

# WHO GOD IS

Genesis 1:1, Selected Texts (NASB)  
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Everyone wonders who God is. It's one of the greatest questions of life. Some have said that it's a question no one can answer. I think it is a question which reasonable people can answer using reasonable means. The first problem we have is where to look to find information about God. I suggest that we begin by imagining that we are looking in a mirror or a pool of still water.

## 1. God is an intelligent Creator.

The human eye is a powerful testimony that there must be an intelligent creator, and let's just call him God for the moment. The theory of evolution states that eyes developed over billions of years through billions of accidental changes, although none of these could have made the organisms more fit to survive since the eye would not work until the end. There's a second reason why that could not have happened. The eye requires a highly complex brain to receive and interpret the signals it sends. It also requires a sophisticated transmission line called the optic nerve to carry the signal from the eye to the brain. These highly specific structures would have had to evolve side by side with the eye over billions of years in a non-working state, and then accidentally connect to achieve sight. This is not possible by any mechanism known to science, and it has a statistical probability of virtually zero.

There's a more important reason why the eye did not just develop sight by many mutations over billions of years. British scientists Watson and Crick discovered half way through the last century that all biological structures and their functions exist because their patterns are encoded as information in the DNA of every cell. Where did these complex designs come from? The patterns themselves, as ideas, are not material things. They are merely represented in the material of DNA in the nucleus of each cell. There is no known evolutionary mechanism for the creation of the information which is found in DNA. So who put the pattern in there? There must have been an intelligent creator.

The only logical conclusion is that we are the design of a surpassingly brilliant intellect, and every time we look in the mirror our eyes teach us that fact. Though we are not yet using the Bible to gather information about God, we can corroborate the fact that God is Creator with the Book of Genesis, chapter one, verse one: **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”** The specific verse which explains the origin of the design of the eye is: **“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them”** (Genesis 1:27).

## 2. God is extremely powerful.

The second thing we learn by looking in the mirror is that God must be extremely powerful. The mirror into which we just looked is composed of atoms and molecules. The discovery of molecular, atomic, and subatomic structure has revealed a world of shocking design and beauty. It has also led to the biggest bombs ever seen in human history. How can so much energy be stored in the tiniest structures of the atom that a few pounds of plutonium can flatten an entire city? The intelligent creator who made such atoms must be extremely powerful also.

The same conclusion can be reached by considering the heavens. For the creatures which God made to survive they must be placed on a planet with very specific conditions. A little farther away from the sun and every living thing freezes, a little closer and every living thing is burned up. Even the tilt of the earth makes our planet friendly to human life. A few degrees of tilt either way would make earth uninhabitable. It would take an extremely powerful creator to spin the earth perfectly around the sun so that the creatures he made would survive. There are many other critical measures of the earth environment which would kill all living things were they to change even a small amount.

Once again, though we are not yet using the Bible as a direct source of information, we can corroborate our observations about God from his creation: **“Thus says God the LORD, /Who created the heavens and stretched them out, /Who spread out the earth and its offspring, /Who gives breath to the people on it /And spirit to those who walk in it...”** (Isaiah 42:5). And again: **“Lift up your eyes on high /And see who has created these stars, /The One who leads forth their host by number, /He calls them all by name; /Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, /Not one of them is missing”** (Isaiah 40:26).

### 3. God is a communicator.

There is an important deduction to be made about God from observing creation. With all of his immense intelligence and power which we can see by what he has made, we may safely conclude that he can communicate. If God can encode his thoughts in DNA then surely he can talk. What means would such a God use to communicate to us? If our previous reasoning is true, human beings can only talk because God designed it into our DNA. So if he made people to communicate with words, surely he would use words to communicate with the people he made.

Where should we look to hear the words God is speaking to his creation? Let me suggest to you that the dusty Bible on your shelf has qualifications no other book can match. It has sixty-six books written over thousands of years by over forty authors, all of whom agree in detail about the nature of God. If one were to try purposefully to collect authors over a time span of four thousand years it would be impossible to find forty authors who would agree on the answer to the question “Who is God and what is he like?” The conclusion we should draw from this, which has been concluded by millions of people in hundreds of countries over thousands of years, is that God is talking to his creation through the Bible.

People often ask: “Is the Bible reliable? Haven’t people monkeyed with it to make it say what they want it to say? Aren’t there many copying mistakes?” That question of reliability was answered in the last century by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran. Before the birth of Jesus large parts of the Bible were preserved in oil-filled jars in super-dry desert caves

near the Dead Sea. These scrolls sat there unmolested until they were accidentally discovered by a shepherd boy in 1947. When the Book of Isaiah, for example, was compared with the one we have today, our current copies were found to be ninety-seven percent accurate, with no differences affecting our understanding of God. That's a time lapse of two thousand years! There is no other ancient document in history with that level of reliability--not even close! Apparently the powerful and intelligent creator took pains to make sure that his words would be available to those willing to read them.

There is much more we could say about the uniqueness of the Bible which proves it is different from every other religious book. It must suffice to say for now that it is the most likely candidate for being the words which the extremely intelligent and powerful God is saying to the people whom he made. Though we are still not yet using the Bible as our data bank about God, it also corroborates the nature of God as communicator to his creation: **“So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; /It will not return to Me empty, /Without accomplishing what I desire, /And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it”** (Isaiah 55:11).

