

PETE
CABRERA JR.

ONE OF THE WORLD'S LEADING TEACHERS ON IDENTITY

BACK

to

BASICS

WORKBOOK

ANSWERS TO 11 OF LIFE'S
MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Back-to-Basics Workbook

*Answers to 11 of Life's Most Important
Questions*

Pete Cabrera Jr.

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Back to Basics

Introduction

*Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.
Ephesians 5:17*

I. The Value of Understanding

In the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible, the word *understand* appears in approximately 89 different verses. Similarly, the word *understanding* appears in over 150 different verses. That means God sees understanding as such an important concept that he spoke of it over 240 times in Scripture.

The chart below contains foundational Church terms alongside the number of Bible verses in which each term is mentioned. Even though *understanding* is cited as many times as other highly important concepts, we often spend more time addressing less frequently used terms such as repentance and obedience than we do the value of understanding. To be clear, I am not suggesting that one doctrine is more important than another simply because the Bible mentions it more frequently, but I believe it is vital for us to give appropriate time and attention to any teaching that the Holy Spirit highlights so often throughout Scripture.

Foundational Church Terminology	
English Word	Number of Verses with Direct Mentions in the KJV
1. Faith	231
2. Repentance	26
3. Grace	159
4. Obedience	12
5. Baptism	22
6. Understand	89
7. Understanding	156

II. The Truth vs. the Truth You Understand

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
John 8:32

In John 8:32, Jesus reveals that truth alone does not make us free. Instead, it is the truth that we *know* which makes us free. Interestingly enough, the same Greek word translated as *know* in John 8:32 is translated as *understand* only eleven verses later in John 8:43.¹ In other words, John 8:32 could also be translated, “And ye shall *understand* the truth, and the truth [*you understand*] shall make you free.” Isn’t that awesome? The key to freedom is not buried in the depths of the sea or hidden in a far-away galaxy. It is right before our eyes, if we would only seek to understand it.

III. Defining Understanding

So how should we define *understanding*? To arrive at a good, working definition, let us examine the first mention of the word understanding in the King James Version of the Bible:

*¹And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ²See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: ³And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom and **in understanding**, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, ⁴To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, ⁵And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship (Ex. 31:1 – 5, emphasis added).*

¹ Strong’s Greek 1097, ginosko (pronounced ghin-occe-ko), <http://biblehub.com/greek/1097.htm>, (2016)

In Exodus 31, God gave a man named Bezaleel the responsibility of overseeing an important construction project. In doing so, God filled Bezaleel with his Spirit, wisdom, and understanding to ensure that he was equipped for the task. This suggests that the kind of understanding God wants us to have starts with the in-filling of the Spirit. As our ultimate Guide, the Holy Spirit orders our steps so we can gain the skills that we need in order to complete our God-given assignments. **Understanding, then, can be defined as an instinctive, Spirit-led skillfulness that enables us to be effective at what God calls us to do.**

For instance, if I truly understand the anatomy of a shoe, I can create a shoe or, at the very least, make it work effectively. God understands life; therefore, he can create life and make it work effectively. In fact, because God understands all things, he possesses the knowledge that can make you an effective employee, businessperson, father, mother, friend, or servant. That is why, in all your getting, you should get an understanding (Prov. 4:7).

IV. Understanding God's Will

The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Deut. 29:29

By this point, it should be clear that God wants you to be a person of understanding. Even still, there are preachers and teachers who say it is impossible for us to understand God's will. I want to state emphatically and unapologetically that such teaching is contrary to Scripture. Though we do not know all things as God knows them, we do know what he chooses to reveal to us through his Word. Simply put, God's will is what brings him pleasure, so if it were impossible for us to understand his will, it would also be very difficult, if not impossible, for us to please him. Let us, therefore, stand on the truth that God wants us to understand his will (Eph. 5:17).

1 Thess. 5:18 reveals that the will of God is *in Christ Jesus*. In other words, **God discloses his will to us through all of the things we see Christ doing in Scripture**. As a result, if you want to know what pleases God, all you have to do is look to the life of Christ. In the Bible, Jesus delights in healing the sick, helping the poor, and setting people free from sin. That was God's will then, and it is still his will today.

