

# Read the Bible - 2 The Bible Helps Us See & Know God

## Last Week:

- **The Bible gives us the opportunity to see and know God.**
- The Bible is alive and powerful
- The Bible has the power to save and to sanctify us
- The importance of the Bible is that it shows us God's will.
- The Bible guidance for making our way through life
- The Bible equips and empowers us to serve Him

## God's unique Character:

### God Is Immutable – He Never Changes

Malachi 3:6

*I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.*

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?*

God does not change. His attributes are the same from before the beginning of time into eternity. His character never changes – he never gets “better” or “worse.” His plans do not change. His promises do not change.

### God is Omnipotent – He Is All Powerful

Genesis 18:14

*Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.*

Omnipotent means to have unlimited power (omni = all; potent = powerful). God is able and powerful to do anything he wills without any effort on his part.

### God Is Omniscient – He Is All-Knowing

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

*1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me! 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. 3 You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. 5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.*

God is omniscient, which means he knows everything. He can be everywhere, at the same time. And He never sleeps, He's aware every moment of every day. He knows our way, and is with us always. There's no place on this earth we can go that He doesn't see and know of.”

## **God Is Omnipresent – He Is Always Everywhere**

Psalm 139:7-10

*Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.*

To be omnipresent is to be in all places, at all times. Yet, it is important to understand that for God “to be” in a place is not the same way we are in a place. “God’s being is all together different from physical matter,” the website Ligonier.org explains. “He exists on a plane wholly distinguishable from the one readily available to the five senses.”

## **Reading the Bible teaches us to imitate God.**

Ephesians 5:1

*Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children.*

## **God’s shared character**

### **God Is Wise – He Is Full of Perfect, Unchanging Wisdom**

Romans 11:33

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!*

Wisdom is more than just head knowledge and intelligence. A truly wise person is someone who understands all the facts and makes the best decisions. A wise person uses his heart and mind together with skill and competence. But even the wisest man on earth would never come close to being as wise as God.

James 1:5

*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*

### **God Is Faithful – He Is Infinitely, Unchangingly True**

Deuteronomy 7:9

*Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.*

As with all of God’s attributes, they are not separate, isolated traits but interconnected parts of his perfect whole being. So his faithfulness cannot be understood apart from his immutability, the fact that he never changes. The fact that he is unchanging means he can never not be faithful.

Matthew 25:14-23

*21 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ 23 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’*

## **God Is Good – He Is Infinitely, Unchangingly Kind and Full of Good Will**

Psalm 34:8

*O, taste and see that the Lord is good*

The goodness of God is kind, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and His unfailing attitude toward humanity is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people.

Just like his other attributes, God's goodness exists within his immutability, and infinite nature, so that he is unchangingly, always good. His mercy flows from his goodness. "In his goodness to us, we see that He has purposed to be good in a special way to his people"

Galatians 6:9-10

*9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

## **God Is Just – He Is Infinitely, Unchangeably Right and Perfect in All He Does**

Deuteronomy 32:4

*The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.*

Being just means more than God is simply fair. It means he always does what is right and good.

Proverbs 24:23-24

*23 Whoever says to the wicked, "You are in the right," will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by nations, 25 but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them. 26 Whoever gives an honest answer kisses the lips.*

## **God Is Merciful – He is Infinitely, Unchangeably Compassionate and Kind**

Romans 9:15-16

*15 I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.*

God's mercy is inseparable from his justness. He is infinitely, unchangeably, unfailingly merciful – forgiving, and kind toward us. It is undeserved mercy, all true mercy must be, for deserved mercy is only justice. Mercy is not getting what we do deserve.

Micah 6:8

*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

Luke 6:32-36

*32 "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*

## **God Is Gracious – God Is Infinitely Inclined to Spare the Guilty**

Psalm 145:8

*The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.*

Mercy is not getting what we do deserve (damnation), grace is getting what we don't deserve (eternal life). As mercy is God's goodness confronting human misery and guilt, grace is His goodness directed toward the debt of sin.

Because grace is a part of who God is and not just an action he bestows, it means we can trust that grace is eternal. His grace is something we do not earn or lose.

Ephesians 4:29-32

*29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

## **God Is Loving – God Infinitely, Unchangingly Loves Us**

1 John 4:7-8

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

As with all attributes, we can only begin to comprehend God's love in light of his other attributes. The love of God is eternal, sovereign, unchanging, and infinite.

## **God Is Holy – He is Infinitely, Unchangingly Perfect**

Revelation 4:8

*Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord Almighty.*

The word holy means sacred, set apart, revered, or divine. That God is holy means he is endlessly, always perfect. And his standard for us is perfection as well.

Matthew 5:48

*Therefore you are to be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect*

That's why we need Christ. Without Christ taking the place for us and dying for our sins, we would all fall short of God's holy standard.

## Discussion Questions

- How would you describe God's character as a whole?
- How would you describe the difference between the parts of God's character we can imitate and parts we can't imitate?
- What attribute of God's character do you think is most important for you to imitate?