So far we have gathered three kinds of information about God: two inferences from nature, a deduction from those two inferences, and corroborating evidence from the Bible. The picture so far is this: an extremely powerful, surpassingly intelligent creator has made us and communicated with us by virtue of the Bible. That means that we can get reliable information about him from the Bible. And even if the foregoing logic is not yet convincing to you I invite you to at least follow along in the next section to see what the Bible says about God. Perhaps you should pray a brief prayer: “God, if this information is true, please show me.”

It is now time to use the Bible as it was intended: the one reliable source of information about God. Theologians call this special revelation. Without special revelation, we can only know general things about God (like our first three points). That's why God has spoken to mankind for thousands of years through the Bible. So what has he told us about himself?

#### 4. God is holy.

God is holy, which means total moral perfection: **“Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy’”** (Leviticus 19:2). For God to be holy in that way separates him completely from us because none of us has total moral perfection. Our failure is described in Romans 3:23: **“...For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”** The logic is simple. God's glory is the outshining radiance of his true character, which is perfect. By comparison to that we are all failures--or sinners, to use the Biblical term.

#### 5. God is just.

God is also the fairest of judges, and even so we are all in trouble because of our sin: **“The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, /And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. /In whirlwind and storm is His way, /And clouds are the dust beneath His feet”** (Nahum 1:3). How much trouble are we in? The God who spun the planets around the sun and who programmed our DNA will judge us for our sins and there is nothing we

can do to stop him. Quibbling is useless. Escape is impossible. We might as well try to resist a tidal wave.

#### 6. God is merciful.

But this is where the good news starts! Mercy means that we do not receive what we deserve, namely, punishment! The merciful heart of God will not allow him to leave us in our helpless condition: **“But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth”** (Psalm 86:15).

#### 7. God is loving.

Furthermore, love is central to God’s nature. The Bible says, in fact, that **“God is love”** (1 John 4:8). The mercy and love of God caused him to engage in a sacrificial plan to solve our spiritual problem of sin: **“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins”** (1 John 4:10).

This deserves some further thought. Many people think that being good or religious is the way to be saved. They think: “If I try to love God by doing lots of good or religious things, God will save me.” The Bible says that the real plan of God is for him to love us first! This is demonstrated in his plan to grant us escape from the punishment we deserve for being moral failures. God, out of love for us, sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die in our place. He took the punishment for all of our sins, as Isaiah prophesied: **“But He was pierced through for our transgressions, /He was crushed for our iniquities; /The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, /And by His scourging we are healed”** (Isaiah 53:5). God revealed his love for us to Isaiah centuries before Christ came.

That’s what the word “propitiation” from our previous verse in 1 John (4:10) means. Jesus took the punishment of God for our sins and so the anger of God over those sins was put away forever. The Apostle Peter explained it: **“...And He Himself [Jesus Christ] bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed”** (1 Peter 2:24). Because of God’s love for us our disease of sin can be healed through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf. It is humbling to see ourselves in this position of total weakness before God, but it is the truth.

#### 8. God is gracious.

God is also gracious, and grace means that we receive the benefit of good things which we have not deserved. Paul the Apostle explained it to the Romans of his day: **“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Romans 6:23). The phrase “free gift” may sound redundant to our ears but God wanted us to be clear that forgiveness and eternal life in Christ are given to us free of any payment on our part. Add the mercy, love, and grace of God together and the output is this undeserved offer of new life in Christ.

Although it does not involve any contribution on our part, the offer must be individually received. God asks only that we trust in Christ as our only hope of salvation. Faith is the sole requirement for receiving God's gift, as Paul explained: **"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast"** (Ephesians 2:8-9).

#### 9. God is Father.

Being saved from punishment is important, but we are also saved for a personal relationship with God the Father through faith in Christ. Jesus spoke of this great purpose in one of his prayers to the Father: **"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent"** (John 17:3). Our relationship with God the Father begins from the moment we trust Christ for the forgiveness of our sins and lasts for eternity.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of knowing God. It is the reason he created us! When we meet God in a personal way we can never be alone again. Jesus said: **"I am with you always"** (Matthew 28:20b). Suddenly, the extremely powerful and surpassingly intelligent Creator is working on our behalf every day to protect us, to guide us, and to empower us to live new lives! This new life in Christ opens the door to the deepest satisfactions our souls can ever know.

#### 10. God is omnipotent.

One last thing. We learned our first three points by looking at nature. We could go back and revise them by looking at what the Bible has to say about God in those areas, but one will do. God is not only extremely powerful, he is omnipotent--a word which means all-powerful. In many places in the Bible God is called almighty, such as Revelation 1:8: **"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'**" The word "almighty" means "ruler of all," (*pantokrator*, Gk.) and that includes you, me, and every person ever born!

If we find ourselves prone to take issue with any part of the plan of God explained above, the truth of the omnipotence of God puts it all in perspective. God, in his omnipotence, applies the plan to every person who ever was born, is alive now, or who will be born. There is no way around it.

### CONCLUSION

Thank God that he is not only just and almighty, but he is also merciful, loving, and gracious! Your knowing these things has given you a choice opportunity to receive the gift of forgiveness and eternal life through Christ. You can do this by praying a simple prayer in which you admit that you are a sinner, receive forgiveness for your sins through Christ's death on the cross for you, and receive eternal life as a gift. God made you to know him, and he is holding out his hand to you--just take it!