



God the Father

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Note: The Scripture references in this hand-out are taken from the New King James Version.

How would you describe God to someone?

He is our Creator who before anything came into being, He was, and is and always will be for He is eternal with no beginning or end.

Since God created all people, is He the Father of all?

God is self-existent and though God created mankind, He is only the Father of those who have accepted His son... the supernatural birth causes a person to be a child of God...

John 1:12 - But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

In Genesis 1:1 the Hebrew name for God is Elohim, a plural noun... how does this relate to the names Bethel, Daniel, Ezekiel, Elijah, and Immanuel?

Bethel means, house of God, Daniel means, God is my judge, Ezekiel means God will strengthen, Elijah means my God is Jehovah, Immanuel means God with us.

How do the names of God help us understand who He is?

The names of God reveal His character...

Jehovah – means Redeemer – Deut 6:4

Adonai – means Master of Lord – Genesis 15:2

El Shaddai – means Almighty God – Genesis 17:1

El Olam – means Everlasting God – Genesis 21:33

Jehovah Elohim – means Lord God – Exodus 34:6

Jehovah-jireh – means the Lord will provide – Genesis 22:14

Jehovah-shalom – means the Lord our peace – Jud 6:24

The Nature of God – God is a Spirit

What does John 4:24 tell us about the nature of God?

John 4:24 - "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

God is a spiritual being which means He is non-corporeal, He does not have a physical body as we do. God is outside the confines of time and space...

Isaiah 46:9-10 - Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'

Since God is a spiritual being, can we see Him?

We can not see spiritual beings as the normal course of things...

John 5:37 - And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.

Jesus was the physical manifestation of God who came so that we may see and know God...

Colossians 1:15 - He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Besides God, are there any other spiritual beings?

Angels are also non-corporeal spirit-beings...

Luke 24:39 – "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

The reason that people have been able to see angels on rare occasions is that God opened the eyes of those who saw them...

II Kings 6:15-17 - And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

How do you reconcile John 1:18 with John 14:9?

John 1:18 - No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

John 14:9 – [Jesus said] He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

John 1:18 refers to God's spiritual nature which we can not see in our mortal bodies. John 14:9 refers to the personal attributes of God, His goodness, love, mercy, wisdom, etc.

How can Jesus say that “no one has seen God at any time” given that several Old Testament patriarchs saw God (Abraham, Jacob, and Isaiah for example)?

God has revealed Himself to men in times past in visions and what is called theophanies, or pre-incarnate appearances of God. But these revelations of God were only limited in their scope not showing the full glory of God. It is not possible for us in our mortal bodies to see God in His full glory.

The Nature of God – God is Light

What is the Apostle John talking about in 1 John 1:5 in light of John 2:4-5? (pardon the pun)

1 John 1:5 - This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

I believe that John is referring back to the reference to light he made in his gospel...

John 1:4-5 - In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

God is the giver of life... light is the illumination of the truth about God giving life. And Jesus is the personification of the life-giving truth about God:

John 8:12 - Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

What does it mean in 1 John 1:5 that there is no darkness in God?

If the light of God is the truth about Him, then the darkness would be the absence of truth. God radiates truth and always wants people to come to the knowledge of the truth. God in no way wants to mask the truth about Himself from people:

2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

If God is not willing that any should perish, why then doesn't God make His presence more visible to our generation? Why did the resurrected Jesus stay in our midst rather than ascend to the Father?

Jesus accomplished His mission to pay the price for our sins and it was to our benefit that He went to the Father to intercede on our behalf. Also, He blessed us with the presence of the Holy Spirit who helps us to know Him...

John 16:7 - Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

God desires a depth of relationship with us only possible if we may freely choose that relationship so He created us in His image giving us the ability to make choices. This mortal life is a test to see who will choose a relationship with their Creator and who wants to be left on their own.

The Nature of God – God is Love

What does 1 John 4:8 tell us about the nature of God?

1 John 4:8 - He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

God is love... God embodies what love is all about and has demonstrated this through His Son...

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

How is the love of God distinguished from the concept of love that people who don't know God have?

- The popular cultural view of love is that love is a feeling, something that a person has no control of but can fall into or out of. In contrast, the love of God is an act of the will, a commitment to action benefiting another.
- The world sees love as showing affection for another so that you'll be loved in return. But God took sacrificial action on our behalf without expecting anything in return.

Why is it the case as 1 John 4:8 says, that He who does not love does not know God?

True agape sacrificial love only comes from God, it is a by-product of having a right relationship with Him...

Galatians 5:22-23 - the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

When we love the unlovable with an attitude of gratitude for God loving us, that is the love that demonstrates that we know God.

