

Lesson Two

The Atheist would have us believe that God does not exist. The Agnostic claims that we cannot be sure if God really exists. The Deist insists that God does exist, but that we cannot know anything about him, except what Nature and Reason tell us. In this lesson we will look at how we can be sure that God exists. More importantly, we will look at how God reveals himself to us so we may know who he really is.

Many people have questioned God's existence. Philosophers have constructed complex arguments for and against the existence of God. However, complex arguments are not necessary to answer the question. God has provided evidences of his existence that are obvious to all people.

God says:	From this we know:
<i>Hebrews 3:4</i> "For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything."	All people know God exists from the created world. (nature)
<i>Romans 1:20</i> "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."	
<i>Romans 2:15</i> "...since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them."	All people know God exists from their consciences, which demand accountability. (conscience)

What nature and conscience reveal is called the Natural Knowledge of God. The Natural Knowledge of God tells us there exists a powerful and wise God who demands we live in a certain way. But that is a very limited view of who God is. It does not give us any detailed information about what God is like. So why has God provided all people with Natural Knowledge of him?

God says:	From this we know:
<p><i>Acts 17:26-27</i> "From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us."</p>	<p>God wants all people to seek out the true God.</p>

We see that God wants people to seek him, but Natural Knowledge doesn't tell us enough to allow us to know him personally. So how can we know who the true God is?

God says:	From this we know:
<p><i>Job 37:5</i> "God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding." <i>Isaiah 40:13</i> "Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor?" <i>1 Corinthians 2:11</i> "For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."</p>	<p>We cannot understand who God is with our limited abilities. For us to know more about God, he must reveal himself to us.</p>
<p><i>John 1:18</i> "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known." <i>Hebrews 1:1, 2</i> "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe."</p>	<p>God has revealed himself through prophets and through his Son, Jesus Christ. This is known as Revealed Knowledge and is recorded for us in the Bible.</p>

God wants us to know who he is and what he has done for us. That is why he has given us the Bible. So how does the Bible describe God?

God says:	From this we know:
<i>John 4:24</i> "God is spirit."	God is spirit. He has no physical body.
<i>Psalms 90:1-2</i> "Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."	God is eternal.
<i>Genesis 17:1</i> "I am God Almighty."	God is all-powerful (omnipotent).
<i>Jeremiah 23:23-24</i> "Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away? Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD."	God is everywhere (omnipresent).
<i>Hebrews 4:13</i> "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."	God is all knowing (omniscient).
<i>Malachi 3:6</i> "I the LORD do not change."	God is changeless.
<i>Leviticus 19:2</i> "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."	God is holy—perfect in every way.
<i>1 John 4:8</i> "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."	God is loving.
<i>Exodus 34:6</i> "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."	God is merciful.

There is another part of God's nature that is shown us in the Bible. It is one that we cannot fully grasp, but one that is essential for a proper understanding of the Bible. If we do not view God as he has revealed himself, we will not be able to understand his plan of salvation for us.

God says:	From this we know:
<p><i>Deuteronomy 3:39</i> "Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other."</p> <p><i>Deuteronomy 6:4</i> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."</p>	<p>The Bible tells us there is only one God.</p>
<p><i>Ephesians 5:20</i> "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."</p> <p><i>1 John 5:20</i> "We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true--even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life."</p> <p><i>Acts 5:3, 4</i> "Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit...? You have not lied to men, but to God.'"</p>	<p>The Bible reveals God as 3 separate persons-- Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</p>

The Latin word "triune" (tri = three, une = one) has been used to help communicate the nature of God. It reflects the fact that God has revealed himself as one God, but three persons. This triune nature of God is revealed throughout the Bible. In fact, God hints at this fact in the words of Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.'" We will examine the relationships among the persons of the Triune God more closely in later lessons.

All Bible passages are from the New International Version.