

We Believe
What we believe about God
Deuteronomy 6:4

November 5, 2017 am

HDBC

This we begin a new sermon series that will take us through November and December. Called ***We Believe***. In it we will examine the most important things that we believe. . . things that distinguish us from those who are not Christ-followers as well as from other denominations and Christian groups. ***We Believe*** these things primarily because the Bible teaches them. ***We also Believe*** them because we have experienced the effects of these truths in our lives.

These are not simply words written in a statement of belief to be listed on a website or posted in our building. These are truths that make a difference in our lives.

Theology matters! What we believe about God, ourselves, salvation, heaven and hell, the church, our purpose in life, and so much more, **matters**.

Why the series? If we already believe these things, why talk about it?

1) To reinforce the importance of these particular truths.

Many things are important, but not all things are equally important.

2) To clarify why we believe them. Confirm the truth of each one.

Make sure we know why we believe what we believe. What is the basis.

3) To make sure we can answer many of the most important life questions.

Most of the critical life questions can be answered by sound theology.

4) To help others know who we are and what makes us tick.

We want to express to the community what we believe, and why.

We want those who might consider joining with us to know what we believe.

During these two months we will examine nine important subjects. Though these topics are covered extensively in theological books and make for great conversations in the halls of theological institutions, they also shape how we live our lives. They

affect us intellectually, emotionally, psychologically, relationally and spiritually. In fact, every area of our lives is affected by these things.

This morning . . . ***What we believe about God.***

Belief in the existence of God is practically universal. It may surprise you to know, the Bible does not defend the existence of God; it simply reveals His nature, plans and purposes. With only one statement the Bible dismisses the atheist: *The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.* Only a fool ignores the reality of a divine being.

That fool is ignoring the instinctive knowledge that God has given to every man. Romans 1:19 ***Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.***

Even among those who believe in God, there are many misconceptions of what God is like. Some make God in their own image and according to their desires. Others see God through only one of his attributes, love for example, to the neglect of all his other attributes.

There is no way to adequately describe God. But there are some things we can know about God from the revelation of the Bible. Baptist Faith and Message Statement which we affirm says this about God.

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. BFM

I want to approach this message by considering some of the questions people ask about God. They transcend generations, culture and age. So, let me start with a child-like question, but one that has adult implications.

1. How Big Is God?

Have you ever wondered just how big God is? Most all of us have at one time or another. Especially important to children. **They translate big into powerful.**

The bigger, the stronger. It was important to me as a child that God be very big! He had to be bigger than any villain or monster. He had to be big enough to handle all the enemies that I might fear.

Also big enough to handle any problem that I might face. As I got a little older I realized God would have to be even bigger than that because I was not the only one with problems. He would have to be big enough to deal with other people's fears, problems and situations, not just mine.

So, how big is God?

1 Kings 8:27 – *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!*

Solomon had built and dedicated the temple. In doing so realized that it could not come close to housing God. Even if the temple were as big as the entire earth or the highest heavens, God would spill out. It could not hold Him.

Is 40:12 - *Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and marked off the heavens by the span. And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure. And weighed the mountains in a balance, and the hills in a pair of scales.*

When God wants to examine his creation he simply looks at it as you would a small toy in your hands. Big enough to hold all the water of all the oceans in the his hands. Measured the heavens between his thumb and little finger. Knows the number of dust particles on the earth and can weigh all mountains and hills like you might weigh a pebble. HE'S BIG

2. How Old Is God?

Do you picture God as an old man with a beard sitting on a throne. Tired eyes, slumped back. Someone who has been around a long time? If so you are partly true. He has been around a long time. In fact there never has been a time that God did not exist. There was never a time when he began.

Our human minds have trouble comprehended that. We like to think in linear terms. Everything having a starting time and ending time. Worship Service. Ballgame. Class at school. War. Etc.

