

Week 2 | Who God is

Day 1 Reflection

TRUTH

God is the planner and Creator of the universe. But He is not just any Creator. He is your Creator! He is a personal God Who wants to be known. How can we know Him? Well, the Bible is the primary way in which God chooses to reveal Himself. And it is in the pages of Scripture that God's character, or attributes, are on full display.

Look up the following Scripture passages. Draw a line to match it with the attribute of God that is described therein.

*Note that this list is not exhaustive.

Leviticus 19:2	Sovereign
I Kings 8:27	Loving
Psalms 78:38	Eternal
Psalms 139:1-6	Omnipotent (all-powerful)
Psalms 139:7-10	Holy
Isaiah 57:15	Omnipresent (all-present)
Jeremiah 32:27	Infinite
Acts 4:24-28	Long-suffering
Hebrews 6:18	Immutable
Hebrews 10:30-31	Wrathful
Hebrews 13:8	Truthful
I John 4:7-11	Omniscient (all-knowing)

Now pick one or several of these attributes that mean the most to you. Why is it important for you to know this about God? How can knowing these attributes of God enrich your relationship with Him? Finally, use these truths of God as a prayer of praise or thanksgiving to your Creator. Perhaps you would like to journal your prayer.

Day 2 Reflection

TRUTH

May we look for evidence of God everywhere- but nowhere with such import as an examination of Scripture. For today's Scripture reflection, read Exodus 34. Who does God say He is through this intimate encounter with Moses? Note these attributes of God that are clearly stated and those that are implied in this passage.

EVIDENCE

Now, how would you build an argument around the existence of God? If you were encountered with the question "How do you know God exists?", how would you answer? If a friend, colleague, child probed you for evidence about God's existence, what would you say? "Because the bible says so" might not be enough if we don't have a sound argument to demonstrate the evidence of God.

We would like to introduce you to a term – Apologetics. Perhaps you've heard the term before but not really worried about what it means or why you need to pay attention to it. Why is apologetics important? In very simple terms, apologetics is defending Christianity against objections. Our study is about being Armed with the Belt of Truth and we need to make sure we are armed with the truth that is grounded in scripture! Lest we forget who is TRUTH! As we read in John 14:6, Jesus himself tells us "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

So, let's arm ourselves with the arguments that help us to defend, faithfully and confidently, what we know is true!

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Right, but how and where do we find evidence for God? We’ve studied his attributes and character in our scripture reflection, but how do we construct an argument for his existence?

Let’s use some resources to help us. Here is a short video from Sean McDowell. He presents five arguments for God’s existence. Watch the video and think about how you would use these arguments in your life and in conversations with others? Have you ever heard these arguments before? Perhaps you would like to jot down some summary points and practice putting the argument together! Don’t be shy! Practicing means you will be prepared when faced with the question for real!

WATCH THIS VIDEO: <https://seanmcdowell.org/blog/does-god-exist-4-quick-arguments>

In addition, here are two articles from gotquestions.org that you can use to further expand on the arguments presented in the video:

- Does God Exist? <https://www.gotquestions.org/Does-God-exist.html>
- Is there evidence for the existence of God? <https://www.gotquestions.org/evidence-existence-God.html>

Close your time today in prayer. Remember that we are NEVER alone and even though some of this information may be new or a little confusing, our God wants to help you understand and know him more. What is your prayer today?

Day 3 Reflection

TRUTH

Names are very important throughout all of Scripture. A person's name reflects his/her character. God is no different. His Names are inseparably linked to His qualities. Listed below are names of God that describe how He relates to humanity.

Read through the list of Names. Do any of them stick out to you? Why? Look up the verses for these Names and answer the questions.

Jehovah-Jireh -The Lord will Provide

Genesis 22:14 How had God provided for Abraham in this chapter? Describe a time that you received provision from God. Do you need Jehovah-Jireh for some provision this day? If so, do not tarry in asking Him.

