

## Purpose of Our Study

In these notes we will study the Christian teaching regarding God.

## Outline of Study

We will begin by looking at the Triune nature of our God and the relation between the persons in the Godhead; then we will look at the attributes of God. In later sections we will learn more detail about the second and third persons of the Godhead, Jesus Christ the Son of God and the Holy Spirit.

## The Trinity

The Bible teaches that God is not strictly monotheistic. It also teaches that He is not three distinct and separate “gods.” Rather, it teaches us that God is Triune, or three-in-one. So we could say that it teaches Trinitarian-monotheism. A text that points to God’s “three-in-ONE” nature is James 2:19. Texts that point to God’s plural nature include Genesis 1:2, 26.

God has always existed (Exodus 3:14). The Son has always been the Son and is not a created being. The Spirit is not an energy or force, but is a personal being just like the Father and Son are.

We can also see selected texts that demonstrate the deity of each person in the Godhead—John 4:21, John 1:1, Acts 5:3-4. Each one is worthy of worship, honor, obedience.

## The Three-in-One Working Together

There is total harmony in the Godhead. Each works together with the other two members to accomplish God’s purpose. An example is creation. Each member of the Triune God was involved: Gen. 1:1, 1:2, Col. 1:16.

The Bible teaches us that the Son and Spirit are *functionally* or *economically* subordinate to the Father. They are not *ontologically* subordinate. The latter would mean that they are lesser beings, of less quality or importance or worthy of less (or no) worship.

In the former case, functional subordination simply means that in their harmonious inner working, the Son is subject to the Father, and the Spirit to both the Father and the Son. See John 14:28; 15:26; 1 Cor. 11:3.

## The Attributes of God

The attributes of God are the characteristics or properties, we might say, that God has. Since He has everything in perfection, His attributes are sometimes called His perfections.

God’s attributes are discussed in various ways by different theologians. Following are some of the ways His attributes are classified:

1. Moral and non-moral attributes.
2. Communicable and incommunicable attributes.
3. Attributes of greatness and goodness.

I will use the last classification, though I believe there is good value in the other ones as well.

### God's Attributes of Greatness

Spirit	John 4:24
1. Living	Jer. 10:10; 1 Tim. 4:10
2. Incorporeal	John 4:24, despite anthropomorphisms
3. Invisible	John 1:18; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 John 4:12
4. Intelligent	Prov. 3:19-20
5. Emotion	Psalm 5:5; Jer. 31:3
6. Will	Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11
Omniscient	Psalm 139:1-6; 1 John 3:20
Omnipresent	Psalm 139:7-10
Omnipotent	Jer. 32:17; Dan. 4:17; Rev. 7:12, 11:17, 15:8, 16:9
Self-existent	Exod. 3:14; John 5:26
Infinite	1 Kings 8:27; Jer. 23:23-24; Psalm 147:5
Perfect	Matt. 5:48; Psalm 18:30; 2 Chron. 19:7
Wise	Dan. 2:20; Rom. 11:33; 16:27; Prov. 2:6
Eternal	Psalm 90:1-2; 102:11-12; Deut. 33:27; Isa. 9:6
Immutable	Mal. 3:6; James 1:17
Incomprehensible	Isa. 55:9; Psalm 139:6; Rom. 11:34
Holy	Isa. 6:1-5, 57:15; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 1:5

God's holiness is sort of a bridge to His attributes of goodness, because holiness refers both to God's separateness from creation as well as His separateness from sin.

### God's Attributes of Goodness

Truth	Rom. 3:4; 2 Chron. 15:3; Jer. 10:10; John 17:3; 1 Thess. 1:9; Titus 1:2; John 14:6; 15:26; 1 John 2:27
Love	1 John 4:8, 16; John 3:16; Isa. 63:9
Righteousness and justice	Deut. 32:4; Psalm 11:7, 89:14, 145:17; Rom. 3:26, 2:6 (including that God rewards the righteous, Heb. 6:10, and punishes the wicked, Rev. 16:4-7)
Faithfulness	Lam. 2:22-23; Heb. 10:23; 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 John 1:9; Psalm 119:75
Mercy	Eph. 2:4; 2 Cor. 1:3; Titus 3:5
Grace	Psalm 86:15; Eph. 1:6, 2:8-9; Rom. 3:23-24