

## Relationships between God and Humanity

### God's Love through Jesus

Verse	What does it tell us about Jesus's relationship with humans?
'Jesus replied "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My father will love them and we will come to them and make our home with them".'	Jesus loves all humans and all beings and all the world regardless of what they have done. However, anyone who loves and obeys Jesus will be welcomed into their home (heaven) where they will be loved by God and Jesus. By following and loving him we will get to Heaven because we are imperfect and he is not.
'And I will ask the father and he will give you another helper and he will be with you forever.'	Jesus is able to request things from God as a son of God. He only needs to ask and the wish will be granted. Jesus teaches them that all they need is ask and their needs will be granted. It is less about the specific helper and more about the fact that we should follow Jesus's lead in asking God for things we need. The specific helper in question though, is the Holy Spirit.
'The spirit helps us in our weakness.'	The Holy Spirit is what keeps us going in our times of need and weakness. The Spirit represents God's omnipresence and his being in all of us all the time.
'But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.'	The Holy Spirit can grow all sorts of positive things in the mind and hearts of the people it supports. Through the Holy Spirit they can gain all the things mentioned in the verse. It is about regaining control over their lives and refining their own abilities.
'Your attitude should be the same that Jesus Christ had.'	God sent Jesus as an example for humans to follow. Christians should behave like Jesus did, and follow all his teachings.

### God as Atemporal

- Most Christians hold the core belief of God being an atemporal (outside of time) and transcendent (not bound by the universe) entity.
- This means that he is able to see every moment, everything and everyone at any and all the time. He is able to be omnipresent, or everywhere at once.
- This view is largely based on the idea that God was able to create the world and so therefore wouldn't be bound by it, it also is based on the fact that he is all-powerful (omnipotent) and so is not bound by what humans are limited to as a result of physics.

- The view is backed up by a quote in Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you”.
- The significance of this quote is that God can see the past (because it has happened and he watched it), the present (because it is happening now) and the future (because he knows and has set out plans for specific individuals). It also shows God has a plan for everyone.
- As with every belief in the Christian religion, there are some exceptions. A small minority of Christians logicise that it is impossible for God to be atemporal as he is able to do things in the moment. He would not be able to relate to what he has created because he is not seeing it.
- This group of Christians see the concept of God being able to respond to change and answer prayers such as that of King Hezekiah (2 Kings) who is sick and dying. He asks God to give him more life and God says, “I will add fifteen years to your life”. This shows God responding to humanity.
- He has also interacted physically in the Old Testament by the Noah’s Flood tale and God destroying Sodom and Gomorrah due to the sinful nature of those living there.
- For these Christians, there is no set path necessarily, but God will guide those people who come to him for aid and who he wishes to use. God isn’t outside of time, but rather he is time.
- One piece of evidence for this idea is the verse: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End”. It suggests time cannot flow without God.

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## Human Communication with God

- There is a specific issue which the Catholics and Protestants are fiercely split on. That is whether individual humans who are not priests or holy at all, can communicate openly with God.
- Catholics for example, believe there is a bridge constructed between God and a Priest when he is ordained (made a priest). They can then perform acts in the name of God.
- For many Catholics, this is the base for acts in the church such as Confession which they believe they can go to the priest to commit. The priest speaks to God and asks for forgiveness for this person. It is the responsibility of the priest to allow confession and forgiveness just as Jesus forgave the sinners. In Galatians 2:20 it says, ‘It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me’.
- Catholics also believe the Church (a representative of God on Earth) can give ‘indulgences’ and ‘absolution’, which are two methods of eradicating sin. They also say giving money/aid to the Church in the name of a dead person will help them get through purgatory.
- On the other hand, Protestants could be named the ‘Church of the People’ because they believe that in the eyes of God, everyone is equally a sinner and equally needs forgiveness. As a result of this, God will speak to each person individually, priests are not required to be mediators between the person and God.
- This is especially important as it means prayer between someone and God is strongly personal, they are directly and purposefully communicating with God. Their sins are their own and God is the only one who can forgive them. No priest can forgive someone of their sins.