

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

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So recently (in probably [my favorite post ever](#)) we explored the fact that God wants to be known; that His glory is important because we are important to Him. This was

evidenced in the point: "In the Old Testament, a variation of the phrase: '*Then they will know that I am the Lord*,' is used 88 times." But God, in an effort to [reveal himself](#), doesn't just say "I want you to know me," *he actually describes himself*. A lot. It's awesome. I think he loves us enough that he wants to give us an accurate perception of who we're dealing with; ultimately for the purpose of his glory, but also for the sake of relationship with us. When someone asks very little of you, you need very little trust, but when someone asks for you to trust them with your *life*; well, it's nice to have a lot of trust there. And God gives us very clear, consistent insight into His character. But before we go there, let me ask you the same question our [Pastor Steve Moltumyr](#) posed to us recently and then further unpacked:

How would you define God? Pick three adjectives and write them down.

I've seen confirmation of his teaching over and over again ever since. So here it is: 3 major characteristics of God:

1. **He is Holy** - "Be holy because I am holy." Is a phrase used at least 6 times in the Bible. Not to mention the slew of verses that are a variation of the point. God proclaims himself to be holy - and this is a *big deal*. Here's one of my favorites:

"You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own." — **Leviticus 20:26**

2. **He is Just** - He administers justice. He has the right to because, well, he's perfect, and he's in charge. And as tough as it sounds, we *like* this don't we? Take what is going on today for example - [ISIS](#). Insert full body shudder. It's painful just to *hear about*. We want justice don't we? Something just seems right when evil is held accountable. And since God is holy, he sort of defaults on justice (in my opinion) because holiness and sin cannot ultimately coexist. But then again, it means *we also* must be judged, even if we aren't ISIS; because compared to holiness, even our righteousness is like "filthy rags," (Isaiah 64:6). Gulp.

"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." — **Deuteronomy 32:4**

3. **He is Compassionate** - Sigh of relief, right? Without this trait, we would all get what our sins deserve. With this trait, God sends us Jesus. He didn't just say "no biggie, I forgive you because I will get over it," because, remember, he is also *just*. He still required the penalty for sin be payed, he just paid it for us himself. He made a way to

Him when we had *no power* to make our own way to Him. Because of this trait, we have the opportunity to make an eternal decision about whether we want a life with God or without God. And his compassion is evidenced over and over again because he is about *life, and he loves richly*.

"And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness..." — Exodus 34:6

"He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." —
Psalm 103:10

So why are these traits of the ultimate importance? As Pastor Steve Moltumyr took the time to describe; these three traits are like three legs on a stool. If you are without one leg (a crucial element of the chair); the stool will in fact topple over when challenged by the weight of one trusting in it's competence. **If our perspective of God is lacking one of these crucial traits, it is going to topple when challenged by a weighty demand.** If he is not holy, he has no right to be the ultimate moral authority. If he is not holy, we are not separated from him, and there was no need for Jesus to make a way for us. If he is not just, then we have no accountability for our actions; no direction, no clear evidence of what he requires of us. Again, Jesus was not necessary. If he is not compassionate, well, we would not have sent Jesus. We would all get what we deserve. **You need all three characteristics to achieve a durable and accurate perspective of who God is.**

Here's the part I love, that can't be missed. **The most distinctive difference between other world religions vs. Christianity is the concept of "Do," vs "DONE."** There is *nothing* we can do to achieve eternal life. The "to do" requirement is finished. It is done. Whereas most other world religions will tell you what you must do to even the scales in your favor, Jesus already did it for us. The Do vs. Done principle is one we'll consider very soon.