V. Proving God's Will

*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may **prove** what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Rom. 12:2, emphasis added

Inasmuch as Eph. 5:17 encourages us to understand God's will, Rom. 12:2 challenges us to *prove* it. In other words, God wants us to demonstrate that his ways work. Remember, the will of God is revealed fully in Christ; for that reason, the Holy Spirit desires to empower us to do the same works that Jesus did when he walked the earth.

By answering some of life's most important questions, this workbook is purposed to reveal what the will of God is for the believer and to equip you to prove that will. In each lesson, I will present questions and/or activities designed to help you comprehend what you read. For your convenience, I have provided an answer key at the end of each lesson so you can compare your responses to mine before moving forward in the workbook.

Prepare to learn. Prepare to understand. Prepare to be transformed.

Sincerely,

Pete Cabrera Jr.

VI. Review Questions

1. Define the word *understanding*.

2. Fill in the blank: *It is not the truth alone that makes us free, but rather, our _____ of the truth that makes us free.*

3. Which of the following ministry gifts do you believe is given ***primarily*** to help the Body of Christ understand the things of God?

- A. Pastor
- B. Teacher
- C. Prophet
- D. Apostle
- E. Evangelist

Explain:

4. What is God's will for the believer?

Introduction Answer Key

VI. Review Questions

1. Define the word *understanding*.

Understanding is an instinctive, Spirit-led skillfulness that enables us to be effective at what God calls us to do.

2. Fill in the blank: *It is not the truth alone that makes us free, but rather, our understanding of the truth that makes us free.*

3. Which of the following ministry gifts do you believe is given primarily to help the Body of Christ understand the things of God?

A. Pastor

B. Teacher

C. Prophet

D. Apostle

E. Evangelist

Explain:

Teachers are responsible for helping students learn what they do not already know. A good teacher will break down a complex matter into simple terms so that the least of us can understand it.

4. **What is God's will for the believer?** God's will is the sum total of all of the things we see Christ doing and teaching in Scripture. Pertaining to the believer, God wants us to live in the same way that Jesus lived when he walked the earth.

—Lesson One—

Who is God?

Vocabulary List

- *Law of first mention*
- *Ruach*
- *Pneuma*

Introduction

Who is God? This question brings to mind the words of King David, who wrote, "...neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me" (Psalm 131:1). Without a doubt, God is so great and his intelligence so immeasurable that we would be foolish to think we could comprehend everything about him. Having said that, while we do not know everything about God, there is a great deal that we can learn about him through his Word. Our primary objective in this lesson is to identify who God is so that we might better understand his will for our lives.

Back-to-Basics Opening Challenge

Directions: In the space below, write down your response to the question "Who is God?" You will have another opportunity to respond to this question at the end of the lesson, so there is no need to change your answer in this section once you have written it down.

Who is God?

Note: In the following sections, you will see questions of various types. Answer each item to the best of your ability, and be sure to fill in any blanks that appear.

I. Who is God?

A. The Law of First Mention

The **law of first mention is a principle that Bible students use to interpret Scriptures more accurately.** In essence, this “law” encourages readers to explore the first time a word or concept appears in Scripture and trace its development throughout the Bible to learn foundational truths about it. With that in mind, let us turn our attention to the Book of Genesis.

B. Three in One

*¹In the beginning **God** created the heaven and the earth. ²And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the **Spirit of God** moved upon the face of the waters. ³And God **said**, Let there be light: and there was light.”*

Gen. 1:1 – 3, emphasis added

One of the foundational truths revealed in Genesis 1:1 – 3 is that of the Godhead. In other words, God is three in one. 1 John 5:7 declares that “there are three that bear record in heaven, the _____, the _____, and the _____: and **these three are one.**” Perhaps, then, it is no surprise that we find *these three* in the Bible’s opening verses.

Firstly, Genesis 1:1 says, “**God created...**” I believe that to be a reference to the *Father*. Gen 1:2 goes on to say, “And the **Spirit of God moved...**” which is an obvious reference to *the Holy Ghost*. Finally, Gen. 1:3 says, “**God said,**” which I believe to be a reference to *the Word of God*. So then, God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, and God the Word (i.e. Jesus Christ¹) worked as one to form Creation.

