

Christian Life Study Outlines

From: The Open Bible
(New American Standard Version)

Master Outline Number Two God

The Bible reveals God as the only Infinite and Eternal Being, having no beginning and no ending. He is Creator and Sustainer of all things. He is the Supreme and Personal Intelligence, and Righteous Ruler of His universe. He is life and therefore the only source of life. (John 5:26)

Man is natural and cannot know God by wisdom. "Can you discover the depths of God?" (Job 11:7). God is a person and can be known only by revelation. In the Old Testament, He reveals himself to and through his prophets. In the New Testament, He reveals Himself through His Son Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3)

I. The Existence of God

⁵By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. ⁶And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (Hebrews 11:5-6 NASV)

The Bible nowhere attempts to prove or argue the existence of God. "For he who comes to God must believe that He is." The existence of God is a fact taken for granted by the writers of both the Old and New Testaments. "In the beginning, God (Genesis 1:1 OT). The Bible opens by announcing the sublime fact of God and His existence. There are arguments for the existence of God; they are not conclusive, but are food for thought:

- (1) Universal belief in God comes from within man. It is innate in man, and comes from rational intuition.
- (2) The argument from "cause and effect." Everything that began owes its existence to a cause. We have a watch, we must have a watchmaker. We have a building; we must have a builder. We have a creation; then we must have a creator. This creation could not have come into existence without an intelligent, personal creator anymore than the alphabet could produce a book itself without an author.
- (3) The argument from anthropology. Man's moral and intellectual nature argues for a moral and intelligent creator.
- (4) The Bible and the Christ that it reveals, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His vicarious death, and His bodily resurrection – all of this and much, much more – argue for the existence of God.

II. The personality of God

⁹For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, (1 Thessalonians 1:9, NASV)

The Bible reveals God as a personality. He is called "... a living and true God" – one possessing self-consciousness and self determination. His personality is shown in what he does, such as:

- (1) God loves. "God so loved the world" (John 3:16)
- (2) God hates, "There are six things which the Lord Hates" (Proverbs 6:16)
- (3) God cares, "He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7)
- (4) God grieves, "He has grieved in his heart" (Genesis 6:6)

Only a personality can hate, care grieve; therefore God must be a living, eternal and personal being.

III. The Nature of God

⁸The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:8 NASV)

There are four definitions of God in the Bible. Since God cannot be defined, they are incomplete. However, they do throw light upon the nature of God. They are:

- (1) "God is love" (1 John 4:8). This is the nature of God in His divine compassion.
- (2) "God is light" (1 John 1:5) This is the nature of God in his divine character; In Him there is no darkness.
- (3) "God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29). This is the nature of God in His divine holiness.
- (4) "God is spirit" (John 4:24) This is the nature of God in His divine essence.

The attributes of God reveal His nature. Do not think of His attributes as abstract, but as vital mediums through which His holy nature is unveiled – attributes ascribed to Him, such as:

- (a) Life is ascribed to God (John 5:26)
- (b) All knowledge is ascribed to God (Psalm 147:5)
- (c) All power is ascribed to God (Revelation 19:6)
- (d) Filling the universe with His presence is ascribed to God (Psalm 139:1-10)

God is everywhere present, but he is not in everything. If God were in everything, man could worship any object and he would be worshipping God. God is a spirit being. "and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

IV. The Grace of God

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (Ephesians 2:8 NASV)

Grace is the love and mercy of God in action. Mercy is negative, and love is positive; both together mean grace. To show mercy in love is grace. God showed mercy in love when he sent his son to bear our sins in his own body on the cross. (John 3:16)

- (1) The grace of God saves forever (Romans 8:38-39)
- (2) The grace of God is unconditional; that is we are not saved on the condition that we "hold out until the end" or that we "fail not" or that we "do our best". We are saved by the grace of God apart from works.
- (3) The grace of God is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9)
- (4) The grace of God makes no discrimination (Revelation 22:17)
- (5) The grace of God justifies (Romans 3: 23, 24)
- (6) The grace of God makes every believer an heir (Titus 3:7)
- (7) The grace of God teaches the believer how to live (Titus 2: 11, 12)

The grace of God is nothing less than the unlimited love of God expressed in the gift of His Son, our Savior. It is the undeserved love of God toward Sinners.

V. The Trinity of God

¹⁶After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, ¹⁷and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matthew 3:16, 17 NASV)

By the trinity of God we mean His tri-personal existence as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – three distinct Persons in one God.

- (1) The Father is recognized as God (1 Peter 1:2) and is all the fullness of the Godhead invisible (John 1:18).
- (2) The son is recognized as God (Hebrews 1:8) and is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested in the flesh (John 1:14).

- (3) The Holy Spirit is recognized as God (Acts 5:3, 4) and is all the fullness of the Godhead acting upon man, convicting him of sin (John 16:7-11) and guiding the believer into all truth (John 16:12-15).
- (4) The doctrine of the trinity is not explicit in the Old Testament, but is rather implied. "Then God said, Let Us make Man..." (Genesis 1:26)
- (5) The doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in the New Testament in the above scriptures (Matthew 3:16-17) we have Christ being baptized in water, the Father speaking down from heaven and the Holy Spirit descending as a dove. We are to baptize in the "name (not names) of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).
- (6) Even creation implies the doctrine of the Trinity. In creation we have space, matter and time in one creation. In space, we have length, breadth and height in one space. In matter we have energy, motion and phenomenon in one substance. In time we have past, present and future in one time. In man we have body, soul and spirit in one man (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
- (7) In the Holy Trinity, we have Father, Son and Holy Spirit in one God.