



### Study Guide #3: A Man and His God

#### God Identified

**QUESTION:** Who is God?

**QUESTION:** Do you feel your answer adequately describes Him?

NOTE: the next three questions are to be answered, not based on what you think it *should* be, but on the way things actually are *at this moment* in your life.

**QUESTION:** What bearing does **your** concept of God have upon your desire for a daily devotional time?

**QUESTION:** What impact does **your** concept of God have upon your relationship with the following?

- ... your spouse (or choice of one)?
  
- ... your children (or when God blesses you with them)?
  
- ... your family and friends?
  
- ... your co-workers?

**QUESTION:** How does **your** way of thinking about God affect your reactions to the bumps and changes of course in life?

**QUESTION:** Why does our concept of God play such an important role in these areas of life?

# MOMENTUM

Well known evangelist, pastor and author A.W. Tozer once said "*what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.*" So what comes to your mind?

1 Peter 3:15 says, "*in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.*" Unless you live on a remote island in the middle of the Pacific, people are watching and observing your life every day. So the focus of this study is simply this: Are they getting a right view of God?

Read 1 Peter 3:15 again. Many Christians have missed the most important part of this verse. Consider this: although we must "always be prepared" and we need to give "a reason for our hope" ... the most important part of this verse is the words "in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord."

**QUESTION:** What does it mean to set apart Christ as Lord in your heart?

**QUESTION:** How exactly does one set apart Christ as Lord in their heart?

The words "set apart" literally mean, "to sanctify." In other words, keep your heart pure. Dedicate your heart completely to God. Oh, and by the way, the words "set apart" are written in the present tense, active voice, and imperative mood. Let me explain.

Present tense simply means that the action being described (in this case: keeping your heart pure) is happening right now, right now, and right now - always in real time. The action never pauses, never takes a break, never stops, it's always happening.

The active voice means YOU are the one doing the action. No one else can keep your heart pure but you. And the imperative mood means this is a command - no option.

So think carefully about what God is telling us here. Every moment of every day YOU have to keep your heart pure. You are responsible for ensuring that your heart is always focused on God and His glory. I can't do it for you, and you can't do it for me. And when we aren't actively doing this, we are disobeying a direct command from our Father and thus we are sinning!

**QUESTION:** Proverbs 23:7 tells us "*As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he*" (KJV). Read Proverbs 27:19 and Proverbs 4:23. Why is it so important that every moment of every day we are setting apart Christ as Lord in our hearts?

What you think will become what you do. How you view God, how you relate to and interact with God on a daily basis, will be reflected in every word you speak and every thing you do. And not just at church or work, but even when you're at home and when you're alone.

It is, therefore, very important that you have an understanding of who God is. As people watch your life, they ARE seeing how you view God. How are you representing His holiness and glory? Are you revealing Him through every thought, word and action in your life? Are you a mirror reflecting Him, or a wall hiding Him? Do you let your light shine for all to see, or are you hiding it somewhere deep within? Do people see the image of yourself (an image you have worked so hard to portray), or do they see the image of Christ being lived out? Do you stand up for Him, even when you may stand alone?

The bottom line is simple - when we set apart Christ as Lord in our hearts, He will show up as Lord in our lives. When the Lordship of Christ is revealed in our daily living, people will begin to ask "what makes you so different?" And the only reason they even know to ask that question is because they see the difference in your daily living!

**QUESTION:** As the people who see you daily and who know you best are watching you, whom are they seeing the most of (self or God)?

## The Name Above All Names

OK, it's quiz time. What are the names of God found in Scripture? What do they mean?

So, how did you do? Could you name 10 of them? How about 5 names of God? Maybe two? Why is it important that we know the names of God? After all, isn't just knowing Him as "God" enough?

Let's say I put my name up on a white board. I then bring in different people to look at that name and tell you what that name means to them. You would find that my name carries a special significance to each of them, but in different ways.

For example, you might hear descriptions such as friend, husband, father, father-in-law, grandpa, uncle, brother, son, son-in-law, employer, business owner, teacher, chairman of the board and so on. Each of those descriptions represent the exact same person, but in a different role. Each one gives you a glimpse into who I am.

It's even more significant with the names of God. Each of God's names tells us something about who He is, and how we can (and should) relate to Him. An understanding of those names, and understanding of who God really is, will in turn impact your heart – how you think about Him - resulting in a life that is focused on glorifying Him.