1. Which of the following Scriptures testifies that God is three in one?

- A. John 1:14 C. 1 John 5:7
B. Eph. 1:3 D. Rom. 8:32

II. The Father

A. Attributes of God

Without a doubt, God possesses unique characteristics that set him apart from everyone else. Complete the matching activity below as we prepare to examine the distinct attributes of God the Father.

Directions: Match each of the Scriptures below with its corresponding quotation.

1. _____ Genesis 1:1

2. _____ Ephesians 4:6

3. _____ John 10:29

4. _____ 1 Corinthians 11:3

A. “...And the head of Christ is God”

B. “In the beginning God created...”

C. “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”

D. “My Father... is greater than all”

¹ See John 1:1 and John 1:14 for evidence that the Word of God appeared as the man we know as Jesus Christ.

The verses in the matching activity you just completed contain notable truths about God the Father. Let us examine a few of them now:

1. God is creative (Gen. 1:1).

From the very beginning, the Father is characterized as a creator, not a destroyer. Because God does not change, he still desires to demonstrate his creativity among us through innovative miracles, inspired messages, and the day-to-day joys of life.

2. God is not just a father, but the omnipresent Father (Eph. 4:6).

God the Father always hears us and is able to respond to our requests in all places, at all times.

3. God is ruler over all (Eph. 4:6).

The Father is matchless in power and sovereignty, and he desires to demonstrate his matchless power and sovereignty on his children's behalves.

4. The Father is greater than all, including Christ (John 10:29; 1 Cor. 11:3).

Ultimately, everyone must submit to the will of the Father, even Christ. Those who submit to God's will are rewarded with divine exaltation.

B. God as Adam's Father

... Enosh was the son of Seth. Seth was the son of Adam. Adam was the son of God.
Luke 3:38, NLT

Adam is the only creature that God created in his image and likeness. That means there was something unique about Adam, not only in his design, but also in the way God felt about him. Ultimately, God made everything so that Adam could rule over it.

Luke 3:38 states that Adam was God's son. Of no other earthly creation is such a statement made. As a son, Adam was the rightful heir to everything that belonged to his Father (Gen. 25:5). Indeed, if I were given the opportunity to write my own version of Gen. 1:26, it might read, "And God said, I want a son on earth who looks and acts just like me, so let us create one and bless him beyond his wildest imaginations."

If you are a parent, think about the first time you laid eyes on your newborn baby. Truly, the natural affection that we have for our children is so great that we want to do nothing less than give them the world. That is the extreme kind of love—times infinity—that God had for Adam and Eve. However, God did not only desire to give them the world; he actually did so.

C. God as Your Father

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Matt. 6:9

Beloved, God looks at you and wants to do nothing less than give you the world. In fact, when it's all said and done, our Heavenly Father will ensure that his righteous ones inherit a perfect world, which the Bible refers to as the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1).

2. Question: Which Testament, the Old or New, refers to God more often as Father? _____

The Old Testament refers to God as Father approximately 15 times compared to the New Testament, which refers to God as Father over 165 times in the Gospels alone.² Why this dramatic shift in the way the authors of the Bible viewed God? I believe it can be summed up by the mention of one name—*Jesus*.

It would seem that one of Jesus' missions was to restore to mankind what Adam lost, and one of the most important things that Adam lost was his view of God as a loving Father (Gen. 3:10). Consequently, when Jesus taught his disciples to refer to God as Father (Matt. 6:9; John 20:17), he was announcing that the time had come for mankind to be restored to his special position with God.

III. The Spirit

A. He's Alive

So far, we have established that God is a caring Father, but let us not stop there. God is also a *Spirit* (John 4:24). Interestingly enough, the first time God's Spirit appears in Scripture, he is **moving** upon the face of the waters preparing to bring life to that which is empty and void (Gen. 1:2). This reveals at least two things about the Holy Spirit: 1) He is alive and 2) He moves about the earth to produce the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

The Hebrew word for spirit is *ruach*³, **which means life and breath**. Similarly, the Greek word for spirit is *pneuma*⁴, **which means life, breath, and vitality**. So then, when we refer to God as a spirit, we are declaring him to be the creator and giver of all life, vitality, and consciousness.

