**Knowing God**

Student Handout

# Week 1: The Attributes of God (Part 1)

#### A Definition of God

God is an infinite, unembodied Mind. He is the greatest conceivable Being—infinite in all his attributes.

#### Why is it vital to know who God is accurately?

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

### Self-Existence

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

#### Questions to Explore

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Omnipotence

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### Questions to Explore

Is God powerful enough to create a stone so heavy that even he cannot move it?

(1)

(2)

(3)

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Omniscience

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### Questions to Explore

What about passages that teach that God “remembers” or “forgets” things?

How can God know the future unless he determines the future?

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Omnipresence

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### Questions to Explore

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Conclusions

## Discussion Questions

(1) What are common misunderstandings of God that you’ve seen in our culture? How have you seen these distortions affect people’s lives?

(2) What are helpful ways to keep an accurate view of God’s character?

(3) Which attribute of God is most comforting to you? Why?

(4) Which attribute of God is the hardest for you to believe or minimize? Why?

Scripture Memorization

**(2 Pet. 1:4-5) Because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires. 5 In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises.**

Homework

For each Scripture passage on the chart, offer a prayer to God by putting the verse in your own words and praying the verse to him.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Attribute** | **Verse** | **Meditation & Prayer** |
| **Self-Existence** | (Ps. 90:2) Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God. | Here is an example of a way to meditate on this verse: *“God, when I look at the mountains, they seem so permanent… But these have only existed for a fraction of time compared to You! God, you have always existed, and you always will. Thank you, God, that I can always depend on you being there for me.”* |
|  | (Col. 1:15-17) Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,  16 for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.  17 He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. |  |
|  | (1 Tim. 1:17) All honor and glory to God forever and ever! He is the eternal King, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God. |  |
| **Omnipotence** | (Jer. 32:17) Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. |  |
|  | (Isa. 43:13) From eternity to eternity I am God. No one can snatch anyone out of my hand. No one can undo what I have done. |  |
|  | (Eph. 3:20) Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us. |  |
| **Omniscience** | (1 Jn. 3:20) Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything. |  |
|  | (Isa. 46:10) Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. |  |
|  | (Ps. 139:5-6) You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.  6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! |  |
|  | (Heb. 4:13) Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable. |  |
| **Omnipresence** | (Jer. 23:23-24) Am I a God who is only close at hand?” says the LORD. “No, I am far away at the same time.  24 Can anyone hide from me in a secret place? Am I not everywhere in all the heavens and earth?” says the LORD. |  |
|  | (Prov. 15:3) The LORD is watching everywhere, keeping his eye on both the evil and the good. |  |

# Week 2: The Attributes of God (Part 2)

### Sovereignty

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### Questions to Explore

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Immutability

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### Questions to Explore

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Time and Eternity

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### Questions to Explore

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Transcendent and Immanent

#### Definition

#### Biblical basis

#### What if God didn’t have these attributes?

### Righteous and Just

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Loving

#### Definition

#### Biblical Basis

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

#### What if God didn’t have this attribute?

### Conclusions

## Discussion Questions

(1) Do you agree with the description of God’s sovereignty? How would you articulate the sovereignty of God?

(2) Which attribute of God is most comforting to you? Why?

(3) Which attribute of God is the hardest for you to believe or minimize? Why?

Scripture Memorization

**(Dan. 11:32) The people who know their God will display strength and take action.**

Homework

For each Scripture passage on the chart, offer a prayer to God by putting the verse in your own words and praying the verse to him.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Attribute** | **Verse** | **Meditation & Prayer** |
| **Sovereignty** | (Ps. 115:3) Our God is in heaven. He does whatever pleases him.  16 The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to mankind. | Here is an example of a way to meditate on this verse: *“God, you are the One who is in charge—not me! But thank you for giving me the ability to make an impact on your work here on Earth. Show me how to align myself with what pleases you—not myself.”* |
|  | (Eph. 1:11) We have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will. |  |
|  | (Job 41:11) Who has given me anything that I need to pay back?  Everything under heaven is mine. |  |
| **Immutability** | (Heb. 13:8) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. |  |
|  | (1 Sam. 15:29) God is not a man that He should change His mind. |  |
|  | (Jas. 1:17) Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. |  |
| **Transcendent and Immanent** | (Isa. 57:15) “I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.” |  |
|  | (Isa. 66:1) Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool… My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being.  2 But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word. |  |
|  | (Ps. 8:1) O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth, who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!  4 What is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? |  |
| **Righteous and Just** | (Ps. 5:4) O God, you take no pleasure in wickedness; you cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked. |  |
|  | (Jas. 1:13) Remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. |  |
|  | (Gen. 18:25) Surely you wouldn’t do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn’t do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?” |  |
| **Loving** | (Jn. 15:13) There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. |  |
|  | (Ps. 56:8) You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book. |  |
|  | (Rom. 5:8) God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. |  |

