

# The God of the Bible

The Bible reveals a Divine Being to us Who is unique from all other beings. He exists in three distinct Persons, yet, is One in essence. All three Persons have always been and will always be fully God. Therefore, three Gods do not exist, only One God. However, this One Divine Being possesses three distinct individualities. There is no other being like Him in this matter. He is uniquely three Persons in One essence. To assist us with understanding Who He is, He reveals each of His persons to us in distinct ways. The Person revealed as God the Father shows us that God is the source of all things. The Person displayed as God the Son exhibits God in a human form through which we can discern His character. The Person manifested as God the Spirit presents the essence of God, for God is Spirit. These three individualities are not One God displaying Himself in three ways; instead, they manifest the three unique personalities of God. Therefore, God the Father never acts as though He is God the Son, nor does God the Spirit display Himself as the other Two Members.

Within Scripture, God has revealed His nature to us, which is the combination of His essence and attributes.

Essence is the essential or basic structure of an entity. It describes what something is made up of, the underlying substance. Therefore, essence is the basis by which something exists. It describes the footing of justification for boasting, reasons for steadfastness, the foundation for hope, and the underpinning for the inherent ability of a being.

To help us better understand the concept of essence, we can examine how Scripture uses it.

In his second letter to the Corinthians saints, Paul encourages them to begin setting funds aside to fulfill their commitment, lest when he comes, if some of the Macedonians are with him, the Corinthian saints should be ashamed based on (essence) their boasting, 2 Corinthians 9:4. In the same letter, Paul dealt with false apostles claiming that he was nothing. On the foundation of foolishness, for Paul knows not to boast in the flesh, Paul reminds them that if anyone has anything to boast about in the flesh, it would be him, 2 Corinthians 11:17.

Faith is the substance (essence) of that which is hoped for, the evidence of accomplished deeds not seen, Hebrews 11:1. Since hope is always based upon a promise, faith is the reason there is hope, for if we do not believe someone's word, how will we trust in the fulfillment of their statement? However, when we have faith in their promise, our lives are impacted by our trust in their ability to fulfill it. Therefore, without faith, there is no hope.

The character and Person of Christ fully represent the essence of God to us in human form, Hebrews 1:3. Since Christ is the Second Person of the Godhead in human form, He is the radiance of the proper opinion and character of the essence of God. He has always existed as God, with the other members of the Godhead; therefore, He is not a created or birthed being, John 1:1. Setting aside His outward appearance as God, He took on the appearance of a man and was found in the likeness of a human, Philippians 2:6-8. However, He is still God; therefore, His actions are based on Him being God.

John 4:24 states that God's essence is spirit: the underlying immaterial substance that is the basis for God's existence. Spirit's characteristics are self-existence, simplicity, immensity, and unity.

Self-existence is an inherent characteristic of spirit. The animating principle of spirit has no beginning or end; therefore, God possesses life within Himself, John 5:26. The basis of His existence is by the necessity of His

Own Being, and He is the only living and true God, 1 Thessalonians 1:9. He is the I AM, Exodus 3:14; The self-existing One. The Hebrew name for LORD means self-existing One (יהוה - Yihweh). It is rooted in the word "to be (היה heyeh)", for He simply is.

Unity relates to the essence, not the individual Persons of the Godhead. God's essence is singular in existence; therefore, He is one spirit. The Persons do not divide or separate the essence into three individual beings. Since spirit is united, it cannot be added to or taken from; instead, it is always singular and will always remain one essence.

There is only One God, Deuteronomy 6:4.

The essence of the Father and Son is One Thing, John 10:30. It is important to note that when Jesus stated this, He used a neuter gender for the word "One" instead of masculine, which does not indicate that He is the Father; instead, by using a neuter "One", He reveals that they are of the same essence, yet individuals.

Even the demons know that God is One, James 2:19.

The simplicity of the essence of God means that spirit can never become anything but spirit. His essence cannot be compounded with another substance by adding to it or disarranged by decomposing. His essence is and always will simply be spirit. Therefore, when He is called, "The King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible", it is true because His essence does not change or corrupt.

Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, only God, wisdom and glory into the ages of the ages. - 1 Timothy 1:17.

Professing themselves to be wise, they were made to be foolish and changed the proper opinion of the incorruptible God into a likeness of corruptible humans and birds, and four-footed animals and creeping things - Romans 1:22-23.

