

Bible workbook

Year 10

Term 4

Attribute of God: God is...	Page	Number of weeks	Number of pages
God is Protector	2	3	7
God is Truth	9	3	7
God is Lord & King	16	3	12

Total: 27

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<https://www.aop.com/curriculum/shop-lifepac?filter=GL12> (free download samples)

Other sources:

The gift of discernment pages 2-4:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/understanding-the-spiritual-gift-of-discernment.html>

The reason for Christmas pages 23 – 27:

Russell Grigg, Creation.com

<https://reasonsforhopejesus.com/wise-men-still-follow-his-star/>

<https://baptistbulletin.org/the-baptist-bulletin-magazine/dec-06-issue/were-the-wise-men-astrologists/>



God is Protector

The gift of Discernment



God has made the gift of discernment available to all Christians. This is a gift that will help us know what is right for a Christian, and what is wrong. Using the gift of discernment protects us from going on the wrong path.

When looking at the world, people take in information from everywhere, process it, and then choose what to do with it. Some people seem to do nothing with what they see and learn. Others seem to take in their surroundings and be one step ahead of it; they make smart decisions, have an almost supernatural ability to determine who is trustworthy, or seem to always have the perfect advice for a situation. They seem to have unique wisdom.

This gift is called discernment, and it is a kind of wisdom that comes from insight as much as from learned experience and knowledge. In the Christian faith, it comes from the Holy Spirit, and is a way of having insight in determining the true nature of a situation, person, or thing.

People with the spiritual gift of discernment have it, though wisdom and discernment can be bestowed to those who ask for it as well. Discernment is a tool God gives believers as they walk through life, though it must be understood and the believer must follow the Lord's leading to be useful.

What Is Discernment?

In the simplest terms, discernment is wisdom. The dictionary defines discernment as, "the quality of being able to grasp and comprehend what is obscure; skill in discerning; an act of perceiving or discerning something." In the Christian faith, it is a similar concept, but it is bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and many denominations believe it can allow someone to know whether a demonic or heavenly influence is over a person, place, or event. It is also a gift that can be requested, used, or ignored.

One of the harder elements of defining discernment, and finding information about it in the Bible, is that discernment is not always the word used in any given English translation. Often the version will use another word. Synonyms include wisdom, understanding, discretion, prudence, testing, and sense. Any time a reader sees these words, that is a signal the subject is discernment.

Where Does the Bible Talk about Discernment?

There are several general categories under which the verses about discernment can fall. Whenever good law or lawmaking is the subject, discernment is involved. Good behavior and decision making is another general category. It is also one of the subjects of the poetic books Psalms and Proverbs.

In the New Testament, there are many verses about the difference between worldly wisdom and true discernment, warning Christians to lean on the Spirit for guidance rather than what the world says is right and wrong. The apostle Paul focuses on it when speaking to fellow

Christians, and emphasizes it when addressing his peers or disciples, such as Timothy and Titus.

Here are a list of verses about discernment. They are all from the English Standard Translation, so the word discernment may not appear, but one of its synonyms will:

- Proverbs 8:5 - "O simple ones, learn prudence; O fools, learn sense."
- Deuteronomy 4:6 - "Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'"
- 1 Samuel 25:33 - "Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from working salvation with my own hand!"
- Job 12:20 - "He deprives of speech those who are trusted and takes away the discernment of the elders."
- Philippians 1:9-10 - "And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ."
- Hebrews 5:14 - "But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

Discernment in the Life of Solomon

One of the most famous stories in the Bible is about discernment. After King David died, his son Solomon was anointed and ascended to the throne. Overwhelmed with the responsibility, when God offered him anything in the world, his request was simple, "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil" (1 Kings 3:9a).

God granted him this wisdom, and much more. He became famous for his wisdom, and solving problems and addressing disputes became a part of his job. When two women came to him claiming to be the mother of one baby, it seemed to be a difficult dilemma. Both had sons, but one child died. Without modern genetic testing, how would he determine who was the child's rightful mother? At first, it seemed like he suggested something unthinkable, to cut the child in half. In that instance, the women revealed their inner character:

"Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, 'Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death.' But the other said, 'He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him'" (1 Kings 3:26).

God gave Solomon the understanding of human nature to discern which woman had love in her heart, which had malice, and how to extract the truth. The baby was given back to his mother. The full account is in 1 Kings 3:16-28.

How Can We Be More Discerning?

True discernment starts with prayer. Just like Solomon requested wisdom, the believer should ask the Spirit for guidance and discernment. God smiles on those who ask for it. "The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God" (Psalm 14:2).

It is also a willingness to learn from those who are older and wiser. The book of Proverbs is structured as a father teaching his son what true wisdom looks like. Consulting God in prayer, asking wise believers for their input, and reading the Scripture helps cultivate a spirit of discernment. Applying this wisdom is where the life of a believer makes the difference. Despite all the knowledge available to mankind, Solomon did not apply it when making marriages, and eventually he allowed each bride to worship any god they wished, leading to the spiritual decay of the entire nation of Israel.

