

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - April 4, 2024

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Title: Theology - The Doctrine of God

"The Attributes of God"

I. Introduction

A. Attributes are qualities or characteristics of a person or thing. Although general revelation may give us a glimpse of God's attributes, it is not until we come to God's Word that we understand the character of God as He has revealed it to us.

B. Special revelation is absolutely necessary in order to understand the Creator.

II. God's Natural Attributes

A. **Defined-** Natural attributes are the very nature of God's Being. They are unique to Him and cannot be the characteristics of man either now or in the future.

1. This is sometimes questioned because of 1 John 3:2, "...but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."
2. In what sense will we be like **Him**? We will be like Jesus in His moral attributes (love, holiness, mercy, etc.).
3. We can never become like Him in His natural attributes (eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, etc).

B. Described

1. **Transcendence** (Isa. 57:15) - God is above His creation.
"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, ..."

2. **Immanence** (Isa. 57:15; Col. 1:7)
 - a. Although God is above all (transcendence) He has seen fit to be actively involved **within** His creation (immanence).
 - b. The climax of His immanence was His coming to earth as a Baby, living for 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ years on earth, and dying on a cross for man's sins.

"... I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, ..." (Isa. 57:15b)

"one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 4:6)

3. **Eternity** - God has no **beginning nor ending**. There is no past, present, nor future with God, only eternal present.

Point: God is not limited by time!

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Psa. 90:2)

4. **Infinity** - God has **no limitation in space**.
- a. All of His attributes are without limit. (See 1 Kings 8:27; Psa. 103:17; 138:7-12; Isa. 55:8-9; Jer. 23:24).
5. **Immutability** - God is not capable of nor susceptible to change; He is **unchangeable**, invariable, and permanent. (Psa. 102:24-27; Isa. 46:9-10; James 1:17)
- "For I am the LORD, I change not." (Mal. 3:6)
- a. When we speak of the immutability of God, in a sentence, this says that God never differs from himself.
- b. He may on occasion alter his dealings with men in a dispensational sense, but his divine character remains constant.
- c. This is a vital attribute (i.e., immutability) of God, without which he could not be God.
- d. For example, a person may only change in two directions. He may go from better to worse, or from worse to better. But it is unthinkable that God could travel down either of these roads.
- e. To go from worse to better implies past imperfection. To go from better to worse implies present imperfection.
- f. However, how can we understand those occasions when we read of God repenting? In fact, this is recorded no less than 15 times in the Old Testament. Here are a few examples:

"And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." (Gen. 6:6)

"And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." (Exod. 32:14)

"And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel" (1 Sam. 15:35).

"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not"
(Jonah 3:10).

Comments:

1) It is vital to observe God's immutable plan in dealing with man as stated in the Bible. Note these observations:

- a) God will always bless when men do good.
- b) God will always judge when men do evil.
- c) God will always forgive when men repent.

2) Thus, in the verses quoted above, it was man who changed, **Not** God.

"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou are the same, and thy years shall not fail."
(Heb. 1:10-12)

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (Heb. 1:17)

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
(Acts 1:11)

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever"
(Heb. 13:8)

6. **Omniscience** (Psa. 139:2; Isa. 40:26; 46:10; Rom. 11:23)

- a. Omniscience means that God is **all-knowing**. He knows the future as well as the past. He knows all things whether actual or merely possible.
- b. He knows things immediately and spontaneously. He knows the thoughts of man better than man knows them himself.

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"
(Isa. 46:10)

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." (Psa. 147:5)

"O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest

my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether." (Psa 139:1-4)

"O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Rom. 11:33-34)

- c. God's knowledge is beyond our comprehension. It is not only that He knows more than we do. He knows differently than we do.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

(Isa. 55:8-9)

Comments:

- 1) God's knowledge of the future should not be confused with God's determination of the future.
- 2) God can know a certain event will happen without forcing it to happen that way.

Point: God's omniscience is a free act of His will.

Comments:

- 1) If God desires, He can determine not to remember our sins. This wonderful ability is a reminder of the power of the blood of Christ to completely cleanse us from our sins.

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." (Isa. 43:25)

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:12)

STOP: It's time for reflection. We certainly should rejoice in the comfort of knowing from the Word of God that He forgives our sins. But for a few moments, without getting stuck in a rut, what specific sin(s) are you so grateful to God, knowing that He has forgiven you, and that He will remember no more? //You don't have to be concerned about sharing this information with others. //

The point of this pause for reflection is for us to really grasp the wonder and joy of being a forgiven sinner, saved by the GRACE of God!

