

Study 2 – The Nature of God

I. The Nature (Essence) of God

A. God is a pure Spirit. As God, He has no body.

1. Read John 4:24. How does Jesus describe the nature of God here?

2. Read 1 Tim. 6:16. How does this verse help explain that God is pure spirit?

B. Though God cannot be seen, He can be known:

1. Read Matt. 11:27. In order for God to be known, what must He do?

2. Read Psalm 145:3 and 147:5. Can anyone ever fully understand God? Why or why not?

3. Read Jeremiah 9:23-24 and John 17:3. Can we know God truly?

C. God is a personal being; He is a person (personhood, personality), not an 'it'.

1. Read Malachi 2:10 and John 14:9b. What indicator of God's personality are taught in these verses?

2. Read John 3:16. What personal trait of God is stated here?

D. The Trinity

1. God is a triune being, one God in three persons.

- a) Read Deuteronomy 6:4 and Isaiah 45:5-6. How many gods are there?

- b) Read Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14. Who are the three persons of the Trinity?

- c) Read Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:17,18. How do these verses point to the three persons of the Trinity?

2. The doctrine of the Trinity is revealed progressively in the Old Testament.

- a) The Majestic Plural. Read Genesis 1:1-3, 26. How does God refer to Himself in these verses?

- b) The Angel of the Lord (an Old Testament prefiguring of God’s salvation through the pre-incarnate Christ).
- (1) Read Genesis 32:30. What does Jacob say about his encounter with the Angel at Peniel?

- (2) Read Genesis 48:16. What did Jacob say the Angel had done for him?

- c) The Trinity in the Book of Psalms
- (1) Read Psalm 2:2, 7, 12.
- (a) What two persons are mention in verse 2 and what, according to verse 7, is their relationship? _____
- (b) According to verse 12, in whom are we told to find refuge (or to trust)? Does Scripture ever command us to trust anyone who is less than wholly divine? _____
- (2) Read Psalm 110:1-7.
- (a) In verse 1, what two persons are mentioned?

- (b) In verse 4, what had God promised that is true of Christ (compare Hebrews 2:17)? _____
3. The Trinity is revealed in the New Testament not by theological defense but in the ordinary course of events.
- a) Read Matthew 3:16,17. State how the three persons of the Trinity are present here.

- b) Read Matthew 28:20. Is whose name is baptism to be administered (NOTE: one name but three persons)?

- c) Read Acts 5:1-4. How do these verses teach that the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Trinity?

II. The Attributes of God

- A. God’s attributes are the different aspects, characteristics, or perfections of His nature by which God makes Himself know to us through revelation. They are typically classified according to His *incommunicable attributes* (those that have no resemblance in man, or are not “communicated” to man) and *communicable attributes* (those that God shares or “communicates” to us as creatures made in His image). NOTE: The lists below are partial—Scripture reveals more of God’s attributes than appear in the lists.

B. God's *incommunicable attributes*. Look up the passages on the right and match the appropriate verses with the attribute listed on left.

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| ___ 1. Independence (self-existence) | a. Psalm 90:2; 102:27 |
| ___ 2. Immutability (unchangeableness) | b. John 5:26; Acts 17:24-25 |
| ___ 3. Omnipresence (God is present everywhere) | c. Malachi 3:6; James 1:17 |
| ___ 4. Eternality (God always exists) | d. Psalm 139:7-10 |

C. God's *communicable attributes*. Look up the passages on the right and match the appropriate verses with the attribute listed on left.

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| ___ 1. Holiness (otherness; purity) | a. Nehemiah 9:17b; Rom. 3:24 |
| ___ 2. Omniscience (He knows all things) | b. Psalm 86:5; 119:29 |
| ___ 3. Omnipotence (He is all powerful) | c. Numbers 23:19; 2 Tim. 2:13 |
| ___ 4. Love | d. Psalm 89:14; 1 Peter 1:17 |
| ___ 5. Wisdom | e. Romans 9:18; Ephesians 2:4,5 |
| ___ 6. Truthfulness/faithfulness | f. Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 6:3 |
| ___ 7. Mercy | g. Job 42:2; Luke 1:37 |
| ___ 8. Grace | h. John 3:16; 1 John 4:8 |
| ___ 9. Longsuffering/forbearance | i. Daniel 4:34; Rev. 7:14 |
| ___ 10. Goodness | j. John 21:17b; Heb. 4:13 |
| ___ 11. Righteousness/justice | k. Numbers 14:18; Romans 2:4 |
| ___ 12. Sovereignty | l. Psalm 104:24; Dan. 2:20-21b |