If a Christian applies spiritual wisdom, and is listening to the Holy Spirit, that person will exhibit the characteristics of someone wise and Christ-like. Since Jesus is the model for living life, He showed discernment. He also taught on the subject. He emphasized not seeking the wisdom of the world, which clouds true discernment.

The wise Pharisees and Sadducees - the religious leaders of the day - were unable to identify Jesus Christ as the Messiah because they were too wrapped up in their own knowledge. However, those the culture would have viewed as uneducated, simple, or foolish saw the truth. Jesus even said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children." (Matthew 11:25b)

The more wisdom and discernment that a Christian exercises, the stronger his or her faith, and the better that person will be able determine what is right, good, and God's will, manifesting in love for God and others just like Jesus had.

A Prayer for Discernment

Dear Father God,

Thank you for wisdom from Your Word and guidance from Your Spirit. Thank you for leading us and making Your wisdom available to us. Lord, I know that without You, I will make foolish, selfish, sinful choices that do not bring You glory or expand Your kingdom. Please grant me discernment. Help me to understand Your will and Your way in all circumstances. Give me conviction to do what is right, peace to know it is Your leading, and the insight to see when I am trying to discern in my own power rather than Yours. Please grant me wisdom to walk through life safely and in a manner that glorifies You. Show me the times of trial and when I am being tempted, so I can lean on You. I want to live a life that is Spirit-led and Spirit-filled. Father, teach Your people to follow the path set before us, to run the race with endurance, and to finish well. Make us discerning like Jesus.

In Your Son's name I pray, Amen.

Prayer

Vocabulary

adoration - To worship and honor with reverent admiration.

intercession - Prayer, petition in favor of another person.

atonement - Reconciling of God and man by the death of Christ.

omniscient - Knowing everything; having complete or infinite knowledge.

petition - An earnest request.

ritual - A set way of doing something; ceremonial act.

reconciliation - Being restored to friendship, harmony, or communication.

sovereignty - Supreme power or authority.

supplication - A humble and earnest request or prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Read Matthew 6:9–13.

Prayer is our most important means of communication with God. The Lord Jesus taught His disciples how to communicate with the Father. He taught by word and by example. Prayer is desired by the heavenly Father and is essential in the Christian's life.

The Lord's Prayer is our model prayer. It was given to us twice in the New Testament. Versions of the prayer are found in Matthew 6:9–13 and in Luke 11:2–4.

Matthew's version is the most commonly known. The prayer's purpose is to serve as both a lesson and a guide. Through the prayer Jesus is trying to teach us how we are to view the Father, what kinds of things we should pray for, and what our attitude should be in prayer.

The prayer can be divided into an introduction, seven petitions, and a conclusion.

The introduction, "...Our Father which art in heaven..." is designed to direct our thought toward our Father and His divine purposes in our lives. We can see from the invocation that our prayers will be directed toward a personal, objective, and living God. As believers in Christ, we belong to a family of which God is the Father.

The first petition, "...Hallowed be Thy name," refers back to the covenant I AM, which God used with Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:13 and 14). His name helps us to see that God is present to help in every possible circumstance or situation we could face. He is the "ever present" God. To lower God's name in any way is to reject His sovereignty.

The second petition, "Thy kingdom come..." refers to the universal recognition of the Lord as King. As a result of Christ's atonement, His spiritual kingdom has been brought within believers' hearts. This kingdom encompasses each individual believer on earth.

The third petition: In this we can experience in our own lives what Christ requested, "...They will be done..." by knowing God's Word. We should first learn about and respond positively to those things in the Bible that God has commanded us to do. Then we can expect God to guide us in those areas of our lives for which the Bible gives no specific directions.

The fourth petition, "...in earth, as it is in heaven..." is a continuation and extension of the third request. This petition reflects God's sovereignty and gives us the extent of His rule.

In the fifth petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," we are reminded to pray in faith believing that God will supply our needs. Because God loves us, He will continually care for our daily needs. In Matthew 6:28–34, we are instructed by Jesus to be more concerned about obtaining God's righteousness than with our physical needs.

The sixth petition, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors..." instructs us to pray for the forgiveness of our sins and to be forgiving toward others. First John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." At the same time, we cannot expect to receive answers to our prayers if we are not willing to forgive others. Psalm 66:18 tells us, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

The seventh petition, "and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil..." should help remind us how Christ overcame temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1–11).

It is translated in the Good News Bible as 'Do not bring us to hard testing, but keep us safe from the Evil One.' This is our prayer of protection against the evil one.

According to 1 Corinthians 10:13, we can have confidence that "...God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

The conclusion, "...For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen," reveals that Jesus acknowledged His Father's power and glory. All that is important and beautiful belongs to God.

The Lord's Prayer lays before us a perfect guide, teaching us how to pray more effectively. We should expect to see results from our prayers. James 5:16 states, "...The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." (NIV)

James 4:2 tells us, "...you have not, because you ask not." When we make our requests before God specific and personal, we can see definite answers. Prayer should also help us to grow in our friendship with the Lord so that we will become increasingly more comfortable in His presence.

