



What Does the Bible Teach About the Nature of God?

Thursday Indepth Bible Class of the
Trilacoochee church of Christ

In His Image

- Ex. 15:11 - “Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?”
- Psalm 113

In His Image

“Without doubt, the mightiest thought the mind can entertain is the thought of God, and the weightiest word in any language is the name of God. For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is ... what he in his deep heart understands God to be. We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God. This is true not only of the individual Christian, but of the company of Christians that composes a Church. Always the most revealing thing about a Church is her knowledge of God, just as her most significant message is what she says about Him or leaves unsaid, for her silence is often more eloquent than her speech. Were we able to extract from any man a complete answer to the question, “What comes into your mind when you think about God?” we might predict with certainty the spiritual future of that man.”
(A. W. Tozer, Knowledge of the Holy, p. 4)

In His Image

- The attributes of God may be classified under two main categories:
 - His infinite powers, in two groups:
 - Non-communicable and eternally unique to God alone,
 - Non-communicable to humankind in this life, but conferred after the Judgment.
 - His personality attributes, communicable to humankind and given at Creation.
 - Those nobler, higher characteristics, behaviors, and emotions of humankind are reflections of having been created in God's image. We will have them in full measure in heaven.

In His Image

- His personality attributes were given to humankind in the Creation.
 - Gen. 1:26-27 - “Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
 - Ecc. 7:29 - “Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.”

In His Image

- His personality attributes were given to humankind in the Creation.
 - Acts 17:26-29 - “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' 29 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.”

In God's Image (Imago Dei)

- “A Bible term, applied only to humankind, which describes the similarities between God and humanity. Genesis 1:27 does not mean that God is in human form, but rather, that humans are in the image of God in their moral (free moral agents), spiritual (eternal souls), and intellectual (ability to reason) nature. Humans mirror God's divinity in their ability to consciously use the unique qualities they have been given, and which make them different than all other creatures: rational thinking, complete self-awareness, creative freedom, the ability to fulfill our purpose for being, and the power to transcend and control our condition.” (<http://www.pbs.org/faithandreason>)

In His Image

- His Divine attributes that will be shared with His children at the Judgment.
 - 1John 3:1-3 - “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

In His Image

- His Divine attributes will be shared with His children at the Judgment.
 - 2Peter 1:4 - “By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”
 - Phil. 3:21 - “Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”

In His Image

- 1Cor. 15:49-54 - “And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Aseity - Means God is so independent that He does not need humans or their help in order to be; He is fully independent.
 - Acts 17:25 - “Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Beauty - The attribute of God whereby He is the sum of all desirable qualities.
 - Psalm 27:4 - “One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.”
 - Psalm 73:25 - “Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Blessedness - God is joyful in Himself and in all of His character.
 - 1Tim. 6:15 - “He who is the blessed and only Potentate...”
 - “Blessed” from makarios means “supremely blest; fortunate, well off; blessed, happy, happier.” (*Strong's*)
 - God is perfectly happy and has fullness of joy in Himself.
 - Gen. 1:31 - “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.”
 - Isa. 62:5 - “...And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Freedom - That attribute of God whereby He does whatever He purposes.
 - Psalm 115:3 - “But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.”
 - Dan. 4:35 - “All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, What have You done?”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Nothing in all of the heavens and earth can hinder God from performing His will.
- While God is free to do whatever He chooses, He is always and infinitely trustworthy.
- However, God cannot do anything that would be opposed to His own character or He would cease to be God. Therefore, God's freedom and power is qualified by His other attributes.
- E.g. God can't lie (Titus 1:2); God can't deny Himself (2Tim. 2:13); God can't be tempted by evil (James 1:13).

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Glory - The Divinely generated brightness that surrounds God's revelation of Himself. It emanates as an expression of His greatness and character; the appropriate outward expression of His own excellence.
 - Psalm 104:1-2 - "Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, 2 Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Luke 2:9 - “And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.”
- Matt. 17:2 - “He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.”
- Rev. 21:23 - “The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- “Though we do not now find ourselves surrounded by a visible light, there is a brightness, a splendor, or a beauty about the manner of life of a person who deeply loves God, and it is often evident to those around such a person. In the life to come, such brightness will be intensified, so that as we reign with Christ, it seems that we also will receive an outward appearance that is appropriate to that reign and to our status as image bearers of God and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (*Grudem 221*)

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Prov. 4:18 - “But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.”
- Dan. 12:3 - “Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.”
- Matt. 13:43 - “Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”
- 1Cor. 15:43 - “It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Grace - The state of forgiveness given by God because He desires man to have it, not because of anything he has done to earn it. The condescension shown by God toward the human race.
- A spontaneous gift from God to man, generous, free and totally unexpected and undeserved that takes the form of Divine favor and mercy.

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Rom. 3:23-26 - “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Holiness - He is completely separate from sin and wholly incorruptible.
 - The refrain of “Holy, holy, holy” in Isa. 6:3 and Rev. 4:8 manifests that only one Divine characteristic in scripture is elevated to the third degree; the Bible never says that God is love, love, love or power, power, power.

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Immanence - Refers to God being in the world. It is contrasted with His transcendence.
 - Psalm 114:5-8 - “What ails you, O sea, that you fled? O Jordan, that you turned back? 6 O mountains, that you skipped like rams? O little hills, like lambs? 7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, At the presence of the God of Jacob, 8 Who turned the rock into a pool of water, The flint into a fountain of waters.”
 - God cannot manifest Himself in this world, or universe, or in the presence of man, because if God should appear in this world in the fullness of His glory and power, it would destroy this world.