Immensity describes His essence. His essence is beyond the boundaries of the universe, 1 Kings 8:27. Because of His immensity, He can be everywhere at all times, Jeremiah 23:23-24. Heaven is His throne and the earth His footstool, Isaiah 66:1. Christ showed the immensity of God by ascending above the heavens; therefore, God exists outside of this universe, Ephesians 4:9-10. The ability of Christ to pass through the heavens displays that He is God, for no other being can go beyond the glory clouds that cover the third heaven, Hebrews 4:14; Isaiah 14:14. This aspect of God's nature is fully manifested to us through Scripture. He has set His glory above the heavens, Psalm 8:1; 57:11. He is high above all the nations, and the proper opinion of Who He is, is above the heavens, Psalms 113:4.

Omnipresence is not an attribute of God; instead, it describes the immensity of His essence. An attribute must be an ability of the essence that is true at all times. In eternity past, there was nothing created for whom God would be present. Therefore, omnipresence is a space-time relationship of His immensity to creation. The universe was created within the essence of God. Since His essence is spirit, and spirit is not bound to material substance, it can exist in the same space without conflict or causing confusion of identity. God and creation are not one thing. His essence is present in all creation, yet at the same time it transcends all creation.

Since God's essence is beyond the created universe, each of the three Persons of the Godhead can be present to creation in different ways at various times. God the Father and God the Son are currently residing within the

third heaven, where the Holy Spirit inhabits the Church on earth, Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 8:1. During Christ's earthly ministry, God the Father and God the Spirit were present in the third heaven, John 14:16. The ability to change location of residency reveals that each Person of the Godhead totally possesses the entirety of the Divine Essence and can therefore personally emphasize His presence in any place within the essence.

### **The Attributes of God.**

An attribute is a characteristic or quality that defines an entity, concept, or object. It is the inherent ability of the essence. Scripture reveals seven attributes of God's essence, giving us a full understanding of His Nature.

**Omniscience** is the attribute of possessing a complete and unlimited knowledge. All three Persons of the Godhead have a full awareness and understanding of all the events, possibilities, and facts, both actual and potential, Matthew 11:21-23. Therefore, they are uniquely wise towards each other and all other things.

God knows the beginning from the end, Isaiah 46:9-10; therefore, He simultaneously knows the past, present, and future, Romans 4:17; Acts 15:15-17. This knowledge is not mixed or unclear because He knows the beginning as the beginning and the end as the end, along with all the sequential events in between, Romans 11:33. Therefore, He is not learning as time goes by, nor has He overlooked any aspect or forgotten any fact concerning any event. Through His power He made the earth, and by His wisdom He established it, stretching out the heavens by His understanding, Jeremiah 10:12.

We see examples of His knowledge in prophecy and its fulfillment. It was prophesied concerning Christ that the Lord would hear Him and deliver Him from death, Psalm 22:8. The elders of Israel referenced this prophecy while Christ was on the cross, Matthew 27:43. The Roman soldiers divided His garments among themselves, just as prophecy foretold, John 19:24.

He knows what He has planned to do beforehand. For it was determined beforehand that Christ would be delivered over to lawless hands to crucify Him, Acts 2:23. Those who would be in the Church are the elect of God, not individually chosen beforehand, but of a chosen group that would be placed as sons, 1 Peter 1:1-2. Foreknowledge is looking back at the decree the Godhead made before the creation of the universe. God determined beforehand that all who are in Christ would be holy and blameless in love before Him, Ephesians 1:4. God made an oath to show the immutability of His promises, Hebrews 6:17-18.

God also knows the possible from the actual. If the works done in Bethsaida were done in Tyre and Sidon, they would still be there to this day, Matthew 11:21-23. God knew that Saul would come to Keilah and that the men of the city would turn David and his men over to him, 1 Samuel 23:5-14. God knows our sitting and rising, and He understands our thoughts, for He understands our path and is acquainted with our ways. There is no place that God is not, for not even darkness can hide someone from Him, Psalms 139:1-12.

He has a knowledge that exceeds that of men. The way He thinks is not the way man is able to think. His ways are beyond that of men, Isaiah 55:8-9. However, those who are in Christ can receive the things from the Spirit and understand the mind of Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:14-16 (for who knows the mind of the Lord, who is knit together with Him? Indeed, we have a quality of the mind of Christ), for we are joined together with God in our spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:17.

The depth of the riches of His knowledge are unsearchable by men. No man knows the mind of the Lord that he may counsel Him. Who can give to God that He must repay it? All things are from Him and to Him, Romans 11:33-36.