# Week 3: The Doctrine of the Trinity

#### Introduction

#### Definition

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#### What should we expect?

### Biblical Defense

#### #1: There is only ONE GOD.

Rejecting this leads to TRITHEISM.

#### #2: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all DISTINCT PERSONS.

Rejecting this leads to MODALISM.

#### #3: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all TRULY GOD.

Rejecting this leads to ARIANISM.

#### Are there any good illustrations for the Trinity?

### Heretical Illustrations

#### “The Trinity is like three men who share a common human nature.”

#### “The Trinity is like water. The one substance of water can exist in three different forms: liquid, ice, or vapor.”

#### “The Trinity is like an egg. It is an eggshell, an egg yolk, and an egg white.”

#### “The Trinity is like a three-leaf clover.”

#### “The Trinity is like an actor who plays three different roles in a play.”

#### “The doctrine of the Trinity is like three links in a chain.”

#### “A music chord contains three notes.”

#### “The Trinity is like Neapolitan ice cream.”

#### “The Trinity is like a triangle.”

#### “The Trinity is similar to ‘Cerberus.’”

#### The term ‘Trinity’ never appears in the Bible.

#### The Trinity was invented at the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451.

#### If the Father, Son, and Spirit are God, that’s three gods. It’s simple math. 1 + 1 + 1 = 3.

#### (Deut. 6:4) “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!”

#### (Jn. 14:28) Jesus said, “The Father is greater than I.”

#### (Jn. 17:3) Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God.”

#### (1 Cor. 14:33) God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

### Conclusions

## Discussion Questions

(1) What are the key biblical passages that support the doctrine of the Trinity?

(2) In what ways does the doctrine of the Trinity affect our view of God as a personal being?

(3) Is the study of the Trinity just an academic discussion for theologians? Or does this subject have practical application for our lives?

Scripture Memorization

**(Phil. 2:6) Jesus “existed in the form of God.”**

**(Col. 2:9) “In Jesus all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.”**

**(Jn. 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”**

Homework

**(1) What is your favorite illustration to explain the Trinity? What makes the illustration your favorite? Where does the illustration break down?**

**(2) Read these insights and respond to the prompt at the bottom of the page.** In his book *Delighting in the Trinity* (2012), theologian Michael Reeves writes,

Allah is said to have ninety-nine names, titles which describe him as he is in himself in eternity. One of them is ‘The Loving.’ **But how could Allah be loving in eternity? Before he created there was nothing else in existence that he could love** (and the title does not refer to self-centered love but love for others). The only option is that Allah eternally loves his creation. But that in itself raises an enormous problem: if Allah needs his creation to be who he is in himself (‘loving’), then Allah is dependent on his own creation, and one of the cardinal beliefs of Islam is that Allah is dependent on nothing.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Single-person gods, having spent eternity alone, are inevitably self-centered beings, and so it becomes hard to see why they would ever cause anything else to exist. Wouldn’t the existence of a universe be an irritating distraction for the god whose greatest pleasure is looking in a mirror? Creating just looks like a deeply unnatural thing for such a god to do. And if such gods do create, they always seem to do so out of an essential neediness or desire to use what they create merely for their own self-gratification.[[2]](#footnote-3)

Allah is a single-person God who has an eternal word beside him in heaven, the Qur’an. At a glance, that seems to make Allah look less eternally lonely. But what is so significant is the fact that Allah’s word is a *book*, not a true companion for him. And it is a book that is only *about* him. Thus when Allah gives us his Qur’an, he gives us *some* thing, a deposit of information about himself and how he likes things. However, when the triune God gives us his Word, he gives us his very self, for the Son is the Word of God, the perfect revelation of his Father. The Word was with God and the Word *was* God. It is all, well, very revealing. This God does not give us some *thing* that is other than himself, or merely tell us *about* himself; he actually gives us himself. If he just dropped a book from heaven, he could keep us at the sort of distance we would expect. But he doesn’t. The very Word of God who is God comes to us and dwells with us.[[3]](#footnote-4)