Jehovah-Nissi- The Lord My Banner

Exodus 17:15. Why could Moses call God a Banner? How is the Lord your Banner?

Jehovah-Raah- The Lord is My Shepherd

Genesis 49:24, Psalm 23:1-6, Psalm 80:1 An extended translation of Raah, can be 'friend'. Using this translation, what would God's name be? Tell Him how you feel about that.

How do these three Names change the way you think about God? How can these Names help draw you closer to Him?

LISTEN : As you meditate on the Names of God, perhaps you would like to play this song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXqrF1vTzjY> (Names by Elevation Worship and Maverick City, feat. Tiffany Hudson)

TACTICS

Ordinarily on Day three we would look at what tactics we could use to have discussions about the topic we are exploring for the week. Do you remember the five arguments from Day two? Have you thought about how you would have this type of discussion with someone? Remember the key to having good discussion is that you stick to the topic and not attack the person!

Today you are encouraged to just sit in God's presence. We have just finished an exercise of exploring all the names of God. What do you want to say to God today? What has stood out to you about the names and character of God?

Read Psalm 103 and spend time in your journal meditating, praying, and praising Him for all He is to us.

Day 4 Reflection

TRUTH

Look up the references below for three more Names of God and answer the questions.

Jehovah-Rapha- The Lord Who Heals

Exodus 15:26 Do you need healing from Jehovah-Rapha today? Cry out to Him. He hears you.

Jehovah-Sabaoth- The Lord of Hosts

1 Samuel 1:1-3 Isaiah 1:24, Isaiah 6:5, Haggai 2:6 Hosts can be translated 'armies'. If using this translation, how would the Name of God read? Do any of these verses suggest God has an army? Who might constitute His Army?

Jehovah-Shammah- The Lord is There

Ezekiel 48:35 According to this verse, what city is symbolically named, The Lord is There? Why is this an appropriate Name for God and Jerusalem?

After studying the Names of God for the past two days, journal your thoughts about who God is and how He relates to humanity. How might each name be relevant in your life this very day? Pray your thoughts to Jehovah-Shammah- the Lord Who is There with you.

CHURCH HISTORY & OTHER WORLDVIEWS

Since its inception, The Church, guided by belief in Scripture and its truth within, has influenced all nations and cultures with the Biblical worldview. However, since the formation of the Early Church and throughout the generations, within the walls of the church there have been periods of disagreements as to what constitutes the truth found in Scripture. Throughout the centuries, God has awakened some saints to the theological errors in their own age. In a large sense, our theology rests on the shoulders of these dear saints, who many times faced persecution to stand for the Truth.

For today's reflection, we will learn about some of these faithful giants who together form their own Hall of Faith, continuing in the footsteps of the saints in Hebrews 11.

EARLY CHURCH

First Century

The early church defended the true nature of Jesus. The rise of Gnosticism and Docetism, its close cousin, believed that spirit is good, and flesh is evil. Therefore, Jesus could not really be flesh; his body was an illusion. The apostle John refuted this thinking in 1 John 1:1, 4:2, 5:6. How do these verses argue against Gnosticism?

Ignatius, a disciple of John, addressed these doctrines of heresy and was martyred in AD 110 for his unabashed allegiance to Christ.

Polycarp, the last known living disciple of the apostle John, was a contemporary of Ignatius and battled the same heresy. Polycarp was martyred also. Go to [gotquestions.org](https://www.gotquestions.org/Martyrdom-of-Polycarp.html) for the encouraging details of his martyrdom. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Martyrdom-of-Polycarp.html>

Fourth Century

The doctrine of Arianism arose during this century. It taught that Jesus was not divine or eternal but that he was a created being with some divine attributes. The Christian Church battled this doctrine for nearly a century. It was at the Church Council of Constantinople in AD 381, that this was finally declared a false doctrine. It is however interesting to note that the present-day Jehovah's witnesses and the Mormons hold a similar position on Christ's nature.