7. **Omnipresence** - means that God is everywhere present in the universe in the whole of His being.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Psa. 139:7-10)

"Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do Not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD." (Jer. 23:23-24)

8. **Omnipotence** - means that God is **all-powerful** and is able to do whatever He wills to do.

a. By his great power, God created the universe and its creatures. He maintains in existence all that He has created, and He determines the events and the final end of the universe and its inhabitants.

b. In Scripture He is called the **Almighty God** (Gen. 17:1) and the **Lord God Almighty** (Rev. 4:8)

"Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (Job 42:1-2)

"Ah Lord God! behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and **there is nothing too hard for thee.**" (Jer. 32:17)

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**" (Matt. 19:26)

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of

mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. 19:6)

- c. It is God's omnipotent hand that holds the universe together.

Points:

- 1) All that is necessary for the universe to be destroyed is for the Lord to withdraw His preserving power.

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1:16-17)

Comments:

- 1) God can do anything in harmony with His nature.
- 2) He does not do things that are foolish, self-contradictory, sinful, unworthy of deity, or against the promises He has given in His Word.
- 3) For example:
 - God cannot lie (Titus 1:2)
 - God limits His omnipotence both by His Word and by His will.
 - God has also limited Himself by giving to each person a free will to choose to accept His offer of salvation or to reject it; To serve Him or decide to serve something or someone else.

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; ..." (Joshua 24:15a)

- d. The omnipotence of God is a great comfort to all Christians. No problem is too big for our God! No trial too difficult. No challenge is impossible!

//Why not just give God some Praise right now??//

Point: Here is some encouragement for every Christian:

Take your problem(s) to the Lord and do as the old song says: "Take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there."

//Thank You Lord!!//

*** "We serve a God who is able to do all rational, right, and worthy things, a God who is equal to all emergencies, and competent to the care of that which he has made."

- William Newton Clarke

Are you excited, thankful, and full of praise for the many blessings that you have in and from the Lord?

It is once again interactive time. Please respond to the questions that follow by referring to the material presented in this lesson. Also, please complete the biblical passages by filling in the blank spaces. All passages have been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

For responses given to the questions presented, please annotate the page number from this handout from which you gleaned your response.

1. God's _____ are the very nature of His being. They are _____ to Him and cannot be the characteristics of _____ either _____ or in the _____.

2. What does Transcendence in reference to God mean?

Your response:

3. What is the term used that says God has seen fit to be actively involved within His creation? (Circle the correct response.)

- A. Immanence
- B. Omnipotent
- C. Omniscient
- D. None of the above

4. God has no beginning nor ending. What term describes this attribute of God?

- A. Infinity
- B. Eternity
- C. Immutability
- D. None of the above

5. God is not capable nor susceptible to change is known as His what?

- A. Omnipotence
- B. Eternity
- C. Longevity
- D. Immutability

6. God may on occasion alter His dealings with men in a dispensational sense, but His divine character does what?

Your response:

7. "Every _____ gift and every _____ gift is from above, and _____ down from the _____ of lights, with whom is no _____, neither _____ of turning."

[Hebrews 1:17]

8. "_____ the _____ yesterday, and to _____ and for ever."

[Hebrews 13:8]

9. What is the term (in reference to God) that means He is all-knowing? (Circle the correct response.)

- A. Omnipotent
- B. Omnipresence
- C. Immutability
- D. Omniscience

10. "_____ is our LORD, and of great _____; his _____ is infinite."

[Psalm 147:5]

11. "Neither is there any _____ that is not _____ in his sight: but _____ things are _____ and _____ unto the _____ of him with whom we have to do."

[Hebrews 4:13]

12. God's knowledge is _____ our _____. It is not only that He knows more than we do. He knows _____ than we do.

Your response and the page number where you gleaned the answer:

13. I, even I, and he that _____ out thy _____ for mine _____ sake, and will not _____ thy sins."

[Isaiah 43:25]

14. "For I will be _____ to their _____, and their _____ and their _____ will I remember _____ more."

[Hebrews 8:12]

15. What does Omnipresence mean?

Your response:

16. God is _____ - _____ and He is able to do whatever He wills to do. This describes what about God?

Your response:

17. Ah Lord God! behold, thou has made the heaven and the _____ by thy great _____ and _____ out arm, and there is _____ too _____ for thee."

[Jeremiah 32:17]

18. "in hope of _____ life, which God, that _____ lie, promised before the _____ began."

[Titus 1:2]

19. "And if it seem _____ unto you to _____ the Lord,
_____ you this day, whom ye will _____; ..."

[Joshua 24:15a]

20. What care, concern, and/or problem/situation do you need to
take to the Lord?

I truly trust and pray that you have been blessed from this lesson. May
the Lord continue to bless and keep you as you put all of your trust and
care in Him, who does all things well!

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own
understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall
direct thy paths." [Proverbs 3:5-6]

May the Love of God and the Sweet communion of the Holy Spirit,
continue to rest, rule, and abide in your hearts both now and forever.

Pastor Austin