

Leader's Guide

Let's Explore Our Faith

Lesson 2 - What is God Like?

Aims:

- To know what the Bible teaches about what God is like
- To understand that knowing what God is like helps us to believe in Him
- To write a prayer of thanksgiving to God for what He is like

Preparation:

- Read through *Article of Faith* 1.a. (concerning God). Note any questions that come to mind. Any question(s) you have may be the same one(s) your students ask.
- Read the Scripture basis for *Article of Faith* 1.a.: Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:4; 1 Kings 8:27; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 90:2; 103:8; 116:5; 147:5; Isaiah 6:3; 40:28; 57:15; Jeremiah 23:23-24; Malachi 3:6; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; 14:16; Acts 17:28; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Colossians 1:17; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 1:2,12; 11:3; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 4:10-16
- Read the *Article* again. Highlight the connections between the key points of the lesson and the Scripture passages referenced.
- Prepare the student lesson.
- Copy the attribute cards on heavy paper or cardstock. Carefully cut apart cards. Cards may be copied back to back. If you opt to do this, be sure to match and line up the two sides. For lasting use, you may want to laminate the cards. Place the cards in a small basket or lunch sack.

Needed:

- Student workbook, Bible and pencil for each student
- Copy(ies) of *MC Constitution with Articles of Faith and Practice*
- Chalkboard, marker board, or writing pad (with markers or chalk)
- A small basket or lunch sack
- Attribute cards, cut apart
- A colorful ball or other uniquely-identifiable object
- Glass of water
- An egg

Getting Started:

Begin your class with prayer. Ask God to help students understand what He wants to tell them about what He is like.

Distribute *Student Workbooks*, Bibles and pencils. Hold up the large, colorful ball, or other uniquely-identifiable object. At your discretion, let the students touch the object. Students respond to the first statement, describing the object. **What is this object like?** Give sample answers, if needed (round, large, colorful, smooth, bouncy, etc.) **What is it not like?** Again give a sample answer if needed (square, flat, white, small, bumpy, etc.) Volunteers answer. Write their responses on the chalk or marker board. **How did you discover these things about the object?** Guide discussion to show that they discovered these things about the object by seeing it, touching it, etc.

Direct students' attention to the second statement. **Now describe God. What do you think God is like? What do you think God is not like?** Sample answers have been provided. Have the students fill in the remaining five spaces for both questions. Ask for volunteers to share their answers, and write their responses in two lists on the board. Then ask, **How do we know which of these answers are really true about what God is like or what God is not like? How do we discover what God is really like?** Have students answer the multiple choice question. (*Answer: by reading His Word, the Bible*) Stress the fact that the Bible gives us the only information about God we can really trust.

We may see evidence in the world of things God does, but the Bible helps us understand those things we may observe. Only the Bible is completely accurate in what it teaches us about God!

Also point out that God really wants us to know Him and what He is like. Have students look up Jeremiah 9:24 to fill in the missing words of the verse. (Answers: *understands, knows, LORD, righteousness, delight*)

Study:

Show class copy(ies) of the *MC Constitution with Articles of Faith and Practice*. Pass around for class to inspect. Have a student volunteer (preferably a good reader) read the *Article of Faith* paragraph from the *Student Workbook*. Have students circle any words that are new to them. Write the words on the board. (Words printed in bold are listed in the *Glossary*). Then discuss the paragraph, noting any concepts that may require more explanation during the study time. Discuss the paragraph, being sure that students understand the definition of an attribute.

Assign each student one or more attribute statement(s) to research. Have students circle the statement number you assign them. Ask them to look up the Bible verse(s), read it and mark the correct meaning for each statement. Help students in locating Bible verses or understanding meaning, if needed.

When students have finished their research, read through all statements. Have students explain the meaning they have chosen, and if time permits, let them read their assigned verse(s). Be prepared to paraphrase some verses or explain the statements so the students understand the meaning. As you proceed, have all students check the correct meaning for each statement.

Answers:

1. *There is no other God.*
2. *God is not confined to a body as we are; He cannot be seen.*
3. *God has no beginning. He has always been; He is the forever "I AM."*
4. *God is not limited. He is bigger than the universe!*
5. *God is great, but knows, cares for and loves us individually.*

6. *God is always the same; we can depend on Him every day.*
7. *God is forever; He had no beginning and will have no end.*
8. *God has no sin or wickedness of any kind. He is completely pure and perfect.*
9. *God wants what is best for every person.*
10. *God is always completely fair. He always makes the right decision.*
11. *God always does what is good and right, and is pleased to provide for His people.*
12. *God is wise; He made and understands everything and always knows what's best to do.*
13. *God is always honest; you can totally trust His word. He never lies.*
14. *God is all-powerful; He can do anything.*
15. *God is all-knowing; He knows everything—past, present and future. He knows all about you.*
16. *God is all-present; He is everywhere at once, and with you all the time.*
17. *God made everything (by starting with nothing).*
18. *God keeps His creation operating properly.*
19. *God knows about His creation and is active in caring for it.*
20. *God is separate from and greater than His creation, not a part of it.*
21. *God has always been Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

