

About GOD

Who Is He?

What is His Name?

What does He look like?



www.fenlandschurch.co.uk

This is a Study About God

Exodus 31:18

18 When God finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two stone tablets of the Agreement. God had written on the stones with his finger.

READ and LISTEN

We will leave the question about God having fingers for later. What we need to see is that God wrote his Word. God had people write down his word. So, God wants people to READ his Word.

People don't seem too keen on reading, at least not where long words and difficult concepts go. There is a newspaper that has a reputation for using only 800 basic English words. The point of reading is that you can go at your own pace. Listening is very important but you can't stop the words when you don't understand them. You can't re-run a sentence or two to make sure you understood what was said.

So, reading and listening are a vital part of knowing what God has to say to us.

A great preacher, John Wesley [1703-1791], wondered why people could not understand his preaching. Many people, then, did not learn to read or write. He was staying at an inn. He asked a maid to help him. He read a sermon to her and asked her to



stop him every time she did not understand what he said. Well, he was stopped many times. It made a big difference to how he preached after that!

There is another way we understand what people are saying and meaning. God has given us souls. We pick up meaning from body language, feelings and being sensitive to how another person is speaking. All these non-verbal things communicate along with the words. Nowadays, we often use emojis when we write a text – so that people 'get' the tone and meaning of our words.

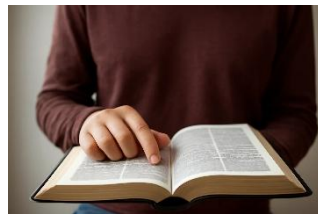


God

Romans 3:4

let God be true but every man a liar

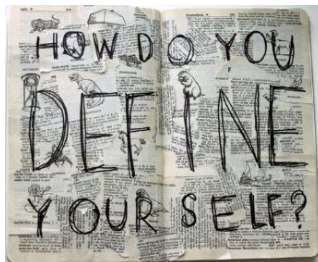
When we use the word 'God' what are we thinking, what do we mean. For many it is just and easy word to say when we are surprised or shocked. For me, the word is a title for the One who created and rules the universe. The One who has provided evidence of himself in everything we see and experience. The One who has provided a book that provides what we need to know.



There is evidence for God around us and in the Bible

When Moses asked God, "Who are you". God said, "I AM WHO I AM". Really, He was explaining that He is who he is. He is not tied down to time, not restricted in what he can do, not limited in brain power. He just IS!

Hebrew people like Moses, adopted this active word (a verb) and made it a name (noun) Y'W'H or Yahweh. It is not a name – it is a description of being. Even we mere humans can understand this. Which of us likes being tied down to our names?



God is not defined by what we think. He is not controlled by what we want. However, He has rules:

1. He does not lie
2. He always does what is right
3. He will always keep His Word
4. He will always be loving, merciful and gracious

So God is Truth and Love, Faithful and Kind. The BIG problem is that we humans think that God is like us. So to believe Him, trust Him, love him is very hard.

Why is this?

Well the main reason is that we are nothing like God:

1. We lie
2. We do what is wrong
3. We break our promises
4. We are selfish and unkind

How can we get to know God?

I'm just confused, by candles and prayers.

I just need to know, if You are there.

Show me the way, for I long to see.

If You are real, be real to me,

Questions – Cliff Richard – from the film “Two a Penny”

You can do this by starting at the point where you understand that you need forgiveness and a massive change of 'heart'



Even a pop song gets this:

Waiting for your change of heart

It just takes a beat

To turn it around

Yes, I'm waiting for your change of heart

At the edge of my seat

Please turn it around (Turn it around)

I am sure you realise that by 'heart' we are talking about the 'real you'. You can ask God to be real to you. But you need to be 'real' about this. God does not play games. After all, in order to give you a Way Out he had to make a way in to our sinful world.

He came to us in Jesus. He is called 'the Christ' or 'Messiah'. The Son of God. There are many films about champions, saviours, like Superman, Spiderman or the Avengers. The four Gospel accounts – written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, all show how unique Jesus is. The apostles wrote letters to help us understand who Jesus is and what he did for the world when he died on a Roman Cross.

There's a Man up on a cross and He's been crucified

Do you have any idea why or for who He died?

When you gonna wake up, when you gonna wake up

When you gonna wake up and strengthen the things that remain?

Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan seemed to think that people are asleep – they are not able to see God, or the truth about Jesus, until they wake up!



Does God have a name?

Exodus 3:15

This is My name forever

So God adopted a name. No-one gave him the name. For the people of Israel it became sacred – not even written down fully, and never spoken. In Hebrew it is **Y'H'W'H**. It is a name Jewish people will not speak. Christians say it as 'Jehovah or Yahweh'. It is connected with God saying, "I AM WHO I AM". There are many gods with names given them by human worshippers. Not so with the Creator.

I wonder, if you could choose your own name, what would it be? It might be you like the sound of it or it links you with a famous person. Some people choose to be named according to their position or job. A name can tell who you belong to. Like Robin – son. God has many other names that are more like titles or descriptions – they enlarge on what God ought to mean to us.

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a Child is born,

Unto us a Son is given;

And the government will be upon His shoulder.

And His name will be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

It is a very good thing to study the names and titles of God. It can bring you to know him and trust him. Here are a few:

Yahweh my SHEPHERD (YHWH ROHI) – Psalm 23:1

This reminds us of the loving care of God.



Yahweh my RIGHTEOUSNESS (YHWH TSIDEKENU) – Philippians 3:9

This reminds us that heaven cannot be ours unless we are given righteousness (sinlessness by God)

Hard to illustrate – it is like being protected by Jesus. His righteousness covers us.



A Little Grebe protecting her young under her wings

Yahweh our PEACE (YHWH SHALOM) – Philippians 4:7

This reminds us that we are OK with God and will not be condemned by him. This is a very broad and deep word meaning the complete absence of conflict and anxiety and fear.



What Does God Look Like?

John 1:18

No one has ever seen God. The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father's side —he has revealed him.



There are all kinds of visions and ideas of God. These may help us but they should not become things of worship or superstition. God told Moses that the problem with actually seeing God would cause his death! Instead, Moses was able to see God in the he has on everything and he heard the voice of God. In the Bible people saw visions of thrones and angels, bright coloured light, fire and storm. All this only gives us an idea of what God is like rather than who He is.

The Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11) describes God judging the world of unbelievers. The being on the Throne was terrifying.

We read in the Bible many ways to learn about God and recognise that he exists. The beauty of creation, the wonder of a starlit night, the way everything has its own unique identity (like our fingerprints). However, Moses wanted to see God, see His face.

The apostle Paul wrote this:

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus said:

John 14:9

He who has seen Me has seen the Father

If we want to know God – not just know about God, then we have Jesus. A real contact, a human being – but not quite the same as us. Jesus had the same character as God in a body that was and is in every way unique. So,

- He does not lie
- He always does what is right
- He will always keep His Word
- He will always be loving, merciful and gracious

We do not know what Jesus looked like. We should not try to paint him or make a statue of him because it will only fall short and lead us astray. We need to 'see' Jesus through the heart (through a spiritual way of seeing and understanding).

We can see evidence of God in our beautiful world. It is possible to 'see' God in his Creation.

Romans 1:19-20

what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse

God in Three-Persons?

Luke 3:21-22

When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. 22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

At the baptism of Jesus God the Son was joined in his earthly life by God the Holy Spirit and God the Father spoke. You will find many occasions in Scripture (the Bible) where these three Persons are mentioned together.

Genesis 1:1-3

1 In the beginning God (FATHER) created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God (THE HOLY SPIRIT) was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said (THE WORD), "Let there be light"; and there was light.



In this part of Genesis we read a name for God – ELOHIM – which is a plural – it describes a group, a council of equals. Later we read:

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness

So we can see something about God in each other. Not the holy, death-causing face of God but similarities with how God is creative, intelligent, able to have power over other things. We lost most of that when Adam decided to disobey God!

You are probably thinking that I am asking you to think something that is impossible. How can any being be three persons at the same time? One answer is: God is not limited to my ability to understand who he is. I could try to explain it but prefer to say, "It just is!" I can think of things that can be three things – Water can be ice, liquid and steam. I can be 'me', a father, and a husband. We are thinking about God:

1. He is everywhere at the same time
2. He is able to do whatever he chooses whenever he chooses
3. He knows the beginning from the end of everything
4. He had no beginning and will have no end
5. He is independent of everything; everything is dependent on him
6. He has chosen to communicate with humans in three ways: in Father (supreme), in Son (his Word), in Holy Spirit (for relationship). These three are all equally God.
7. When I pray I come to God the Father, through God the Son, by the power of God the Holy Spirit

We need to have a bigger understanding of the word ONE!

God the Father

Isaiah 45:5

I am the LORD, and there is no other;

There is no God besides Me.

