

Week 7: The Attributes of God

Grudem_{ST} 11-13; Grudem_{BD} 4-5; Ryrie 6

“The various perfections [or attributes] of God are not component parts of God. Each describes His total being.” (Ryrie, 39)

Incommunicable Attributes of God: those that God does not share or “communicate” to us (Grudem, 157-181)

- A. Independence: *God does not need us or the rest of creation for anything* (Ps. 50:10-12; Acts 17:24-25)
- B. Immutability: *God is unchanging in His being, perfections, purposes and promises* (Num. 23:19; Ps. 33:11; Is. 46:9-11; Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17)
 1. But God sometimes does change His mind (Gen. 6:6; Ex. 32:9-14; Is. 38:1-6; Jon. 3:4,10)
- C. Eternity: *God has no beginning, end, or succession of moments in His own being; He sees all time equally vividly* (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 3:14; Job 36:26; Ps. 90:2,4; 2Pet. 3:8; Rev. 1:8)
- D. Omnipresence: *God is present at every point of space with His whole being* (Ps. 139:7-10; Jer. 23:23-24)
- E. Unity: *God is not divided into parts; in His whole being, His attributes are displayed entirely* (Ex. 34:6-7)

Communicable Attributes of God: those that God shares or “communicates” with us (Grudem, 185-222)

- A. Attributes Describing God’s Being
 1. Spirituality: *God’s being is not made of any matter, and has no parts or dimensions* (John 4:24)
 2. Invisibility: *God’s total essence will never be able to be seen by us* (John 1:18; 1Tim. 1:17)
 - a) But Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God (John 14:9; Col. 1:15)
 3. Glory: *the created brightness that surrounds God’s revelation of Himself* (Ps. 24:10; Rev. 21:23)
- B. Mental Attributes
 1. Omniscience: *God fully knows Himself and all things actual and possible* (Job 37:16; 1John 3:20)
 2. Wisdom: *God always chooses the best goals and the best means* (Job 12:13; Rom. 16:27)
 3. Truthfulness: *He is the true God, His knowledge and words are truth* (Prov. 30:5; John 17:3, 17)
- C. Moral Attributes
 1. Goodness: *God is the final standard of good, and all He does is worthy of approval* (Luke 18:19)
 2. Love: *God eternally gives of Himself to others* (Num. 14:18; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1John 4:8, 10)
 3. Mercy: *God’s goodness toward those in misery and distress* (2Sam. 24:14; Ps. 103:8; 2Cor. 1:3)
 4. Grace: *God’s goodness freely given to those who deserve punishment* (Ps. 119:132; Rom. 3:24)
 5. Patience: *God’s goodness in withholding of punishment for a time* (Nah. 1:3; 1Tim. 1:16)
 6. Holiness: *God is separated from sin and devoted to seeking His own honor* (Lev. 19:2; Is. 6:3)
 7. Righteousness: *God always acts in accordance with what is right* (Deut. 32:4; Rom. 3:25-26)
 8. Jealousy: *God continually seeks to protect His own honor* (Ex. 20:5; 34:14; Is. 48:11)
 9. Wrath: *God intensely hates all sin* (Ex. 32:9-10; John 3:36; Rom. 1:18)
- D. Attributes of Purpose
 1. Will: *God decides and approves everything He is and does* (Matt. 6:10; Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11)
 2. Freedom: *God does whatever He pleases* (Ps. 115:3; Prov. 21:1; Dan. 4:35)
 3. Omnipotence: *God is able to do all His holy will* (Jer. 32:17; Matt. 19:26; Eph. 3:20)

“God is more than the sum total of His perfections. When we have listed all the attributes we can glean from revelation, we have not fully described God.” (Ryrie, 39)

Questions for Reflection:

1. How should God’s “independence” affect your pride?
2. Does God’s “immutability” affect how you think He can work in your life?
3. Does God’s “eternity” affect your anxiety about the future?
4. Does God’s “omnipresence” affect how you conduct yourself when no one is watching you?
5. Does God’s “omniscience” affect your thought life?
6. Does God’s “truthfulness” help you place yourself under the authority of His Word?
7. Does God’s “goodness” reveal your true condition, and how you perceive your own actions?
8. Does God’s “love”, “mercy”, “grace” & “patience” towards you lead you to do so towards others?
9. Does God’s “holiness” cause you to completely separate yourself from sin?
10. Does God’s “jealousy” cause you to put away all other idols from before Him?
11. Does God’s “omnipotence” cause you to believe that He can work in you to correct any problem area in your life the questions above may have revealed?