The final question raises the doctrine of the Trinity, which is a hard concept to understand. But because the Bible teaches it, we can believe it. Hold up the glass of water. Explain how water in its three states helps us better understand the Trinity. Then hold up the egg. In the same way, explain how the three elements of an egg help us grasp the fact that God is a trinity. Teaching Tip: It is okay to admit that you don't have all the answers regarding the Trinity. Keep your remarks simple.

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Describe the object your teacher shows you.

Write or draw your answer

What is the object like? What is it not like? How did you discover these things about the object?

Now describe God.

What do you think God is like?

God is strong
God is _____
God is _____

God is _____
God is _____
God is _____

What do you think God is not like?

God is not a liar
God is not _____
God is not _____

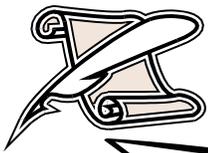
God is not _____
God is not _____
God is not _____

How do we discover what God is really like?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> by seeing Him | <input type="checkbox"/> by making up ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> by touching Him | <input type="checkbox"/> by reading His Word, the Bible |

In our first lesson, we discussed God and His Word to us. In the Bible, God has told us a lot about Himself. Instead of trying to *prove* that there is a God, the Bible simply *assumes* that God exists and then tells us what He is like! Verses like Jeremiah 9:24 let us know that God really wants us to know Him and what He is like. **Find Jeremiah 9:24 in your Bible, then fill in the missing words below.**

“But let him who boasts boast about this: that he _____ and _____ me, that I am the _____, who exercises kindness, justice and _____ on earth, for in these I _____’ declares the LORD.”



Article of Faith

One **Article of Faith** explains what the Bible teaches us about God:

*We believe that the one and only true God is Spirit: self-existent, **infinite**, personal, unchangeable, and **eternal** in His being; perfect in **holiness**, love, justice, goodness, wisdom, and truth; **omnipotent**, **omniscient**, and **omnipresent**; Creator and Sustainer of all things, visible and invisible; both **immanent** and **transcendent** to creation; eternally existent in three persons, one in substance and co-equal in power and glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

This **Article of Faith** gives us many characteristics or qualities of God. We call God’s qualities, *attributes*. Knowing and understanding God’s attributes tells us what He is like. **Circle the number of each statement your teacher assigns you below. For each statement, look up the verse or verses and mark the space in front of the correct meaning. Be prepared to share your answers.**

1. God is the one and only true God (1 Corinthians 8:4).
 There is no other God.
 There are several gods for various groups of people.
2. God is Spirit (John 4:24).
 God is only a ghost; He isn’t real.
 God is not confined to a body as we are; He cannot be seen.
3. God is self-existent (Exodus 3:14; Colossians 1:17).
 God has no beginning. He has always been; He is the forever “I AM.”
 God was created by a stronger power long ago.

4. God is infinite (1 Kings 8:27).
 - God is too busy to care about human beings.
 - God is not limited. He is bigger than the universe!
5. God is personal (Psalm 139:1).
 - God is only a powerful force, like electricity.
 - God is great, but knows, cares for and loves us individually.
6. God is unchangeable (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 1:12).
 - God is always the same; we can depend on Him every day.
 - God is sometimes good and sometimes evil.
7. God is eternal (Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17).
 - God is forever; He had no beginning and will have no end.
 - God is very old and will someday die.
8. God is holy (*perfect in holiness*) (Isaiah 6:3).
 - God is always very happy with how we live.
 - God has no sin or wickedness of any kind. He is completely pure and perfect.
9. God is love (*perfect in love*) (2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 4:10).
 - God will always give me anything I want, because He loves me.
 - God wants what is best for every person.
10. God is just (*perfect in justice*) (Deuteronomy 32:4).
 - God is always completely fair. He always makes the right decision.
 - God takes my side in every argument.
11. God is good (*perfect in goodness*) (Exodus 34:6; Psalm 100:5).
 - God usually does what is good.
 - God always does what is good and right, and is pleased to provide for His people.
12. God is wise (*perfect in wisdom*) (1 Timothy 1:17).
 - God is wise; He made and understands everything and always knows what's best to do.
 - God is sometimes surprised when I disobey Him.
13. God is truth (*perfect in truth*) (Exodus 34:6).
 - God sometimes tricks me by not telling the truth.
 - God is always honest; you can totally trust His word. He never lies.

The prefix or first part of the next three words about God is “omni,” which means “all.”

