GOD'S ATTRIBUTES · STUDY NOTES

Study 1: God is real

For personal study or groups

Your name

biblehelp.net

How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

PART 1

Who is God?

Who is God? What is He like? How can we know Him?

These are questions people have tried to answer throughout history. If we describe God as a being who is higher in intelligence, power and goodness than human beings, then a great many people believe in a God of one sort or another. Many people claim to worship a deity with qualities such as purity, superior knowledge and wisdom.

Many people believe passionately that they have the right idea about God, and that they are doing the right things to know and please Him. But how do we know who is right? Who has found the true God, and has the authority to say so? Different religions make different claims. They cannot all be right. Where can we turn for help?

Finding out about God

The first thing we will take for granted in these studies is that God does exist. We will see what God is like as the course goes on, but we will not try to prove His existence. We see clear evidence of intelligent design in the multitude of plants and creatures on this planet, and in the workings of our solar system and the universe.

Great efforts have been made to explain how the world came into being without a powerful and loving Creator. Yet all such attempts collapse when they face the question of ultimate origins. Where did the building blocks of life come from in the first place? Serious inquiry into the origins of the universe forces us to reckon with an ultimate Creator.

1 **Look up Romans 1:20**

What can be clearly seen from what God has made?

But people have many different ideas about God, and many of them disagree. So we need a final authority to tell us whether our thinking about Him is right: something we can appeal to

for what we say about Him. Many people look at the world of religion and despair; it is so perplexing, with so many different claims and ideas.

There is, however, a book unlike any other, which gives us the help we need. That book is the Bible.

PART 2

God makes Himself known in the Bible

God speaks through the Bible

The Bible has an authority unlike any other book. It gives us information no other book gives. Its view of history, the present and the future is unique. It tells us about God, because God Himself has spoken and made Himself known in the Bible. Let's see what the Bible says about itself.

2 **Look up 2 Timothy 3:16**

What does this verse say all Scripture is?

3 **Look up 2 Peter 1:20–21**

From whom did the prophets speak, and how?

The Bible had different human authors, each with a different upbringing and experiences. They came from the Jewish people (with one or two exceptions), but what unites them all is that God revealed Himself to each of them, and spoke through them.

God spoke to people

He spoke to the first human beings He made, Adam and Eve.

4 **Look up Genesis 2:16–17**

What did God tell the man he could eat, and what must he not eat?

He spoke to a man called Abraham, who was to play a significant part in God's purposes in history, and made him great promises (Genesis 12:1–3).

See also: Genesis 12:1–3.

Then He revealed Himself in a very dramatic way to Moses, another man who had a great influence on the world, and who received the Ten Commandments from God.

5 **Read Exodus 3:1–5**

What did God say to Moses in verse 5?

Later in history, God spoke to a man called Jeremiah, who became a prophet – someone specially chosen to be God's spokesman.

6 **Look up Jeremiah 1:5**

When did God set Jeremiah apart, and for what?

All these people, and many others, heard from God. What they were given to write down is what we have in the Bible today.

PART 3

What is special about the Bible?

A unique book

Why can we be so confident that the Bible tells us accurately about the real and true God? Other religious books make similar claims. What is so special about the Bible?

The Bible stands out as a unique piece of literature. It took over a thousand years to put together and involved many different people, yet its message is always the same. Its various human authors describe the same God, working by the same principles. From beginning to end there is consistency. God does not change. His purposes do not alter. Page after page, the same truth is revealed.

The Bible also does something no other book does: it predicts with amazing accuracy events that will take place in the future. Names, places and details of distant events are foretold hundreds of years before they happen. This is clearest in the predictions about God's Son, Jesus Christ, who died in a most exceptional way and then astonished the world by rising from the dead. Where He would be born, what He would do, how He would die and how He would be raised – all this was recorded in the Bible hundreds of years before it happened. The Bible stands alone among religious books: it tells the history of the world from its creation to its final end.

A serious book

The Bible also has a depth and seriousness found in no other book. Questions about the afterlife, about our fear of death, about our relationship with God, and about how to know Him and serve Him are all tackled and answered in the Bible. It reaches beyond our experience to speak of spiritual things: our souls and our destiny.

7 **Look up John 8:23**

What did Jesus Christ say about Himself?

The Bible speaks with clear authority about the unseen realm of heaven and the afterlife.

8 **Look up John 3:13**

Who has come down from heaven?

Only in the Bible will we gain understanding of these things. Life and death, and all the serious and important issues of life, are dealt with in this special book. God is real, and, as we will learn in the rest of this course, the Bible tells us about Him, and explains how we can know Him and serve Him.

See also: something to read and consider: Genesis 1; Psalm 145; Isaiah 40.

Something to pray about

Pray that the Lord would teach you from His word, and that you would understand the message He has given us in the Bible.

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. How do you try to explain the world around you? Do you believe there must be a Creator?

2. What lies beyond death? Do you think about it, and wonder what will happen to you?

3. Are you prepared to read the Bible seriously?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 1

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES · STUDY 1 · MEMORY VERSE

"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from His workmanship, so that men are without excuse."

Romans 1:20

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

"I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You." (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **Romans 1:20** *For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from His workmanship, so that men are without excuse.*

2 **2 Timothy 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for instruction, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*

3 **2 Peter 1:20–21** *20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture comes from one's own interpretation. 21 For no such prophecy was ever brought forth by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

4 **Genesis 2:16–17** *16 And the LORD God commanded him, "You may eat freely from every tree of the garden, 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for in the day that you eat of it, you will surely die."*

5 **Exodus 3:1–5** *1 Meanwhile, Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from within a bush. Moses saw the bush ablaze with fire, but it was not consumed. 3 So Moses thought, "I must go over and see this marvelous sight. Why is the bush not burning up?" 4 When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called out to him from within the bush, "Moses, Moses!" "Here I am," he answered. 5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."*

6 **Jeremiah 1:5** *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as a prophet to the nations."*

7 **John 8:23** *Then He told them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.*

8 **John 3:13** *No one has ascended into heaven except the One who descended from heaven—the Son of Man.*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says 'man', 'he' or 'brothers' where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 1: God is real

> **Memory verse:** “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from His workmanship, so that men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- Raise the big questions: who is God, what is He like, how can we know Him?
- Show that God has made Himself known in the Bible, and why the Bible is unique and trustworthy.

Suggested timing (about 75 minutes)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer.
- **20 min** Part 1 video (2 min); Romans 1:20 and discussion of the different ideas people have about God.
- **25 min** Part 2 video (3 min); 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20–21, Genesis 2:16–17, Exodus 3:1–5, Jeremiah 1:5.
- **20 min** Part 3 video (3 min); John 8:23, John 3:13, and the "questions to ask".
- **5 min** Summary and closing prayer.

Tips

- The course takes God's existence for granted; don't get stuck in debates. Point to creation (Romans 1:20) and move on to what God has revealed.
- Fulfilled prophecy about Christ is a strong encouragement; you might read Isaiah 53 or Micah 5:2 together.
- Encourage each person to start reading the Bible regularly (Genesis 1, Psalm 145, Isaiah 40 are suggested).

Answers to watch for

- **Romans 1:20:** God's eternal power and divine nature are clearly seen in creation.
- **2 Timothy 3:16:** all Scripture is God-breathed.
- **2 Peter 1:20–21:** prophets spoke from God, carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- **Genesis 2:16–17:** God commanded Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- **Exodus 3:5:** "Take off your sandals… holy ground."
- **Jeremiah 1:5:** "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you…"
- **John 8:23:** "You are from below; I am from above."
- **John 3:13:** only the Son of Man has come from heaven.