**QUESTION:** Read the following verses, then answer the question. Read Ezekiel 39:7, 25; 36:21, 23; Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 19:12; Malachi 1:14; Deuteronomy 28:58; Philippians 2:9-11. What do these verses tell us about God's name, and how He views it?

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**QUESTION:** Since God feels this way about His name, how should we feel about it? (NOTE: saying "the same way He does" isn't a good enough answer, be more specific.)

## **God is Elohim**

The name "Elohim" (pronounced El-o-heem) is typically rendered as "God" in our Bible. It appears in the Old Testament about 2,570 times. The first time we see it is in Genesis 1:1 which says, "In the beginning (Elohim) God ...".

The word Elohim means "the strong one; the almighty leader, the supreme deity." Now just pause for a moment and think about what Genesis 1:1 is telling us about God. Before anything else existed, the strong one, the supreme deity already was.

**QUESTION:** What does that tell you about God compared to all other "gods"? What does that tell you about God compared to yourself? (NOTE: try to think deep here)

**QUESTION:** Read Isaiah 45:18 and Jeremiah 32:27. What do these verses tell you about God (NOTE: "LORD" literally means "the God who cares" - include that aspect in your answer).

**QUESTION:** Read Psalm 58:11. Elohim (the strong one, the almighty leader and supreme deity) does what with the earth?

**QUESTION:** Read 2 Corinthians 5:10. How does this help you with your walk with God (NOTE: be sure to apply this to you personally instead of making a broad statement)?

**QUESTION:** Read Deuteronomy 10:17. Keeping in mind the meaning of "Elohim," what does this verse tell you about God?



**QUESTION:** How does this impact your daily walk with God?

Those are just a few examples of what we can learn about God, simply by understanding the name "Elohim."

### **God is El Shaddai**

Scripture also teaches us that there are compound names of God as well. For example, the name "El Shaddai" is a combination of "Elohim" and "Shaddai" which means "the almighty *sufficient* one." El Shaddai is a name which speaks of God's complete sufficiency to nourish, nurture and care for His children. When God would reveal Himself to the patriarchs of the Old Testament (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), this is the name He would use (read Genesis 17:1; 28:3 and 35:11).

**QUESTION:** How can the name El Shaddai help you in your walk with God at work? At home? In the midst of a trial or storm of life? (see 2 Peter 1:3-10).

This study doesn't have the time to dig into the rest of these names, but other compound names of God include:

- El Roi - the God who sees (see Genesis 16:13)
- El Echad - the One True God (see Malachi 2:10)
- El Hanne'eman - the faithful God (see Deuteronomy 7:9)
- El Emet - the God of Truth (see Psalm 31:5)
- El Gibbor - the Mighty God (see Isaiah 9:6)
- El De'ot - the God of knowledge (see 1 Samuel 2:3)
- El Hakkavod - the God of Glory (see Psalm 29:3)
- El Hakkadosh - the Holy God (see Isaiah 5:16)

**QUESTION:** Please take the time to consider these names and answer the question - how can this name help me in my walk with God?



## Jehovah Reigns!

The name "Elohim" and all its compound names are often called the "formal" names of God. Kinda like you being called "mister" or "sir." Anytime God reveals Himself with the name Elohim, He is stating that He alone is the Almighty, most powerful One over the entire universe. It is critical that we understand that aspect of His character - the Almighty, Supreme and Most Holy God of the Universe.

However, God has also revealed to us a softer, more personal side. Where the name "Elohim" is the formal title God uses, the name "Yahweh" (or Jehovah) is His "personal" name. YHWH (Yahweh or Jehovah) meant everything to the Israelites. Think about it this way, all that the name "Jesus" means to the born-again believer today, "Jehovah" meant to Israel - and more. When transcribing Scripture, the Scribes would throw away the quill and then bathe after every instance of writing the name YHWH.

"Jehovah" was the name God used when He wanted to emphasize his love and care for His people. When God revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He was always Elohim. However, when He revealed Himself to Moses, He came as Jehovah (see Exodus 6:1-3). The name "Jehovah" literally means, the God who cares.

Just as Elohim has compound names, so does Jehovah. From each of those names we get yet another glimpse into who God is.

## God is Jehovah-Jireh

One of those compound names is "Jehovah-Jireh" (pronounced Jie-rah) which means, the God who cares will see to it - or, The Lord will provide!

**QUESTION:** Read Genesis 22:13-14. What can you learn about God from this name as it relates to you personally? (NOTE: "he will provide" is too vague of an answer, try to be more specific.

