Our Awesome God

Charles F. Stanley - In Touch Ministries
For everything, a season, and in everything, prayer.
WORTHY OF OUR WORSHIP

Is God worth worshipping? If we’ve grown up in church or a religious culture, our instinctual response may be “of course,” but we may not be able to say why. However, it’s one of the most important questions we need to answer, because how we view God not only influences every interaction we have with Him, but also our perspective on life and the world.

God knows everything about us, but we only know a fraction about Him—that which we can learn and comprehend with our finite, human minds. As the apostle Paul wrote, “for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known” (1 Cor. 13:12). We are born in a fun house of dirty, distorted mirrors but one day we will live in a palace of pristine glass, seeing God and His creation as perfectly as He does.

Until then, however, we are not walking blind. We can learn everything we need to know about God from His Word and from the life of Jesus Christ, who said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). As we consider what God’s prophets and eyewitnesses have said about Him in His Word, we can begin to articulate why we can place our faith and hope in Him.

So if we are to believe God is worth worshipping, we need to grow in our knowledge of and relationship with Him. That’s why we’ve compiled this booklet full of Dr. Stanley’s teachings on the nature and character of God. We pray it helps you draw closer to Him, so that in return He will draw closer to you (James 4:8), and that “the more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:8 NLT).

From your friends at
In Touch Ministries
HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW GOD?

What kind of relationship do you have with the Lord? Is He a distant deity or your closest friend? In one way or another, everyone has an association with Him, whether it’s acknowledged or not. Even those who say they don’t believe in God are bound to Him simply because He created them.

The Lord designed mankind to relate to Him. If we communicate with Him only on a surface level, we cheat ourselves and hinder fulfillment of the Lord’s ultimate goal for us—an intimate relationship with Him. Though this is His desire for each of His children, many believers, unfortunately, do not live in the close fellowship that He’s made available to them.

Believers can be saved and eternally secure yet relationally distant from the Lord. Some Christians show little interest in spiritual things and are unaware of the shallowness of their interactions with God. Others are confused and frustrated, wondering why they don’t hear His voice or feel His presence. Even though they attend church, read their Bibles, and pray, He still seems to be far away and disconnected from them.

The first step in our quest for intimacy with the Lord is getting to know Him—who He is, what He does, how He thinks, and what He desires. Even though God is invisible and inaudible to our physical senses, a close relationship with Him is cultivated the same way human friendships are—by spending time together.

The most obvious way to become better acquainted with the Lord is through prayer. But oftentimes our
prayers are more monologues than dialogues. We come to Him with our list of concerns, but how often do we take time to listen for His responses? Although God delights in hearing our prayers, He also wants us to be still and listen to Him.

Since He speaks to us primarily through His Word, that’s where we will most likely hear His voice. We can interact with the Lord by praying as we read Scripture. We can meditate on His words and ask Him questions: “What are You saying to me? How does this apply to my life?” Then, we listen, giving Him time to speak to our spirits. Just remember that whatever He says will never contradict His written Word. The more we listen, the more we’ll hear His voice, and soon our time with Him can become our greatest delight.

03

G O D I S . . .

Our God is the same in Genesis 1:1 and throughout the 66 books of the Bible until the last chapter of Revelation. He is the inescapable, awesome, and righteous Judge of all mankind, and every one of us must stand before Him to give an account of our lives.

Yet many people have an incorrect view of God. They think they are free to live as they please, but when trouble comes, God will bail them out. They believe God doesn’t pay attention to sin unless it’s something really bad, like murder. But these perceptions of God are contradicted in Scripture.

Even if we believe in God and have trusted Him with our
eternal lives, there may still be ways in which we don't know Him very well. We might not have an accurate understanding of Him because our views are not based on Scripture. Furthermore, our actions can sometimes contradict what we claim to believe about God.

People who don't know God personally may see Him as an impersonal divine being who resides in heaven but can be called upon for help when needed. If asked to describe their God, they are quick to defend their nebulous perception of Him by saying that He's too big for words. But in reality, they can't describe Him because they don't really know Him. They have an unscriptural view of God; and therefore, they have no confidence in His faithfulness but can only hope that He will answer them when they need Him.

As humans, we tend to make our own version of God, but if He's not the One described in the Bible, we don't have the one true God because all others are false. Without the Bible, we'd have an excuse for our inaccurate ideas, but the Lord has given us His Word so that we can know Him and have a relationship with Him.

Some people imagine Him as a loving grandfather in heaven who's waiting to bless them, while others think He's a harsh judge sitting on His throne, ready to pour out punishment. There are also people who don't even believe God exists because they want to live as they please rather than in obedience to His divine authority. However, the only way to truly know God and His attributes is to rely on the descriptions of Him that are found in the Scripture.

According to Romans 1:19–20, that which is known about God is evident within us, and His invisible attributes, eternal power, and divine nature are clearly on display through His creation. Therefore, we have no excuse. To deny His existence is to suppress the truth and bring ultimate disaster upon ourselves.

A correct understanding of God is essential because it has eternal ramifications.

