

## What God Says About Himself



*The Mystery of the Trinity is Revealed only in the Bible.*

**G**OD'S great plan is to save us through faith alone in our Savior. That plan can be understood and believed by the simplest child as well as the most learned adult. The trouble with many learned adults is that they seem to think that they are at least as wise as God Himself, if not wiser. From the first temptation in the Garden of Eden, the devil has tried to overrule the Word of God by promising people "wisdom" (Genesis 3:1-5). The Apostle Paul once observed, "*Not many wise according to the flesh are called.*" 1 Cor 1:26.

In this lesson we will study of what God says about Himself. To do so, we must listen to what He tells us in the Bible, rather than relying on our own thoughts and impressions. Human wisdom, be it ever so deep and learned, can never reveal to us the truth about the nature of the one true God. This truth we must learn from Scripture.

### ICON KEY

-  Introduction
-  Important point
-  For further reading

### Descriptions of the True God

1. Read John 4:24. [When John has a I or II in front of it, it refers to the letters which John wrote, located near the end of the New Testament. John without the numerals refers to the Gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament]. God is sometimes pictured as an old man with white hair. ***But here, and in many other places in the Bible, God is described as a...***

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We tend to think of that word as describing some kind of ghost or phantom, not a real person. Yet the Bible everywhere speaks of God as a person – only a person who did not take on flesh and blood until Christ was born of Mary in Bethlehem.

2. In Exodus chapter three, God called Moses to lead His people out of slavery in the land of Egypt. But Moses was afraid that the people wouldn't listen to him, or to his God, either. Read Exodus 3:14. The people would no doubt ask him WHICH God he represented. ***What was Moses supposed to say to them?***

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**"LEARN FROM ME"**



What God claims for Himself is true: He is the only God who truly "is" or "exists." All other gods are made up by the mind and hand of men.

## **Qualities of the True God**

3. Read Proverbs 15:3. *What does this passage tell us about the true God?*

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4. God uses another word to describe Himself in Leviticus 19:2. *What is that Word?*

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This word means "perfect," "righteous" and "without sin."

5. Read Psalm 90:2. *What are God's origins? When did He come into being?*

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6. Read Deuteronomy 32:4 *Put down some of the words used in this verse to describe God:*

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7. We are often told that "religion must change with the times." People in our day and age seem to view God much differently from the people of only 100 years ago. But read Malachi 3:6. *What does God say about Himself in this verse of the Bible?*

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8. Human beings are notoriously unreliable. Sometimes they stick by their friends, and sometimes they forsake them. But read II Timothy 2:13. *What is one very comforting quality of God?*

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9. When God appeared to Abraham, Genesis 17:1, He described Himself using a word that is often used of God in the Bible. He said,

*"I am \_\_\_\_\_ God."*

10. Look up Exodus 34:6-7, the account of how God declared His name unto Moses on top of Mount Sinai. *Write down some of the qualities of God revealed in verse six?*

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11. Read Psalm 139:1-4. *Another thing you can say about God is that He...*

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12. Some people look at all the suffering and pain in the world, and imagine that God must be a cruel and heartless God. But read Psalm 145:9. *This passage definitely states that God is...*

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13. Read I John 4:8. There is one quality that sums up all the words with which God describes Himself to us. *That Word is...*

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## **The Number of God**

14. The people who lived in Bible times believed in many different gods. People today also profess a belief in many gods. Read Deuteronomy 6:4. *What number does God give Himself in this passage?*

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15. Read Matthew 28:19. There is only one God, as the previous passage showed us. And yet, in this verse the one God describes Himself as *three different Persons, namely:*

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16. Again, read II Corinthians 13:14. The Apostle Paul was pronouncing a blessing upon the Christians in the town of Corinth. *With which words does he name the three Persons of God?*

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17. Read Matthew 3:16-17. This is the account of the baptism of Jesus. But the other two Persons of God were also present. *How did God the Father make His presence known?*

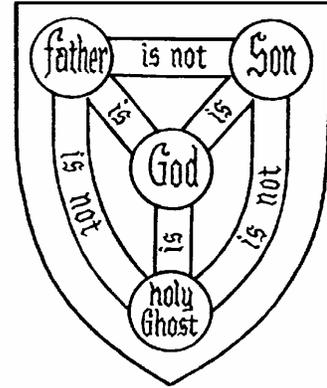
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*How did God the Holy Spirit make His presence known?*

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## "LEARN FROM ME"

In the Bible, God clearly describes Himself as one God in three Persons. But how can three be one, and one be three? This idea of a "three-in-one" God makes no sense to our human reason. Over the centuries, Christians have used many pictures to try to describe the Trinity. Some point to the three different forms of water: gas, liquid and solid; they are quite different, and yet they are all water. Some refer to the word G-O-D itself: there are THREE letters, but they form ONE word. However, all such human comparisons fall short in one way or another. The fact is that our limited, human minds cannot see how God could be one and three at the same time, but the illustration above may help us see with our minds what God wants us to believe with our hearts.



A "creed" is a statement of what a person believes. One of the three great creeds of the Christian Church is the Athanasian Creed. In it, you find statements such as these:

- There is only one God: but in this one divine Essence are three distinct, separate Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*
- The Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Ghost is God. Yet there are not three Gods, but only one.*
- The Father is eternal; the Son is eternal; the Holy Ghost is eternal. Yet there are not three eternals, but only one.*
- Each is not a third part of God, so that the three together make the complete God; but each one is the full God.*



## A Proper Approach to the Doctrine of the Trinity

We use the words "Triune" and "Trinity" to describe the true God. Some are surprised to find that these words do not occur in the Bible. However, as we have seen *the doctrine of the Trinity certainly does come from the Bible!*

18. Read Exodus 3:1-5, the account of how the Lord spoke to Moses out of a burning bush. ***What strange command did God give Moses in verse 5?***

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***What was the reason God gave for this command?***

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**"LEARN FROM ME"**



In the same way, we should remember that when we discuss the doctrine of the Trinity, *we are standing on holy ground*. It is fitting for us also to show humility before the God who reveals Himself to us in the Bible. We should not reject His Word simply because this doctrine – or any other – fails to make sense to our human reason. Rather, God calls upon us to “remove our shoes” in a spiritual sense, to humbly accept in faith what we cannot understand.

19. Read Romans 11:33-34. *How does the Apostle Paul describe the “judgements” and the “ways” of the Lord?*

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20. Read Mark 16:16. Thank goodness the Lord does *not* say, “He who *understands* everything about God shall be saved.” *What does He say?*

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21. We are not able to comprehend, with our limited minds, all the mysteries of God. The Lord simply asks us to believe. Read I Thessalonians 5:18. *What is something ELSE the Lord says we should do - at all times and in all places?*

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It has been well said that if we could understand all there is to know about the true God, then we would *be* God. Rather than being required to understand God, we are simply called upon to believe, and that with thanksgiving! Rather than puzzling over the nature of God, we can spend our time more wisely getting to know the true God better by studying His Word.

22. Read John 1:18. *Who is in the very best position to “declare” to us the truth about our Heavenly Father?*

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23. Read John 17:3 *How can we get to know the true God and be saved?*

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24. Read James 1:21. *How can we get to know the true God and be saved?*

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25. Read Matthew 11:27-30. *How can we get to know the true God and be saved?*

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