3. Which of the following Scriptures shows that the Holy Spirit is God?

- A. Acts 5:3 – 4 C. John 14:26
B. Matt. 23:14 D. Rom. 8:26 – 27

B. He's Omnipresent

*Whither shall I go from thy **spirit**? Or whither shall I flee from thy **presence**?*

Psalm 139:7, emphasis added

In Psalm 139:7, King David expressed an important truth: The Holy Spirit is omnipresent, meaning, he is everywhere at all times. This should bring the believer great consolation because, **if God's Spirit is everywhere, we can experience his presence anywhere**. Believers do not need to worry about whether or not God is with us; his Spirit ensures us that he is as close to us as the air we breathe.

C. How He Loves Us!

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Rom. 5:5

While it is true that God's Spirit gives life to all creatures, that is not all he does. By virtue of who he is, the Holy Spirit endeavors to make believers aware of just how much God loves us. 1 Cor. 2:12 says, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Undoubtedly, the Holy Spirit wants us to know the incomparable love that God has for us and the tremendous blessings that he has prepared for those who love him.

² Robert H. Stein, "Fatherhood of God," <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/fatherhood-of-god.html>, (2014)

³ Strong's Hebrew 7307, ruach (pronounced roo-akh), <http://biblehub.com/hebrew/7307.htm>, (2016)

⁴ Strong's Greek 4151, pneuma (pronounced pnyoo-mah), <http://biblehub.com/greek/4151.htm>, (2016)

Directions: To explore how the Holy Spirit works in our lives, match each of the roles below with its supporting Scripture from the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible.

Roles of the Holy Spirit	Supporting Scriptures (KJV)
1. _____ He comforts.	A. Matthew 12:28
2. _____ He casts out devils.	B. John 14:16
3. _____ He sanctifies.	C. John 14:26
4. _____ He glorifies Christ.	D. John 16:13
5. _____ He teaches.	E. John 16:14
6. _____ He helps us pray.	F. Acts 1:8
7. _____ He speaks.	G. Acts 13:2
8. _____ He gives gifts.	H. Romans 8:16
9. _____ He guides us into all truth.	I. Romans 8:26
10. _____ He reminds us that we are God's children.	J. 1 Corinthians 12:7 – 11
11. _____ He empowers.	K. Ephesians 4:30
12. _____ He grieves.	L. 1 Peter 1:2

IV. The Will of God

A. The Holy Spirit Works through Us

Earlier, I stated that the Holy Spirit moves about the earth to manifest the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God, but how exactly does he do that? In 1 Corinthians, Paul posed a poignant question: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you” (3:16)? In other words, the Holy Spirit’s earthly residence is the Church, and the Church fulfills God’s will when we come into agreement with him by faith.

B. We Walk by Faith

Why do I say we must come into agreement with God *by faith*? Sadly, some people believe that they must “feel” God’s presence in order to know that he is there, and all too often, our need to feel something before we take action means that we never take action at all.

Don’t get me wrong; it’s a wondrous thing to experience God in a tangible way. However, our feelings should never replace our faith. If God says he is always with us (Matt. 28:20), we should believe him regardless of how we feel.

At this very moment, the Holy Spirit stands ready to comfort, sanctify, guide, and speak to mankind, but he wants to do all of those things through us. Ultimately, it is the Church’s responsibility to believe God’s Word and move on it in order to see the will of the Spirit manifest in people’s lives.

Directions: Use an attribute of the Holy Ghost to fill in the blanks in the section below labeled “My Challenge.”
Note: To locate attributes of the Holy Ghost, you can reference the matching activity you completed in Roman numeral 3, Section C, of this lesson. I have provided an example of how to complete the activity in the space below.

Example:

What I love most about the Holy Ghost is how he comforts us. By the end of this week, I will do my best to comfort someone.
(Insert attribute of the Holy Ghost)

My Challenge:

1. What I love most about the Holy Ghost is how he _____ . By the end of this week, I will do my best to _____ someone.
(Insert attribute of the Holy Ghost)

V. The Son

A. The Divinity of Christ

For sure, God is Father and Spirit, but he has chosen to reveal himself through the Son, Jesus Christ (Col. 1:15). Whenever someone mentions that Jesus is God, you can be sure that disputes will arise. For that reason, I see merit in defending Jesus’ divinity before explaining how it relates to the will of God for the believer.