The Lord's Prayer was never intended to become a ritual said in meaningless repetition. The Lord's Prayer is given as a "lesson plan" from which we can learn the essential elements of prayer. The Lord's Prayer is a clear illustration of all that prayer contains, the adoration of God as well as our supplications. The Lord's Prayer is both individual and universal (for all Christians) and suggests that men should continually pray.

Complete these statements.

- 1.1 The three parts of the Lord's Prayer are the a. _____ , seven b. _____ , and a c. _____ .
- 1.2 The Lord's Prayer can be found in a. _____ and b. _____ .
- 1.3 A humble and earnest request or prayer is called a _____ .
- 1.4 The reconciliation of God and man by the death of Christ is called _____ .
- 1.5 The purpose of the Lord's Prayer is to serve as a a. _____ and a b. _____ .
- 1.6 God's name in Exodus 3:13 is _____ .
- 1.7 The Lord's Prayer was not intended to become a _____ .
- 1.8 When our requests to God are a. _____ and b. _____ we can expect to see definite results.

The purpose of prayer.

Both the public and private prayers of the Old Testament saints reveal how important prayer was in the lives of God's people. Jesus gave us most of the teaching on prayer in the Gospels through instruction and example.

Prayer demonstrates faith from a person who trusts in God and who believes His Word. Read Hebrews 11:1; it presents the best description of faith found in the Bible. Our words in prayer commit us to God. We should receive our primary stimulus to pray from the Bible. The Holy Spirit enlightens those who read God's Word in faith. The Holy Spirit helps us to communicate our prayers to God.

We demonstrate an attitude of worship in prayer by giving thanks and praising God before we even ask for anything. The more we become aware of God's holiness, the more we recognize our own sinfulness. First John 1:9 illustrates how we can freely come to God in confession and ask for forgiveness. We can come to God with confidence because Jesus Christ is our great High Priest and Advocate before the Father. We should also express our adoration to God because of all that He is. He is worthy of our sincere praise because of all the good things He has done for us.

Our praise to God will lead us directly to thanksgiving for His goodness to us. We are told by Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:18), "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Jesus was successful in His dedicated action while on earth.

His need to get away from His disciples and the multitudes for personal renewal in prayer helped Him to know His Father's will. He taught us that response to God involves both the heart and the mind.

Request in prayer

Our prayers should be motivated by love and confidence in God. Without love our prayers are empty and meaningless; without prayer, love is unfulfilled. Our prayers should reflect compassion for the needs of others. We should pray for fellow believers as Paul did in Colossians 1:9–11.

God can deal with the simplest of our needs. We can have confidence that He will answer our prayers because we are His children. Our requests may not always be granted, but God will answer in the way that is best for us at that time.

Prayer is not for the purpose of informing God of things He does not know. God is omniscient and knows about our needs even before we ask Him. He has chosen to use the prayers of righteous men to accomplish many of His purposes.

Because Christians sometimes place hindrances in their lives that prevent God from working as He desires, He cannot grant every request in prayer. If we fail to ask for God's forgiveness from sin, we cannot expect Him to answer our prayers. Remembering Christ's words in the garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39), "...Not as I will, but as You will," we should never try to compel God to act in a certain way that pleases us.

Prayer has power in everything that is within God's will. God will supply the needs of life for the one who prays. These needs may be both spiritual (affecting the mind and soul) and physical (affecting the body and the individual's surroundings).

Complete these statements.

1.9 We should never try to _____ God to act in a certain way.

1.10 Because God is _____, He knows about our needs even before we ask Him.

1.11 Before making a request to God, we should a. _____ our sin and ask for b. _____.

1.12 The best description of faith found in the Bible is in _____.

Complete this list.

1.13 Name five different things that prayer should include.

God is Truth

God is Just



Justice is behavior or treatment that is based on what is right and fair. Just behavior acts according to what is right. Just treatment of another person means to treat them in a manner that is fair.

The Bible measures right and wrong by God's standard. God created the world and owns and rules it (Psalm 89:11), so what He calls just is the definition of justice. He never changes (Heb. 13:8), so the standard He set at the foundation of the world is unchanged and will remain unchangeable.

The Lord loves justice (Psalm 33:5). All His ways are just and true (Revelation 15:3). Psalm 89:14 tells us that righteousness and justice are the very foundation of His throne.

A just man judges fairly, obeys God's laws, and provides food and clothing for those in need.

Read Romans 3:21-28.

The justice of God is both an absolute and a relative attribute of God's character. Justice is a necessary outflow from the holiness of God and is His separateness from evil. God's justice is a holy justice (Psalms 89:14). The Word of God tells us that (Psalms 145:17), "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." God governs His entire creation through the divine administration of perfect justice. God is the governor and ruler of the world. In this section you will learn the meaning of God's justice administered in His creation and in His redemptive plan for mankind.

