

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 3



HOLINESS IS THE NATURE OF GOD

Scripture Texts: Matthew 3:16-17; John 4:24; James 1:17; Jeremiah 23:24; Nahum 1:2; 1 John 4:16

We can only briefly touch a few points of God's character and attributes. How can finite man ever know all or fully comprehend anything about the infinite God? Yet He wills that we should know Him. For this purpose He reveals Himself to us through His Word. We may know Him and partake of His goodness, tasting here what will be complete in Heaven.

The one God is all-knowing, all-powerful, always present and eternal. He is good, He is love, He is the Creator and Ruler of all. Since man tends to become like what he worships, we should know something of the nature of what we are worshipping. God's nature in a man makes his character holy. His actions are holy and right.

Yet holiness is not primarily actions. It is the nature within causing the deeds. Today we study of God, the Supreme Being, and the only One worthy of worship.

MEMORY VERSE: *Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.—Deuteronomy 6:4*

Three in One

Matthew 3:16-17 The Memory Verse makes it clear that there is but one, true God – **one Lord**. There is no other. Yet God is made up of three Persons. At Jesus' baptism, all three Persons were manifest – Christ the Son in human form coming out of the water, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove coming upon Christ, and the Father speaking from Heaven. Each of the three is God. They are equal in power and glory, have the same attributes, and are of the same substance. Each is perfect, each is holy, and all agree and work as one. We call them the Trinity – three in one. (See **Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14**).

God Is Spirit

John 4:24 **God is a Spirit**. This does not mean He is unreal or a mere influence. Spirit is real and is of a higher order than flesh. Each of the Three is an individual Person with all the qualities of personality. God sees, knows, thinks, and cares. He has mind, sensibility, action, will, and reason. Being a Spirit, worship in mere word and outward form cannot reach Him. He must be worshipped **in spirit and in truth**. Man is created a step above the animal kingdom. Man also is spirit; he has within him a soul, and it is in this higher realm that his worship must be. Spirit communicates with spirit.

Psalm 90:2 states that God is from everlasting to everlasting. God's nature is eternal; He always was and always will be.

God Is Unchangeable

James 1:17 **No variableness** – God is changeless, has not even a **shadow of turning**, nothing which resembles or indicates change. God does different things, but all are consistent with each other. His being, His character, His attributes, His Word, and His purpose never change.

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God Has All Power

Jeremiah 23:24 Can any hide ...? There can be no hiding place from the One who sees all. (Read **Proverbs 15:3**). God sees all. Therefore, He knows all. God is everywhere. **Do not I fill heaven and earth?** In **Isaiah 46:9-10** we read this of God's nature, **I am God ... none else ... none like me.** He is unique in that He is absolutely Supreme. **Declaring the end from the beginning** – only God knows the future. One proof that the Bible is from God is the many events which it foretold hundreds of years before they occurred. **My counsel shall stand, and I will do ...** No human can rightly use such language. Only an all-powerful, all-knowing, and eternal Being can say that His plans shall not fail and what He will do for sure. There is **nothing too hard for thee (Jeremiah 32:17)**. God is all-powerful. He created all things.

God Is Just

Nahum 1:2 God is jealous – Being the only God with none like Him, it is right that He keep His true position and demand recognition of it. **The Lord will take vengeance** – Vengeance belongs to God, not man (**Romans 12:19**). He is perfectly just. **Reserveth wrath for his enemies** - God's wrath is used rightly. It is not the blind, selfish, uncontrolled wrath of man, but is directed at His **enemies**. It is **righteous judgment (Romans 2:5)**. It is for the unbelievers who **do not obey the truth, but they obey unrighteousness (Romans 2:8)**.

No attribute of God overbalances or crowds out another. Some would make His love to crowd out His wrath. Wrath is but the other side of love. Without wrath for sin, His love for holiness would be incomplete. Without wrath for the sinful, unrepentant, and corrupt, He could not bless the righteous nor preserve the light and holiness of Heaven. Because God is love, He is also wrath to all that would destroy the object of His love. Wrath is the protection of love. Because love is eternal, so also is wrath. Realizing this, **let all fear God, and keep his commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13)**. Not the fear of fright, but the fear of respect, reverence, and obedience, which brings peace. Let us be moved to worship and love, which is the highest form of service God desires. **Deuteronomy 32:4** declares Gods perfection, truth, holiness, and justice. **He is the Rock**, the Rock that is higher than I, the Rock of our salvation.

God Is Love

1 John 4:16 The greatest of God's attributes, at least from the standpoint of sinful, needy man, is love. **The love that God hath to us** – Oh, how much it means to all mankind? **God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.** – The love of God reaches out and takes man in. God and His love cannot be separated. If one has the real love of God, he has God. God can dwell in him and take man to dwell in Him in this life. This blessing is obtained by repentance and complete yielding to God. Christ saves one from sin, the Holy Spirit enters, and the love of God is his. All of God's attributes and qualities – His nature – are made available for his good to the one who obtains real salvation. (**2 Peter 1:4**).

JUST A THOUGHT

**The man whose conscience never bothers him
must have it pretty well trained.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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