



## Going Deep Study Guide Part 2

### “Knowing God”

*Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.*

*Jeremiah 9:23-24*

*The Knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Prov. 9:10 NASB*

*Support your . . . goodness with knowledge. II Peter 1:5*

**“The single most important thing in our mind is our idea of God and the associated images”  
Dallas Willard**

**“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us . . . Were we able to extract from any man a complete answer to the question, “What comes into your mind when you think about God?” we might predict with certainty the spiritual future of that man.**

**A. W. Tozer**

**Always the most revealing thing about the Church is her idea of God.”**

**A. W. Tozer**

**“If your concept of God is wrong, the more religion you get, the more dangerous you become to yourself and to everyone else”**

**William Temple**

**Everyone has an image of God in their mind from which they live their Christian life. Sadly, it is often distorted or misinformed.**

## **Why is our understanding or picture of God so critical?**

### **1. It profoundly affects the way we relate to God.**

If we have a vague, fuzzy and impersonal picture of God, then our relationship with God usually turns out to be vague, fuzzy and impersonal. Or if we picture God to be against us or always out to get us, it will be highly unlikely that we will want to get too intimate with God. Or if we feel that we have to earn God's love, then we will spend our lives huffing and puffing trying to put ourselves into God's good books.

**How we understand God influences powerfully the nature of our relationship with God!**

**It is only by knowing God, correctly, that we can understand correctly how we are to live – what He actually expects from us.**

### **2. Our picture of God rubs off on us!**

We become like the God we worship. If we believe God is violent, we will tend toward aggression. If we understand God to be against certain people, we will be opposed to them as well. If we see God as overly serious, we will most probably come across as heavy ourselves.

**It would seem that we shape our picture of God and then that picture of God shapes us.**

**Knowing who He is defines who we are.**

**If we mis-define God we mis-define everything else.**

Those who operate on the wrong information aren't likely to know the reality of God's presence in the decisions that shape their lives, and they will miss the constant divine companionship for which their souls were made. We can be robbed of the real joy that comes from knowing intimately the most "*joy filled being in the universe*" – the God of Scripture.

# How is our understanding of God Developed?

## **1. Instructionally → We live our lives at the mercy of our ideas; this is never truer than with our ideas about God.**

**A.** As children we learn about God from our parents:

(1) They teach (2) They modeling

**B.** Church / Preaching / Leaders Modeling

**C.** Biblical teaching and reading.

ILL. People with poor or defective vision need glasses to put print and people in focus. In the same way we need Scripture to bring into focus our genuine sense of God. We all have some inkling of God, but it is vague and smudged. Biblical truth serves as the lens that will get that picture in focus and allow us to think correctly about his character, his redemptive work, His Son, His Spirit and our relationship to Him.

God has given us all the information we need to live as we ought in the Bible. However, the Doctrine of God is not presented in scripture as a set of well-organized theological tenets unrelated to the realities of everyday life. He has chosen to reveal Himself – His character in the context of real life – in relationships with real people.

## **2. Experientially →**

The Disciples understanding of spiritual things was often faulty; their misunderstandings of Jesus were frequent; yet Jesus was able to touch and transform their lives beyond the limits of what had entered their minds, simply because they loved him, trusted him, wanted to learn from him and honestly meant to obey him according to the light they had. Often their understanding of what had happened to them came after the fact.