Vocabulary

administration - Management of governmental affairs.

distributive - Giving a proper share.

judicial - Having to do with the functions of judges, laws, and courts.

mercy - Compassion.

righteous - A position given to the Christian that makes him acceptable to God.

sacrificial - Given as an offering, especially to God.

salvation - Deliverance; freedom.

substitute - To take another's place.

Justice is an attribute of God's nature

Genesis 18:25 asks "...Will not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?" Again, we read in Psalm 11:7: "For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice; the upright will see his face."

From these two Old Testament Scriptures, we can begin to understand that justice, as an attribute of God, is found throughout the Scriptures.

Biblical use of the word: Meaning of justice

The term justice is used in a general sense to mean what is right. Justice means not only to respect one's rights of life, property, and reputation; but it also carries a much broader meaning of the proper recognition of man's duty toward God. In man's relationship with others, justice has several aspects. Showing love is an obligation of justice. In Romans 13:8 we read "...for he that loves another has fulfilled the law."

Justice also carries the responsibility of public administration. Our courts would illustrate this aspect in due process of law. Where just laws are carried out in our courts, we can see the equal distribution of justice. The judicial function of any government must remain within its limits and use judicial powers to protect life, property, reputation, and social order.

Aspects of justice

Justice in our society is an extension of divine justice. In Romans 13:1–7 we are reminded that man rules through laws and courts because God allows them to act as ministers of God's good. Only God possesses the ability to look into the hearts of man. Only God, because His very nature is just, can administer absolute justice.

Complete these activities.

1.1 Define justice in your own words.

1.2 List two ways justice must reveal itself in society.

a.

b.

1.3 What three areas of society should justice protect?

a.

b.

c.

Justice—an expression of God

The justice of God is proclaimed through-out the Bible (Genesis 18:25; Psalm 11:7; John 17:25; and Hebrews 6:10). God is a righteous judge and every reward, penalty, and judicial action which He bestows is just. God's justice demanded condemnation when man fell. God's justice was satisfied when Christ died on the Cross.

Sin demands justice

There can be found no clearer example of God's justice than His dealings with sinful mankind. In the book of Genesis, God gave His law for creation (Genesis chapters 2 and 3). As part of this law, He warned Adam and the woman not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, the Word of God informs us that Adam and Eve transgressed God's law and ate of the tree.

At that moment in history, God's justice took judicial action. Punishment, as promised, was administered from God, the judge of all the earth. Adam and Eve were separated from God's presence by broken fellowship. Physical death and spiritual death began at this point in time. Romans 3:23 advises us that this action of Adam and Eve has also affected our standing with God. This verse tells us that all of us have sinned and have come short of God's glory.

Chapter 3 in Romans continues by telling us that now there is no one righteous except God. If our story were left at this point, despair and hopelessness would be our only future. However, we will learn that God's mercy provided a way whereby justice would be fulfilled and yet mercy would provide a way of escape.

Answer this question.

1.4 How was God's justice revealed to Adam and Eve?

Complete these Scripture verses.

1.5 Romans 3:23: "For a. _____ have b. _____ , and come short of the c. _____ of God."

1.6 Romans 3:10: "...There is none _____ , no, not one."

God's justice was expressed through His Son

Jesus Christ was God's answer to man's need of salvation. Justice demanded the punishment of sin and mercy supplied an alternative to the continuation of man's spiritual death. John 3:16 states: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus Christ became our substitute under the punishment of justice. God's very nature is justice and He cannot overlook sin. Sin must be punished and Jesus became our sin bearer to suffer that punishment. The Bible proclaims in Romans 8:1 the result of this sacrificial atonement of Jesus:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...."

How can you and I be in Christ Jesus? God's Word makes this answer clear (John 5:24):

"... He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Complete these statements.

1.7 Romans 5:12: As a result of Adam's disobedience, _____ passed upon all mankind.

1.8 Romans 6:23: The wages of sin is _____ .

1.9 Romans 6:23: The gift of God is _____ .

1.10 John 14:6: _____ is the way, the truth, and the life.

1.11 _____ caused God's justice to demand punishment of sin.

1.12 The result of Adam's sin is _____ and therefore, all of mankind needs salvation.

1.13 God's gift to the world is _____ through Jesus Christ.

Match these items.

- 1.01 _____ wages of sin
- 1.02 _____ to deliver, to set free
- 1.03 _____ to transgress God's law
- 1.04 _____ to take the place of another
- 1.05 _____ given as an offering
- 1.06 _____ functions of judge and law courts
- 1.07 _____ God's commandments and precepts
- 1.08 _____ to show compassion
- 1.09 _____ to do right, rightness
- 1.010 _____ management of governmental affairs

- a. salvation
- b. sacrificial
- c. justice
- d. judicial
- e. law
- f. administration
- g. sin
- h. death
- i. mercy
- j. substitute
- k. righteousness

Write true or false for each statement.