Here are some of the most well-known Scriptures that refer to Jesus as God:

1. “But **unto the Son**, he saith, ‘Thy throne, **O God**, is forever and ever...’ – (Heb. 1:8, emphasis added)
2. “And Thomas answered and said unto Him, ‘My Lord and **my God!**’” – (John 20:28, emphasis added)
3. “Jesus said unto them, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am.**’” – (John 8:58, emphasis added; cross reference Ex. 3:14)
4. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, **being in the form of God**, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men...” – (Phil. 2:5 – 7, emphasis added)
5. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh...**” – (1 Tim. 3:16, emphasis added)

One of the most common misunderstandings among antichristian groups is that those who believe in the Godhead also believe that Jesus and the Father are the exact same person. That leads them to ask a plethora of questions such as, “If Jesus and God are the same person, how could Jesus pray to God?” and “If God cannot be tempted, and Jesus was tempted, how is Jesus God?”

As we established earlier in this lesson, God has always existed as the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. Therefore, when we say *Jesus is God*, we are saying that he is the Word of God made flesh (Luke 1:35; John 1:14), not that he, in his current form, is the exact same entity as God the Father.

To be perfectly clear, I do not believe that the Father left heaven and put on a body, nor do I believe that the Holy Spirit ever changed his original form. However, it is absolutely true that the Word of God was sent from heaven to dwell among men and save us from our sins (Matt. 1:21). That Word began with God; that Word was originally in the same form as God; and that Word was God (John 1:1).

The glory of the Gospel is that the Word of God willfully took on the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem us. That explains why Jesus was susceptible to temptation, yet never sinned. He is a man, but he is also the Word of God. It furthermore explains why the Bible says God the Father is greater than the Son. As the Supreme Spirit, God the Father is greater than all; therefore, if Jesus is the Word **made flesh**, it stands to reason that the Father is also greater than Jesus. Even so, by virtue of his God-nature, Christ is no less divine or eternal than the Father or the Holy Spirit.

B. The Virgin Birth

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

1 Pet. 1:23

While some claim falsely that Jesus was just an ordinary man, others claim that he was an extraordinary man, but that he was not born of a virgin. Those in the latter group deny Jesus' virgin birth based upon the false premise that human reproduction is impossible without the seed of a man.

The truth, however, is that the Word of God *is* seed (1 Pet. 1:23), and it is able to do far more than what the seed of a man can do. One astonishing characteristic of God's Word is that it contains the power to fulfill itself. So then, when the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and planted the Word of God in her womb, that self-fulfilling Word grew inside of Mary and eventually came forth as the holy child named Jesus of Nazareth.

C. The Kid is Not His Son

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli...

Luke 3:23, emphasis added

In America, there is a well-known talk show called the *Maury Show*. On *Maury*, mothers invite their children and potential babies' fathers to take DNA tests to see if the men in question actually fathered the children. Often, the accused men wait in suspense, hoping to hear Maury say, "You are **not** the father."

Well, I have news for everyone who would try to refute the divinity of Christ: Neither Joseph nor any other man was Jesus' biological father. In fact, to argue that Joseph was Jesus' biological father is to ignore Scripture altogether. In Luke 3:23, the parenthetical insertion "(as was supposed)" lets the reader know that, although people thought Joseph was Jesus' biological father, he really was not.

According to Matthew 22, when the Pharisees stated that Christ was the descendant of David, Jesus said, "If David then calls him Lord, how is he his son" (v. 45)? None of the Pharisees could answer Jesus because they were looking at the Messiah's birth from only a natural point of view. Today, however, we know that the Scriptures refer to Jesus as David's Lord and son because, in his original form, Jesus was God, yet, according to his natural lineage, he was King David's descendant.

D. The Perfect Blood

Interestingly enough, secular scientists have confirmed that a mother and baby's blood can be very close in the placenta without ever blending.⁵ That is important because, had Mary's blood mixed with Jesus', the Lord would have been inherently sinful just like the rest of us. Nevertheless, God, in his infinite wisdom, designed pregnancy so that Jesus' blood would not have to mix with Mary's.