There is a lot of discussion nowadays about the importance of a father in a family. This quote sums up those thoughts:

A father can provide a doorway to the world. His interaction forms part of the foundation, integral to identity formation, and the expression of one's truth. At each stage of a child's development, the relationship with the father affects the sense of self and gives the confidence to express creative potential (Kavaler-Adler, 1993, p. 187).

There is some cross over between male and female when it comes to what fathering means but we cannot get away from the fact that gender is a very important part of what we mean by 'father'. Jesus taught a lot about serving, praying to and obeying God the Father.



A father cannot be a mother and a mother cannot be a father – some gender issues prevail about this. God designed the human race to be in families. This is expressed in many ways. Aunts and

Uncles and Grandparents all play a part. The purpose is for children to grow amid good examples and a suitable, safe environment. God is the complete parent. He is able to provide all we need with respect to love and care. He is able to provide discipline and tolerance, correction and kindness.

This human world is broken! Even the best parents will have difficult and troubled children. And the best of children sometimes have poor parents! Christian upbringing will help – some of the time. The problem is sin. Humans are born with a rebellious streak. The solution is found when fathers, mothers, children submit to God as their Father. He adopts us and includes us in his family and surrounds us with unchanging promises and perfect love.

God as Father is not confined to a box. God as Father is evident in the Son and the Holy Spirit.

God the Son

1 John 4:10-11

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

The man Jesus is unique among humans. He looked like a man, ate, drank, slept, had emotions, like a man. But he did not sin or break God's Laws, or harm anyone. He did good things, he taught good things. The Bible explains that Jesus came into the world from God's home. He was and is and ever will be fully God. He became fully human apart from our human nature to rebel and disobey. Even as a child, his attitude and behaviour was perfect.

Philippians 2:5-8

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

This may be hard to understand. We are talking about God – not what is possible in human power or mind. The Bible tells us eight things about Jesus that emphasise his uniqueness.

1. His Birth

- a. He was born to a virgin – Mary.
This was promised hundreds of years before it happened



2. His Life

- a. He did nothing wrong even as a child. Everything about him demonstrated his freedom from sin and absolute authority to teach and heal



3. His Baptism

At his baptism he was honoured as 'the Son' and anointed with the Holy Spirit. All three Persons of God were working as One

4. His Death

At the Cross He spoke words of forgiveness and love. He paid a ransom for everyone to release us from Satan's power and from God's judgement on us because of our sin



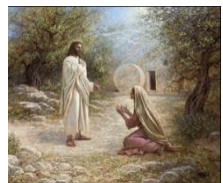
5. His Burial

In being buried it was demonstrated that he had truly died and in that condition died for everyone. This opened the door to dead sinners being given new life



6. His Resurrection

Jesus came alive again. He defeated death because he could not be held by it. He had not sinned. The wages of sin is death. He entered into death and burst out from its grip.



7. His Ascension

After appearing in different ways to his disciples, he gathered them at the Mount of Olives. There he ascended to God's home. Two angels told the followers that Jesus would return in the same way that he left them.



8. His Return

The Bible tells us that Jesus will come back to this world and be King here. He will come back for all his people, whether alive or dead. All will be gathered up to be with him.



Jesus is unique and all these eight things belong to him. No-one else can claim to have achieved them.

John 14:2-3

I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

God the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:30

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

The Holy Spirit is as much a person as the Father and the Son. You can grieve him. You can't grieve a stone or a cloud. They are objects. It is important to always think of the Holy Spirit as a person. This is important because some of what the Holy Spirit does is compared with water, oil, fire and wind. You can be filled with the Holy Spirit as well as know his companionship and help in every day.

Don't get confused by the old word ghost! It is another word for spirit. People think they see the spirit of someone who is dead! We recognise that the Holy Spirit is the living Presence of God in us and around us.

On the Day of Pentecost God poured out his Spirit everywhere. He was clearly seen in the changed behaviour of the disciples of Jesus.

Acts 2:1-4

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.



*An artist's idea of what it all might have looked like on the Day of
Pentecost*

Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

When the Holy Spirit works in someone the first thing that happens is that people are reminded of Jesus. They are made to think about him. How he lived on earth, how he died to deal with our sins, how he came alive from the dead. This is really important. God has given his Holy Spirit into the World to help us fix our eyes on his Son Jesus. The Holy Spirit does not want attention; he wants us to see Jesus.

John 16:12-15

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

David Chapman

July 2026