**QUESTION:** Please give a couple of examples where God has been Jehovah-Jireh to you.

The first time this name appears, we are given a very special glimpse into who God is. Because God is El Roi (the God who sees), He is fully aware of all your needs. As Jehovah Jireh, He is the one who will provide for those needs!

Elohim (the almighty, supreme God of the universe) instructed Abraham to take his only son, Isaac, whom he loved, and go sacrifice him as a burnt offering (read Genesis 22:1-2). Because Abraham understood who God is, he acted in obedience to, and reverential fear of Elohim (see Genesis 22:3-10). Scripture tells us that because Abraham knew God as Elohim, he also knew that God was powerful enough to raise his son back from the dead (see Hebrews 11:17-19), which is why he knew that Elohim would resolve the situation (see Genesis 22:8).

Just when Isaac was in imminent danger of death, Jehovah-Jireh stepped in to deliver him. Think about it: the knife was lifted up and Isaac is just a hairs-breath away from certain execution. At that very moment, Jehovah (the God who cares) stops him and spares Isaac's life. When the need was at its most urgent, God provided exactly what was needed.

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Paul refers to Jehovah-Jireh in Romans 5:6 when he says, "*at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*" We also read, "*when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law*" (Galatians 4:4). Abraham recognized the name Jehovah-Jireh as describing God's goodness, Mercy and Grace. God provided exactly what Abraham needed at the exact time he needed it.

Read Matthew 6:8, 32. God knows your needs and has a provision already in place. Consider this: God provided Abraham with a ram - the exact thing he needed to take Isaac's place. Jehovah-Jireh is the God who not only sees your every need, but He is the One who will provide exactly what will meet that need at the exact moment you need it.

Read Jeremiah 29:11 and compare it with Romans 8:28. Remember, not only is God Jehovah-Jireh (the God who cares about you and sees your need with a plan to provide), He is also - at that exact same moment - Elohim (the almighty, supreme God) who has the power to make it all happen!

**QUESTION:** Read Matthew 6:34-35; Genesis 50:19-21; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Philippians 4:19 and Psalm 37:25. Understanding that God is Jehovah-Jireh, what impact should that have upon your daily life?

God is Jehovah-Jireh just as much for you and I today as He was for Abraham. There are other compound names of Jehovah that you should take the time to look into as well, such as:

- Jehovah-Tsidkenu (pronounced Sid-Kay-new) - the God who cares is our Righteousness (see Jeremiah 23:1-6)
- Jehovah-Mccadesshem - the God who cares is our Sanctifier (see Exodus 31:13)
- Jehovah-Rohi - the God who cares is our Shepherd (see Psalm 23:1)
- Jehovah-Shammah - the God who cares is present (see Ezekiel 48:35)
- Jehovah-Rapha - the God who cares is our Healer (see Exodus 15:26)
- Jehovah-Shalom - the God who cares is our Peace (see Judges 6:24)

This represents just a few of His names. Can you begin to see how knowing the names of God not only increases our understanding of who God is, but can have a deep impact on how we live for Him?

## **A Tribute to God's Attributes**

Are we seriously going to look into the attributes of God here? Yes, and no. Yes, we are going to take a quick glance at some of the attributes of God. No, we are not going to go into a doctrinal dissertation here - how boring would that be!

Keep in mind that our view and understanding of God has a direct impact on the things we think, say and do every day. To be a pure and godly man in every aspect of my life, it would be beneficial to review at least a couple of these attributes - just as a refresher.

So what is an attribute anyway? As a simple definition, let's consider an attribute to be a quality ascribed to something (or someone) to help you understand that object (or person). For example, if I said, "the color of that paint is blue," color would be an attribute of the paint. If I told you that my house was large, size would be an attribute of the house. Or if I were to tell you that my wife is smart, intelligence would be an attribute of my wife.

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Read Jeremiah 9:24. The phrase "*understand and know*" refers to giving total attention to something so as to gain a deeper insight and comprehension about it. Then, as you know more about it, it leads you to act or behave in a different way, based upon your newfound understanding.

When we understand and know God, that knowledge is going to affect how we think about Him. This in turn will affect how we live for Him. Daniel said, "*The people who know their God will firmly resist (the enemy)*" (Daniel 11:32, addition mine).

The question we as men need to take away from this study is this: how well do I know God? One of the reasons we struggle so much with giving in to temptation is that we no longer have a proper view of God. With a proper understanding of who God is, we will begin to "*fear the Lord our God and serve him only*" (Deuteronomy 6:13).

