

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

What Is An Attribute?

An attribute is a characteristic, which is intrinsic to God. It is that by which God is identified or distinguished. God's attributes can also be defined as perfections. The attributes of God are who He is. In other words God does not merely possess justice, mercy, and love; He is justice, mercy, and love.

Classifications of attributes:

- Incommunicable attributes are those unique to God, for example eternal and self-existence.
- Communicable attributes are those transferable in part to humans, for example goodness, righteousness, and love.

Self-existence (Aseity)

God is independent of all things. He is perfectly self-sufficient, not depending on anything outside Himself. – John 5:26

- God depends on nothing; all things depend on Him. – Rom. 11:36
- God needs nothing – Acts 17:24-26
- He does everything according to the council of His own will. – Eph. 1:5, 9, 11
- God's sacred name Yahweh (YHWH) speaks of His aseity. – Ex. 3:14

Eternity of God

God transcends all limitations of time, so that He is without beginning and without ending. God is not limited by moments of time. – Psalm 90:1-4

- God is the first and the last – Isaiah 41:4, 43:10-13, 44:6
- God existed prior to creation. – Gen. 1:1, John 1:1, 17:5 & 24
 - All true believers in the Gospel will have eternal life – John 3:14-16, 5:24, 6:47-51, 10:27-28, 11:25-27
 - All who reject the Gospel will also live forever. – Rev. 20:10-15

Immutability

God is unchanging in His essence, character, purpose, and promises.

- God is eternally the same – Psalm 102:25-27
- He does not change His mind – Malachi 3:6
- God will do what He says He will do – Num. 23:19, 1Sam. 15:29

What about the argument of the open theists?

- An open theist is one who rejects the orthodox view of God's immutability and omniscience. The open theist view teaches that God grows, learns and discovers things He previously did not know and changes His mind. They also believe God took a risk by creating mankind whose actions He cannot necessarily foreknow.

Some of the "problem passages"

- Genesis 6:5-7
 - "The LORD was sorry" (6), "I am sorry that I have made them." (7) = These are anthropopathies (figures of speech) used by God to communicate to man on mankind's level of understanding.
- Exodus 32:10-14
 - A figure of speech expressing God's anger at the people's sin.
- Jeremiah 18:5-11
 - This is not a change of mind but a threat of judgment.