Yes, God knows who will be saved and who will be lost; however, that does not mean that God pre-elected some to salvation and the rest to condemnation. The condemnation of men is because of Adam's sin, not God's will, Romans 5:12. In the decree, God determined not to make this type of choice, 2 Peter 3:9. Therefore, it is foolish of men to say that some are pre-lect to salvation, whereas others are not. God had provided salvation for all. However, God is free to use a person in the way He deems appropriate, including setting them apart as vessels of wrath, just as He determined to use Pharaoh, a man who had rejected the truth, to make His name known to the whole world, Romans 9:17-18.

**Omnipotence** is the attribute of Deity relating to its inherent ability. Each member of the Godhead is able to do anything that He determines to do. This power is limited only by that which is preposterous or contrary to the Divine Nature. Therefore, if God says He will perform something, He, in fact, has the inherent ability to do what He said because He is not the type of being that is unaware of the capabilities of His own strength and abilities.

His eyes are open to all the ways of men, to show favor to thousands and repay the perversity of the father upon his children, Jeremiah 32:18-19, 27. It is through His power that all things begin and end, Revelation 1:8. When dealing with Sarah's question concerning her ability to have a child, the Lord speaks to Abraham and asks if anything is too difficult for Him. At the appointed time, He will return the time of life to Sarah and she will bear a son, Genesis 18:14. This involves the restoration of the physical body to enable it to procreate again, even though her body was well past the time of being able to give life.

God made the heavens and the earth by His great strength and outstretched hand, Jeremiah 32:17. He not only created the universe out of nothing; in addition, it was by His strength that He made the heavens and the earth. In the first part of the book of Genesis, we have the renovation of the earth, which was done by His strength as He made it possible for humans to live in Eden, making something at His will, Genesis 1:3. Through His wisdom, He established the inhabited world and stretched out the heavens by His discernment, Jeremiah 10:12.

**Truth** is seeing things as they really are because it is not concealed, and does not fail or disappoint expectations. Therefore, truth is not relative; it is absolute.

Since truth is an attribute of God's essence, He is a Being that never lies. This is an essential aspect of His nature in contrast to humans, for every man is a liar who contradicts or changes what God has said, Romans 3:4. God will be justified in His word and blameless in His judgment because they are truthful, Psalms 51:4.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, Who is the third Person of the Godhead revealed to us. Today the Holy Spirit, Who was sent from the Father and testifies concerning Christ, convicts the world of the singular sin of not believing in Christ, John 16:8. The Holy Spirit is the one who teaches us how to abide in Christ, 1 John 2:27, and is the Spirit of truth, John 15:26.

As a truthful Being by nature, God does what He says He will do, for He is not a man, nor the son of a man that He should be caused to change His mind, Numbers 23:19. Therefore, we can hold fast to the hope that we have, for He Who promised is faithful, Hebrews 10:23.

Those who reject God, exchange the truth of God for the lie, which is independence from Him, Romans 1:25. As a result of their willful denial of truth, their minds are turned over to corruption, exchanging the incorruptible image of God with that of corruptible man, animals, and creeping things, while serving and worshipping the creation rather than the Creator. In their rejection, they even ruin their own bodies, doing that which is against nature, Romans 1:26-27.

**Goodness** is an inherent attribute of Deity that produces an inner sense of well-being. God is good; therefore, He is by nature happy. He is the only Being Who inherently is good, Matthew 19:17. God is a happy God, 1 Timothy 1:11. Since Jesus is God in the flesh, He also has a sense of well-being, resulting in Him being happy, 1 Timothy 6:15.

Mercy is an aspect of God's goodness, not an attribute. Through His goodness, He wants others to have an inner sense of well-being. Mercy is the relief from the impact of sin. Because of His great love with which He loved us, He is rich in mercy towards us, saving us even though we were dead in trespasses and sins, Ephesians 2:4-5. According to His mercy, He saved us by the washing and regeneration from the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5. Happy is the man to whom the Lord does not impute his sin, Romans 4:7-8.

**Love** is an attitude that seeks the best for another. To understand this attribute of God, it is important to comprehend the differences between the concepts of love expressed in the Greek language. Agape (ἀγάπη) is a type of love that seeks the best for the one loved. This is the kind of love that conveys God's attribute. Philos (φίλος), which is often mistranslated as love, means fondness, expressing friendship. These two concepts of love are expressed in Scripture, where στοργή (storge - family love) and ἔρως (eros - romance) are not but often their definitions are imposed upon the meaning of love.

