

OK... Are you ready for this tour? (pause) If you are a part of a home team and have been able to watch The Truth Project video series you know that Dr. Del Tackett who teaches in the video calls these lessons “tours”. Well today I’m going to be your “tour guide” for the most important tour of all.

Who is God?

How well do you know God? What do you know about his being, his nature, his character or his attributes. When I first learned this was the message I was going to deliver I thought to myself there is NO WAY I can do this in just one message. You could put together an incredibly long sermon series on just this one topic.

Who is God? His being, his nature, his character and his attributes.

Who is God is not something I can answer for you in a 25-30 minute sermon. It is something you discover throughout your life.

Do you know what it means to be a Theologian? The word “Theology” as defined by the American Heritage Dictionary is simply “the study of the nature of God and religious truth;”. The simple fact that you are even here today listening to this message says that to some degree you are a Theologian. You are here to learn about the nature of God.

I want to accomplish three things you today.

1. To begin understand some of the attributes of God.
2. To understand the benefits of knowing God and the results of not knowing or trusting God.
3. How to improve your relationship with God by removing the filters that exist between you and God. What are filters? Ultimately they are the things that keep you from understanding the answer to the question... Who is God?

Let’s look at just a few of the attributes of God. Remember this is just a sampling.

## **#1. God is Sovereign**

### **Psalm 115:3**

3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

### **Deuteronomy 4:39**

"Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is **God** in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

In other words, God is the ONLY ONE in charge. There is nobody above him. He does not report to anyone and no one can tell God what to do. There is no one like him.

## **#2. God is Holy**

### **Psalm 145:17**

17 the Lord is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.

### **1 John 1:5**

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

This means God is 100% pure and perfect; without sin.

### **#3 God is Truth**

#### **Psalm 33:4**

<sup>4</sup> For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.

#### **Deuteronomy 32:4**

<sup>4</sup> He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

Since God cannot lie we know that he is Truth and that all Truth comes from God.

When I was about 18 my grandmother was giving me a tour of a new building her church had just built. This was the same church I grew up in as a child. I'll never forget one thing she said to me. She said "Chad you know what is amazing. Every word in the Bible is true." That is a profound statement. And she said it with such confidence. At the time it was a shocking statement. I thought to myself... Uh... have you actually read that thing. You know there are stories in there about seas parting, people walking on water, people being brought back to life after death.

What is obvious now is that YES she had read the Bible because she knew that God is Truth and what comes from God is true.

### **#4 God is Love**

#### **1 John 4:7-8**

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

#### **Romans 5:8**

<sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### **#5 God is Eternal**

#### **Psalm 90:2**

<sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

### **#6 God is Omnipresent**

### **Jeremiah 23:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> "Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away? <sup>24</sup> 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 declares that he fills the heaven and earth. He is not a part of it but he is present in every place. So kids when you disobey your parents. GOD IS THERE! If we just took a moment just before we are about to do something and just thought to ourselves "GOD IS HERE". Do you really think we would still do a lot of the things we do?

I don't know about you but I am going to have A LOT to answer for when my times. I'm gonna' be like... "Oh... you saw that!"

### **#7 God is Wrath is just**

#### **Romans 1:18-19**

<sup>18</sup>The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup>since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup>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.

Sometime people don't want to talk about the wrath of God. It just doesn't seem fair. That's man's view not God's view. God's view is always just. We confirmed earlier that God is Holy. That means God does not tolerate sin and because of our sin we cannot be with him.

There are consequences for our actions. When a child disobeys a parent or a teacher there is a consequence for their actions. The same holds true with us. When we sin against God there is a consequence for our actions.

So let me ask you this? Was it fair that God had to sacrifice his one and only son to pay for our sins? No of course not... but it was just.

Those are just seven attributes of God. God is Sovereign, God is Holy, God is Truth, God is Love, God is Eternal, God is Omnipresent, and God's Wrath is just. This is only the beginning. I haven't even began to scratch the surface of "Who is God?". His being, his nature, his character and his attributes but I have given you some basic foundational Truth's about God that you can build from.

So why do we need to be "theologians" studying the nature of God? Why do we need to understand God? Are there any benefits to knowing God? And what happens when we don't know or trust God.

The Apostle Paul wrote in a letter to the Colossians.

Colossians 2:2-3

<sup>2</sup>My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, <sup>3</sup>in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

I don't know about you but that sounds pretty good. To know God in which whom you can find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

One of the most important benefits of a relationship with God is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23 talks about the fruit of the spirit. In fact you could change the word fruit to nature and learn more about the attributes of God.

22 But the fruit (nature) of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

I know we all like those benefits.

Throughout Psalms David speaks of many benefits in trusting and knowing God.

#### **Psalm 34:8**

<sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

God blesses those who seek him.

#### **Psalm 37:5-6**

<sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

<sup>6</sup> He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

God's light will shine upon your goodness.

#### **Psalm 37:39-40**

<sup>39</sup> The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble.

<sup>40</sup> The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him.