14. God is omnipotent (Psalm 147:5).
 - God is all-powerful; He can do anything.
 - God is only as strong as a powerful king.

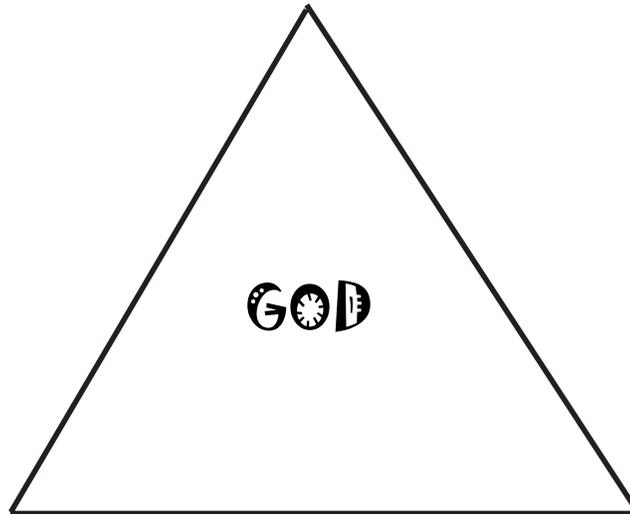
15. God is omniscient (Psalm 147:5).
- God is still learning about this world.
 - God is all-knowing; He knows everything—past, present and future. He knows all about you.
16. God is omnipresent (Jeremiah 23:23).
- God is all-present; He is everywhere at once, and with you all the time.
 - God is present only in His church.
17. God is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3).
- God made only the important parts of the universe.
 - God made everything (by starting with nothing).
18. God is the Sustainer of all things, visible and invisible (Nehemiah 9:6; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17).
- God allows the universe to run on its own.
 - God keeps His creation operating properly.
19. God is **imminent** to His creation (Acts 17:28).
- God knows about His creation and is active in caring for it.
 - God does not know or care what happens in this world.
20. God is also **transcendent** to His creation (Jeremiah 23:23).
- God and the universe are the same; He is a part of creation.
 - God is separate from and greater than His creation, not a part of it.
21. God is eternally existent in three persons (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).
- God has always been Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - We really worship three separate gods.

The Bible teaches that God is a *tri-unity*—One God, yet three persons. We sometimes call this the “Trinity” or we say that God is “triune,” which means “three-in-one.” The Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit are equal in the power and glory that belong to God. Each of them is completely God.

Although we cannot totally grasp the truth of the Trinity, a couple earthly examples may help us to better understand. The first is **water**. Water can be a liquid, frozen (ice) and even a gas (steam). And if we had just the right container that could hold some liquid, ice, and steam— together at once, all three would still be water. The second is an **egg**. With one egg you have the shell, the white and the yolk. Each part of the egg is separate, but together you still have just one egg.

If none of the three (water-ice-steam or shell-white-yolk) could change into either of the others, it would be a little bit like God. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all God; but the Father doesn't become the Son or the Holy Spirit, the Son doesn't become the Father or the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit doesn't become the Father or the Son. They stay forever three separate or individual persons in the one being of God! The following diagram shows this point. **Look up the following verses to find which Person of the Trinity is referred to, and fill in the blanks.**

1 Corinthians 8:6a _____



1 John 5:20 _____

Acts 5:3-4 _____

Don't worry if you do not understand the Trinity perfectly. We believe God is one God, yet three persons because that is what the Bible teaches us, not because we are smart enough to figure it out completely! **Look up Hebrews 11:6. Fill in the missing words to discover how we believe what God says about Himself and what He will do.**

“And without _____ it is _____ to please God,
 because anyone who comes to him must _____ that he
 _____ and that he _____ those who earnestly seek him.”

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

God wants us to believe in Him. In fact, the Bible says that anyone who refuses to believe that God exists is a _____. **Look up Psalm 14:1 to find the answer.**

God also wants us to know Him and what He is like. Knowing God and what God is like helps us to receive His forgiveness, trust Him and His Word, obey Him and worship Him.



Let's Review.

Read each sentence. Circle "T" if the sentence is true or "F" if the sentence is false. Try doing this exercise from memory. If you are "stumped," look back at the previous pages. If you still cannot find the answer, ask your teacher for help.

- T F We discover what God is like by seeing and touching Him.
- T F The Bible tries to prove that there is a God.
- T F Attributes are God's characteristics or qualities.
- T F We believe what God says about Himself and what He will do by faith.
- T F Knowing God and what God is like helps us to trust Him and His Word.



Scripture to Learn.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrew 11:6 (NIV)

My Response.



List three things about God that you think are the most awesome.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

In the space below, write a prayer thanking God for what He is like. Especially mention how you feel about the three things you listed above.

Dear God: _____
