

FOUNDATIONS

Track One : Believer to Disciple

Lesson 01 : The Nature of God

This lesson is designed to teach us the nature of God. God's nature is revealed in His Creation, His Word, His attributes and His Names. The Word of God reveals the nature of God to us. Jesus Christ is the Word in flesh - the perfect expression of the nature of God - the exact representation of God. God's true picture is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. Our picture of God - affects not only our posture/stance toward God, but also our posture/stance towards people, the world, and the devil.



All Peoples Church & World Outreach
#319, 2nd Floor, 7th Main, HRBR Layout,
2nd Block, Kalyan Nagar,
Bangalore 560 043, INDIA
www.apcwo.org | contact@apcwo.org
Phone: :+91-80-25452617

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version.

1. What Do We Mean By The Term “Nature Of God”?

- Nature of God is His Characteristics, Attributes and Qualities. Basically who He is, what He does.
- God’s nature is revealed both in His attributes and His Names.
- All of Creation reveals who God is and speaks of His greatness (Romans 1:20, Psalm 19:1)
- The Word of God reveals the nature of God to us.
- Jesus Christ is the Word in flesh – the perfect expression of the nature of God – the exact representation of God. God’s true picture is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. (John 1:1,14 Hebrews 1:3)
- God’s Word and His Works are always consistent with His nature – with who He is. God will never say something or do something that contradicts who He is. So an important test to evaluate if something is truly of God – is to see if it aligns with God’s nature.
“Whatever you think you know about God, which you do not find in the Person of Jesus Christ, you have reason to question” – Bill Johnson
“Jesus Christ is Perfect Theology” – Bill Johnson
- Our picture of God – affects not only our posture/stance toward God, but also our posture/stance towards people, the world, and the devil.

2. God’s Attributes Reveal His Nature

2.1. God Is The Creator And Eternal

- Genesis 21:33, Psalms 90:2
- No one made God. He always existed. He is self-existent and self-sufficient, not dependent on any thing else for His existence. At some point He decided to make us and He has lived with us ever since.
- Unlike Him we are all created and have a beginning.
- Colossians 1:15-17 All things were created in Him, through Him, for Him, I Timothy 1:17.

2.2. He is Spirit Person

- John 4:24 Psalm 139:7-10
- God doesn’t have a natural mortal physical body like ours.
- However, He is not some formless, jelly like, impersonal, Spirit-force. The Bible reveals God having a form similar to us. He has hands, eyes, ears, feet, etc. God also has feelings and emotions like us – He loves, He cares, He laughs, He weeps, He is angered, He forgives, etc. He is a Person, and hence a personal God.

- Hence God desires relationship. He is described as Father. He considers us believers, sons and daughters and as part of His family.
- Bible records that at times He takes on a physical appearance in order to communicate. (Theologians call this as epiphany). Example: Moses Exodus chapters 33 - 34

2.3. He Is All Powerful (Omnipotent)

- Luke 1:37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.
- God's power is absolutely limitless yet He has declared that there are certain things He will not do. For example He will never be unfaithful, never lie, never stop loving. He cannot do these because these are contrary to His character and nature.
- God is powerful all the time.
- His power is released through His Word (Hebrews 4:12)

2.4. He is All Knowing (Omniscient)

- Psalms 147:5 Job 37:14-18 Isaiah 46:9,10

2.5. He Is Present Everywhere (Omnipresent)

- Jeremiah 23:23-24 Psalm 139:7 Acts 17:24

2.6. He is Triune

- John 14:26
- The Bible presents this as fact, without giving a systematic explanation of how God is three Persons in one.
- God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit are all eternal, co-equal, and are to be worshipped.
- Each Person of God-Head work as one, in unity and harmony. The Father represents the wisdom of the God-Head, He Conceive. The Son represents the authority of the God-Head, He Commands. The Spirit represents the power of the God-Head, He Creates. (Psalm 104:30, Job 33:4)
- Jesus & Holy Spirit coming down Matthew 3:16-17
- Father + Holy Spirit + Jesus John 16:15
- Jesus prays to the father for all believers John 17:21

2.7. He Is Infinite

- Psalm 147:5 Romans 1:20
- Limitless : He cannot be measured, contained or fully grasped.
- Supreme : He is not a superior being but a supreme being.
- Eternal : He always existed and always will exist.

2.8. He Is Holy And Righteous

- God's perfection is the standard for our moral character and the motivation for our lifestyle. Our moral code should follow His standard of Holiness. 1 Peter 1:16
- He is untouched and unstained by any form of evil. Hebrews 1:13, James 1:13. Hebrew Holy '*Qadash*' – Something withheld from ordinary use treated with special care.
- God delights in righteousness Jeremiah 9:24
- He only does and only commands others to do what is right according to His own Law Genesis 18:25.

2.9. He is Sovereign

- As Sovereign – He is absolute Master, Ruler, Lord and everything yields and bows to Him. 1 Timothy 1:17
- In His Sovereignty, He has chosen to entrust man with a free will and He has chosen to respect man's choice.
- God is so secure in His sovereignty that He is not afraid to give up control. As far as a human beings "free will" is concerned, God has given up control.
- Man's freedom to choose and the choices he makes, even if it opposes the purposes of God, in no way, undermines, lessens or weakens God's Sovereignty. God is still in authority.
- However, man's choices also have their consequences.