God will there in times of trouble and help deliver us.

David also talks about the results of not trusting and knowing God.

#### **Psalm 32:10**

<sup>10</sup> Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

#### **Psalm 55:23**

<sup>23</sup> But you, O God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of corruption; bloodthirsty and deceitful men will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you.

There are so many benefits of having a relationship with God. On the other side of the coin there are some not so good results when we don't know or trust God.

So we have looking into some of the basic attributes of God and we know there are benefits to knowing and trusting God. How important is it for us to understand and know God?

The Apostle Paul explained his perspective of the importance of his relationship with God.

Philippians 3: 8-10

<sup>8</sup>What is more, **I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish,** that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. <sup>10</sup>**I want to know Christ** and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

Paul states that he has lost all things and they he considers them rubbish compared to the greatness of know Christ Jesus. How does Paul's perspective compare to yours?

God himself has a perspective on this... Look at Jeremiah 9:23-24

Thus says the LORD; "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the might man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, **that he understands and knows me...**" (ESV)

Look at this verse... it says "let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the might man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches" When we boast about our wisdom, our strength and our riches what are we really boasting about.

We are boasting about ourselves! When we are consumed with thinking about ourselves and how great and wonderful we are it inhibits our ability to understand and know God. Ultimately we lose sight of what God's real plan is for us.

The world says that when we do something great we should say "Look at me! Look at me!" but God says if you are going to boast... boast that you understand and know him.

This is one of the biggest struggles for all believers... without even realizing it we can become so consumed with ourselves and how the world views us... that we lose sight of how God views us.

### **1 Samuel 16:7**

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

We are constantly seeking approval from man and not from God.

Do we have the right hair style? Do we have the right clothes? Do we drive the right kind of car? Do we have the right kind of home? What is my social status?

It's not with just with adults... kids struggle with the same issues... Am I cool? Do I have right friends? Do I have right clothes? The right skateboard? The right video game system? The list goes on and on.

And when we compare ourselves to the values of man it begins to hinder our ability to understand and know God.

Do not be caught up in man's opinion of you. God is looking at your heart. We can't be consumed by stuff in this world.

The other night we were talking in our small group about being consumed with the things or stuff of this world. One of them said. You never see a trailer hooked up to a hearse. In other words, when it's your time to go you don't get to take any of that stuff with you anyway.

### **Matthew 6:19-21**

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

I have to admit one of my treasures here on this earth is football. I enjoy football, I especially enjoy college football and more specifically Oklahoma football. Now I know if you are a Texas fan that's probably not what you wanted to hear today. Just know I am still searching the Bible to see if there is any hope for you guys.

And feel bad for everyone here today because Oklahoma a bye week this weekend so they were not playing. You see if Oklahoma were playing this weekend this sermon would probably been a lot shorter.

Just a few short years ago I would have said that I **LOVED** Oklahoma Football. I would be mentally destroyed for days if we lost a game and even longer if it was a BIG game. But as my relationship with Christ grew that love turned into simple enjoyment. You see my reaction to the game was interfering with my relationship with God. For me it was a "filter" between me and God. This was a worldly event taking the place of God. This "filter" was inhibiting my understanding and relationship with God.

For most of us there are a lot of "filters" that inhibit our understanding and relationship with God.

Remember 1 John 1:5

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

I want to take a moment to give you a visual reference of what I am talking about filters in our lives. We all have our own filters that interfere with our relationship with God. The more filters we have the harder it is to see the light of God.

I'm going to have Gene turn off the lights and turn on the spotlight. If you are not familiar with how a spotlight works, let me explain. In the back of the spotlight is an EXTREMELY bright light. We are going to say that that light represents God. The Bible says that God is light; in him there is no darkness. If there is no darkness in God why isn't the light shining on me?

The reason is because right now there are 6 colored "filters" in front of that light.

There is a RED, GREEN, BLUE, PURPLE, YELLOW and PINK colored filters.

Let's say each of those colored filters represents a filter in your life. In other words... something worldly that consumes your and interferes with your understanding and relationship with God. God light has not diminished I have simply but other things in my life that have block my ability to have a better understanding and relationship with him.

I going to give some examples of some common filters in our lives but your filters could be different.

The RED filter – APPEARANCE.

The GREEN filter – WEALTH.

The BLUE filter – SOCIAL STATUS.

The PURPLE filter – INABILITY TO FORGIVE OTHERS

The YELLOW filter - AN ADDITION – it could be any kind of addition.

The PINK filter – A BOASTFUL ATTITUDE – look at how great I am.

Look how bright God is in our life now that we have removed our filters. Once we begin to remove those filters we can improve our relationship with God. We know can see more clearly God's plan for us.

What are the filters in your life?

You can turn on the lights.

Before you can begin to remove those filters and walk with God you must first establish your relationship with his son Jesus Christ. You can do that now by confessing your faith in him.

**John 5:24**

<sup>24</sup>"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

Are you ready to begin your relationship with Christ?