When it comes to a human type of agape (ἀγάπη), it is the desire for something that a person is willing to sacrifice to gain it. It is not seeking the best for the one loved. Instead, it is for the benefit of the one expressing love. This type of love is shown by those who are fond of giving long salutations, wearing clothing to emphasize their prosperity, and love the best seats of the synagogues so they are given the admiration of men, Luke 11:43. The result of this kind of love from humans is to seek the best for themselves, not caring about how it impacts others. Such things as adultery, fornication, dishonorable passions, and going after strange flesh are applied to the concept of love, when they are actually expressing ἔρως (eros - romance) and only seeking to fulfill the desires from the flesh.

In contrast to human love, God's quality of love always seeks the best for the one loved. This kind of love is defined in Scripture so that we can understand it. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 explains what true agape is. Love is long-suffering, which is a long holding out of one's anger against unreasonable people. Love is kind, for it seeks to make others feel at ease. Love is not jealous, nor does it brag, or puff itself up. Love will in no way act in a disgraceful manner, nor seeks its own benefit. Love is not provoked, will not put to a person's account something that is wrong, and will not rejoice in unrighteousness. Instead, love rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, and endures all things. Love will not accept a person's perverted way or accept their corrupt lifestyle. Love does not excuse wickedness without penalty or overlook the wrong others.

When God expressed love towards the world, He did not dismiss sin; instead, He sent His Son to pay the ransom and free us from the sin nature, John 3:16. Grace is an aspect of love, for it is an attitude by which a person is given a benefit without consideration of merit. God expressed His love towards us while we were yet sinners, Romans 5:8; therefore, through this expression of love, God gave us the means by which to be saved from His coming wrath. He did not do this because we deserved salvation; instead, in expressing love towards us while we were sinners, He did what was best in providing a righteous way to be saved.

In contrast to human love, and even the love required under the Mosaic law, the Christian's standard of love is to love as Christ loved us, John 13:34. This can only be done by using the fruit of the Spirit, Who proceeds God's quality of love in our lives, Galatians 5:22-23. This type of love will always seek the best for others.

**Righteousness** describes a person who acts in accordance with good virtue and morals. The types of actions they produce are beneficial and no aspect of wrong is involved in their lifestyle.

By His nature, God is righteous; therefore, He never acts in a way that is contrary to Who He is, and in all His ways He does what is right, Psalm 145:17. Even in the deferral of punishment for sins God's righteousness is shown through Christ's propitiatory work on the cross. God was, in fact, righteous in His actions towards sinful humans and fallen spirit beings, while only providing justification through grace for humans. He did not ignore sin; instead, He directly addressed it for what it truly is and dealt with it in a righteous manner, Romans 3:25.

When those who are saved today sin, God is righteous in sending away the sin, along with cleansing from all unrighteousness, when they verbally agree that their action is not out from faith and therefore sinful, 1 John 1:9. As children of God, He deals with our sin as a family matter. This may include child-training to get us to correct our ways or even putting us to death when we refuse to accept His correction, for He will not allow His children to be condemned with the world, 1 Corinthians 11:32. Those who are clean do not need to wash again, only their feet need to be washed, John 13:10. Therefore, the sending away of sins is a righteous response to a saint verbally agreeing with God concerning their actions being sinful.

All humans possess the knowledge of good and evil; therefore, we intuitively know what is right to do, Genesis 3:22. We know that a good person is kind and helpful, one who obeys the laws and does not do things in secret. Their works are beneficial in nature. We also know that those who do wrong are harmful to others, hide their activities, and negatively impact our society. This knowledge is because we have a conscience that bears witness either for or against us, Romans 2:15.

There is no aspect of the sin nature in God, for within Him is no darkness, 1 John 1:5. He dwells in the light, which reveals all things for what they truly are, 1 Timothy 6:16. His actions are not done in a hidden manner; instead, they are on display for all to see, Isaiah 45:19.

No man in a position of authority is purer in his judgments than God, Who is our Creator. No high-born man is more righteous, Job 4:17. The sons of man do not judge in fairness, Psalm 58:1; however, when the time is proper, God will fairly judge, Psalm 75:2. The way of the righteous is fairness, Isaiah 26:7. The words of king David express the necessity of a ruler who is righteous and has respect for God, 2 Samuel 23:2. Although he knew that his house was not set in order before God, through his life he had learned that God is righteous and therefore will do as He promised, 2 Samuel 23:5. Therefore, God is just when He speaks, and His judgments are without blame, which no man can claim, for He is, by His very nature, righteous, Psalm 51:4.

**Holiness** is separation. One who is holy is set apart from others. Vain repetition has no value with God, so when Isaiah records the seraphim at the throne crying out, "Holy, Holy, Holy", there is a purpose for their repetition, for they speak of the three persons of the Godhead.

And this one called unto that one and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy is Jehovah of hosts. All the earth is full because of His honor, Isaiah 6:3.