After Adam's fall, no other man except Jesus Christ would ever possess perfect blood. God reasoned that, if sin could enter the world through one man's blood and make all men sinners, it was only right that perfect obedience could enter the world through another man's blood and make all men righteous. That is why the blood of Jesus is such an iconic symbol in Christendom. It testifies of the perfect life that Jesus laid down to pay for our sins (Eph. 1:7).

4. Which of the following Scriptures states that all men are sinners because of Adam's bloodline?

- A. Rom. 5:12 C. Rom. 6:23
B. Rom. 1:16 D. Rom. 8:16

VI. The Will of God in Christ

A. God Speaks by His Son

*¹God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
²Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.
Heb. 1:1 – 2*

I would like to conclude this lesson by addressing an age-old question: Is God hateful, or is he loving? Without going into a lengthy examination of old and new covenants or God's dealings with fallen man vs. his dealings with redeemed man, let us focus upon Jesus Christ, the one man who can settle the score.

Heb. 1:1 – 2 explains that God spoke in times past by the prophets, but **now speaks** to us through Jesus. This indicates that every prophet who came before Christ possessed some degree of ignorance pertaining to the full counsel of God.

1 Pet. 1:10 declares that the prophets of old *inquired and searched diligently* to understand the coming salvation of which they were moved to speak. In other words, although the prophets spoke accurately about things to come, they, themselves, did not have a full understanding of the revelation God was giving them.

B. Let There be Light!

*And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
Gen. 1:3*

In Gen. 1:3, God said, "Let there be light," but he did not create visible lights until the fourth day of Creation. In fact, up until Gen. 1:18 – 19, there was no observable evidence that any light existed. As with everything God does, he had a purpose for creating the world that way.

As I see it, the light in Gen. 1:3 is symbolic of Christ. Inasmuch as God called light out of darkness and waited three days to bring about its manifestation, he likewise declared the light of Christ to the prophets of old, but brought about no manifestation of that light until the fullness of time had come.

⁵ "Placenta 101," <http://www.mountsinai.on.ca/care/placenta-clinic/placenta101>, (2013)

C. Painting in the Dark

*Who being the **brightness** of his glory, and **the express image of his person**, and upholding all things by the word of his power...*

Heb. 1:3, emphasis added

Imagine painting a picture of someone in the dark. You might get the shape of the head right, but the nose will probably be the wrong size, and the ears will probably be in the wrong place altogether. In essence, that is what the prophets of old were doing—painting pictures of God while in the dark. Not until the light of Christ shone into the world did mankind get to see a perfect picture of the Father.

Today, there should be no debate about whether or not God is good. Jesus is literally the last word regarding God's nature. Therefore, when conversations about God's will become contentious, we need only look to the life of Christ to settle the matter. Generally speaking, if Jesus endorsed it, commanded it, or demonstrated it, it is God's will.

Directions: Read Luke 9:51 – 56 to answer the questions below.

⁵¹As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; ⁵³but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" ⁵⁵But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and he said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of. ⁵⁶For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And they went to another village (NIV).

1. Did Jesus' disciples ever have to adjust their ideas about what God was really like? Explain.

2. Have you ever had to adjust your ideas about what God is really like? _____ If so, what were some of the greatest challenges you encountered during that process?

3. In Luke 9:56, what does Jesus describe as one of the primary characteristics of his ministry?

Beloved, if you desire a ministry like Christ's, you must focus upon saving lives, not destroying them. Remember, the Bible never says that God is judgment or condemnation, but it does say that he is love (1 John 4: 8). This is the same love that the Holy Spirit pours out in our hearts so that we can help others in the same way that Christ has helped us.

VII. God's Desire for You

...He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

John 14:12

Directions: Read the list below. Place a checkmark on the line next to each item that accurately identifies the work of Christ. Leave the line blank if it is not something Jesus did during his earthly ministry.