Oneness for the single-person God would mean *sameness*. Alone for eternity without any beside him, why would he value others and their differences? Think how it works out for Allah: **under his influence, the once-diverse cultures of Nigeria, Persia and Indonesia are made, deliberately and increasingly, *the same*.** Islam presents a complete way of life for individuals, nations and cultures, binding them into one way of praying, one way of marrying, buying, fighting, relating—even, some would say, one way of eating and dressing. Oneness for the triune God means *unity*. As the Father is absolutely one with his Son, and yet is not his Son, so Jesus prays that believers might be one, but not that they might all be the same. Created male and female, in the image of this God, and with many other good differences between us, we come together valuing the way the triune God has made us each unique.[[4]](#footnote-5)

**List a few reasons why the Christian conception of God is different from the Muslim conception of God:**

(1)

(2)

(3)

# Week 4: The Person and Work of Christ

### Who is Jesus?

(Mt. 16:13) [Jesus] asked, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

#### Evidence for the Deity of Christ

(Jn. 1:1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

#### Old Testament References

(Isa. 9:6) For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us… His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Wonderful Counselor (Isa. 25:1; 28:29)

Mighty God (Isa. 10:21)

Eternal Father (Isa. 63:16b)

Prince of Peace (Isa. 26:3, 12)

#### New Testament use of the Old Testament

(Rom. 10:9) If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord… you will be saved. 13 WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.

Joel 2:32

#### Jesus was incarnated

#### Hypostatic Union

At the incarnation, two natures (true deity and true humanity) were inseparably united in one person: Jesus Christ.

#### How could Jesus be God if he lacked essential properties of deity?

Omnipotence

Omniscience

Omnipresence

#### Kenosis Theory

“Emptied himself” (*ekenōsen*).

Jesus willingly gave up the USE of his divine attributes.

To repeat, Jesus has always possessed the divine attributes, but he chose not to USE them.

#### How could an infinite God squeeze into a finite body?

#### Was Jesus able to sin? If not, how could he be tempted?

### What did Jesus do?

#### The Work of the Cross of Christ

(1) Physical torment

(2) Psychological torment

(3) Spiritual torment

#### The Importance of Jesus’ Person and Work

## Discussion Questions

(1) What are key passages that support the deity of Christ?

(2) What did Jesus suffer for you at the Cross?

(3) What does the incarnation tell us about God’s nature and character?

(4) Is the study of the person and work of Jesus just an academic discussion for theologians? Or does this subject have practical application for our lives?

Scripture Memorization

**(Jn. 8:58) Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”**

**(Jn. 10:30) “I and the Father are one.”**

**(Jn. 20:28) Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”**

Homework

**Read this article about the crucifixion. Afterward, spend 10 minutes giving thanks to Jesus for what he did for you.**

### The Crucifixion of Christ

By [**James M. Rochford**](https://www.evidenceunseen.com/aboutjamesrochford/)

What happened at the Cross? The NT authors only offer the terse statement: “They crucified him” (Mk. 15:24; c.f. Mt. 27:26; Lk. 23:33; Jn. 19:16). But what did Jesus’ sacrifice truly entail?

### 1. Physical Torment

The Romans perfected the art of torture and execution, and their masterpiece was death by crucifixion. This form of torture was so extreme that it usually wasn’t even allowed for Roman citizens. After studying what occurred during crucifixion, it is easy to see why.

#### Scourging

Before he was crucified, Pilate had Jesus “scourged” (Mt. 27:27; Mk. 15:15; Lk. 23:16; Jn. 19:1). History speaks about the brutality of Roman scourging. Josephus recorded the scourging of a man who was “whipped till his bones were laid bare” (*Wars of the Jews*, 6.304). During the days of Polycarp, we read that martyrs “were torn by scourges down to deep-seated veins and arteries, so that the hidden contents of the recesses of their bodies, their entrails and organs, were exposed to sight” (Eusebius, *Church History*, 4.15.4).