God is One in essence, but three in Persons. Therefore, it is true that the Lord God is One God, Deuteronomy 6:4; yet, has three distinct divine Persons.

We see the three Persons expressed all throughout Scripture; therefore, this is not a new concept imposed on Scripture by Christianity. In the beginning, the Spirit of the Lord is brooding over the earth, Genesis 1:2. Brooding is something a being does; it does not describe the actions or characteristics of wind or breath,

Deuteronomy 32:11. In the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Lord on the earth rained fire and brimstone upon the valley from the Lord in the heavens, Genesis 19:24.

False religions such as Islam reject the revelation of three persons and make God a being that has little interest in humans. This concept comes from how God interacted with Ishmael, who was not the son of promise; however, God still blessed him because he came from Abraham, Genesis 16:10-12. In doing so, they deny the Holiness of God. Other cults, such as the Mormons, change the image of God into that of humans, making Jesus a son of the Father, who was a human before he became a God, Romans 1:23. Denying the holiness of God. All false religions claim Jesus never states that He is God; however, Scripture shows otherwise. Not only was He able to forgive sins, which is only something God can do, evident through the physical healing of those He forgave, He also clearly stated to the Jews that He is the I AM, John 8:58; Matthew 9:2-6. However, God shares His glory with no one; therefore, Jesus cannot be a god, but the God, Isaiah 42:8.

Each person of the Godhead is unique and totally separate from the other two. This separation has been true at all times concerning God. He has never existed in a form other than One Divine Nature with three distinct Persons. Each Person of the Godhead is equal in power and authority, yet individual in Person. In revealing Himself to us, God has chosen to show the three Persons in different ways so that we can understand that God is both the source of all things and the means by which all things continue to exist. God the Father is expressing that God is the source of all things. God the Son displays Deity in a physical form that we as humans can understand and by whose power all things exist. God the Spirit conveys that God's essence is Spirit.

### **Qualities of God's Nature**

The natural results from the combining of the essence and attribute produce specific qualities that relate to God's nature.

Since the essence and attributes that make up the nature of God do not change, one of the qualities of His nature is **immutability**. God's nature (essence and attributes) cannot be changed, altered, added to, or modified; therefore, God's consciousness does not change. We see this quality of God's nature manifested to us through the oath that He gave, for it is impossible for Him to lie; therefore, His determinate will is immutable, Hebrews 6:17-18. Jacob is not destroyed because God does not change, Malachi 3:6. This quality does not relate to a Person's attitude or activities, which are a result of the manifestation of their individuality and how they determine to use the essence and attributes.

God's nature is **mobile**. Each Person of the godhead can change His attitude, activity, and what attribute(s) He expresses. This is not in conflict to His immutability, which relates to His determinate will. When the wickedness of humans was so bad that all the formations of their thoughts were to produce what is wrong, God chose not to strive with men anymore, Genesis 6:7. However, He preserve the human race and His word, Genesis 8:1; Genesis 3:15. God wrapped Himself in flesh, Philippians 2:5-8. He will create a new heavens and new earth, in which righteousness will settle down and feel at ease, 2 Peter 3:13.

An inherent quality of His Nature is **freedom**. He cannot be compelled or constrained by force to govern His activities. Each Person of the Godhead is free to express the essence and attributes without any inner or outward compulsion, necessity, or restriction, Isaiah 40:13; Romans 11:34.

**Sovereignty** is an exclusive privilege of His Nature by virtue of His freedom. Each Person of the Godhead is free to express the Divine Nature without fear or seeking the favor from Themselves or Their creation. All of God's purposes and decrees are sovereign. We understand His sovereignty in how He shows mercy, for no one

can by his desire or work force God to show mercy to him, Romans 9:16, 18. God brought forth the Church of His own will, James 1:18.

God is not limited to time or space; therefore, He is not finite. Since infinite only exists when there is something finite, infinity is not an attribute of His essence but a quality of His Nature. **Infinite** express a quality of God's Nature by which all there Persons lack nothing. They are complete, having no limitations or bounds. Therefore, creation added nothing and took nothing away from God, Psalm 90:2.

What we know of time and space were created by God; therefore, a quality of God's nature is **eternal**. He is not limited or bound by time and space. His essence not only permeates all of creation, His immensity extents beyond the universe. The natural habitation of God is entirety, Isaiah 57:15. He is the I AM, Exodus 3:14. He is always present; no beginning, no end. We get a general concept of how God sees times in comparison to humans in 2 Peter 3:8 where the notion of a thousand years is but a day to God.