Have any of your views of God changed in light of this study? Explain.

Suggested Reading

Genesis 1