

- Q4. What is God? (What are the attributes of God?)
A4. **God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.**

Scripture References: John 4:24; 17:11; Job 11:7; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; 1 Kings 8:27; Jeremiah 23:24; Isaiah 40:22, 57:15; Exodus 3:14, 34:6; Psalm 90:2, 100:5, 117:2, 145:3; 147:5; Romans 2:4, 16:27; Genesis 17:1; Revelations 4:8, 15:4, 19:6; Deuteronomy 32:4

- DQ1: How can we best know God?
- DQ2: How can we best know God's existence?
- DQ3: In what attributes is God infinite, eternal and unchangeable?
- DQ4: What is the meaning of "infinite"? Could you explain "infinite"?
- DQ5: What is the meaning of "eternal"? Could you explain "eternal"?
- DQ6: What is the meaning of "unchangeable"? Could you explain "unchangeable"?
- DQ7: Could you explain a God who is infinite, eternal and unchangeable? If not, why not?
- DQ8: What are differences between God and man?
- DQ9: Why is it important to know the attributes of God?

Notes:

We can know God best through the Scriptures, which testify as to His existence as well as His attributes. The Scriptures present the personhood of God. There is no other source which is more reliable than the Scriptures when it comes to knowing God.

God spoke to man through a "special revelation" known as the Holy Bible, without which we could not know His attributes. Gaining knowledge of the personal attributes of God is not possible through a "general revelation" such as the created nature. God's created universe generally reveals the existence of God and other information about God.

Knowing the personal attributes of God is essential. If you know your parents, then you certainly should know about many of your parents' personalities and attributes. Otherwise, you can hardly say that you know your parents. To know God is to know His personal attributes and to know Him personally. To say that I am in a relationship with God is to say that I am familiar with the attributes of God and am growing more and more in the knowledge of Him.

The words "infinite," "eternal" and "unchangeable" are used to describe God's attributes. These descriptive words indicate that the nature, character and magnitude of God's attributes are far above human experiences, knowledge and limits. Unlike God, man has always possessed certain personal attributes which are limited and changeable. If God's personal attributes, while far exceeding that of man, were limited, then there would be no need for man to believe in and

worship such a God. But, the Scriptures tell us in no uncertain terms that God is eternally limitless, not bound by the limitations of time and infinite in His Being. Such a God is truly worthy of our worship.

What an amazing thing for such limited beings like us to be able to have and enjoy a real-life relationship with an infinite Being! The Scriptures tell us that such a relationship is possible and is demonstrated in real-life.

Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man, demonstrated how an infinite God could forge a workable relationship with a finite man. This is a true mystery! Think about it, God, by very nature and definition, must be mysterious, not because He is completely hidden or unknowable but because He cannot be known by very limited beings.

The Scriptures tell us that God created man in His image (Genesis 1:26-27). How could a finite being be created in the image of an infinite Being? In order to answer the question, we must first understand the differences between two types of attributes of God. First, there are God's attributes which are not shared with man or "incommunicable attributes." Second, there are God's attributes, which are shared with man or "communicable attributes." God's infinite, eternal and unchangeable natures or attributes are incommunicable and man does not share in such qualities of God. Yet, there are certain attributes of God which can be shared with man such as wisdom, power, holiness, righteousness, goodness, truth, etc. It is because of the communicable attributes of God, which man shares with God, that it is said that we are made in the image of God.

It is not possible to know God through human reason, logic, study and mind apart from God's revelation of Himself to man. To suppose, think and reason that man could comprehend God is to demonstrate the ignorance of man regarding God and His attributes. To be sure, it is impossible to know God through human efforts and endeavors. It is not possible for a finite being to know perfectly an infinite Being.

Notwithstanding what has been said, man can know this immense God through the Scriptures, for it is the revealed Word of God and God has intentionally and methodically revealed Himself sufficiently for man to know Him though not perfectly. Had God not revealed Himself through the Scriptures and other means of special revelation, there is no way that man could have known God.

Then, how is it possible for man to know such a God? Let us examine this question and see if we can arrive at an answer.

Read Matthew 16:13-17 carefully.

DQ10: Who did Peter say Jesus was?

DQ11: How was Peter able to come to know so accurately the identity of Jesus?

Peter's answer is considered a most excellent statement of faith. Why? Peter's statement of faith clearly identified who Jesus is. Peter knew and understood precisely who was standing before him. His statement of faith so fittingly described Jesus. He said, "**You are the Christ, the**

Son of the living God.” This statement describes Jesus’ deity and humanity as well as His offices and mission.

How is your statement of faith?

To Christians, a clear statement of faith is a must. Your statement of faith is not merely a string of few key words but an ultimate expression of your heart, mind and will regarding God. As such, your statement of faith is your very spiritual worship to God. Your acknowledgment of God is an acknowledgement of your relationship with God. To acknowledge such a relationship is a spiritual worship of God. A wholesome statement of faith will satisfy God. Jesus was extremely satisfied by Peter’s statement of faith. Notice what Jesus said. He said, “**Blessed are you, Simon...**” A clear statement of faith even stirred up the heart of God, even to the point of bestowing a blessing.

Do you know the identity of God that you are serving and worshipping? You must ask the question “who is God” of yourself! Without knowing God’s identity and personal attributes, you could possibly mistakenly believe you are worshipping the God of the Scriptures when you are worshipping another imaginary god of your own mind and heart.

Finally, Peter’s statement of faith provides one of the most precise and accurate description of Jesus for us to use in helping others to know Him. Who is Jesus to you? We hope that you would be able to confidently answer this question as did Peter.

Westminster Confession of Faith
CHAPTER II
Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

1. There is but one only,[a] living, and true God,[b] who is infinite in being and perfection,[c] a most pure spirit,[d] invisible,[e] without body,[f] parts, or passions;[g] immutable,[h] immense,[i] eternal,[k] incomprehensible,[l] almighty,[m] most wise,[n] most holy,[o] most free,[p] most absolute;[q] working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will,[r] for his own glory;[s] most loving,[t] gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;[u] the rewarder of them that diligently seek him;[w] and withal, most just, and terrible in his judgments,[x] hating all sin,[y] and who will by no means clear the guilty.[z]

[a]. Deut. 6:4; I Cor. 8:4, 6; see Gal. 3:20

[b]. I Thess. 1:9; Jer. 10:10

[c]. Job 11:7-9; Job 26:14; see Ps. 139:6

[d]. John 4:24

[e]. I Tim. 1:17; see John 1:18

[f]. Deut. 4:15-16; cf. John 4:24 with Luke 24:39

[g]. Acts 14:11, 15

[h]. James 1:17; Mal. 3:6

[i]. I Kings 8:27; Jer. 23:23-24

[k]. Ps. 90:2; see I Tim. 1:17

[l]. Ps. 145:3; see Rom. 11:34

[m]. Gen. 17:1; Rev. 4:8
[n]. Rom. 16:27
[o]. Isa. 6:3; see Rev. 4:8
[p]. Ps. 115:3; see Isa. 14:24
[q]. Isa. 45:5-6; see Exod. 3:14
[r]. Eph. 1:11
[s]. Prov. 16:4; Rom. 11:36; see Rev. 4:11
[t]. I John 4:8; see vs. 16 and John 3:16
[u]. Exod. 34:6-7
[w]. Heb. 11:6
[x]. Neh. 9:32-33; see Heb. 10:28-31
[y]. Rom. 1:18; Ps. 5:5-6; see Ps. 11:5
[z]. Exod. 34:7a; see Nah. 1:2-3, 6
