

Grace and Truth

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Will the real God please stand up? Christian views of God's character (Baylor University, cited by Jim Cook)

- 25% see God as benevolent – a benefactor God
- 25% see God as powerful and authoritative
- 25% see God as distant
- 25% see God as a judging and critical God

Exodus 34:6-7 “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and **abounding in steadfast love** [*hesed*] and **faithfulness** [*emets*], keeping steadfast love to thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and fourth generation.”

Nahum 1:3 [Context: prophecy against Nineveh]
The LORD is *slow to anger* and great in power,
and the LORD *will by no means clear the guilty*.
His way is in whirlwind and storm,
and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

Lam. 3:22-23 [Context: On way to exile]
The *steadfast love* of the LORD never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
²³ they are new every morning;
great is your *faithfulness*.

Ps. 86:14-15 O God, insolent men have risen up against me;
a band of ruthless men seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.
¹⁵ But you, O Lord, *are a God merciful and gracious,*
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Ps. 57:10-11 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among the nations.
For your *steadfast love* is great to the heavens,
your *faithfulness* to the clouds.
Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!
Let your glory be over all the earth!

Jonah 4:2 [Context: The people of Nineveh have just repented, and God is ready to show them mercy]
And he prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are *a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love* [Note that Jonah omits “and faithfulness”], and relenting from disaster.

Prov. 20:6 [What about us?]
Many a man proclaims his own *steadfast love*, but a *faithful* man who can find?

Psalms 85:7-11
⁷ Show us your *steadfast love*, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.
⁸ Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to folly. [Ex. 34 context: after idolatry]
⁹ Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land. [Moses: "Show me your glory"]
¹⁰ *Steadfast love and faithfulness* meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
¹¹ *Faithfulness* springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Other passages to consider: Ps. 108:4; Ps. 89:1-2, 14; Ps. 61:7; Gen. 32:10 [prefigures]; Ps. 138:2; Ps. 115:1; Jer. 32:18; Joel 2:13; Neh. 9:17; Micah 7:20; Is. 16:5; 2 Sam. 2:6, 15:18. (Many more in the Psalms.)

"Perfect in power, in love and purity." (*Holy, Holy, Holy*)

Trinity is written into the very character of God.

John 1:14 – "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, *full of grace and truth*."

2 Timothy 1:7 – "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-control."