- 1.011 _____ The term justice in a general sense means what is right.
- 1.012 _____ Justice is similar in meaning to love.
- 1.013 _____ Justice, socially, must protect the property, reputation, and lives of others.
- 1.014 _____ Justice followed Adam's transgression.
- 1.015 _____ Adam's transgression was a free choice.
- 1.016 _____ Every person is guilty of sin.
- 1.017 _____ Christ helped God overlook sin.
- 1.018 _____ Jesus Christ was God's answer to justice.
- 1.019 _____ Mankind must receive the atoning work of Christ if they are to benefit personally.
- 1.020 _____ Justice means to revenge evil wrongs.

Complete these Scriptures.

1.021 "For God so a. _____ the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever b. _____ in him should not perish, but have c. _____ life." (John 3:16)

Sin: The Origin of Suffering

While some people blame God for their suffering when they are experiencing pain and sorrow, the Bible teaches that the Lord is not the cause of human suffering. Rather, sin is the originator of all pain, suffering, and evil.

Like the domino effect, sin impacted the entire universe: humans, animals, plants, and planets. Because of this extreme impact on all things, most theologians rightly state that the entire world is fallen.

God had originally created everything good. On the sixth and last day of creation, God looked at all He had made and declared it to be very good, which included the first man and woman (Genesis 1:31). The Lord had graciously made mankind with free will so that they could choose to love Him.

However, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, thus bringing sin into the world (Genesis 3:6-7). As Romans 5:12 clarifies, "When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned" (NLT).

The Lord had already warned the first human couple that their sin would bring death into the world, which did occur because of man's sin (Genesis 2:17). Death, disease, and suffering insidiously crept into God's good creation.

Weeds and thorns hinder plentiful crops, intense pain accompanies childbirth, and humans die (Genesis 3:16-19). Because of the pervasiveness of sin, all creation is longing for redemption (Romans 8:19-23).

While suffering in the world is caused by the presence of sin in the world, it is important to note that the Bible never says that suffering comes because of a specific sin in a person's life.

This was the lie that Job's friends believed, which was that God caused people to suffer because of their sinfulness (Job 4:7-8).

While many people today believe this same lie, the Bible is clear that Job had not done anything to deserve his suffering (Job 1:1,8). A person does not get cancer, for example, because of lying or getting angry. Rather, cancer and other diseases are a result of living in a fallen world.

Many people wrongly believe suffering is a form of divine punishment, which is not true according to Scripture. Individual choices of sinful mankind can and do affect others, such as a gunman choosing to attack a school.

However, the people experiencing the suffering should not be thought of as having "deserved the pain" because of something they did. God does discipline His children for their good (Hebrews 12:6), but He cannot cause evil, for this would contradict His very being (1 John 1:5).

God is Lord and King



The presence of God

The One God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — is always present, no matter where we are. There is no place in the entire universe where God is not present. God is present everywhere! Knowing that God is present everywhere can be a source of great joy and comfort to us. The Bible says,

“in your presence is fulness of joy” (Psalm 16:11).

God’s presence can help us to have much joy. Likewise, God comforts us with His continual presence.

The Bible says, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1). No matter what the trouble we might face, God is always present to help us.

God’s presence

God is the Almighty Creator of everything that exists. He is present everywhere in the universe. One of the great truths of our Christian faith is that God is present everywhere. God’s presence fills the entire Creation, everything that exists. There is nowhere that God is not present. The Scriptures clearly state,

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. (Psalm 139:7–12).

God is present to each and every person no matter where he or she is. This truth of God’s presence can be a source of great joy and comfort to us. The truth of God’s presence in your life can help you to live a happier and fuller life.

Vocabulary

attribute - Trait, characteristic, or quality that is basic to a person or thing.

depend - To rely on or to trust.

eternity - All the time; all the past and all the future.

impersonal - Having no existence as a person.

omnipresence - Being present everywhere at the same time.

personal - Of, having to do with, or belonging to a person.

presence - Being present in a place.

present - Here or near, not absent.

provision - The act or process of providing for.

quality - Characteristic; something special about a person or object that makes it what it is.

universe - The whole body of worlds, planets, and stars; all material creation.

Read Psalm 145 and Acts 17:23–29

God is here. The word present means here. That means that God is present; He is here. He is near you, and He is near all people. When someone is taking attendance at a meeting or in a class and calls your name, you answer, "Present." You are saying, "I am here." If you are not present, when the person in charge calls your name, you are marked absent when your name is called. When a person calls on God's name anywhere in the universe, God answers, "I am here." God would never be marked "absent" anywhere in the whole universe! He is present everywhere.

Many people in different parts of the world can call on God at the same time. God will answer, "I am here," to each one of them! Everyone in the world could call on the Lord at the same time, and God would still answer, "I am here." God said, "Call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know", (Jeremiah 33:3).

The Bible also says, "The LORD is near to all those that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Psalm 145:18).

God is everywhere in a different way than the air or water is. The air that is around you and in you is not the same air that is around and in people in different places. Air in one place may have slightly more oxygen than in another place. Water in one place may be different in purity and mineral content than in another place. Some water is fresh water and some is salt water. The great and wonderful fact about God is that He is everywhere and He is the same everywhere!