In their 1986 article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Edwards, Gabel, and Hosmer explain Roman scourging in this way,

Flogging was a legal preliminary to every Roman execution, and only women and Roman senators or soldiers (except in cases of desertion) were exempt. The usual instrument was a short whip (flagellum or flagellum) with several single or braided leather thongs of variable lengths, in which small iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones were tied at intervals.[[5]](#footnote-6)

As the Roman soldiers repeatedly struck the victim’s back with full force, the iron balls would cause deep contusions, and the leather thongs and sheep bones would cut into the skin and subcutaneous tissues. Then, as the flogging continued, the lacerations would tear into the underlying skeletal muscles and produce quivering ribbons of bleeding flesh. Pain and blood loss generally set the stage for circulatory shock.[[6]](#footnote-7)

Thus, before Jesus was crucified, they conclude that “Jesus’ physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical.”[[7]](#footnote-8)

#### Carrying the Cross

While popular films typically picture Jesus as carrying his entire Cross to Golgotha, it is more likely that he just carried the top, horizontal bar.[[8]](#footnote-9) Historians estimate the crossbar at roughly 80 lbs, which seems more feasible for a bleeding and lacerated man. Even though the crossbar was only 80 lbs, Jesus was unable to make the trek because of his injuries, which was only 600 yards away (Mt. 27:32; Mk. 15:21; Lk. 23:27).

#### Crucifixion

The first recorded act of crucifixion was in 519 B.C. by Darius of Persia.[[9]](#footnote-10) However, while the Romans didn’t *invent* crucifixion, they certainly *perfected* this form of torture. The Romans drove the nails through the base of the hand (or wrist) in order to maximize the level of pain. Edwards, Gabel, and Hosmer write, “The driven nail would crush or sever the rather large sensorimotor median nerve. The stimulated nerve would produce excruciating bolts of fiery pain in both arms. Although the severed median nerve would result in paralysis of a portion of the hand, ischemic contractures and impalement of various ligaments by the iron spike might produce a clawlike grasp.”[[10]](#footnote-11)

Because of this strategic insertion of the nail, the individual would live for a very long time. In fact, the Romans nailed the victim in these specific locations, because it avoided rupturing any major arteries, allowing maximal pain. Edwards, Gabel, and Hosmer write, “Although scourging may have resulted in considerable blood loss, crucifixion per se was a relatively bloodless procedure, since no major arteries, other than perhaps the deep plantar arch, pass through the favored anatomic sites of transfixion.”[[11]](#footnote-12)

#### Length of crucifixion

Jesus survived somewhere between three to six hours on the Cross (Jn. 19:14). However, most victims lasted much longer. Crucifixion could last for hours or up to “three or four days.”[[12]](#footnote-13) It could actually be seen as a sadistic blessing that Jesus was scourged so badly, because it meant a shorter time on the Cross.

#### Death by crucifixion

Crucifixion would eventually kill the individual in one of two ways: asphyxia or by heart failure. Edwards, Gabel, and Hosmer write,

The weight of the body, pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, would tend to fix the intercostal muscles in an inhalation state and thereby hinder passive exhalation. Accordingly, exhalation was primarily diaphragmatic, and breathing was shallow. It is likely that this form of respiration would not suffice and that hypercarbia would soon result.[[13]](#footnote-14)

Adequate exhalation required lifting the body by pushing up on the feet and by flexing the elbows and adducting the shoulders. However, this maneuver would place the entire weight of the body on the tarsals and would produce searing pain. Furthermore, flexion of the elbows would cause rotation of the wrists about the iron nails and cause fiery pain along the damaged median nerves. Lifting of the body would also painfully scrape the scourged back against the rough wooden stipes. Muscle cramps and paresthesias of the outstretched and uplifted arms would add to the discomfort. As a result, each respiretory [sic] effort would become agonizing and tiring and lead eventually to asphyxia.[[14]](#footnote-15)

This is why the first-century Seneca spoke of crucifixion victims “drawing the breath of life amid long-drawn-out agony.”[[15]](#footnote-16)

### 2. Psychological Torment

In addition to the *physical* torment, Jesus experienced tremendous *psychological* torment as well.

#### Jesus was stripped completely naked

While modern crucifixes usually depict Jesus wearing a loin cloth, this is much more for our benefit as modern people. Historically, crucifixion victims were given no way of preserving their nudity; Jesus was crucified buck naked.[[16]](#footnote-17) Of course, we need to remember that Hebrew culture was much more modest than today. In our culture, it is regular to see sex and nudity. In theirs, it wasn’t. Therefore, if you can imagine it, this would have been even more humiliating than it is today.