Augustine of Hippo, AD 354-430, was a monk. Augustine battled against another monk by the name of Pelagius. Pelagius denied the teaching of original sin. (The doctrine of original sin says that man has an inherent sinful nature passed on from Adam.) He believed that man alone could completely choose good or evil himself without God's grace. Augustine responded by claiming the depravity of man and the need for the sovereignty of God's grace. Augustine was a prolific writer. We are still learning from this faithful saint. Here are three of his quotes:

"You have made us for yourselves, O Lord and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us."

"Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended

on you.”

If you have time, google some more quotes by this faithful saint.

Middle Ages

During this time, in Europe, there was one church. It was the Catholic Church. It was a time when the Church was blinded by traditions. But God’s truth shone brightly in a few men who argued and sometimes died for the truth of Scripture. The two men we will learn about lived before Martin Luther and his 95 Theses.

John Wycliffe, AD 1330-1384, spent a lifetime promoting Scripture and its authority over Papal (the Pope) authority. John believed that the Bible should be read by everyone. At that time, the Bible was in Latin and only a few copies were kept at the church. An average Englishman could not read Latin. So, John began to translate the Bible that was written in Latin into English. This was before the printing press, so everything was done by hand. He never lived to see this translation done. But the Church so hated the Wycliffe Bible that copies were confiscated, and people were killed for owning one. John himself died a natural death, but so hated was he that a Bishop 44 years after John’s death, had his body exhumed and burned. John’s ashes were then thrown into a river.

Jan Hus, AD 1369-1415, a Catholic priest, read the writings of Wycliffe. Hus, a Czechoslovakian, started preaching in the Czech language, instead of Latin, as the Church commanded. He believed that Christ alone is the Head of the Church. Jan also opposed the selling of indulgences that the Church had just instituted. Hus was burned at the stake. Reportedly his last words were, “Lord Jesus, I endure this cruel death for you. I ask you to have mercy on my enemies.”

John Wycliffe, called “The Morning Star of the Reformation,” and Jan Hus lit the way for other reformers, like Martin Luther and John Calvin to follow. (More about these and other saints next week as we continue our study on Church History)

And If you’re asking, WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW THIS?? Let’s let John Piper help us with that: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-value-of-learning-history>

Here’s another article that might pique your interest: <https://www.gotquestions.org/church-history.html>

Robert Shindler, a close associate of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, noted, “It is all too plainly apparent men are willing to forego the old for the sake of the new. But commonly it is found in theology that that which is true is not new, and that which is new is not true.”

Day 5 Reflection

TRUTH

Read Psalm 20. In what does the Psalmist declare we must place our trust? In what ways does this Psalm illustrate the attributes and or Names of God?

What Name/Names of God will you cling to today? Write out a prayer using one or more of God's Names as you call out to Him.

DIGGING DEEPER

Remember the goal here is to explore and possibly challenge yourself. Perhaps you want to explore a podcast on a topic that you normally would not or read an article to expand your thinking on a topic. Today is a day that you decide how deep you want to go. The purpose is to provide you with resources to allow you to delve into study.

Today you have a selection of articles and podcasts that you can use to Go Deeper! Some interesting articles to consider based on what has been studied this week:

- Who is God?: <https://www.gotquestions.org/who-is-God.html> - a great article that addresses the questions Who is God? What is God? How can we know God? There are many scripture references that you may wish to explore on the topics that interest you. Use this as an opportunity to really thumb through scripture. Look for God on the pages of scripture and be amazed!
- Go back to Day four if you didn't get through all the church history or perhaps there was an article that you would like to read again. The John Piper article on learning history is particularly interesting.

Some podcasts you may wish to consider:

- MamaBear Apologetics Podcast Episode #27: Who Made God? <https://mamabearapologetics.com/mba027-who-made-god/>
- Alisa Childers Podcast Episode #59: Is God Different in the Old Testament? With Jean E. Jones <https://www.alisachilders.com/blog/is-god-different-in-the-old-testament-with-jean-e-jones-the-alisa-childers-podcast-59>