

A Study of God Our Father

- * How do we know God exists?
- * Who is He, if He is a He?
- * What is He, if He is a He, like?
- * It seems that we can conclude two ways that we recognize God's existence: An inner witness and nature's witness of scripture!

I. It seems that within any culture on the earth, throughout all generations, there exist a belief and acceptance of The Divine!

A. Obviously, that Divine, takes on many forms and has many names and expresses themselves in a multitude of ways!

1. But the point is this...Why is it that in all cultures and in all generations there is a belief in something greater than mankind?
2. I believe that this is an absolute testimony of the imprint of God upon all of His creation!
3. I want you to remember something here. I am not trying to convince any of you as to the existence of God! If you didn't believe already, chances are you wouldn't be here. I am merely desiring to help you "formulate" a firm foundation of faith!!!
4. Throughout scripture we see God's messengers explain how this "imprint of God" is upon all of mankind!!!
5. The issue is that man merely "suppresses" the truth!!!

Romans 1:18-21 (NLT)

18 But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. 19 They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. 20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

21 Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused.

B. In all of my travels and ministry around the world I have developed a statement about this reality:

We do not "go unto all the world" to convince people about something they do not know. We are merely going to explain to them something they already suspect!

1. From the Native American communities to the tundra above the Arctic Circle of Russia, I have been told stories of a Creator

- that is so similar to The Gospel Story!!!
2. After listening to their stories and even “legends”, I then tell the story of God’s Son coming to His creation! Few people ever express doubt, because in several cases I am merely confirming their story and giving names to the characters!
 3. I am merely giving “reasons” for the story! I am merely explaining how we need to submit to and worship this awesome God!

Psalm 14:1 (NLT)

1 Only fools say in their hearts, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, and their actions are evil; not one of them does good!

Psalm 10:3-4 (NLT)

3 The sinful man is proud of the desires of his heart. He praises those who want everything but he speaks against the Lord. 4 The sinful man in his pride does not look for God. All his thoughts are that there is no God.

- C. These and many other scriptures seem to say that sin leads people to think irrationally and deny God’s existence!
 1. The scripture teaches and explains that this produces deception and thereby people are deceived into thinking that God doesn’t exist!

II. There is a great difference in the lives of a Believer! There is an inner witness!

Romans 8:16 (NIV)

16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

- A. This is only the beginning of things!!! Then comes the full development of this awesome relationship with our Creator!

Ephesians 3:17 (NLT)

17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong.

Philippians 3:8 (NLT)

8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.

1. Please get this settled deep down in your being...

The point of the Gospel is...KNOWING HIM!

2. Peter says this about this relationship and faith:

1 Peter 1:8 (NIV)

8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

B. Remember, nowhere in the scriptures is there an effort to PROVE the existence of God!

1. As scripture opens in Genesis one, there is an assumption of God's existence!
2. "In the beginning God..."
3. It is not our place to try to argue and convince, but rather to share and explain!

Acts 17:24-28 (NIV)

24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 28 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

III. After we accept the existence of God, the next logical question is:
WHAT IS HE LIKE?

A. There are several interesting statements in scripture worthy of visiting concerning the subject of....What is God like?

Matthew 11:25-29 (NLT)

25 At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. 26 Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!

27 "My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." 28 Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

1. There are implications here that suggest that there is a unity of expression within The Trinity!
2. If we aren't careful, we will believe and live out our faith as though Jesus CAME TO SAVE US FROM HIS MEAN DAD!
3. This paints a distorted picture of a loving Heavenly Father!

B. Jesus and the life He lived is an open expression of Who God is!

Hebrews 1:1-3 (NLV)

1 Long ago God spoke to our early fathers in many different ways. He spoke through the early preachers. 2 But in these last days He has spoken to us through His Son. God gave His Son everything. It was by His Son that God made the world. 3 The Son shines with the shining-greatness of the Father. The Son is as God is in every way. It is the Son Who holds up the whole world by the power of His Word. The Son gave His own life so we could be clean from all sin. After He had done that, He sat down on the right side of God in heaven.

1. But wait just a minute !!! In the Old Testament, we see a mean “ol God. A retributive God. A God Who is out to get you.
2. Is that the case? Or is our understanding and human description of God’s actions the problem?
3. Have “human definitions” of His actions “created a God in our own image?”

1 Corinthians 1:21 (VOICE)

21 For in God’s *deep* wisdom, *He made it so that* the world could not even begin to comprehend Him through its own style of wisdom; in fact, God took immense pleasure in rescuing people of faith through the foolishness of the message we preach.

4. Yes, we can get to know the Person of God and His character!!! We see this expressed, revealed and even commanded throughout scripture!

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NIV)

14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

5. Only God can reveal God!

C. Throughout scripture the character of God is revealed through His many names:

1. El Shaddai - The Lord Almighty
2. El Elyon - The Most High God
3. Adonai - Lord and Master
4. Jehovah Nissi - The Lord My Banner of Victory
5. Raah - The Lord My Shepherd
6. Rapha - The Lord My Healer
7. Shammah - The Lord is There
8. Tsidkenu - The Lord Our Righteousness

9. Mekoddish - The Lord Who Sanctifies
10. Jireh - The Lord Who Provides
11. Shalom - The Lord My Peace
12. Sabaoth - The Lord of Hosts

That's a little part of Who God Is!