#### Jesus was crucified in a public place

Golgotha was “probably a busy intersection chosen to heighten the effect of the execution as a public deterrent to similar ‘crimes.’”[[17]](#footnote-18) To put this in modern terms, it would be equivalent to being publicly tortured at a shopping mall or busy intersection downtown. The Romans strategically crucified criminals in public places as an incentive to others not to challenge the law of Rome.

#### Jesus was abandoned by his closest friends

Matthew records that “all the disciples forsook him and fled” (Mt. 26:56). Judas denied Christ for 30 pieces of silver (Mt. 26:15), and Peter denied Christ three times in a row (Lk. 22:54-60). In fact, Jesus even heard his last denial in person (v.61). Many of us have experienced rejection or betrayal from our friends and family. We hardly need anyone to convince us of how painful this is. Jesus experienced this abandonment at the moment when he needed companionship the most.

#### Jesus was tortured in front of his mother and closest friend

Perhaps the only thing worse than torture is to be tortured in front of your loved ones! John records that Jesus was crucified—fully naked—in full view of his mother and closest friend, John (Jn. 19:25-27). Being stripped naked in front of your mother would be bad, but beaten, whipped, and tortured to death? This must have been horrific.

#### Jesus could have ended his torment at any moment

We have all been stuck in suffering before. But Jesus’ suffering was different: he could have ended it at any moment. Jesus said, “Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?” (Mt. 26:53).

This psychological torment kept Jesus awake all night. He couldn’t sleep. He said, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death” (Mt. 26:38). His torment was so intense that Luke records, “His sweat became like drops of blood” (Lk. 22:44).

### 3. Spiritual Torment

The *physical* and *psychological* torment was no doubt inconceivable. And yet, by far the worst torment that Jesus faced was *spiritual* in nature. At the Cross, Jesus was judged by God the Father for the sins of the human race. Jesus cried out, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mt. 27:46). At the Cross, Jesus was forsaken by God for the first time in eternity, and he was judged for the sins of the human race. The author of Hebrews writes, “It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31), and Jesus experienced this terror for us.

Paul writes, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21). Peter explains, “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24). Isaiah writes, “Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all” (Isa. 53:6). During those hours, Jesus took on the wrath of God.

### Why Did Jesus Die?

Why did Jesus endure such suffering? Paul tells us: “He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross” (Col. 2:13-14). The “written code” (NIV) or “certificate of debt” (NASB) was a legal document that was nailed to the top of the cross of a guilty person. This document had the person’s name and their crime. For example, if the person was a murderer, it would say, “John Doe: Murderer.” Once the person died, their debt was paid to the state. For instance, Jesus had a certificate of debt nailed to the top of his Cross. It read, “Jesus the Nazarene: King of the Jews” (Jn. 19:19). In other words, Jesus was being crucified for claiming to be the king of the Jews.

This becomes interesting when we read that Jesus screamed, “It is finished” (Jn. 19:30) from the Cross. This expression “It is finished” (*tetelestai*) literally meant “paid in full.” Each one of us has a certificate of debt—many sins that have violated God and others. And Jesus paid for your certificate of debt at the Cross—“once for all” (Heb. 9:26).

# Week 5: The Holy Spirit

#### Who is the Holy Spirit?

#### The Holy Spirit is a personal being, not an impersonal force.

#### He possesses personal attributes.

Intelligence

Emotion

Volition

Personhood

Personal pronouns

#### He is truly God.

#### Draws us to Christ

#### Indwells the believer

#### Assures our salvation

#### Illuminates Scripture

#### Helps us to pray

#### Slowly sanctifies us

#### Guides us in God’s will

#### Gives spiritual gifts

#### Empowers us

#### Comforts us

#### What is our role?

(1) Being filled

(2) Grieving

(3) Blaspheming

(4) Quenching

### Conclusions

## Discussion Questions

(1) What are some common misconceptions about the Holy Spirit?

(2) What might happen if we focus too much on the Holy Spirit? What if we focus on him too little?

(3) What are the most powerful ways you’ve seen the Holy Spirit has worked in your life?

(4) How does the Holy Spirit’s work in the Old Testament compare to His work in the New Testament?

