



Go for God!

“GOD LOVES YOU!”

“Love God – Love One Another” Series (Part 1)

> “LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD” - Matthew 22:34-40

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

> Let's discover three keys to understanding the GOD we are to LOVE:

Key #1 – Who is this GOD?

Key #2 – What is His NAME?

Key #3 – How can I personally know GOD?

> Key #1 – Who is the GOD?

- The Nelson's Bible Dictionary defines God as: The creator and sustainer of the universe who has provided humankind with a revelation of Himself through the natural world and through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God; it simply affirms His existence by declaring, "In the beginning God..." (Gen 1:1).

God has revealed Himself through the physical universe (Ps 19:1; Rom 1:19-20). The greatest revelation of God, however, comes through the Bible. Through the inspired written record, both the existence of God and the nature of God are revealed in and through Jesus Christ. We can know God through a personal relationship of faith and through a study of what the Bible teaches about His nature.

- God may be described in terms of attributes. - An attribute is an inherent characteristic of a person or being. While we cannot describe God in a comprehensive way, we can learn about Him by examining His attributes as revealed in the Bible.

> The first group is known as the NATURAL attributes of God:

- God Is Spirit. Jesus taught that "God is Spirit" (John 4:24). God has no body, no physical or measurable form. Thus, God is invisible. He became visible in human form in the person of Jesus Christ, but His essence is invisible.

- God Is Changeless. Progress and change may characterize some of His works, but God Himself remains unchanged (Heb 1:12). He does not change; otherwise, He would not be perfect. Thus, what we know of God can be known with certainty. He is not different from one time to another.

- God Is All Powerful. God's power is unlimited. He can do anything that is not inconsistent with His nature, character, and purpose (Gen 17:1; 18:14). The only limitations on God's power are imposed by Himself (Gen 18:25). "Impossible" is not in God's vocabulary. God creates and sustains all things; yet He never grows weary (Isa 40:27-31).

- **God Is All Knowing.** God possesses all knowledge (Job 38:39; Rom 11:33-36). Because God is everywhere at one and the same time, He knows everything simultaneously. That God has the power to know the thoughts and motives of every heart is evident from many Scripture passages, notably Job 37:16; Ps 147:5, and Heb 3:13.

- **God Is Everywhere.** God is not confined to any part of the universe but is present in all His power at every point in space and every moment in time (Ps 139:7-12). Thus, God does not belong to any one nation or generation. He is the God of all the earth (Gen 18:25).

- **God Is Eternal.** Eternity refers to God's relation to time. Past, present, and future are known equally to Him (2 Peter 3:8; Rev 1:8). Time is like a parade that man sees only a segment at a time. But God sees time in its entirety.

> **The second group of attributes is called MORAL attributes. These refer to God's character, His essential nature:**

- **God Is Holy.** **The word holy comes from a root word that means "to separate."** Thus, it refers to God as separated from or exalted above other things (Isa 6:1-3). Holiness refers to God's moral excellence. Being holy, God demands holiness in His own children. And what He demands, He supplies. Holiness is God's gift that we receive by faith through His Son, Jesus Christ (Eph 4:24).

- **God Is Righteous.** Righteousness as applied to God refers to His affirmation of what is right as opposed to what is wrong. The righteousness of God refers to His moral laws laid down to guide the conduct of humankind, as in the Ten Commandments.

Righteousness also refers to God's administration of justice. He brings punishment upon the disobedient (Gen 18:25; Deut 32:4; Rom 2:6-16).

Finally, God's righteousness is redemptive. In the Book of Romans the righteousness of God refers to God declaring the believer to be in a state of righteousness as though he had never been unrighteous (Rom 1:16-17; 3:24-26). **This is possible because of the sacrificial death of Jesus on our behalf.**

- **God Is Love.** Love is the essential, self-giving nature of God. God's love for man seeks to awaken a **responsive love of man for God**. Divine love runs like a golden thread through the entire Bible. Nature is eloquent with the skill, wisdom, and power of God. Only in the Bible, however, do we discover God giving Himself and all He possesses to His creatures, in order to win their response and to possess them for Himself. God loved and gave; He loved and sought-just as a shepherd seeks his sheep.

God loved and suffered, providing His love by giving His all on the cross for the redemption of humanity. God, in His love, wills good for all His creatures (Gen 1:31; Ps 145:9; Mark 10:18).

- **God Is Truth.** All truth, whether natural, physical, or religious, is grounded in God. Thus, any seemingly inconsistent teaching between natural and physical sciences and God's revelation of Himself is more apparent than real. Truth is magnified in an absolute way through God's revelation. (John 14:6; 17:17)

- **God Is Wisdom.** God's wisdom is revealed in His doing the best thing, in the best way, at the best time for the best purpose. Some people have knowledge, but little wisdom, while the most wise at times have little knowledge. But God is **"the only wise God"** (1 Tim 1:17).

In creation, history, human lives, redemption, and Christ, His divine wisdom is revealed. Man, lacking wisdom, can claim God's wisdom simply by asking (1 Kings 3:9; James 1:5).

> **The believer's understanding of God continues to increase throughout his or her earthly pilgrimage. It will finally be complete in eternity when he stands in the presence of God.**

> ***Key #2 – What is GOD’S NAME?***

- **EL, ELOAH:** God "***mighty, strong, prominent***" (Genesis 7:1; Isaiah 9:6) – etymologically, *El* appears to mean "power," as in "I have the power to harm you" (Genesis 31:29). *El* is associated with other qualities, such as integrity (Numbers 23:19), jealousy (Deuteronomy 5:9), and compassion (Nehemiah 9:31), but the root idea of might remains.

