

# Theology Proper~Doctrine of God

The Attributes of God ~ What is God like?

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## I. God is “understandable”

God can be known, but he cannot be fully known. God has revealed something of himself and his character/attributes in his Word. These attributes of God are how we know him and what he is like.

## II. God's attributes relating to himself

God's attributes which respect the inner being of God. They are involved in God's relations to himself and belong to his nature independently of his connection with the universe.

### A. God is Infinite (greatness)

- God is without *outside* limitations.
- Ps 40:5, Ps 71:15, Ps 103:12, 1 Kings 8:27, Rom 11:33

#### 1. Self-existent (greatness)

- God has the ground of his existence in himself. He is independent.
- He exists by the necessity of his own being.
- *Ex 3:14, John 5:26, John 17:24-25*

#### 2. Immutable (greatness)

- God is changeless in His being and purposes, and is incapable of growth or decay in any respect. God is “constant” in character and purpose.
- Ps 33:11, Num 23:19, 1 Sam 15:29, Mal 3:6, Heb 1:12, Heb 13:8, James 1:17b

#### 3. A unity

- God is a unity of one essence in three distinct persons.
- The state or quality of being one. By this we mean (*a*) that the divine nature is undivided and indivisible; (*b*) that there is but one infinite and perfect God.

*The Father is God:* 1 Pet 1:2

*Jesus is God:* John 1:1

*Holy Spirit is God:* 1 Cor 3:16.

*Unity:* Deut 6:4, Is 44:6, John 5:44, 1 Cor 8:4, John 10:30, John 17:22, John 14: 16-23

### B. God is Perfect (greatness)

God is complete in Himself, lacking nothing. Job 37:16, Ps 18:30

#### 1. Truth (goodness)

- Truth is conformity to fact or actuality (AHD3). It is fidelity to an original or a standard (in this case God is the standard; thus, he conforms to himself, doing so perfectly).
- God *is* truth. He is genuine and consistent; he is what he appears and claims to be.
- All truth is founded in and derived from God.
- 1 John 5:20, John 14:6

#### 2. Love (goodness)

- God is eternally moved to self-communication; however, love, in God, is seeking the highest good and glory of his perfections.
- God is attracted to Himself and is graciously displayed to Himself. He is charmed by His own loveliness; he delights in His own infinite beauty.
- 1 Jn 4:8, Jn 17:24

#### 3. Holiness (goodness)

- Separation or apartness. It is the idea of moral purity; i.e., separation from that which is sinful, unclean, bad.
- God's holiness is a governing attribute, governing the rest of His attributes. It is the essential moral nature of God.
- Is 6:1-5, Ps 99:4-9, 1 Pet 1:15-16, Ps 89:35, Ex 15:11

### III. God's attributes in relating to his creation

God's attributes seen in the outward revelation of his being. They are involved in God's relation to the creation and are exercised as a result of the existence of the creation and its dependence upon him.

#### A. God is related to Time & Space

##### 1. Eternal (greatness)

- God's existence cannot be measured by time. The past, present, and future of God's existence is possessed by Him in one indivisible present.
- God transcends all temporal limitations and is without beginning or end.
- Gen 21:33; Deut 33:27; Ps 90:2, 102:11-12; Job 36:26; Rev 1:8, 4:8

##### 2. Immense

- God is not limited by or confined to space.
- 1 Kings 8:27, Rom. 8:39

#### B. God is related to Creation

##### 1. Omnipresent (greatness)

- God is in the universe, everywhere present at the same time, filling every part of it with His whole being.
- This does not mean that God is everywhere present in the same sense.
- Ps 139:7-10; Jer 23:23-24

##### 2. Omniscient (greatness)

###### a. Definition

- God's knowledge includes all things past, present, and future, immediately, simultaneously, and eternally, whether things actual or possible: God is all-knowing.
- Ps 139:1-4; Prov 5:21; Matt 10:29-30; Acts 1:24; 1 Jn 3:20

###### b. Corollary. Wisdom (greatness)

- Knowledge applied--rightly.
- Ps 103:24; Rom 8:28, 11:33, 16:27; Eph 3:10

##### 3. Omnipotent (greatness)

- "Power" is the ability to produce effects.
- Gen 17:1, 18:14; Job 42:2; Is 40:28; Jer 32:17; Rev 19:6

#### B. God is related to Moral Beings

##### 1. Faithful: transitive truth (goodness)

- God's faithfulness is his trustworthiness to act in accordance with his word or promises. He is reliable.
- Deut 7:8-10; Ps 36:5; Ps 89:1,2,5,8; Ps 119:90; Ps 143:1; Lam 3:23; 1 Cor 10:13; Heb 10:23; 1 Jn 1:9

##### 2. Goodness: Mercy and Grace -- transitive love (goodness)

- God's goodness: God's *benevolent* concern for His creatures (Acts 14:17).
- God's mercy: His compassion, pity, kindness, tenderness, longsuffering, and gentleness toward *miserable* sinners. Deut 4:31; Ps 25:6; Ps 103:4; 2 Cor 1:3; Eph 2:4-8; Ps 145:9,15-16; Neh 9:17-21
- God's grace: undeserved, unearned, unrequited, and unwanted favor toward *condemned* sinners. 2 Kgs 13:23; Rom 3:23-24; Rom 5:17, 20; Rom 6:1; 2 Cor 12:9; Eph 1:7; Eph 2:8-9; Eph 3:7-8; Titus 2:11-12; Jam 4:6

##### 3. Righteous and Just: transitive holiness (goodness)

- Consistent with what is morally right; conformity to a right standard. Honorable and fair in one's dealings and actions.
- Deut 32:4; Ps 11:7, 145:17; Jer 50:7; Rom 2:6, 3:26; Gen 18:25; Ps 89:14; 1 Pet 1:17; Heb 6:10; Dan 9:14; 1 Jn 1:9

##### 4. Incomprehensible (greatness)

- God cannot be completely known by a finite mind.
- Job 11:7-9, Ps 145:3, Ps 147:5, Is 55:9, Rom 11:3,