



# Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

## “Character of God” Series Lesson 9 – September 25, 2016

### Communicable Attribute of Invisibility

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

Last week we finished up looking at the Communicable attribute of Spirituality. *God’s spirituality means that God exists as a being that is not made of any matter, has no parts or dimensions, is unable to be perceived by our bodily physical senses and is more excellent than any other kind of existence.*

Today we will continue looking at Attributes describing **God’s Being**, with the study of his Invisibility. This is certainly related to the fact of God’s Spirituality.

#### II. **God’s Attributes Describing His Being:**

- Attributes Describing God’s Being
  - Spirituality, **Invisibility**

God’s Invisibility means that God’s total essence, all of his spiritual being, will never be able to be seen by us, yet God still shows himself to us through visible, created things.

#### III. **Attribute of Invisibility**

##### **John 1:18**

***18 No one has ever seen God***

##### **John 6:46**

***46 Not that anyone has ever seen the Father except him who is from God; he has seen the Father.***

##### **1 Timothy 1:17**

***17 To the kings of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever, Amen***

##### **1 Timothy 6:16**

***16 Who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see***

These scriptures are written after events in scripture where people saw some outward manifestation of God.

##### **Exodus 33:11, 20**

***11 Thus the Lord used to speak with Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend...20 You cannot see my face, for man shall not see my and live***

God used his glory to pass by Moses while he hid in a cleft of a rock. These scriptures indicate that there is a sense in which God could not be seen at all, but that there was also some outward form or manifestation of God which at least in part was visible to be seen by man.

It is then correct to say that God’s total essence or face will never be seen by man, but that God still shows something of himself to us through visible, created things.

#### IV. **If we cannot see God, Then how are we to Think of Him?**

God provides a multitude of analogies from our human lives or from the created world to “see Him”. All of these then help reveal God to us in a somewhat visible way.

In the Old Testament, he uses a number of **“Theophany’s”** – an appearance of God whereby He takes on various visible forms to show himself to people:

- God appeared to Abraham (Gen 18:1-33)
- Jacob (Gen 32:28-30)
- People of Israel (Ex 13:21-22)
- Elders of Israel (Ex 24:9-11)
- Isaiah (Isa 6:1)

In the New Testament, you have Jesus himself, the perfect manifestation of God.

## **V. How will we see God in Heaven?**

Let’s look at several scriptures to try and answer this question:

- Psalm 145:3, John 6:46, 1 Tim 1:17 - “his greatness is unsearchable” and that we will not be able to see the spiritual being of God, at least not with our physical eyes
- Col 1:15 - Jesus is the image of the invisible God.
- Matt 5:8 – Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God
- It is not exactly clear what sense we will be able to “see” the Father and Holy Spirit, or the divine nature of God the Son
- Perhaps the nature of this “seeing” will not be known to us until we reach heaven

Encouraging scriptures of “seeing God”:

- 1 Cor 13:12 – We shall see him “face to face”
- 1 John 3:2 – We shall see him as he is
- Rev 22:3-4 – The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads

God is the perfection of all we long for or desire. Our greatest joy will be when we “see his face”. This time is sometimes called the “beatific vision”, meaning the vision that makes us blessed or happy.

This vision of God will be the consummation of our knowing God and will give us full delight and joy for eternity.

## **VI. Group Questions:**

1. In section IV where we talked about how God manifested himself in the Old Testament, list out specific ways that this happened?
2. Have you ever seen God manifested in some physical way? What about a spiritual way or form?
3. In 1 Corinthians 13:12 discuss what this means to see “him face to face”? How can you reconcile this to John 1:18?
4. Close your eyes and imagine the scene in Revelation 22:3-4, you are before the throne of God, take a minute to take it in. Now open your eyes and talk about the magnificence of “seeing” God.

Study material is primarily taken from Systematic Theology by Wayne Gruden, Chapter 10,-13; The Broadman Bible Commentary by the Southern Baptist Convention and Unger's Bible Dictionary.