Rev. 1:8 - *I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.*

Moses once asked God what his name was. The response: **I Am**. Unusual name. Not **I was**, or **I will be**, or **I came to be**, but **I AM**. Present tense. The one who has always been. He is the self-existent one. He was not created.

The first words of the Bible are, ***In the beginning God . . .***

3. What Is God Like?

A. Spirit Being (John 4:24)

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

Jesus was talking to a woman at a well in Samaria. Talking about worship. Jesus made it clear that God is Spirit, and must be worshiped in spirit and truth. God is not made of flesh and bones. Not material. That is why the incarnation is such an amazing thing! He took on physical, humanity.

B. Personal

He is a living personal being. The chair you are sitting in is not personal. This building is not personal. But God is a personal God. You don't refer to God as "it" but as "him." As a personal being, He chooses to have a relationship with us.

Here's where it gets a bit tricky. The Bible makes it very clear that there is only one God. However, this one God reveals himself to us ***as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.***

We call this the doctrine of the **Trinity**. Word means "three in one." Three persons in one God. One in essence, nature, and being. **Father, Son, Spirit**. Each one is God, yet each one has distinct personality traits and functions. There are times when all three are revealed in the same event.

The Baptism of Jesus. Son was baptized. The Father spoke to the Son. The Holy Spirit descended like a dove. It's a mystery. Accept it. Believe it.

C. Unique

Some things unique to God. We may have elements of them, but not to the same degree as God. Here are some things that make him uniquely different. Start with three **omni's**. Latin for *only*.

1) Omniscient

He knows everything. There is not anything past, present or future that He does not know fully and completely. He knows our innermost desires, our ultimate destiny. His understanding is infinite. Nothing can be hidden from Him. **He knew Jeremiah** even before he was conceived and developed in his mother's womb. He knew you long before you were conceived.

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. Psalm 139:1-4

2) Omnipresent

God is present everywhere. Not confined to one place. We are limited by space. We can only be at one place at one time. God is everywhere.

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, 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. Psalm 139:7-10

3) Omnipotent

All powerful. He can do whatever he desires. Nothing too difficult. He has all power over all things at all times. God is never limited by any circumstance, problem or situation. He has the power to accomplish anything.

I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Job 42:2

4) Holy

God and God alone is completely holy and innocent. All others have sinned and fallen short of His glory. **He is the standard** against which all others are measured. We all fail.

Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the LORD our God is holy! Psalm 99:9

5) Love

Of all the things that make God unique, this may be the most misunderstood. Those who do not know God often have a perception of Him that is anything but loving. Yet, He has made it clear through His words and actions that He not only chooses to love, but it is actually a critical part of His eternal nature.

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

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

4. What Does God Do? (4 things)

A. He Creates

He is the creator of all things. Genesis 1 begins with the story of God's creation. Creation is the personal work of God. Everything you see and touch finds its ultimate origin in the creative power of God.

B. He Preserves

Not only did God create everything, but He preserves it. He is the one who holds it all together. There are some who believe God made it and then wound it up like a giant clock and walked away leaving it to wind down.

The Bible does not teach this. He did not simply create it and then step back uninvolved. He is very involved in his creation.

C. He Rules

I want to call your attention to only two passages, among many, that teach the sovereignty of God. He is in charge. He does what he wants.

Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. Ps. 115:3

I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things . . . he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. 1 Timothy 6:13-16

God is sovereignly ruling over His creation. He is in charge! Regardless of how bad things may seem to get, He never sleeps nor slumbers. He remains at the helm. He's the boss.

D. He Redeems

This is **the story of the Bible**. God redeeming sinful man. Refers to His work of taking sinful people and bringing them into His family, forgiving their sin and causing them to be born again. That is the work of God that you and I will for all of eternity be thanking God for.

Luke 19:10 captures the essence of the story of the Bible. Jesus said . . .

*For the Son of Man came to **seek and to save** the lost.*

He is an incredible God. Get to know Him!!