1. Taught and preached the Gospel (Matt. 4:23) _____
2. Refused to eat with sinners (Matt. 9:10) _____
3. Expressed compassion for mankind (Matt. 9:36) _____
4. Unstopped deaf ears (Matt. 11:5) _____
5. Opposed false religion (Matt. 15:3 – 9) _____
6. Cast out devils (Mark 1:25 – 26) _____
7. Cured fevers supernaturally (Mark 1:30 – 31) _____
8. Healed skin diseases with a touch (Mark 1:40 – 41) _____
9. Opened blind eyes (John 9:6 – 7) _____
10. Held grudges against his enemies (Luke 23:34) _____
11. Healed the sick with no touch (John 4:50 – 51) _____
12. Healed those oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38) _____
13. Cursed people (Gal. 3:13) _____
14. Prayed fervently (Heb. 5:7) _____
15. Lived in obedience to God (Heb. 5:8) _____

All of the items that you checked in the activity above are demonstrations of God's will, but here's the best part: God's desire is that you do the same things Jesus did and greater (John 14:12)! So let me leave you with this encouraging word: If you keep pursuing God, you will most certainly see the works of Christ manifest in your life!

VIII. Review Questions

1. Define the following terms:

- **Law of first mention –**

- **Ruach –**

- **Pneuma –**

2. Why does the New Testament refer to God as Father more often than the Old Testament?

3. List 3 characteristics of the Holy Spirit.

- _____
- _____
- _____

4. What was so unique about Jesus' blood?

5. What is the simplest way to determine whether or not something is of God's nature?

IX. Back-to-Basics Closing Challenge—

Directions: You began this lesson by answering the question "Who is God?" Now that you have completed the lesson, answer the same question again.

<i>Who is God?</i>

Lesson One Answer Key

I. Who is God?

B. Three in One

1 John 5:7 declares that “there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and **these three are one**” (emphasis added). Perhaps, then, it is no surprise that we find **these three** in the Holy Bible’s first mention of God.

1. Which of the following Scriptures testifies that God is three in one?

- A. John 1:14 **C.** 1 John 5:7
B. Eph. 1:3 D. Rom. 8:32

II. The Father

A. Attributes of God

Directions: Match each of the verses below with its corresponding quotation.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>B.</u> Genesis 1:1 | A. “...And the head of Christ is God” |
| 2. <u>C.</u> Ephesians 4:6 | B. “In the beginning God created...” |
| 3. <u>D.</u> John 10:29 | C. “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” |
| 4. <u>A.</u> 1 Corinthians 11:3 | D. “My Father... is greater than all” |

C. God as *Your* Father

2. **Question:** Which Testament, the Old or New, refers to God more often as Father? The New Testament

III. The Spirit

A. He’s Alive

3. Which of the following Scriptures shows that the Holy Spirit is God?

- A.** Acts 5:3 – 4 C. John 14:26
B. Matt. 23:14 D. Rom. 8:26 – 27

C. How He Loves Us!

Directions: To explore how the Holy Spirit works in our lives, match each of the roles below with its supporting Scripture.

Roles of the Holy Spirit	Supporting Scriptures
1. <u>B.</u> He comforts.	A. Matthew 12:28
2. <u>A.</u> He casts out devils.	B. John 14:16
3. <u>L.</u> He sanctifies.	C. John 14:26
4. <u>E.</u> He glorifies Christ.	D. John 16:13
5. <u>C.</u> He teaches.	E. John 16:14
6. <u>I.</u> He helps us pray.	F. Acts 1:8
7. <u>G.</u> He speaks.	G. Acts 13:2
8. <u>J.</u> He gives gifts.	H. Romans 8:16
9. <u>D.</u> He guides us into all truth.	I. Romans 8:26
10. <u>H.</u> He reminds us that we are God's children.	J. 1 Corinthians 12:7 – 11
11. <u>F.</u> He empowers.	K. Ephesians 4:30
12. <u>K.</u> He grieves.	L. 1 Peter 1:2

V. The Son

D. The Perfect Blood

4. Which of the following Scriptures states that all men are sinners because of Adam's bloodline?

- A. Rom. 5:12 C. Rom. 6:23
 B. Rom. 1:16 D. Rom. 8:16

VI. The Will of God in Christ

C. Painting in the Dark

Directions: Read Luke 9:51 – 56 to answer the questions below.

1. Did Jesus' disciples ever have to adjust their ideas about what God was really like? Explain.
Yes. The disciples initially viewed God through the eyes of great (but fallen) men like Elijah. They had to adjust to a more accurate view of God by learning the nature of Christ.
2. Have you ever had to adjust your ideas about what God is really like? If so, what were some of the greatest challenges you encountered during that process? Answers will vary based upon the individual's experiences.
3. In Luke 9:56, what does Jesus describe as one of the primary characteristics of his ministry?
According to Jesus, one of the primary characteristics of his ministry is saving people's lives.

VII. God's Desire for You

Directions: Read the list below. Place a checkmark on the line next to each item that lists one of the works of Christ. Leave the line blank if it is not something Jesus did during his earthly ministry.

1. Taught and preached the gospel (Matt. 4:23) ✓
2. Refused to eat with sinners (Matt. 9:10) _____
3. Expressed compassion for mankind (Matt. 9:36) ✓
4. Unstopped deaf ears (Matt. 11:5) ✓
5. Opposed false religion (Matt. 15:3 – 9) ✓
6. Cast out devils (Mark 1:25 – 26) ✓
7. Cured fevers supernaturally (Mark 1:30 – 31) ✓
8. Healed skin diseases with a touch (Mark 1:40 – 41) ✓
9. Opened blind eyes (John 9:6 – 7) ✓
10. Held grudges against his enemies (Luke 23:34) _____
11. Healed the sick with no touch (John 4:50 – 51) ✓
12. Healed those oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38) ✓
13. Cursed people (Gal. 3:13) _____
14. Prayed fervently (Heb. 5:7) ✓
15. Lived in obedience to God (Heb. 5:8) ✓

VIII. Review Questions

1. Define the following terms:

- **Law of first mention** – The law of first mention is a principle that encourages readers to explore the first time a word or concept appears in Scripture and trace its development throughout the Bible.
- **Ruach** – Ruach is a Hebrew word for spirit that means life and breath.
- **Pneuma** – Pneuma is a Greek word for spirit that means life, breath, and vitality.

2. Why does the New Testament refer to God as Father more often than the Old Testament? The New Testament refers to God more often as Father because Jesus taught his disciples that the time had come for the relationship between God and his children to be totally restored.

3. List 3 characteristics of the Holy Spirit. *Answers will vary.*

- He comforts.
- He teaches.
- He guides us into all truth.

4. What was so unique about Jesus' blood? Because Jesus was born directly of God, his blood was sinless. That is why he was qualified to be the last Adam who could save all men from the penalty of sin.

5. What is the simplest way to determine whether or not something is of God's nature? Jesus is the express image of God, so the simplest way to determine whether or not something is of God's nature is to look to the life of Christ. Generally speaking, if Jesus endorsed it, commanded it, or demonstrated it, it is God's will.

About Pete Cabrera Jr.

Pete Cabrera Jr. is a proud husband, father, and minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Years ago, Pete felt something was missing in his life when, one morning, he read the following Bible verse: “But ye have not so learned Christ” (Eph. 4:20, KJV). Up until that point, Pete had learned Scriptures, how to have church, and how to “live right,” but he had not learned Christ. To say the least, Eph. 4:20 inspired him to pursue a deeply personal relationship with the Lord.

Around that same time, Pete was suffering from a serious back problem, which the doctors said would require major surgery. Fed up with the pain, Pete went on a lengthy search for a miracle from the Lord even though no one at his church thought the miracle was possible. Eventually, Pete found a man who truly believed in the authority he possessed in Christ. When Pete allowed the man of God to lay hands on him, his back was instantly healed.

Since receiving his supernatural healing, Pete has traveled the world in order to reach the lost with God’s power and to equip God’s people to do the same. He is now a part of a local church that believes fully in the gifts of the Spirit as well as the believer’s identity in Christ. Pete loves to see the Father’s will come to pass in the lives of those who desire an authentic encounter with God Almighty.

Certainly, he is living proof that God can do extraordinary things through ordinary Christians. As Pete often says, “Jesus is the real star; we’re just his hype men!”

To learn more about Pete Cabrera Jr., visit www.royalfamilyinternational.com.