

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE What is God Like?

SERIES

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KEY SCRIPTURE Psalm 145:3-9

SYNOPSIS Our perception of God is very important. Let's get a better picture of who he is.

HIGHLIGHTS Close with congregational song: God is Great



☞ What is God Like?

A. W. Tozer... What is God like? Christianity at any given time is strong or weak depending upon her concept of God. The basic trouble with the church today is her unworthy conception of God. What I believe about God is the most important thing about me.

☞ Psalms 145:3-9

3 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. 4 One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. 5 They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works.

☞ 6 They will tell of the power of your awesome works, and I will proclaim your great deeds. 7 They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. 8 The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. 9 The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

☞ God is Great

"Kellogg's Frosted Flakes, they're greeaaat!"

"It was a great big hairy spider!"

☞ v. 3 There is nothing and no one greater than God. **He is the best. He is over and above all.**

Worthy of praise = we can celebrate and boast about our God. We are supposed to be humble and meek, but when it comes to talking about God, boasting is acceptable and even expected.

Greatness no one can fathom = his mighty acts and abilities cannot be fully understood. He is beyond our ability to thoroughly investigate. From the Bible we get glimpse of God, but none of us can fully comprehend him.

v. 5 Glorious splendor of your majesty = there is a weighty magnificence to his excellence and beauty. His glory and honor is absolutely incredible!

Your wonderful works = this one is interesting because in the depth of meaning, it primarily refers to something spoken. His word and his works go hand in hand. In the beginning, God spoke the universe into existence. God said, "let there be light; and there was light." That's how great God ☞ really is... he just speaks and things happen! **He's beyond our comprehension; he holds the universe in his hand.**

J. B. Phillips... God is the great reality. His resources are available and endless. His promises are real and glorious, beyond our wildest dreams.

You might want to ask yourself whether you have a big God or a little God. A little girl listened attentively as her father read the family devotions. She seemed awed by her parents' talk of God's limitless power and mercy. "Daddy," she asked, placing her little hands on his knees, "how big is



God." Her father thought for a moment and answered, "Honey, he is always just a little bigger than you need."

☞ God is Mighty

v. 4 Mighty acts = His strength is beyond our imagination.

☞ v. 6 Power = in theology, we say God is omnipotent. **He is all-powerful; he is invincible; he is unstoppable; he is supreme.** In exerting his power, God loses nothing. There is no effort expended and no sweat involved because God is power.

Awesome works and great deeds = What he does is so magnificent and amazing that it is actually astonishing and fearful. He deserves the highest respect. Think about creation; the flood; the exodus; battle of Jericho; Gideon's army; David and Goliath; the resurrection. Those are astonishing accomplishments and yet it was no effort at all for God.

Comic book characters are popular today... Superman, Wonder Woman, Thor, the Hulk are considered amongst the most powerful beings in the universe. Yet, they struggle to overcome some enemies; they grimace when they exert themselves; they can be weakened and defeated at times, but ☞ not so with God. **There is no weakening, no strain, and he is never defeated.**

For a believer, this is a comforting thought... "There is nothing that God cannot handle. He's got my situation under control." But for some, it might seem frightening... "if God is so mighty and powerful, how can I get close to him without being crushed?"

Isaac Rankin says that just outside his window is a large wire which carries a heavy current of electricity for light and power. It is carefully insulated at every pole and is out of common reach. "However," he says, "if I could lean out far enough to grasp it, death would be as swift as a lightning stroke. Yet the doves in my neighborhood suffer no harm when they perch on it. They fly from my windowsill, where I sometimes feed them, and preen in safety and contentment on the cables. The secret is that when they contact that wire, they touch nothing else. My danger would be that should I attempt to reach out and do so, the walls of my house would act as a ground, and the current would turn my body into a channel through which the electricity would flow in damaging power. Because they rest wholly upon the wire, they are unharmed. So God would have us seek our safety in complete surrender to His power and love. It is when we reach one hand to Him while still holding fast to some forbidden thing with the other that we are in danger."

☞ God is Compassionate

v. 8 Gracious and compassionate = He is so filled with love, mercy, and tender affection for you that he bends over and stoops down to show his kindness.

