

We Believe: God

Community Group Questions

1. What do you think your view of God is?
2. God is wise, holy, just and loving...which of these do you find you focus in on?
3. Do you have a hard time explaining to other people why you believe God created?
4. Do you have people in your life that do not believe in God?

Today we are going to learn some of the attributes of God, I am teaching you under the presupposition that you believe that there is a God. If you do not believe that there is a God or are dealing with someone that does not believe that there is a God, issues that you or they will have to deal with first are things like origin of life, meaning of life and destiny.

Article #2 of FRBC We believe in one God, the creator, preserver and ruler of all things, who is perfect in holiness, and in love, infinite in wisdom and measureless in power. He reveals Himself in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I am going break this article of faith into two weeks. Next week we will look at the Trinity and this week we will look at 7 attributes of God the first 3 roles God has and the last 4 are character traits He possesses.

We believe God is the...

Creator – The creation account in Genesis attributes the entire creation to the work of God. The Bible tells us that He spoke creation into existence and how He did that remains a mystery to us but what we do know is that any discoveries that are made about life and the creation we can attribute to an intelligent God.

Here are some Scriptures other than the Genesis account that attribute all created things to God.

Rev 4:11 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

John 1:3 All things were made through Him (Jesus)

Neh 9:6 “You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.

The Nehemiah passage teaches that not only did God create it teaches that He preserves, that means He keeps creation going

Preserver- *Col 1:17 And He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

God is in charge of times and seasons, new life and death. This is important for us to understand because it reminds us that He is intimately involved in His creation and in our lives, so the fact that He preserves His creation should comfort us knowing that God did not just start the process of creation and forget about it, but He is continually preserving it.

In an article about children’s letters to God one little girls wrote...
Dear God, In Sunday School they told us what You do. Who does it when You are on vacation?

The good news is He does not take vacations.
God is the creator and preserver He is also the...

Ruler- *1 Chron 29:11-12

A ruler is one that exercises dominion of others and God’s ultimate role among created things is that He is the Ruler.

He is in charge of all things with means He is powerful the theological word here is *Omnipotent* meaning all-powerful

When we come to the conclusion that God is the creator, preserver and ruler of all things it will shape our view of God. But interestingly enough among the millions of people that say they are Christians in the U.S. many seem to have differing views of God.

According to a book called "America's Four Gods" published in 2010 by Paul Froese and Christopher Bader, the way Americans view of God falls into one of four categories. Both professors at Baylor University, used polling data from a 2008 survey to break down how Americans believe in God.

Here is what they found...Some Americans believe God is an...

Authoritative God- A God that is very judgmental and very engaged in the world at the same time

Critical God- A God that is removed from daily events but will render judgment in the after-life.

Distant God – A God that set the universe in motion, but then disengaged.

Benevolent God- A God that is thoroughly involved in their lives and is loving and not stern.

So all these people believe that God is creator, preserver and ruler why do they or we seem to have different views of God? I think it may be because they focus on different character traits of God.

I want to look at 4 character traits of God that affect how we view God. Then learn how to develop these character traits.

Wise- and all knowing...the theological word is Omniscience

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Maybe people that believe in an *Authoritative God* only focus on His wisdom. We look to people with authority and realize they often know a lot. We may feel inferior to them and often times because they know a lot we may feel judged by them. Now when we look at God and know that He is wise we think He must look at us in a judgmental way.

Listen to what *1 Corinthians 1:25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men.*

That's kind of offensive! The point here is that if there were any foolishness in God it would still be wiser than the wisest person.

It that is true then how do we-Develop Wisdom? *Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.*

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

We go to the Lord to develop wisdom.

The next character trait is...

Holy-Without sin- In Isaiah 6 we see the angels singing praise to God because He is Holy. He is perfect, He will never sin against us, or will ever sin.

Maybe people that think God is a *Critical God* only focus in on His holiness-He must be critical because we do things wrong and He does everything right?

We can fall into the trap of looking down on others because they are struggling with some sort of sin and start to be very critical of them.

If you start to think that way imagine if you had to wear all your sins on your sleeve.

How do we-Develop Holiness? *1 Peter 1:16 "You shall be holy for I am Holy" The author Lynn Austin said "If you truly understood the holiness of God, you would have a proper attitude about yourself."*

The attitude we need to have is not being critical of others or thinking we are good because we compare ourselves to others that we are better than...Look to Jesus for comparison.

We need to strive to eliminate sinful patterns, sinful activities and sinful thoughts to be more like Jesus.

The next character trait is God is...

Just-The concept of justice is something we love when we are doing right and may not love when we are doing wrong. Pure justice needs to punish wrongdoing.

Isaiah 30:18 For the LORD is a God of justice

***Psalm 9:7-8**

Maybe people that believe in a Distant God think that if God is a just God He would not stand for a lack of justice. He must be distant because there is such a lack of justice in this world, the system that God allows is seriously flawed.

-How do we Develop Justice? *Proverbs 18:5 It is not good to be partial to the wicked or to deprive the righteous of justice.*

This verses reminds us that we do not turn a blink eye toward sin just because it is someone we like.

As Christians we need to uphold justice, that means obeying the laws, that means being a good citizen and that means helping the helpless and oppressed.

The final character trait of God is...

Loving-Some think the God of the OT and NT are different gods.

People think the God of the OT is mean, harsh and unloving and the God of the NT, Jesus is loving and harmless, that accepts anyone and anything including sin.

People who think this are wrong...God has not changed He is loving. *1 John 4:8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

Maybe the people that see God as a Benevolent God only focus in on His love and think that He is a big pushover and accepts everything including sin, He could never be mad because He loves. The problem with this view of God is that it forgets about the truth that because God is love He is angry with sin and He has to bring swift justice on sin.

Listen to what...*1 John 4:9-11 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

This verse reminds us that the GOSPEL message includes the wrath of God being appeased by the blood of Jesus. That means that God is so

loving that even though we deserved to pay for our sin, Jesus, God in flesh paid the price for all that believe.

-Developing Love: Let God define what is not the culture *1 John 5:3*
"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments"