

GOD IS
1 John
By Raymond White

The words “God Is” appear several times throughout the Bible. And it is a challenge to understand just what God is. The notion that God Is *anything* is even more difficult if he is, as some religious philosophers have said, “wholly other” — in other words, not like anything else in human experience. In that case, it would be impossible for God to have any contact at all with this universe that he claims to have created. And that, of course, would make God absurd.

Fortunately, the Bible says nothing of the sort. The Bible does say:

Isaiah 46:9 ... I am God, and there is none like me.

And while that could be an argument for a “wholly other” God, there are plenty of other verses that tell us what God is like. And we discover that he is not like nothing but very much like something. Here then, is what God is like; or more precisely, what God is.

[1] LIGHT

1 John 1:5 God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

I don’t want to debate the degree of literalness (or non-literalness) that we should apply to this verse. Of course we should allow the Bible authors to speak hyperbole and maybe that applies here. But that doesn’t make the claim untrue. Indeed, if we allow the author some metaphoric license, the claim “God is light” is true, at least as true as *Isaiah 46:9*. Isaiah was as capable of writing hyperbole as John.

Now, is God literally light? Does all the light in the universe emanate from his personal self? I don’t know, and this simple text does not seem concerned to delve into those meta-physical possibilities. What it does say is this: Light is what you see and what you know about everything. Information about your universe is available to you because God allows it to be so. You are a sentient, sensual, thinking being because God wills you to be. And Jesus proved it!

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. :7 And [Jesus] said unto him [the blind man], Go, wash in the pool of Siloam...[And the blind man] went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

See? (No pun intended, well, maybe a little.) Jesus was, quite literally, the light of the world, and proved it by giving sight to a man born blind. But that’s impossible. You can’t give sight to someone born blind. Exactly so. But Jesus did; that’s the point. When a person is born blind for whatever reason, the brain does not learn to respond to the sensation of sight. And if those signals are not received from the eyes in the first few weeks, then that part of the brain permanently dies, so that even if technology later corrects the defect, the brain will never see. So when Jesus gave sight to one born blind, that’ was beyond technology, that was supernatural.

God is what you see, what you hear, what you feel, what you know. He is light. He is that information that comes to you bringing knowledge about your universe to your mind.

[2] LOVE

1 John 4:8 ... God is love.

He is not only what you know, he is also what you do: “love.” Do you love anyone so much so that you would sacrifice yourself? Where does that passion come from? Love is not in your best interest, it might even get you killed. You might throw yourself in front of a truck to save your daughter. Why would you do that? Where does love come from? It comes from God.

Romans 5:5 ... the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts...

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

If God had not made us and instilled his love in us, we’d have no capacity to love at all. That we care for anybody at all is because God cared for us. God is what we do. He is love.

[3] LIFE

1 John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

God is your life. Where did John get that idea? Because he heard Jesus say it.

John 6:53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Without Jesus you are lifeless. Oh, you may be breathing and walking around right now, but not for long, and you know it! You do not have life. You are not the origin of life. You can’t keep yourself alive even a second longer than God allows you to live.

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her [Martha] I am the resurrection and the life...

God is what you are. God is life, your essence, your core being — you have no other.

[4] SUMMARY

What is God? (1) He is your light, what you know and see and hear and touch. He is your “sentience.” (2) He is your love, what you do, what you feel. That you care about anyone is God in you. (3) He is your life, what you are, your core. Your “you” was God’s first gift to you.

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

If you don’t know God and his son yet, maybe it’s time for you to meet him.