Activities

Write true or false.

- 1.1 People can find some places where God is not present.
- 1.2 To realize that God is present is important to your life.
- 1.3 God must listen to people's prayers one at a time.
- 1.4 God is everywhere in the same way that air is everywhere.

Complete these statements.

- 1.5 The word present means _____.
- 1.6 Your presence is different from God's presence because _____
_____.
- 1.7 God is everywhere, and He is the _____ everywhere.

God is not confined to a building

Can God only be found in a temple, church, or in heaven? The Scriptures tell us that God does not dwell in buildings alone. Concerning the grand temple built under the supervision of King Solomon ... "Not even all heaven is large enough to hold you, so how can this Temple that I have built be large enough?" (1 Kings 8:27 GNB).

Jesus Himself said, "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matthew 6:6).

Jesus also said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

God is not only in a church or in heaven, He is everywhere; therefore, we can pray to Him wherever we need to.

God is spirit

Like the angels, God is spirit. He has no body. God is everywhere because He is spirit. The Bible tells us,

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:24).

God dwells in heaven, and He also dwells on the earth. He also dwells in the hearts of those who receive Him. God says,

"...

I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isaiah 57:15).

God is omnipresent

God is everywhere at the same time. This is called God’s omnipresence. The word omnipresent means everywhere present.

No place in the world is without Him. God is never absent. The Bible says,

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. (Psalm 139:7–10).

How near is God when He is present?

When He is with you in every-day life, or even sleeping, how close is He? Is He beside you or around you? Yes, He is beside and around you. And because you are His child, He is also within you.

Not only is God present everywhere, but He is also present everywhere at the same time. While He is present with you, He is also present with other people in every city, in every country in the world.

Complete these activities.

1.9 Write two verses that tell that God’s dwelling place is in heaven.

a. 1 Kings 8:30

b. Psalm 123:1

1.10 Explain why God cannot be in just one place.

1.11 Tell how Psalm 139:7–10 shows that God is omnipresent.

Complete the following statement.

1.12 God is so near you that He is a _____ you,

b. _____ you, and c. _____ you.

Answer these questions.

1.13 How important is it to people that God is everywhere at the same time?

1.14 What does God say about His omnipresence as recorded in the prophet Jeremiah?

1.15 How important is it to people that God is everywhere at the same time?

1.16 What does God say about His omnipresence as recorded in the prophet Jeremiah?

Complete these sentences.

1.017 The presence of God everywhere is called God's _____ .

1.018 God is a _____ because He thinks, speaks, and loves.

1.019 Because God is faithful, He will keep His _____ .

1.018 Because God is a person, we can a. _____ Him,

b. _____ Him, and c. _____ Him.

Answer these questions.

1.020 How is God's omnipresence different from air being everywhere?

1.021 How do you know that God is a person?

1.022 What are five attributes of God that are present everywhere?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

Choose the correct answer.

1.023 Because God thinks, speaks, and loves, He is _____ .

a. everywhere

b. a person

c. omnipresent

1.024 God is not _____ anywhere in the universe.

a. dwelling

b. present

c. absent

The reason for Christmas

In most Western countries, Christmas Day is celebrated on December 25th as the traditional birthday of Jesus, although no one knows for certain the exact day when Jesus was born, even though we know reasonably well when He was here on Earth. The Bible says: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son” (Galatians 4:4), so this was at exactly the right time in God’s master plan.

When this right time had come, God sent an angel named Gabriel to a young woman named Mary, who lived in Nazareth, to tell her that she would have a son and that she should call His name Jesus (Luke 1:26–33). Mary was greatly surprised to hear this because she was not married and so she was a virgin. However, the angel told her,

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

When Jesus lived on Earth, not only was He fully human, He was also God incarnate.

An angel from God also appeared in a dream to Joseph, who was engaged to be married to Mary. The angel said,

“Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” Matthew (1:20–22).

The word ‘Jesus’ is the English form of the Hebrew name Yeshua. This is an abbreviation of God’s four-letter name YHVH (Jehovah/Yahweh, meaning to save, deliver, or rescue. Hence the name Jesus means Saviour. The English word Christ is not Jesus’ surname, but is a title. It comes from the Greek Christos, meaning anointed one, usually rendered in English as ‘Messiah’. So Jesus Christ means Jesus the Anointed One, or Jesus the Messiah.

Caesar Augustus fulfils an Old Testament prophecy

In due time, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. This came about because the Roman Emperor, Caesar Augustus, wanted to have a census conducted and so everyone in the Roman world had to go to their ancestral home town to be registered there (Luke 2:1–7). Under God’s oversight, Augustus thus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy in Micah 5:2, which said that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Joseph had to take Mary from Nazareth to his own home town of Bethlehem, a distance of about 110 km (70 miles). While there, Mary gave birth to Jesus (Luke 2:1–7).