(5) The Holy Spirit has given each believer spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11-13). What spiritual gifts has the Holy Spirit given to you? What spiritual gifts have you seen in the people around you?

Scripture Memorization

**(1 Thess. 1:5) For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.**

**(Gal. 3:3) Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

Homework

Spend time in prayer this week by praying directly to the Holy Spirit. Ask Him for the promises that we see in His word below. Put these promises in your own words as you pray to Him.

**(Rom. 8:15-16) You have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.**

A model prayer might be, *“Holy Spirit, show me the love of the Father in my heart today. Give me an understanding of what it means to have a relationship with my loving Heavenly Father. Let my heart understand the Father’s love in new depths. Amen.”*

**(1 Cor. 2:4) My message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**(Rom. 15:13) I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**(Eph. 1:13) You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.**

**(1 Cor. 2:12) We have received God’s Spirit (not the world’s spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.**

**(2 Tim. 1:7) God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power, love, and a sound mind.**

# Study Guide

**What is a good definition of God?** God is an infinite, unembodied Mind. He is the greatest conceivable Being—infinite in all his attributes.

**What is Self-Existence?** God possesses “the ground of His existence in Himself.”

**What is Omnipotence?** “All” (*omnis*) and “powerful” (*potens*). God has unlimited power. To be omnipotent means that God can do whatever is possible to do.

**Is God powerful enough to create a stone so heavy that even he cannot move it?**

(1) Category error: Creating a logical contradiction has nothing to do with power.

(2) If logical laws exist, then this is impossible. If they don’t, there’s no issue.

(3) “Bend a paperclip into a square-circle.”

**What is Omniscience?** “All” (*omnis*) and “knowing” (*scientia*). God knows every true proposition and believes no false proposition.

**How can God know the future unless he determines the future?** Knowing the future doesn’t mean that God is causing the future.

**What is Omnipresence?** “All” (*omnis*) and “present” (*praesens*). God isn’t spread across the universe much like oxygen fills the room.

**What is Sovereignty?** Sovereignty refers to God’s unlimited authority to act in any way that he chooses with regard to his creation—contingent only on his own nature.

**What is Immutability?** “Not” (*in*) and “changing” (*mutabilis*). God is “constant and unchangeable in his character.”

**What is the definition of the Trinity?** God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.

**What are the three propositions that support the doctrine of the Trinity?**

#1: There is only ONE GOD.

#2: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all DISTINCT PERSONS.

#3: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all TRULY GOD.

**Why should we believe in the Trinity if the Bible never uses this term?**

(1) The word isn’t in the Bible, but the concept does exist.

(2) The Trinity is an accurate deduction of biblical teaching.

(3) Many common theological terms do not occur in the Bible.

**What is the hypostatic union?** At the incarnation, two natures (true deity and true humanity) were inseparably united in one person: Jesus Christ.

**What is Kenosis Theory?** Jesus willingly gave up the **USE** of his divine attributes. To repeat, Jesus has always possessed the divine attributes, but he chose not to **USE** them. [If you state that Jesus gave up his attributes, you will be marked wrong!]

**Who is the Holy Spirit?** The Holy Spirit is a personal being, not an impersonal force.

#### Scripture Memorization

(2 Pet. 1:4-5) Because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires. 5 In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises.

(Dan. 11:32) The people who know their God will display strength and take action.

(Phil. 2:6) Jesus “existed in the form of God.”

(Col. 2:9) “In Jesus all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.”

(Jn. 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

(Jn. 8:58) Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”

(Jn. 10:30) “I and the Father are one.”

(Jn. 20:28) Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

(1 Thess. 1:5) For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

(Gal. 3:3) Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

1. Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1457. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1457. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1458. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1459. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Hoffmeier writes, “Herodotus, the fifth-century Greek historian, describes a case in which Darius the Great (522-486 BC) crucified 3,000 Babylonians.” James Hoffmeier, *The Archaeology of the Bible* (Oxford: Lion, 2008), 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1460. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1461. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Emphasis mine. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1460. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1461. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1461. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Epistle 101, to Lucilius, section 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Edwards, Gabel, and Hosmer write, “He was usually naked, unless this was prohibited by local customs.” Edwards, William D. Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, “On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ,” *Journal* *of* *the* *American* *Medical* *Association*. Vol. 255. No. 11. 21 March 1986. 1459. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Craig Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 346. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)