We all have convictions that govern our lives, and being certain about God’s identity should be one of them. A conviction is being so thoroughly convinced of the absolute truth of something that we are willing to take a stand for it regardless of the consequences.

When we are convinced that God’s Word is true, we have a sure foundation for our convictions about God.

GOD’S WORD TESTIFIES THAT THE LORD IS FAITHFUL AND TRUSTWORTHY.

PSALM 36:5  |  PSALM 56:3  |  PSALM 62:8  |  PSALM 119:90  |  PROVERBS 3:5-6  |  LAMENTATIONS 3:23

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A GOD WE CAN TRUST

- **GOD IS AN UCREATED BEING.** He existed before the beginning of time and is the Creator of heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1). Psalm 90:2 mentions His eternal existence, saying, “Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

- **HE IS UNCHANGEABLE.** What a comfort it is to know that the Lord’s perfection, purposes, and promises never alter. If He has given us a promise in His Word, we can be certain that He will never change His mind.

- **HE’S OMNIPRESENT.** This means that God is present everywhere. We don’t have to search and find Him. In fact, according to Psalm 139, we can never get away from His presence. No matter what we face, He is with us.

- **GOD IS OMNIPOTENT.** He has all power: “With God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26). However, the Lord never acts in a manner that is inconsistent with His nature. For instance, He cannot lie or be tempted by evil because He is absolute goodness, perfection, and truth (Titus 1:2).

- **GOD IS OMNISCIENT.** He has complete knowledge about everything, including past, present, and future events. Although we might want Him to share His knowledge with us, as finite beings we are incapable of comprehending the infinite vastness of God’s mind. According to Deuteronomy 29:29, “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us.” God doesn’t satisfy all our curiosity, but He has revealed what He desires us to know in His Word. And if we can’t find an answer in Scripture, we can leave our concerns with Him, trusting in His infinite knowledge and wisdom.

- **GOD IS INVISIBLE.** Although Jesus was visible as God in human flesh, no human being other than Christ has seen the Father. Paul described Him as the “only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see” (1 Tim. 6:15–16).
• **GOD IS LOVE.** This is not just what He does, but who He is—love is an essential aspect of His nature. The ultimate expression of His love for us was the act of sending His Son into the world to redeem sinners (John 3:16). In mercy, grace, and love, He reached down to save and give eternal life to all who believe in Jesus.

• **GOD IS HOLY.** This means He is separated from all sin, and His holiness is the pattern we are to follow. Although we can never live without sin as God does, we who are committed to Christ as our Savior and Lord should have a desire to live a holy life of obedience. Holiness is a lifestyle to which God calls us and for which He equips us through the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit. He gives us sensitivity to sinful attitudes and actions in our lives, and prompts us to immediately seek forgiveness from God and request His strength to turn from that particular sin.

• **GOD IS RIGHTEOUS.** He is the final standard of faithfulness and always acts in accordance with what is right. Furthermore, righteousness is His desire for each of us, and He’s given us His Holy Spirit to enable us to do what we ought to do.

• **HE IS A GOD OF WRATH.** This means the Lord hates sin and everything that is opposed to His moral character. According to John 3:36, “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” The wrath of God will never come upon those of us who have trusted Christ as our Savior because it is limited to those who defy God and reject His Son.

• **GOD IS OUR JUDGE.** Hebrews 9:27 tells us that “it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.” Unbelievers will face the consequences for their rejection of Christ’s salvation (Rev. 20:12–15). But those who have accepted Christ’s gift need not fear God’s condemnation. Instead, Christians will be judged according to how they have lived and what they have done with the truth and the opportunities they’ve been given. This means their judgment is for the purpose of rewards, not punishment (2 Cor. 5:10).

• **THE LORD IS A REWARDER.** Every Christian has a choice whether or not to build his or her life on the foundation of Christ (1 Cor. 3:10–15). If what we have done is of no eternal value, it will be burned up in the judgment, but if our works are precious and everlasting, we will receive a reward. Even in the judgment, God’s love and grace will be evident to His children.

• **GOD IS TO BE WORSHIPPED.** He is the Lord of the universe and worthy of all honor and glory. Our worship of Him is displayed when we let His Word dwell in us richly and praise Him with singing from a grateful heart (Col. 3:16).
God is described in Scripture by a variety of names, but the only time He explained His name is in Exodus 3:14-15, when He appeared to Moses. After being commanded to go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses wanted to know who he should say sent him. “God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (v. 14). Then He went on to explain, “This is My name forever, and this is My memorial—name to all generations” (v. 15). God wants all mankind to remember and know His great name and what it reveals about Him.

The name, “I AM WHO I AM” in Hebrew is the word Yahweh, which we also know as Jehovah. It means self-existent and signifies that God had no beginning and will never have an end. This name describes His fullness—His eternal existence, sovereignty, unlimited power, and omnipresence.

We should treat God’s name as sacred and holy. One of the Ten Commandments states: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain” (Ex. 20:7). In Jewish culture, God’s name was treated with great reverence, but we live in a society that doesn’t honor the Lord or His name.