The very first people to whom God announced this were some nearby shepherds. An angel told them that Christ the Lord had just been born. When this happened, the glory of the Lord shone around them and a great company of angels appeared, praising God (Luke 2:8–14).

A year or so later, some ‘wise men’ (magi), living in another country to the east saw a strange new light in the sky. They thought it was a special star that announced the birth of a

new king, whom they were meant to go and worship. Later, when they got to Jerusalem, they went to the palace of King Herod, expecting that this was where any new king would be. Herod was shocked at the idea of a so-called king that could replace him. He sent for the Jewish leaders and asked them where the Christ was to be born. They told him that the prophet Micah had foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1–6). So off the wise men went again. The Bible doesn't say how many wise men there were; just that there were three gifts.

The light led them to a house in Bethlehem where the infant Jesus now was. Stars, a conjunction of planets (formerly 'wandering star'), or a comet, don't normally move like that, and certainly don't illuminate just one particular house. Therefore, it is more likely that the light that the wise men saw and followed was the glory of God, sometimes called the Shekinah glory or a divine visitation of the presence of God. This was "the glory of the Lord" that had appeared to the shepherds.

When the wise men saw the child Jesus, they worshipped Him and gave Him costly gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold was a symbol of Jesus' kingship. Frankincense was incense used by the priests in the worship of God and so represented homage to the Christ-child as God, as well as being a symbol of Jesus' priesthood. Myrrh was oil used to embalm bodies for burial and so was a symbol of Jesus' future suffering and death.

God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. This was because Herod was planning to murder all the male children two years old and under to make sure of killing Jesus, whom he now regarded as a rival. God also warned Joseph in a dream to take Mary and the child Jesus and escape to Egypt (Matthew 2:7–12). The gold was probably God's provision to pay for their needs there before they could return to Nazareth after Herod died.

Does Christmas have anything to do with Genesis?

The first reference to Jesus in the Bible is in the promise given to Adam and Eve immediately after they had sinned against God (Genesis 3:15).

Yes, very much so. The Lord Jesus, is none other than the Creator God who brought the whole universe into existence. In his Gospel, the Apostle John, a great creation evangelist, referring to Jesus, tells us that, "All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1–3). And the Apostle Paul, speaking of Jesus, tells us that all things "in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible ... were created through Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16).

The first reference to Jesus in the Bible is in the promise given to Adam and Eve immediately after they had sinned against God. In Genesis 3:15, God says to Satan, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." Eve's descendant would be the Lord Jesus Christ. He is called the "seed" of the woman because He had no human father, but through the miraculous power of God would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:20, 23). He

would then live a sinless life, die on the cross for the sins of the whole world, and be resurrected back to life, thereby defeating the power of the devil (Hebrews 2:14).

The reason for the Christmas season is that Jesus came to Earth to die for the sins of the world, and then to rise again to give new life to all who put their faith and trust in Him.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to be a descendant of Adam?

In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah calls the coming Messiah a “Kinsman-Redeemer” (Isaiah 59:20). This meant that the Messiah must be a blood-relative of those He redeems. So it was necessary for Jesus to be born into the human race, via physical descent from Mary, a descendant of Adam, not just for Him to suddenly appear, as angels did from time to time in the Old Testament. This means that only Adam’s descendants can be saved. (We are all descendants of Adam.) Angels could not save us; indeed, angels themselves that sinned cannot be saved through the death of Christ (Hebrews 2:16), because they are not Adam’s descendants.

Was Jesus born on Christmas Day?

Nobody knows exactly which day Jesus was born. But an argument against December 25th that some people have made is that shepherds would not have been watching their flocks by night in December because it would have been too cold. But it’s most unlikely that these people have ever been to Bethlehem, because shepherds really do have their flocks out in December. Actually, Bethlehem is not usually very cold at Christmas—a ‘white Christmas’ is very rare. The average minimum temperature in December is 6°C (43°F). It is also a lot rainier in December than the previous half-year, and much grass had grown by then, so it is a good month for sheep.

These claimants are also likely unfamiliar with sheep farming. Sheep have their own home-grown insulation all over their bodies—their wool, which keeps them warm even in snowy weather, and the wool’s lanolin stops any moisture on the wool from penetrating to the skin. Jacob tended his uncle Laban’s flocks outdoors even when the nights were frosty (Genesis 31:38–40), and this was much further north in Haran, so a lot colder than Bethlehem.

If sheep are kept indoors in cold weather, they are more likely to catch pneumonia due to a build-up in barns of ammonia and stale moisture that promote the spread of viruses. Sheep are much healthier living outdoors, provided they can shelter from winter winds, such as by means of a few trees. Finally, it would be very labour-intensive to provide all the water and grass for a large flock of sheep inside, as well as to regularly clean out their droppings—far better to let them forage.

What does Santa have to do with Christmas?

In countries today that celebrate Christmas, it is only Christians who truly worship Jesus for coming to Earth as God. Everybody else just has a party and perhaps a holiday. And, indeed, Christmas trees, lights, decorations, exchanging cards and presents, family reunions, and enjoying a delicious Christmas dinner are all fun things to have or to do.

