

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. - 1 Peter 2:2

THE SINCERE MILK OF GOD'S WORD

The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword... - Hebrews 4:12

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God's Character

God, in His infinite wisdom and power, has a nature that is in some ways beyond our comprehension.

Yet, He *has* revealed some significant truths about who He is. Consider seven of these truths that relate to God's character.

God is All-Seeing: **Hebrews 4:13** teaches, "*There is no creature that is hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account.*" God has the ability to be everywhere and see everyone at all times. God knows our every action, word, and thought. As **Proverbs 15:3** says, "*The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*"

This serves as a motivation for fleeing unrighteousness. Though others may not know something evil we have done, spoken, or thought, God does (**Luke 16:15**). No one can successfully flee from Him (**Jonah 1:3-4**).

While God's all-seeing nature is a discomfort to the unrighteous, it is a *comfort* to the righteous. God "*sees in secret*" (**Matt. 6:6**) the good deeds that often go unnoticed by others. One who is sincerely striving to do right can find joy in the fact that God is fully aware of all that we do.

God is All-Powerful: In addition to being all-seeing, God is also *all-powerful*. When Sarah laughed within herself upon hearing she would have a child in her old age, God responded, "*Is anything too hard for the LORD?*" (**verse 14**).

God can do whatever He pleases with His creation. This does not negate man's free will, because God has given us the capacity

to *choose* whether to serve Him or not.

God's all-powerful nature does imply, though, that it is imperative for us to humble ourselves under His mighty hand (**1 Pet. 5:6**), surrendering to Him with reverence and godly fear (**Heb. 12:28**).

God's all-powerful character is also a comfort to the righteous, who can rest assured that no matter the trial faced, God is "bigger than our trials." Thus, we can overcome (cf. **Rev. 1:17-18; 2:9-10; 14:1**).

God is Light: Scripture further teaches us "*that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all*" (**1 John 1:5**). God is perfect and sinless. Everything He chooses to do with His infinite power is righteous.

Further, because He is light, He cannot be in fellowship with those in darkness, but only those who walk in the light (**1 John 1:6-7**).

God is Just: Not only can God not be in fellowship with darkness but, as a perfectly just God, He cannot ignore sin. His righteousness demands that He punish sin justly (cf. **Acts 17:31**).

This is part of God's character that makes hell a reality. Sin leads to spiritual death, or separation from God (**Rom. 6:23**; cf. **Isa. 59:2**). Ultimately, sin leads to eternal separation from Him. In other words, our sin "earns" us eternity in hell.

Were God not perfectly just, He might ignore these truths. Yet, in His perfectly righteous and holy character, He will not.

God is Love: Though God in His holiness must punish sin justly, His love causes Him to not *desire* this punishment for anyone.

His love is such a primary part of His character that Scripture teaches "*God is love*" (**1 John 4:8**). Because of God's love, He

came up with a just means by which He could offer salvation to all. This plan of salvation centers on His Son Jesus, who gave His life for us.

God's perfect love is seen in the fact that He sent His Son to die for people who have grossly mistreated Him (**Rom. 5:8**). Because of God's love, people who have sinned can be declared righteous (**verse 9**), and we can return to fellowship with Him (**verse 10**).

God's love does not mean that He *grants* salvation to all. In fact, on the Day of Judgment, "*the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power;*" (**2 Thes. 1:7-9**).

God's love *does*, though, extend salvation to those who *receive* it through faith and obedience to His commands (**Heb. 5:9**).

God is Longsuffering: God's love is further demonstrated in His longsuffering character.

2 Peter 3:9 teaches, "*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*"

This verse was spoken in response to mockers of Peter's day who challenged the promise of Christ's return (**verses 3-4**). The inspired apostle taught that the delay of the Day of Judgment demonstrates the longsuffering character of God.

Had God sent Jesus to judge the world already, some who are now saved would still be lost. Because God does not wish for anyone to be lost, He has suffered mistreatment from mankind without rendering immediate vengeance, granting undeserved

opportunities for repentance.

God is Faithful: Though He is longsuffering, **2 Peter 3:10** teaches that there *will* come a time when God will send His Son to judge the world. We can have assurance that this Day will come because of God's *faithfulness*.

Titus 1:2 says that God "*cannot lie*." In fact, "*it is impossible for God to lie*" (**Heb. 6:18**).

These passages emphasize the strength of the righteous' hope of eternal life. Since God cannot lie, there is 100% assurance that what He has promised will be carried out.

While God's faithfulness is a comfort to the righteous, it is a *discomfort* to the unrighteous. God's faithfulness is proof that God *really* will send people to hell. God assures eternal punishment for the wicked (**Matt. 25:46**), in a place "*where their worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched*" (**Mark 9:48**). As the saying goes, "God said it. That settles it."

Another application of God's faithfulness is seen in **1 Corinthians 10:13**. This verse says, "*No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*" Because God is faithful, we can know that He does not *force* hell on anyone, but will provide us the opportunity to obey Him if we so choose. As difficult as the temptations we face may seem, we always have a *choice* to do right, because our faithful God makes it so.

Though part of God's character is beyond our comprehension, He *has* revealed much about Himself that should build our faith and strengthen our service to Him. May we consider who He is and be thus motivated to give our lives wholeheartedly to Him.

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