

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD



To study God's attributes is to study his character, to answer questions like, Who is God? and What is God like? A typical classification of God's attributes divides them into those that are *incommunicable* (those that he does not share or "communicate" to anyone or anything else) and *communicable* (those that he shares with other beings). Like most theological classifications, this one is imperfect but still helpful as we seek to understand what is so far beyond ourselves.

God's communicable attributes can be further categorized into: attributes of God's being, mental attributes, moral attributes, attributes of purpose and "summary" attributes (attributes that, in a more particular way, modify each of the others).

It is important to consider that God is not simply the sum of his attributes. His attributes are not separate from one another, but each one modifies or qualifies each of the others.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem
The Attributes of God by A.W. Pink

- TRANSCENDENCE** — GOD TRANSCENDS ALL CREATION AND IS UNKNOWABLE APART FROM HIS SELF-INITIATED REVELATION.
- IMMANENCE** — GOD IS ACTIVE IN THIS WORLD AND IN OUR DAILY LIVES. GOD CARES ABOUT EVERY ASPECT OF OUR EXISTENCE AND INVITES US TO WELCOME HIS GUIDANCE, GRACE, AND LOVE.
- ASEITY** — GOD IS SELF-EXISTENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT AND HAS NO NEED OF HUMAN BEINGS OR THE REST OF CREATION.
- OMNIPRESENCE** — GOD HAS NO SIZE OR SHAPE AND IS PRESENT IN ALL PLACES WITH HIS ENTIRE BEING.
- UNITY** — GOD'S WHOLE BEING INCLUDES ALL OF HIS ATTRIBUTES AT ALL TIMES. THESE ATTRIBUTES ARE NEVER IN OPPOSITION.
- ETERNALITY** — GOD HAS ALWAYS EXISTED, HAVING NO BEGINNING AND NO END, AND EXPERIENCING NO SUCCESSION OF MOMENTS.
- IMMUTABILITY** — GOD CANNOT CHANGE IN HIS BEING, PERFECTIONS, PURPOSES, AND PROMISES.
- GLORY** — THE CREATED BRIGHTNESS THAT SURROUNDS GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF.
- BEAUTY** — GOD IS THE POSSESSOR AND THE SUM OF ALL DESIRABLE QUALITIES.
- BLESSEDNESS** — GOD DELIGHTS FULLY IN HIMSELF AND IN ALL THAT REFLECTS HIS CHARACTER.
- PERFECTION** — GOD FULLY POSSESSES ALL EXCELLENT QUALITIES AND LACKS NO QUALITIES THAT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR HIM.
- JEALOUSY** — GOD ALWAYS SEEKS TO PROTECT HIS OWN HONOR.
- GOODNESS** — GOD IS THE FINAL STANDARD OF ALL GOOD, AND ALL HE IS AND DOES IS WORTHY OF APPROVAL.
- PEACE** — GOD, IN HIS BEING AND ACTIONS, IS SEPARATE FROM ALL CONFUSION AND DISORDER.
- HOLINESS** — GOD IS SEPARATED FROM SIN AND HE IS COMMITTED TO SEEKING HIS OWN HONOR.
- LOVE** — GOD ETERNALLY GIVES OF HIMSELF TO OTHERS.
- MERCY** — GOD IS GOOD TO THOSE IN MISERY AND DISTRESS AND HE IS GOOD TO THOSE WHO DESERVE PUNISHMENT.
- RIGHTEOUSNESS** — GOD IS THE FINAL STANDARD OF WHAT IS RIGHT AND HE ALWAYS ACTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHAT IS RIGHT. (THIS IS ALSO KNOWN AS GOD'S JUSTICE)
- WRATH** — GOD INTENSELY HATES ALL SIN.
- TRUTHFULNESS** — GOD IS THE TRUE GOD WHOSE KNOWLEDGE AND WORDS ARE BOTH TRUE AND THE FINAL STANDARD OF TRUTH.
- KNOWLEDGE** — GOD FULLY KNOWS HIMSELF AND ALL ACTUAL AND POSSIBLE THINGS. (THIS IS ALSO KNOWN AS GOD'S OMNISCIENCE)
- WISDOM** — GOD ALWAYS CHOOSES THE BEST GOALS AND THE BEST MEANS TO THOSE GOALS.
- WILL** — GOD APPROVES AND DETERMINES TO BRING ABOUT EVERY ACTION NECESSARY FOR THE EXISTENCE AND ACTIVITY OF ALL THAT EXISTS.
- FREEDOM** — GOD DOES WHATEVER HE PLEASES.
- OMNIPOTENCE** — GOD IS ABLE TO DO ALL HIS HOLY WILL. GOD EXERCISES COMPLETE POWER OVER HIS CREATION AND RULES AS SOVEREIGN.
- INVISIBILITY** — GOD'S TOTAL ESSENCE, ALL OF HIS BEING, WILL NEVER BE VISIBLE TO US.
- SPIRITUALITY** — GOD IS A BEING WHO IS NOT MADE UP OF MATTER AND WHO CANNOT BE PERCEIVED BY OUR BODILY SENSES.