One very important aspect of God's attributes that we should never forget is that each attribute is not just a component part of God. In other words, God isn't partly holy, partly eternal, partly omniscient, etc. Each attribute describes God's total being. So, for example, God is completely and totally Love. Love isn't just a part of God's nature, He is 100% love. At the same exact moment, He is 100% holy, and 100% omnipotent etc.

## **God is Infinite**

Read 1 Kings 8:27; Job 11:7-9 and Romans 11:33. In saying that God is "infinite," we mean that He is not limited by time or space - He is quite literally without limits.

Think about this: since every attribute of God is interconnected and intertwined, every other attribute is also infinite - without limits. Wow! God's love for you is infinite - without limits! God's holiness is infinite - without limits! God's goodness, His faithfulness, His omnipotence etc. are all without limits!

**QUESTION:** How does knowing that God is infinite help you in your daily walk with Him?

## **God is Eternal**

Read Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:1-2; Job 36:26; Psalm 102:25-27 and Isaiah 40:28. What is the difference between being infinite and being eternal? Well, where "infinite" is without limits, "eternal" is without a beginning or end.

By saying that God is eternal, we see that God's very nature (all that God is) is free from all limits of time. God lives in eternity. I know, blows your mind doesn't it? Eternity isn't just "extended time," it's existence above and apart from time (see Revelation 1:8). Time has no control over God - in fact, He created time.

Again, think about this: since every attribute of God is interconnected and intertwined, every other attribute of His is also eternal. That means God's love has no beginning and it has no end. God's holiness has no beginning or end. And so on - how cool is that!

**QUESTION:** How does knowing that God is eternal help you in your daily walk with Him?



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## God is Immutable

The word "immutable" simply means unchangeable, or incapable of changing. In Malachi 3:6 God says "*I the LORD do not change.*" Think of the power in those six words! The God who cares about you never changes. That means His love for you and His care over you will never change - ever!

James 1:17 says that God "*does not change like shifting shadows.*" Read Psalm 102:27; 33:11 and Hebrews 13:8. We live a life of change. I recently looked through a family photo album - wow, have we ever changed! Some family members no longer have what they used to, and some of us have a lot more of some things than we did just a few years ago. For us, change is inevitable. Some changes are welcome, some are not.

Read 1 Samuel 15:29. What a great comfort to know that God never changes. I personally think that one of the greatest truths I find encouraging is that God never changes His mind!

Now think about what you just read in 1 Samuel. Think about the story behind that verse. Saul had become king of Israel. As king, he was to lead Israel into battle with the Amalekites. God instructed Saul to completely destroy every living creature (man, woman, child and animal - 1 Samuel 15:2-3). Instead, Saul decides to only partially obey God's instructions. He allows the king to live and he kept the best of the cattle for himself (1 Samuel 15:7-9). Bottom line: Saul didn't take God's word seriously.

The result: God takes Saul's kingdom away from him (1 Samuel 15:22-16). Saul desperately pleads with Samuel - hoping God would change His mind and restore the kingdom to him. Instead, Samuel utters the words of verse 29. God is not a man, that He should change His mind.

Again, remember that every attribute of God is interconnected and intertwined. This means that every other attribute is also unchangeable. Therefore, God's love will never change. God's holiness, His goodness, His faithfulness etc. will never, ever change!

**QUESTION:** How does knowing that God is unchangeable help you in your daily walk with Him?

## God is Omniscient

Read Romans 11:33; 1 Kings 8:39; Job 11:7-8; 37:16; Matthew 6:8; 10:29; Psalm 139:1-4, 15-16 and Hebrews 4:23. God is all knowing. He has infinite intelligence. There is absolutely nothing God does not know. He is always fully aware of everything, all at the exact same moment. He never has to try to recall something, He never forgets, He never learns anything new.

Once again let me remind you that every attribute of God is interconnected and intertwined. This means that even though He knows everything there is to know about me - every sin I have ever committed and every sin I ever will do - He still loves me unchangeably, eternally, and without limits (just as an example). It also means I can never hide anything from Him. Read Daniel 2:22; Jeremiah 29:11; 17:10; Proverbs 15:3; 2 Kings 19:27; Job 31:4 and Ezekiel 11:5!

**QUESTION:** How does knowing that God is all-knowing help you in your daily walk with Him?

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These are only a few of God's attributes. I'd like to challenge you to do an in-depth study of each of them - keeping in mind that they are all and always interconnected. Then ask yourself the same question I've been asking you: how does knowing that God is \_\_\_\_\_ help me in my daily walk with Him?