However, all this means that Christmas for most people is just a giant shopping spree, with people giving gifts to each other, but not paying homage to Jesus as the shepherds and the Wise Men did. Also, nowadays, the celebration of Christmas often involves a jolly fat man in a red suit, who supposedly lives at the North Pole and travels all over the world by snow sledge on Christmas Eve distributing presents to children who have 'been good'. This of course is a fairy story, but it is also idolatry when used as a substitute for worshipping Jesus. God, not Santa, is the One who knows all that we say and do.

The modern Santa Claus is a corruption of the name of a real man, Saint Nicholas (270–343). He was Bishop of Myra in modern day Turkey and famous for his generosity. The real Nicholas would be horrified at the claims about Santa Claus.

So as we enjoy all the good things about Christmas, we also need to remember that the 'reason for the season' is that Jesus came to Earth to be born, to live, and to die for the sins of the world, and then to rise again to give new life to all who put their faith and trust in Him.

by Russell Grigg, Creation.com, published: 25 December 2015

More about the Wise Men

How did the Wise Men know about the birth of Jesus?

The Wise Men/Magi were educated and notable men who studied the stars and apparently knew the prophecies well. It is thought to have been Daniel the Prophet who first introduced the Magi to the Holy Scriptures of the God of Israel. And, it's believed that throughout the centuries these wise men studied the Hebrew Scriptures; and therefore understood the timing of the Messiah's birth and the sign that would lead them to the place where He would be born.

What exactly did they know?

The Bible does not explicitly tell us, but it is clear that the wise men did understand them well enough to believe that this Child was the promised King of the Jews (the Promised Messiah) and they should follow "His star." Perhaps Daniel had opened the Scriptures to the magi of his time. Perhaps through the Scriptures and Daniel's testimony, these men came to fear the Lord, for we know that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov 1:7) and "the beginning of wisdom" (Prov 9:10). This "fear" is a reverence, respect, and trust of the Lord and His revealed will.

<https://reasonsforhopejesus.com/wise-men-still-follow-his-star/>

Did the wise men use astrology to find baby Jesus?

First we need to make sure we know the difference between astrology and astronomy. Astrology, a pseudoscience, is the study and use of the sun, moon, stars, planets, and so forth in an attempt to predict the future and discover their influence on behavior and events. Astronomy, a legitimate science, is the study of God's handiwork outside the earth's atmosphere—minus the aspects of astrology.

Ancient wise men lived in an age of much astrology. After all, that was what the heathen religions of the time were basically about—worship of the sun, moon, stars, and the like. This worship went on in Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, and just about everywhere else.

Here we need to distinguish between knowing about something and actually believing it or doing it. Though many magi embraced astrology, they had other knowledge as well, including what was known then in the field of astronomy. Further, at least a number of them would have been familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures that had been written up to that time. Daniel 2:12 and 18 and 4:6 and 18 tell of wise men in Babylon. The Scripture accounts of Daniel cause us to believe that he and his friends probably led many magi to turn away from false worship to the worship of the true God of Israel. The men who saw Christ's natal star were likely influenced by the writings of Daniel.

Astrology surely didn't come into play with the wise men's sojourn to see the Christ Child. God forbade the use of astrology, and He wouldn't use it to lead the wise men. There is no such thing as Biblical astrology. Instead, God might have communicated supernaturally with those searching men. After all, He did so when He warned them not to go back to Herod after they had seen the Christ Child (Matthew 2:12).

Some Bible students believe the star that the wise men saw was not a star as we would think of one today, but a "brilliance" (word connotation in the original) that appeared to them as a star, which suggests the Shekinah glory, the visible manifestation of God's presence. Interestingly, we note that when the wise men spoke to King Herod, they said, "We have seen His star" (Matthew 2:2).

Whatever that "star" was, it was specially created by God; it was not just some astrological lining up of certain heavenly bodies.

<https://baptistbulletin.org/the-baptist-bulletin-magazine/dec-06-issue/were-the-wise-men-astrologists/>

Another reason for God's choice of the Wise Men to follow the star

A key Scripture explaining the reason for Christ's birth is John 3:16:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

God sent His Son as a Saviour for the whole world, and not just for the Jewish people.

Until this time, the Jews, as God's chosen people, were the only nation who worshiped the God of the Bible. After the birth of Jesus, it was God's plan that the whole world – every tribe and every nation – would have the opportunity to become the children of God.

The Shepherds hurried to find the baby Jesus, as the angel instructed them. The shepherds would clearly have been Jewish. But the wise men on the other hand were from the far east – a different people group with a different religion. God instructed them too, to seek the Christ child. The birth of Christ broke down the barrier between Jews and non-Jews (gentiles), making it possible for all to come to Christ as believers.

Paul writes to the gentiles, the Ephesians, in Ephesians 2:12-22:

“Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

See also:

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Romans 11:17

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree.

Revelation 7:9

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.