

What is God like?

By

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God's name is YHWH, which means "I am Who I am" or "I will be Who I will be" (Exodus 3:14). In other words, God is self-defining and independent of everyone and everything else. God is invisible (Colossians 1:15) and beyond our understanding (Romans 11:33). This means that the only way we can know what God is like, is if God takes the initiative to tell us and to show us (John 1:18). This is why God gave us creation (Psalm 19), the prophets, the Bible, and, supremely, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3).

God is love (1 John 4:8, 16); God is eternal (1 Timothy 1:17); and God is independent of His creation (Acts 17:24-25). We might ask: "If God is eternally loving, who did He love before He created the world?" The answer is: the One God (Deuteronomy 6:4) is three eternal Persons (Matthew 28:19): Father (Ephesians 3:11), Son (1 John 1:2) and Holy Spirit (Hebrews 9:14), and each by nature loves the others from all eternity (John 3:35). God, then, is

unity in diversity: in everything that God does, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit work together in perfect loving harmony (John 5:19-20).

God is a loving Creator

God's activities are an overflow of God's love. For example, the Father (Genesis 1:1), the Son (Colossians 1:16), and the Holy Spirit (Psalm 104:30) together created the universe (Psalm 33:6). This means that God is the uncreated Creator of all that exists (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3) and, because God made everything (Psalm 33:6), He owns everything (Psalm 95:5), and deserves all our worship (Psalm 33:8-9) and all our love (Matthew 22:37). Because God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to love the Son is to love the Father (1 John 2:23), and vice-versa (John 8:42). You can't have One without the other!

God's love continuously overflows to His creation in His generous gifts to us of food and happiness and sunshine and rain (Acts 14:17). God loves to give good gifts to the world (James 1:17), even to His enemies (Matthew 5:44-48)!

God is a merciful Savior

God's love for His enemies is most clearly seen in the Gospel. God is holy (Leviticus 19:2) and just (Deuteronomy 32:4), and He has warned us that our sin makes us guilty and deserving of death and hell (Genesis 2:17; Romans 1:32). This leaves us all in danger, because we have all sinned against God (Romans 3:10-12), not even thanking Him for His kindness to us and to others (Romans 1:21), but turning His kind gifts against Him and other people (Ephesians 2:3).

Yet because of God's great mercy and love (Ephesians 2:4), 2000 years ago, God gave us His one and only, dearly beloved Son (John 3:16), to come into the world as a man, Jesus Christ (John 1:14). Jesus gave His life on our behalf (John 10:11) so that through faith in Jesus alone (Acts 4:12), we can be saved from the punishment we deserve (1 Peter 3:18). God also sent His Holy Spirit, so that we can be adopted back into God's family as forgiven sons and daughters (Romans 8:15-17), and be made holy and loving, like God (Galatians 5:22-25).

God is a righteous Judge

Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, He ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-11), where He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father (Acts 2:33). By His Spirit, God is now present within each of His children (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). However, on Judgment Day, Jesus will return physically to earth (Acts 17:31), to punish all who have refused to believe in His Gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8-10). He will throw all unforgiven people into the eternal lake of fire (Revelation 20:15). Then, God Himself will come down into the world and live with His forgiven children in a renewed creation, which is free of all sin, forever and ever (Revelation 21:3-4).

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