As Christians we must be careful not to get swept up in the casualness or profanity with which many use God’s name—and this includes the name of Jesus because as the Son of God, His name is also sacred and holy.
JESUS IS ALSO THE GREAT I AM

On one occasion during Christ’s earthly ministry, He caused quite a stir when He said to the religious leaders, “Before Abraham was born, I am” (John 8:58). They instantly recognized this as a claim to equality with God and considered His statement to be like profanity. And if Jesus had not been divine, they would have been right because the Scripture clearly taught that the Lord alone is God.

What the Jewish leaders failed to recognize and believe was that Jesus was God’s Son, who came to save them. Galatians 4:4-5 says, “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

Since Jesus often affirmed His equality with the Father, He was either a liar and imposter, or He was God in human flesh walking among men.

JOHN 1:1-3
When the apostle John wrote his account of Jesus’ life, he identified Him as the Word saying, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” He also affirmed that Jesus is the Creator: “All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”

JOHN 8:58
By saying, “Before Abraham was born, I am,” Christ was claiming not only pre-existence but His identity as I AM—the name of God.

JOHN 10:30
“I and the Father are one.”

JOHN 14:9
When Philip asked Him to show the disciples the Father, Christ said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

JOHN 14:11
“Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me.”

One of the biggest questions we may have about the name I AM is that in some ways it seems incomplete. I AM what? To further authenticate His equality with the Father and clarify who He was, Jesus made several
“I am” statements, which supported His deity and explained His purpose for coming to earth.

LUKE 22:70
When the Jewish rulers asked Jesus if He was the Son of God, He answered, “Yes, I am.”

JOHN 6:35
“I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.”

JOHN 8:12
“I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

JOHN 10:9
“I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”

JOHN 10:14-15
“I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”

JOHN 14:6
“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

JOHN 15:5
“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”

REVELATION 1:8
“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”
Although God is beyond our comprehension in so many ways, He sent us His Son in human form to be a living expression of Himself and His name. In the person of Jesus Christ, we see both the greatness and love of God for us. The Father loved us enough to send His Son into the world for our salvation, and Jesus demonstrated His love by dying on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. What an awesome God we have—the great I AM!

A Prayer

We long to know You better, not just intellectually, but personally. Correct any false assumptions we have about Your character and teach us about Your true nature. You are Elohim, Adonai, Yahweh. Your name is sacred, for You are the great “I AM.” We thank You for sending Your Son to share Your message of hope and salvation with the world. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and by His death and resurrection, we are saved. Empower us by Your Spirit to share that message with others who do not yet know You personally. Draw us closer to You and teach us to trust You in all things. We are in awe of You and look forward to seeing You one day, face to face. You are faithful and worthy of all praise and honor. Amen.

Names of God in the Old Testament

Although we are unable to fully understand everything about the Lord, we can learn more about Him through His names.

ELOHIM
This name is used in Genesis 1:1 and is translated “God.” It describes Him as existing before the beginning of time and being the Creator of the heavens and earth and all that is in them.

ADONAI
This Hebrew name is translated “Lord” and simply means “Master.”

YAHWEH OR JEHOVAH
The most sacred and precious name of God used among His people, it is often in association with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It’s usually signified in the Old Testament with the word “Lord” written in small capital letters.
IF YOU’D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, VISIT INTOUCH.ORG/BELIEVE. YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT US AT INTOUCH.ORG/CONTACT OR CALL 1-800-789-1473.
How do we know Jesus is worth worshipping as our Lord and Savior? There are many reasons, as we’ve already noted, but here are some of His notable qualities for when you sense yourself beginning to question His right to be Lord of your life—or simply want a guide for your prayer time.

**OMNIPOTENT.** God the Son has all power to do whatever fits with His character and is in keeping with His Father’s will. Matt. 28:18

**OMNIPRESENT.** As our Savior, Jesus lives within our hearts and is with us wherever we go. Acts 17:24

**OMNISCIENT.** There are no secrets because our Lord knows all things with complete accuracy. Before we even utter a prayer, He knows what we will say. Heb. 4:13

**CREATOR.** All things were created by Him, through Him, and for Him. Col. 1:15-17

**ETERNAL.** Jesus was born of a woman, but this is not when He came into existence. He has always existed as eternal Son of God, one of the three members of the Trinity. John 1:1-5, 9-14

**HUMAN.** Although He never ceased being God, Jesus was also fully human yet without sin. Because He lived as a man, He understands and can help us in our weakness. Heb. 4:15

**MERCIFUL.** We may freely call upon Christ to be merciful to us and need never worry that He will mistreat us. Heb. 4:16

**Virgin-born.** To become the holy, sinless God-man, Jesus had to be conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin. This was the only way He could represent mankind and be the sinless Lamb of God who was qualified to pay for our sins with His death on the cross. Matt. 1:18-25

**SINLESS.** Because of His divine nature, Jesus was completely sinless. 1 John 3:5

**Deity.** Jesus was also wholly divine with all the attributes and perfection of deity. John 10:30