Slow to anger = patient; he never loses his temper. He is very slow to show displeasure. Many people draw their image of God from father figures in their life and many of those are poor examples of Father God. Some of you have seen a very angry father who was quick to fly off the handle and blow up at you. That is not how God is. He is slowww to anger.



Rich in love = he abounds in love, kindness, mercy, and faithfulness. It oozes out of him. God is love. He can't help but show love and kindness to people because that's simply who he is.

v. 9 Compassion on all = He is filled with affection for everyone. The word here is related to the "womb." He nourishes us, protects us, develops us and has a loving connection to us like a mother and child.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen... God does not love us because we are valuable. We are valuable because God loves us.

☞ There is nothing you can do to make God love you more! There is nothing you can do to make God love you less! His love is unconditional, impartial, everlasting, infinite, perfect! God is love!

We call it mercy--it is God's forgiving love.

We call it providence--it is God's caring love.

We call it kindness--it is God's understanding love.

We call it Christ's passion and death--it is God's proven love.

We call it happiness--it is God's encouraging love.

We call it the will of God--it is God's unerring love.

We call it heaven--it is God's rewarding love.

We call it eternity--it is God's unending love.

☞ God is Good

☞ v. 7 Abundant goodness = more than enough; **his goodness is not just sometimes and not just a little. It is all the time** and it is a lot, a lot.

Righteousness = God is always right, fair, truthful and trustworthy.

v. 9 Good to all = pleasant; excellent; rich; kind to everyone.

Psalms 119:68

You are good, and what you do is good

Erwin W. Lutzer... Think of how good God is! He gives us the physical, mental, and spiritual ability to work in his kingdom, and then he rewards us for doing it!

A.W. Tozer... God is kindhearted, gracious, good-natured and benevolent in intention. God is infinitely good. He is never partway anything. Why did Christ die for us? Because God is good. Why are we forgiven? Because God is good. Why does God answer prayer? Because God is good. Let's put away all doubts and trust him.

God is good... all the time...

Psalms 31:19-20



19 How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you. 20 In the shelter of your presence you hide them from the intrigues of men; in your dwelling you keep them safe from accusing tongues.

God is always good, therefore...

v. 7 We celebrate = gush forth; bubble up. When we think about how great and mighty,  compassionate and good God is, it will cause **our hearts to bubble up and overflow with praise and thanksgiving to him.**

Joyfully sing = to give a ringing cry; rejoice. As we think about God it results in overwhelming joy that has to be expressed. This is an expression of joy which demands loud singing and shouting. (*Like cheering on your team.*) You don't have to be quiet and reserved at OBC. You can express your joy and gratitude to the Lord.

 What is God like? **He is great and mighty; He is compassionate and good.**

--James S. Hewett... At first I saw God as my observer, my judge, keeping track of the things I did wrong, so as to know whether I merited heaven or hell when I die. He was out there sort of like the president. I recognized His picture when I saw it, but I didn't really know Him.

But later on when I recognized this Higher Power, It seemed as though life was rather like a bike ride, but it was a tandem bike, and I noticed that God was in the back helping me pedal.

I don't know just when it was that he suggested we change places, but life has not been the same since--life with my Higher Power, that is. God makes life exciting!

But when He took the lead, it was all I could do to hang on! He knew delightful paths, up mountains and through rocky places--and at breakneck speeds. Even though it looked like madness, he said, "Pedal!"

I worried and was anxious and asked, "Where are you taking me?" He laughed and didn't answer, and I started to learn trust.

I forgot my boring life and entered into adventure. When I'd say, "I'm scared," He'd lean back and touch my hand.

He took me to people with gifts that I needed, gifts of healing, acceptance, and joy. They gave me their gifts to take on my journey, our journey, God's and mine.

And we were off again. He said, "Give the gifts away; they're extra baggage, too much weight." So I did, to the people we met, and I found that in giving I received, and our burden became light.

At first I did not trust Him in control of my life. I thought He'd wreck it. But He knows bike secrets--knows how to make it lean to take sharp corners, dodge large rocks, and speed through scary passages.

And I am learning to shut up and pedal in the strangest places. I'm beginning to enjoy the view and the cool breeze on my face with my delightful constant Companion.

And when I'm sure I just can't do any more, He just smiles and says, "Pedal!"

God is Great; God is Mighty; God is Compassionate; God is Good

Song: God is Great