

THE PERSON OF GOD

(Adapted from Survey of Basic Christianity)

What is God like?

*“I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NO OTHER; I am God,
and there is none like Me”* (Isaiah 46:9).

How can we as finite human beings know God?

**Basically because he wants to be known
and has revealed Himself!**

- **in creation**
- **in His word, the Bible**
- **and through His Son**

The Bible declares the voice of the One Supreme Being,

*“For this is what the high and lofty One
says— he who lives for ever, whose name is holy:
I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is
contrite and lowly in spirit”* (Isaiah 57:15).

Amidst all other imaginations and pretences of gods..

The God of the Bible is the One true and living God

Paul says of the Christians at Thessalonica

you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God
1 Thessalonians 1v9b

Popular Concepts About God

The name “God” has always been upon many lips.

- There have been those who have **denied His existence**,
- those who have **used His name in cursing** and
- those who have **confused and misrepresented His being**.
- **Atheists** say that there is no God and that they can prove it.
- **Agnostics** say it is impossible to know of His existence and work diligently to influence others to join them in a declaration of ignorance.
- **Pantheists** say that God is merely self-created nature, and that man is a part of it.
- **Polytheists** say there is not one God but many.

(Range from ancient pagans to modern day Mormons.)

Other varied ideas have been put forward.

- Some say God is a **principle, an impersonal law or force**.
- Others that God is merely **an idea in a person’s mind, a psychological crutch** for the weak and fearful.
- **Men have made images or idols that represent gods** (Acts 19:23-28) - a practice **forbidden in God’s commandments** (Exodus 20:4-5).
- Many times **men have even called themselves gods** and called on others to worship them.

- Indeed **all those who refuse to acknowledge any account-ability to a God**, in effect **become their own gods**.

Self-Evidence of God

The Bible does not attempt to prove that there is a God. It assumes this knowledge is woven into our human consciousness.

Indeed it declares that:

*The fool says in his heart,
"There is no God."*(Psalm 14:1; Psalm 53:1).

And

*In his pride the wicked does not seek him;
in all his thoughts there is no room for God.*(Psalm 10:4).

BIBLICAL VIEW OF GOD

1. There is One God

Both Old & New Testaments proclaim there is only one God

*I am the Lord, and there is no other;
apart from me there is no God.* **Isaiah 45:5**
*For there is one God and one mediator between
God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* **1 Timothy 2:5**

Men often speak of other gods (1 Corinthians 8:5-6) and the Bible also uses the word in an inferior sense (Exodus 7:1; Psalm 82:6),

but **there is only one true God.**

2. God Exists in Three Persons

However this one God is revealed in Scripture as **plural in His personality.**

One name for God in the Old Testament is **Elohim**, used about 2600 times. It is **plural in form** though at times used with a singular verb.

Deuteronomy 6:4 is the classic Jewish affirmation that there is only one God. *"The Lord our God is one Lord."* This verse uses the Hebrew word Elohim.

We also see that **God often speaks** of Himself even in the Old Testament as **"us" or "we"**

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness Gen. 1:26,

And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. 3:22

a. The Father is God.

Paul, Silas and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

1 Thessalonians 1:1

For he received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying,

“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

2 Peter 1:17.

b. The Spirit is God.

Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God.”

Acts 5:3-4

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:17.

c. The Son is God. (Denied by many of the cults)

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. 1 John 5:20;

while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ Titus 2:13

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:1,

Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” John 20:28

Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. Acts 20:28b

Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, for ever praised! Amen. Romans 9:5

For in Christ all the fulness of the Deity lives in bodily form Colossians 2:9

But about the Son he says,

*“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,
and righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom.*

Hebrews 1:8

*Look, he is coming with the clouds,
and every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him.
So shall it be! Amen.*

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” Revelation 1:7,8

All divine attributes are attributed to each. The qualities **of will, emotion and reason** are also attributed to each.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit are **distinct** from one another and **yet joined in divine association** (1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20-21).

Their names are joined in **the baptismal formula** (***Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*** Matthew 28:19) and the **Apostolic Blessing** (***May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*** 2 Corinthians 13:14).

All three persons are seen in the **baptism of Jesus** (Matthew 3:16-17), and the **Upper room teaching in John** (John 14:16-20; John 15:26; John 16:7-16).

The oneness is also shown in the words of Jesus

Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. John 14:9;

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: John 17:22).

They are called the three persons of the Godhead although they're different from what we usually mean by “persons.”

**They are not three different gods
but one God in three persons.**

The word “Trinity” is not in the Bible but as we've seen the concept of one God in three persons clearly is.

The Bible does not try to explain it.

**So we need to accept the direct statements
of Scripture and leave it at that.**

3. God is Spirit

God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth. John 4:24.

God is an invisible spirit being who is not bound by space, time or form.

For this reason.. **any human attempt to represent God
is a misrepresentation**

God says:

3“You shall have no other gods before me.

4“You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for

I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:3-5

The only image of the invisible God we have is Jesus Christ the Son of God and God has left us with the descriptions of Him in the Bible but with no visible image of Him.

He [Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
Colossians 1:5

4. God Has Personality

He is not a mere principle or idea, but has personal characteristics

- **knowledge** (*For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.* 1 John 3:20),
- **feelings** (*The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.* Genesis 6:6)
- **will or decision-making** (*He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.* James 1:18)

are attributed to Him.

- He manifests both love and anger.
- His knowledge is infinite.
- He remembers and sometimes He chooses to forget.
- He makes decrees and announces the future.

God is not a machine. It is of the greatest comfort to the believer to know that **God is love** (1 John 4:8, 16).

No principle or impersonal force would justify the statement of 1 Peter 5:7,
“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

God’s personal name Yahweh/Jehovah is taken from YHWH, translated LORD in the Old Testament. It was never pronounced and its full spelling or pronunciation is guess work.

This name expresses God’s being **“I AM WHO I AM”**

He is the great **“I AM”**

**It is essential that we know the God of the Bible,
who commands us to know Him through His Son Jesus Christ
because He is the only way to God**

(John 14:6).

Next week we’ll look at the Attributes/perfections of God