



## Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

“Character of God” Series Lesson 1 – July 31, 2016

### Can You Truly Know God?

#### I. **Lesson Starters:**

Can we really know God or just facts concerning Him? How much of God can we know? What attributes are we capable of having and how do we get them?

This series will be broken down into roughly the following topics and lessons:

1. Can You Truly know God?
2. Introduction to the Study of God’s Character
  - a. Classifying God’s attributes(Incommunicable, Communicable)
  - b. Names of God in Scripture
3. Incommunicable Attributes
  - a. Independence
  - b. Unchangeableness
  - c. Eternity
  - d. Omnipresence
  - e. Unity
4. Attributes Describing God’s Being
  - a. Spirituality
  - b. Invisibility
5. Mental Attributes
  - a. Knowledge (omniscience)
  - b. Wisdom
  - c. Truthfulness (and Faithfulness)
6. Moral Attributes
  - a. Goodness
  - b. Love
  - c. Mercy, Grace, Patience
  - d. Holiness
  - e. Peace (Order)
  - f. Righteousness, Justice
  - g. Jealousy
  - h. Wrath
7. Attributes of Purpose
  - a. Will (Secret, Revealed)
  - b. Freedom
  - c. Omnipotence (Power, Sovereignty)
8. Summary Attributes
  - a. Perfection
  - b. Blessedness
  - c. Beauty
  - d. Glory
9. Summary

#### II. **The Necessity for God to Reveal Himself to Us:**

If we are to know God at all, it is necessary that He reveals himself to us. Whether it is the revelation through God’s nature or the personal knowledge of God for salvation, God opens our eyes to himself.

### **Romans 1:18-20**

**18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 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 people are without excuse.**

### **Matthew 11:27**

**27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.**

- The natural creation reveals God because he chose to have himself revealed in this way
- Knowledge of God is not found through human effort or wisdom

### **I Corinthians 1:20-21**

**20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.**

- Sinful people misinterpret the revelation of God found in nature and His word
- Man suppresses the truth and our ways are "futile"; We exchange the truth about God for a lie
- Therefore, we need scripture if we are to interpret God's revelations
- Many different false religions are examples of the way of sinful man without guidance from scriptures
- In God and the Bible alone, we find God's active communication with His people to find truth

## **III. We Can Never Fully Understand God**

Since God is infinite and we are small and finite, we can never fully understand our God. In so many ways He is incomprehensible to us. Incomprehensible to the Christian is the form of the definition, "unable to be fully understood"; not the more common definition used of "unable to understand". It is not true to say that God cannot be understood.

### **Psalms 145:3**

**3 Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.**

### **Psalms 147:5**

**3 Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.**

### **Psalms 139:6**

**6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.**

- The doctrine of God's incomprehensibility means that we can never know "too much" or never "arrive" in our knowledge and understanding of God
- We will never tire of finding new things, wisdom and understanding with a deeper and deeper relationship with God

## **IV. Yet We Can Know God Truly**

We can know true things about God. God is love (1 John 4:8), God is light (1 John 1:5), God is spirit (John 4:24) and God is righteous (Romans 3:26), and so forth. It is God himself we know, not just simple facts or actions.

**Jeremiah 9:23-24**

**23 This is what the Lord says: “Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, 24 but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,”**

**John 17:3-5**

**3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.**

- The source of our joy and sense of importance is from knowing God personally, not mere facts
- A personal relationship with God the Father is the greatest of all the blessings of a Christian life

**V. Group Questions:**

1. Do you feel that God reveals certain things to all people? But yet much deeper truths to others? Why or why not?
2. Discuss 1 Corinthians 1:20-21; How do we know if we are relying on our own wisdom as opposed to God’s to interpret his will and word? If people pray and seek God’s guidance, how can it be that there are so many “truths” that abound that are supposedly “Gods Way”?
3. In the Psalms scriptures above, discuss the surprise and joy it should bring about always being able to grow and understand new truths about God and his plan for our lives?
4. In Jeremiah 9:23-24, discuss the part that says “they have the understanding to know me”, what do you think this means?