What do flawed relationships between people reveal about their relationship to God?

The prerequisite for a healthy relationship with others is a healthy relationship with God. If two people can not get along either one or both are either out of fellowship with God or do not even know Him. That is why Jesus said:

John 13:35 - "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

This is what distinguishes believers from the world, true sacrificial love is rare and what God uses to attract people to the church and to Christ.

The Nature of God – God is a Person

How does Genesis 6:6 indicate that God is a person with a personality?

Genesis 6:6 - And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. God has emotions since He may become grieved by what we do. Displaying emotions is something a person does. There are many places in Scripture where God demonstrates emotions...

Proverbs 6:16 - These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him...

How does Matthew 7:7-11 indicate that God is a person with a personality?

Matthew 7:7-11 - Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

God cares about us as a human father but without human flaws.

1 Peter 5:6-7 - Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

God seeks a personal relationship with each of us. In order for entities to have a personal relationship, both parties must be a person. God is more than a first cause, a force or a power; He is a person.

How may we come to know the personality of God?

God's personality is revealed to us in Scripture and through our interacting with Him. As we get to know Him, His personality becomes clearer to us. We speak to God in prayer, and He speaks to us in many ways including a "*still small voice*" (1 Kings 19:12), others, circumstances that are beyond coincidence, and most of all through His Word.

How can we know if it is God who is speaking to us?

God will not contradict Himself so any message we get from our experiences must be consistent from the Word of God.

The Attributes of God – God is Omnipotent

What does 1 Kings 11:11 tell us about the nature of God?

1 Kings 11:11 - Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.

God is just making certain that sin always has consequences. This also shows that God is sovereign, He has power over who is in authority among men...

Romans 13:1 - Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

God has the power to raise up and put down authorities according to His will.

What does Psalm 33:6-7 tell us about the power of God?

Psalm 33:6-7 - By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; he lays up the deep in storehouses.

God created the universe and thus has power over nature. His power is such that He spoke the universe into existence.

What does Job 1:12 tell us about the power of God?

Job 1:12 - So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

God has power over Satan and limits what power Satan is allowed to have. Satan is a fallen angel and was created by God to serve Him...

Psalm 104:4 - Who makes His angels spirits, his ministers a flame of fire.

Despite Satan rebelling against God, God is powerful enough to still use Satan to serve His purposes.

What does Matthew 19:26 tell us about the nature of God?

Matthew 19:26 - But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

There is nothing God can not do, He is all-powerful, omnipotent.

Is it true to say that there is nothing God can not do?

I wouldn't say there are things God can not do but there are things that God will not do because it would go against His nature, for example:

2 Timothy 2:13 - If we are faithless, he remains faithful; he cannot deny Himself.

The Attributes of God – God is Omniscient

What does Job 37:16 tell us about the nature of God?

Job 37:16 - Do you know how the clouds are balanced, those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?

God is perfect in knowledge... He made the molecules and holds them together so He knows how to construct a cloud so that it does not fall out of the sky.

How can Psalm 147:4 be true?

Psalm 147:4 - He counts the number of the stars; he calls them all by name.

God made the stars so He knows how many there are. We can't even see all of them as an evening in Big Bend during a lunar eclipse would reveal. Note that He calls them by name... even the stars are at His command. Not only are the star's numbered...

Matthew 10:30 - But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

This shows how personal God gets with us.

What does Psalm 139:2 tell us about the power of God?

Psalm 139:2 - You know my sitting down and my rising up; you understand my thought afar off.

God knows everything about us, what we do and even our thoughts...

Psalm 94:11 - The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are futile.

Hebrews 4:13 - And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

What does I John 3:20 tell us about the power of God?

I John 3:20 - For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

God knows all things, He is omniscient.

The Attributes of God – God is Omnipresent

What does Jeremiah 23:24 tell us about the nature of God?

Jeremiah 23:24 - Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the LORD.

God is everywhere, He is omnipresent.

Is God in everything?

There is a New Age belief that God is in everything, this is pantheism which is unbiblical. God being everywhere at once does not mean He is in everything. This implies that God is part of creation, He is the Creator and is separate and distinct from His creation.

Is there a part of creation that God is in?

The only part of creation that God is in is believers:

John 14:16-17 - And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

The Attributes of God – Immutability of God

What does Romans 11:29 tell us about the nature of God?

Romans 11:29 - For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

God is faithful to His promises because His character is at stake. God does not change His mind...

James 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

What does Hebrews 6:17 tell us about the nature of God?

Hebrews 6:17 - Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath,

God's promises are unchangeable because God is unchanging. This is what the immutability of God means, that He is unchanging, He is always God. His nature and character do not change.

Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.