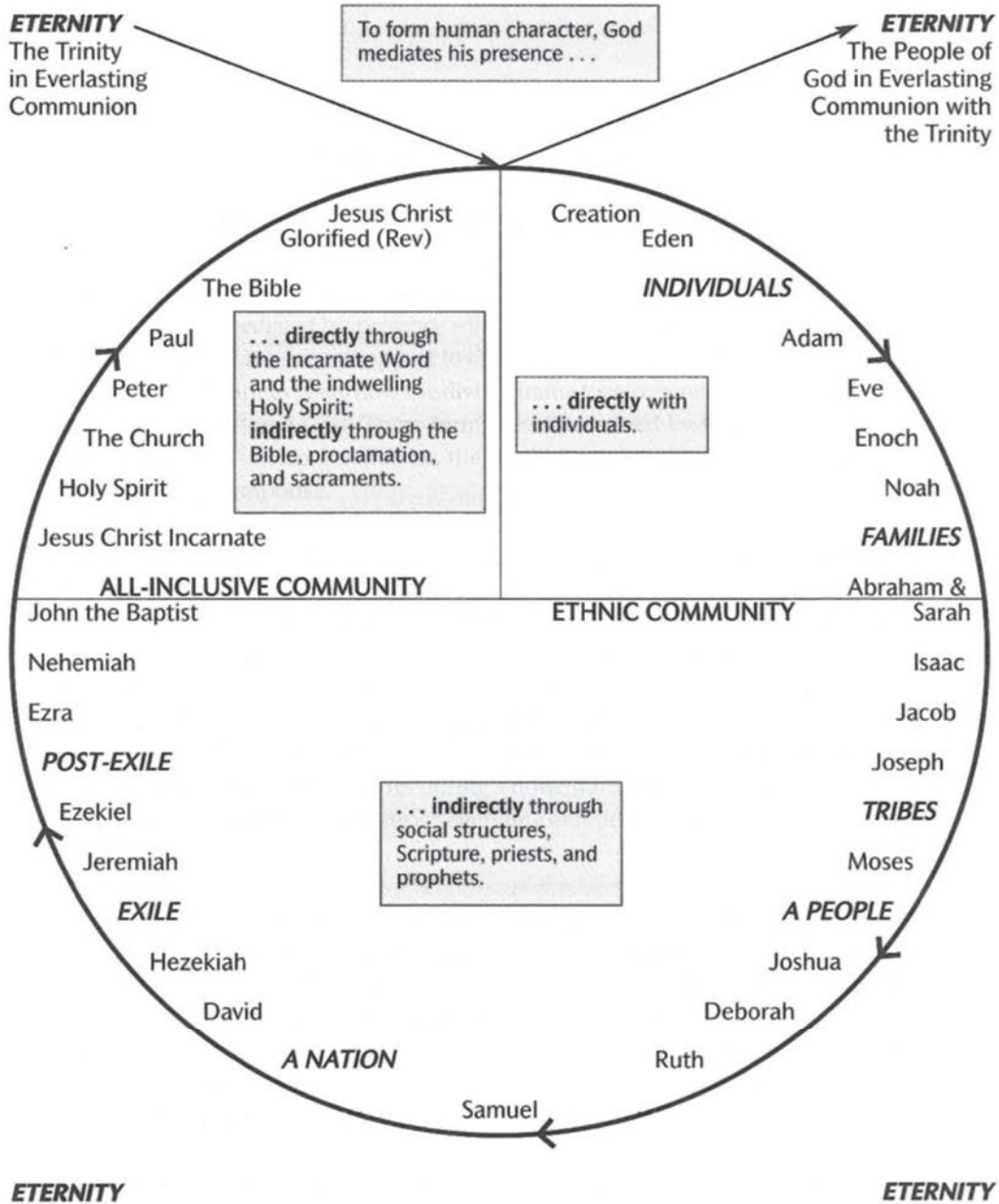
Because God is gracious, he may deepen our life in the Spirit even when our ideas about this life are nonexistent or even wrong – provided that we truly desire to know him better.

## **3. Relationally → This is the primary way He relates to us.**

We are relational beings and that is so because we are made in His image. Just as the divine Persons live in intimate Trinitarian relationship, even so must human persons find fulfillment and be complete in intimate relationships with God and others.

**The aim of God in history is the creation of an all-inclusive community of loving persons with God himself at the very center of this community as its prime Sustainer and most glorious Inhabitant.**

## A Panoramic View of God's Purpose in History



**Illustrate: 1. Individuals: Adam, Eve, Enoch, Noah**

The key word in the book of Genesis is “walk”

**2. Families / a people: Abraham the Hebrew and Isaac, Jacob**

**3. A Nation – Israel → Key story in Pentateuch is Israel**

**5. An all-inclusive Community – The Church – Whole of Acts and NT**

**Relationships require information exchange**

III. Boy , How do I build a relationship with her? Tell about yourself

That’s what God has been doing in history and in **scriptural revelation**. Telling us who He is! Telling us how He works and what His purposes in the world are.

**1. In Scriptural Revelation:**

He is: Creator, Holy, Holy Love, Good, Sovereign, Wise, Full of Grace . . .

**2. In Scriptural Relationships:**

God’s character and nature is revealed to us in the interaction of relationships.

A. Adam and Eve – “walked”

B. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – Faithful

C. Moses

**Ex. 32-34**

<sup>18</sup>And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. <sup>19</sup> And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee;

<sup>5</sup> And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The **LORD**, The LORD God, **merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth**, <sup>7</sup> Keeping mercy for thousands, **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin**, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

There may be no more significant Old Testament description of how God relates to His people than this Hebrew word **hesed**. I argue that the best translation of this term would be “loyal love.” Hesed is difficult to translate because it stands for a cluster of ideas—love, mercy, grace, kindness. It wraps up in itself all the positive attributes of God. Hesed is one of the Lord's most treasured characteristics.

D. Jeremiah – A God of new beginnings Jeremiah 18:1-9

E. Hosea – “A God who will take you back”

F. Jonah – the God of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chance

G. Joel – The God who restores the wasted years

F. Malachi – the God who hears every word. Malachi 3:16 “hearken” “heard”

Ill Jack

**Personal theology statement:**

God is unchanging, good, faithful, holy, sovereign, almighty, gracious, condescending, merciful, loving, righteous, kind, communicative and worthy. He is both Father and Lord.

Therefore, He will care for me, keep His promises, reveal Himself, accomplish His desires, guard me, allow difficulties and trials, never give me more than I can bear, mold me into Christ's likeness. So, I will rest, trust, sacrifice, live with abandon, full tilt, be unashamed, confident, not self-conscious, cling to hope, embrace my humanity/weaknesses, care for others, never stop learning, growing, seeking to know more and express more of our awesome God to anyone who will listen.

Books:

Knowledge of Holy

Good and Beautiful God

The Jesus I Never Knew

The Renovation of the Heart