- **ELOHIM:** God "***Creator, Mighty and Strong***" (Genesis 17:7; Jeremiah 31:33) – the plural form of *Eloah*, which accommodates the doctrine of the Trinity. From the Bible’s first sentence, the superlative nature of God’s power is evident as God (Elohim) speaks the world into existence (Genesis 1:1).

- **EL SHADDAI:** "***God Almighty,***" "The Mighty One of Jacob" (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 132:2,5) – speaks to God’s ultimate power over all.

- **ADONAI:** "***Lord***" (Genesis 15:2; Judges 6:15) – used in place of YHWH, which was thought by the Jews to be too sacred to be uttered by sinful men. In the Old Testament, YHWH is more often used in God’s dealings with His people, while *Adonai* is used more when He deals with the Gentiles.

- **YHWH / YAHWEH / JEHOVAH:** "***LORD***" (Deuteronomy 6:4; Daniel 9:14) – strictly speaking, the only proper name for God. Translated in English Bibles "LORD" (all capitals) to distinguish it from *Adonai*, "Lord."

The revelation of the name is first given to Moses "***I Am who I Am***" (Exodus 3:14). This name specifies an immediacy, a presence. **Yahweh is present, accessible, near to those who call on Him for deliverance (Psalm 107:13), forgiveness (Psalm 25:11) and guidance (Psalm 31:3).**

- **YAHWEH-JIREH:** "***The Lord Will Provide***" (Genesis 22:14) – the name memorialized by Abraham when God provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

- **YAHWEH-RAPHA:** "***The Lord Who Heals***" (Exodus 15:26) – "I am Jehovah who heals you" both in body and soul. In body, by preserving from and curing diseases, and in soul, by pardoning iniquities.

- **YAHWEH-NISSI:** "***The Lord Our Banner***" (Exodus 17:15), where *banner* is understood to be a rallying place. This name commemorates the desert victory over the Amalekites in Exodus 17.

- **YAHWEH-M'KADDESH:** "***The Lord Who Sanctifies, Makes Holy***" (Leviticus 20:8; Ezekiel 37:28) – God makes it clear that He alone, not the law, can cleanse His people and make them holy.

- **YAHWEH-SHALOM:** "***The Lord Our Peace***" (Judges 6:24) – the name given by Gideon to the altar he built after the Angel of the Lord assured him he would not die as he thought he would after seeing Him.

- **YAHWEH-ELOHIM:** "***LORD God***" (Genesis 2:4; Psalm 59:5) – a combination of God’s unique name YHWH and the generic "Lord," signifying that He is the Lord of Lords.

- **YAHWEH-TSIDKENU:** "***The Lord Our Righteousness***" (Jeremiah 33:16) – As with YHWH-M'Kaddesh, it is God alone who provides righteousness to man, ultimately in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, who became sin for us "that we might become the Righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

- **YAHWEH-ROHI:** "***The Lord Our Shepherd***" (Psalm 23:1) – After David pondered his relationship as a shepherd to his sheep, he realized that was exactly the relationship God had with him, and so he declares, "Yahweh-Rohi is my Shepherd. I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1).

- **YAHWEH-SHAMMAH: "The Lord Is There"** (Ezekiel 48:35) – the name ascribed to Jerusalem and the Temple there, indicating that the once-departed glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 8—11) had returned (Ezekiel 44:1-4).

- **YAHWEH-SABAOTH: "The Lord of Hosts"** (Isaiah 1:24; Psalm 46:7) – *Hosts* means “hordes,” both of angels and of men. He is Lord of the host of heaven and of the inhabitants of the earth, of Jews and Gentiles, of rich and poor, master and slave. The name is expressive of the majesty, power, and authority of God and shows that He is able to accomplish what He determines to do.

- **EL ELYON: "Most High"** (Deuteronomy 26:19) – derived from the Hebrew root for “go up” or “ascend,” so the implication is of that which is the very highest. *El Elyon* denotes exaltation and speaks of absolute right to lordship.

- **EL ROI: "God of Seeing"** (Genesis 16:13) – the name ascribed to God by Hagar, alone and desperate in the wilderness after being driven out by Sarah (Genesis 16:1-14). When Hagar met the Angel of the Lord, she realized she had seen God Himself in a theophany. She also realized that *El Roi* saw her in her distress and testified that He is a God who lives and sees all.

- **EL-OLAM: "Everlasting God"** (Psalm 90:1-3) – God’s nature is without beginning or end, free from all constraints of time, and He contains within Himself the very cause of time itself. “*From everlasting to everlasting, You are God.*”

- **EL-GIBHOR: "Mighty God"** (Isaiah 9:6) – the name describing the Messiah, Christ Jesus, in this prophetic portion of Isaiah. As a powerful and mighty warrior, the Messiah, the Mighty God, will accomplish the destruction of God’s enemies and rule with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15).¹

> **Key #3 – How can I personally know GOD?**

- Jesus stated, "***He that has seen me, has seen the Father***" (John 14:9).

(Let’s turn to **John chapter 14**)

- Know ***Jesus*** and you know God! (v7-11)

- ***Pray*** in Jesus name and you will know God! (v13-14)

- Be filled with the ***Holy Spirit*** and you will know God! (v16-20)

- Keep His ***commandments*** and you will know God’s love! (v21-24)

¹ *The Names of God* by Ken Hemphill