2.10. He Is Just

- God respects each individual's choices and rewards them in accordance to their choices and actions. He doesn't show any favoritism or partiality.
- God's justice also involves judgment (Psalms 94:1-3), and acting in a fair way and doing what is inherently right (Genesis 18:25).
- It is a part of God's nature – It is not a standard that exists outside of God to which He must conform – Psalm 97:2.
- In sending Jesus to be our Saviour, God is both Just and the Justifier of those who have sinned (Romans 3:26).

2.11. He Is Truthful And Faithful

- Jesus Himself is truth John 14: 6, 1 John 5:20
- God's word is truth John 17:17
- God is truthful and He cannot lie Numbers 23:19, Titus 1:2, Hebrews 6:18
- Therefore everything He says is absolutely true.

- He is Faithful. He keeps His promises Deuteronomy 7:8-9
- Faithfulness follows logically from immutability because if God does not change then He cannot be unfaithful.

- Because you know God is Truth - you know you can absolutely rely on His Word.
- Because you know God is Faithful - you know He will never leave you or abandon you.

2.12. He Is A Loving And Good God

- God is Love 1 John 4:8-10
- Love demonstrated Romans 5:6-8, John 3:16
- God is absolutely good, all the time. God is so good, He cannot do me wrong. Even when He corrects me, He is doing it out of His goodness.

2.13. He Is Merciful And Gracious

- It is the unmerited favor and goodness of God. He shows it on the basis of His generosity and goodness.
- God's mercy is not a temporary thing or mood but an attribute of God's being, God has always been gracious and merciful Luke 1:50.
- Grace is a gift from God Ephesians 2:8.
- His mercy is lavished upon all His works Psalm 145:9,10 Ephesians 1:7-8
- His mercy brings us salvation Titus 2:11.
- Mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13). While it is true that we reap of what we sow (Galatians 6:7,8), it is His mercy that "writes off" or "cancels" the full reaping of evil, for all the evil we have sown. It is because of His mercies that we are not consumed (Lamentations 3:22). He does not deal with us according to our sins, but instead extends mercy (Psalm 103:10,17). The Cross is the greatest expression of this. When we repent, we position ourselves to receive His mercy.

2.14. He is Unchanging

- Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8
- God's nature does not change across the Old and New Testaments. He is the same God through time. What changes is the "Covenants" - the basis on which man relates to God, changes across the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament reveals what man would experience if he attempts to relate to God on the basis of Law/Works - on what man is able to offer to God. The New Testament reveals what man would experience if he relates to God on the basis of grace given freely by God - on what God extends to man.
- He is today, exactly as He is revealed in the Old Testament, exactly as Jesus revealed Him to be in the New Testament.

3. The Names Of God Reveal His Nature

The names used to describe God tell us much about His character and being.

ADONAI, “Lord”, or “Sovereign” Genesis 19:2, John 4: 11 (Meaning Master or owner, authorities and supremacy). Lord is also used a title for men.

ELOHIM, The source of all creation, the powerful God. Genesis 1:1 (This cannot be expressed as singular, it is a plural for majesty)

THEOS, John 1:1. It is a Greek equivalent of Elohim. It is never used for any being other than God Himself.

El, God

El-Shaddai, Genesis 17:1 The Almighty, the Bountiful one, All-Sufficient one.

El-Elyon, Genesis 14:19 The Most High God

El-Olam, Genesis 21:33 Everlasting God.

I AM that I AM, Exodus 3:14, reveals God as the eternal, self-sufficient and self-existent One

YAHWEH “The Lord” Genesis 4:1

Jehovah Rapha : The Lord my Healer, Exodus 15:26

Jehovah Nissi : The Lord is my Banner/Victory, Exodus 17: 15.

Jehovah Jireh : The Lord is my Provider, Genesis 22:14.

Jehovah Shalom : The Lord is Peace, Judges 6:24.

Jehovah Sabboath : The Lord of Hosts, I Samuel 1:3, Psalm 24.

Jehovah Maccadeshecem : The Lord your Sanctifier, Exodus 31:13.

Jehovah Roi : The Lord is my Shepherd, Psalm 31:13, Psalm 23:1.

Jehovah Sidkenu : The Lord our Righteousness, Jeremiah 23:6.

Jehovah Shammah : The Lord is Present, Ezekiel 48:35.

Our Father : Perhaps the greatest aspect of God’s nature that we must grasp is that of “Father”. God is our Father.

4. Application

1, See God for who He really is and worship Him for who He is

- Do not permit your picture of God to be tainted by life’s experiences, peoples opinions, etc.

2, Desire to conform to His nature. He desires for His nature to be expressed through us

- Make decisions and choices aligned to His nature
- Relate to people aligned to the nature of God - forgiveness, love, peace, justice, etc.

3, See your situations in the light of who He is

- If there is sickness - see Him as your Healer.
- If there is a need - see Him as your Provider.
- If there is trouble - see Him as your Banner, your source of victory.

5. Reflection

- 1, "What new qualities/attributes about God have I discovered from this study?"
- 2, "What attributes about God learnt from this study, have changed my image/understanding of Him?"
- 3, Study and list down the attributes of God.
- 4, Write down the different "I AM" names of God and their meanings. (e.g. Jesus said " I am the light of the world", etc.).
- 5, What do the attributes of God and the names of God reveal?