

## Sunday School Lesson: Theology Proper — Knowing God

Series: Basic Theology

### Big Idea

Theology Proper is the study of God Himself: who He is, what He is like, and how knowing Him changes the way we worship, trust, obey, and live.

### Key Scriptures

John 17:3

*“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*

Psalms 145:3

*“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.”*

Exodus 34:6–7

*“The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness...”*

Lesson Overview

### 1. Opening Question — “What Is God Like?”

*Time: 3 minutes*

*whole group:*

**(Slide)** “If someone asked you, ‘What is God like?’ what would you say?”

Today we are beginning a big subject called Theology Proper. That may sound like a fancy term, but it simply means the study of God Himself. We are not just asking, “What does God do?” We are asking, “Who is God? What is He like? What has He revealed about Himself?”

### 2. What Is Theology Proper?

*Time: 5 minutes*

The word **theology** means the study of God. But in a larger theology series, we study many related topics: the Bible, creation, sin, salvation, the church, angels, last things, and more.

**Theology Proper** focuses specifically on God Himself.

It asks questions like:

What does God reveal about Himself?

What does it mean that God is holy?

What does it mean that God is love?

What does it mean that God is eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, and present everywhere?

How can God be one God and also Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

How does knowing God change the way we live?

This is not just information for people who like big words. This is for every Christian. Children need to know who God is. Parents need to know who God is. Church members need to know who God is. Because everything else we believe depends on who God is.

### **Simple Definition for Kids**

**Theology Proper** means learning who God is and what God is like because He has shown Himself to us.

### **Family Discussion — 2 minutes**

*(Slide)* “What is one thing you know is true about God?”

*After family discussion, ask for two or three families to share.*

## **3. Why Do We Study God?-Time: 8 minutes**

**Reason 1:** We study God because He is the most important entity in the universe.

**There is no greater subject than God.**

We study history because God rules over history.

We study creation because God made creation.

We study people because God made people in His image.

We study salvation because God is the Savior.

We study the Bible because it is God's Word.

**Everything begins with God.**

Genesis 1:1 says:

*“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”*

The Bible does not begin by trying to prove God. It begins with God. He is before all things. He is above all things. He is the Creator of all things.

So theology is not a side topic. It is the foundation for everything else.

**Reason 2:** We study God because we were created to know Him.

John 17:3 says:

*“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*

Christianity is not merely about knowing religious facts. It is about knowing the living God. A person can know facts about God and still not truly know God. For example, someone can know facts about a famous person without actually having a relationship with that person.

But God has not only told us information about Himself. He has invited us to know Him, worship Him, trust Him, and walk with Him.

**Reason 3:** We study God because wrong ideas about God lead to wrong worship and wrong living.

If we think God is not holy, we will treat sin lightly.

If we think God is not loving, we will struggle to trust Him.

If we think God is not sovereign, we will panic when life feels out of control.

If we think God is not just, we will doubt whether evil matters.

If we think God is not gracious, we will hide from Him instead of running to Him.

**What we believe about God shapes how we live.**

**Whole Group Discussion — 3 minutes**

*(slide)* “How might a wrong view of God affect the way someone lives?”

That is why we study God carefully. We want to know God as He has revealed Himself, not as we imagine Him to be.

#### **4. What Are God’s Attributes? - Time: 7 minutes**

When we talk about God’s attributes, we are talking about what is true about God.

An attribute is not a “part” of God. God is not made up of pieces. God is fully and perfectly Himself. But attributes help us understand what God has revealed about His character and nature. For example, the Bible teaches that God is:

Holy, Loving, Just, Merciful, Gracious, All-powerful, All-knowing, Everywhere present, Eternal, Unchanging, Faithful, Good, Sovereign, Wise

These attributes are not random qualities. They help us know God rightly.

#### **Two Helpful Categories**

Theologians often talk about God’s attributes in two broad categories.

##### **1. Attributes that belong to God alone**

These are sometimes called **incommunicable** attributes. That means they are not shared with us in the same way.

Examples:

God is eternal: He has no beginning and no end.

God is all-powerful: He can do all His holy will.

God is all-knowing: He knows everything perfectly.

God is everywhere present: There is no place where God is absent.

God is unchanging: His character, promises, and purposes do not change.

These truths remind us that God is not like us. He is Creator. We are the creation.

## **2. Attributes God reflects in His people**

These are sometimes called **communicable** attributes. That means God shares or reflects these qualities in us in a limited creaturely way.

Examples:

God is loving, and He calls us to love.

God is holy, and He calls us to be holy.

God is merciful, and He calls us to show mercy.

God is truthful, and He calls us to tell the truth.

God is just, and He calls us to care about justice.

We never possess these attributes the way God does. God is perfectly loving, perfectly holy, perfectly wise, and perfectly good. But as His people, we are called to reflect His character.

### **Illustration for Children**

Think about the **moon**. The moon does not produce its own light. It reflects the light of the sun. In a much greater way, Christians do not produce goodness, holiness, love, or mercy on our own. We reflect the character of God because we belong to Him.

### **Family Discussion — 3 minutes**

**(Slide)** “Which attribute of God helps you trust Him?”

Invite one or two families to share.

### **5. Why God’s Attributes Matter for Everyday Life - Time: 5 minutes**

God’s attributes are not just ideas to memorize. They help us live faithfully.

**When we are afraid:** We remember God is powerful and present.

**When we sin:** We remember God is holy, just, merciful, and gracious.

**When life is confusing:** We remember God is wise and sovereign.

**When we feel alone:** We remember God is near.

**When we are tempted to lie:** We remember God is truthful and calls us to truth.

**When we are struggling to forgive:** We remember God has forgiven us in Christ.

### **Knowing God changes real life.**

Parents, this matters deeply in the home. Your children are always learning what God is like. They learn from what you teach, but they also learn from how you pray, how you repent, how you respond to stress, how you talk about sin, and how you trust the Lord.

One of the best things a parent can do is help a child connect daily life back to the character of God.

**Instead of only saying:**

“Don’t be afraid.”

“Tell the truth.”

“Forgive your brother.”

**We can say:**

“God is with us, so we do not have to be afraid.”

“God is truthful, and we want to reflect Him.”

“Jesus has forgiven us, so we can forgive others.”

Theology Proper helps families connect everyday discipleship to the character of God.

## **6. Closing Summary - Time: 2 minutes**

Today we learned that Theology Proper is the study of God Himself. We study God because He is the most important person in the universe, because we were created to know Him, and because what we believe about God shapes how we worship and live.

God’s attributes tell us what He is like. Some attributes remind us that God is completely different from us: eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere present, and unchanging. Other attributes are reflected in His people: love, holiness, mercy, truth, goodness, and justice.

The goal is not merely to know facts about God. The goal is to know God, worship God, trust God, and reflect God’s character in our lives.

### **Closing Family Question**

“What is one truth about God that you want to remember this week?”

### **Homework**

Recited this verse once a day at breakfast, dinner, bedtime, or in the car.

*John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*

Parents, sometime this week ask each child:

“What is one thing you know is true about God?”

Then follow up with:

“How does that help you trust Him?”

The goal is not a perfect answer. The goal is to help your child connect theology to real life.