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Immutability - God cannot change.
 - James 1:17 - “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”
 - Heb. 6:17-18 - “Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Impassibility - The inability of God to suffer; His power to determine what He will permit to affect Him.
 - Psalm 138:6 - “Though the LORD is on high, Yet He regards the lowly; But the proud He knows from afar.”
 - Isa. 57:15 - “For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Impeccability - Closely related to God's holiness; He cannot sin.
 - James 1:13 - “Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- In-corporeality - Refers to God being a Spirit.
 - John 4:24 - “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”
- It is not possible to represent spirit with flesh.
 - Ex. 20:4 - “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Incomprehensibility - It is not possible for man in this world to know God in His fullness.
 - “In so far as God reveals Himself in His attributes, we also have some knowledge of His Divine Being, though even so our knowledge is subject to human limitations.” (*Louis Berkhof*)
 - Isa. 55:8-9 - “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, says the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Infinite - Includes His eternity and vastness; Infinity permeates all other attributes of God: His love is infinite, His power is infinite, etc.
 - Isa. 40:8, 12-15, 25-26, 28
 - 1Kings 8:27 - “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Invisibility - God's total essence, all of His spiritual being, will never be able to be seen by man, yet God still shows Himself through visible, created things.
 - John 1:18 - "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- John 6:46 - “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.”
- 1Tim. 1:17 - “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”
- 1Tim. 6:16 - “Who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- God shows Himself through visible, created things.
 - Gen. 18:1-33
 - Gen. 32:28-30

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Ex. 13:21 - “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.”
- Ex. 24:9-11 - “Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, 10 and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. 11 But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Isa. 6:1 - “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.”
- Col. 1:15 - “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”
- John 14:9 - “Jesus said to him, Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Jealousy - God's jealousy is "zeal to protect a love relationship or to avenge it when broken, thus making it an aspect of His covenant love for his own people." (*J. I. Packer*)
 - Ex. 20:5-6 - "you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Knowledge - God fully knows Himself.
 - Job 37:16 - “Do you know how the clouds are balanced, Those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?”
 - 1John 3:20 - “For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.”
 - Isa. 40:13-14 - “Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has taught Him? 14 With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him, And taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, And showed Him the way of understanding?”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- 1Cor. 2:10 - “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”
- This is amazing since God’s own Being is infinite!

Revealed Attributes Of God

- God knows all things that exist and all things that happen.
 - Heb. 4:13 - “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”
 - Isa. 46:9-10 - “Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.’”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- God knows all things that exist and all things that happen.
 - Matt. 6:8 - “...Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”
 - Matt. 10:30 - “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- God knows all things that could happen but do not actually happen, every alternative course and consequence.
 - 1Sam. 23:11-13 - “‘Will the men of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? O LORD God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant.’ And the LORD said, ‘He will come down.’ 12 Then David said, ‘Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?’ And the LORD said, ‘They will deliver you.’ 13 So David and his men, about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah and went wherever they could go. Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; so he halted the expedition.”
 - Matt. 11:21 - “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Love - God's defining characteristic from the perspective of humankind.
 - 1John 4:16 - "God is Love."
- God is the Original Source of love; no one taught Him to love or showed Him how or why to love; He loved first without cause.
 - John 17:24 - "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world."
 - Rom. 5:8 - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Mercy - The act of God by which He withholds what humankind deserves.
 - Dan. 9:9 - “To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.”
 - 2Cor. 1:3 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.”
 - Neh. 9:17, 31 - “They refused to obey, And they were not mindful of Your wonders That You did among them. But they hardened their necks, And in their rebellion They appointed a leader To return to their bondage. But You are God, Ready to pardon, Gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, Abundant in kindness, And did not forsake them... 31 Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You are God, gracious and merciful.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Grace and mercy relative to sin are strictly Divine prerogatives.
 - Ex. 33:19 - “Then He said, I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”
 - Rom. 9:15-16 - “For He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- “If we could remember that the Divine mercy is not a temporary mood but an attribute of God’s eternal being, we would no longer fear that it will someday cease to be. Mercy never began to be, but from eternity was; so it will never cease to be. It will never be more since it is itself infinite; and it will never be less because the infinite cannot suffer diminution. Nothing that has occurred or will occur in heaven or earth or hell can change the tender mercies of our God. Forever His mercy stands, a boundless, overwhelming immensity of Divine pity and compassion.” (A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 63)

Revealed Attributes Of God

- “From God’s other known attributes we may learn much about His love. We can know, for instance, that because God is self-existent, His love had no beginning; because He is eternal, His love can have no end; because He is infinite, it has no limit; because He is holy, it is the quintessence of all spotless purity; because He is immense, His love is an incomprehensibly vast, bottomless, shoreless sea before which we kneel in joyful silence and from which the loftiest eloquence retreats confused and abashed.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- “It is a strange and beautiful eccentricity of the free God that He has allowed His heart to be emotionally identified with men. Self-sufficient as He is, He wants our love and will not be satisfied till He gets it. Free as He is, He has let His heart be bound to us forever.” (A. W. Tozer, 98, 100)

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Omni-benevolence - Goodness; refers to God being all good to all. His goodness encompasses His grace, love, mercy and patience.
 - Ex. 34:6-7 - “And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Matt. 5:43-48 - “You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Omnipotence - God is all powerful.
 - “His Omnipotence means power to do all that is intrinsically possible, not to do the intrinsically impossible. You may attribute miracles to him, but not nonsense. This is no limit to his power”
(C. S. Lewis)
 - Job 1:9 - “So Satan answered the LORD and said, Does Job fear God for nothing?”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Matt. 22:29-32 - “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. 31 But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.’”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Omnipresence - God is present everywhere at all times.
 - Psalm 139:8 - “If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.”
 - Psalm 121:4 - “Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.”
 - Job 26:6 - “Sheol is naked before Him, And Destruction has no covering.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Omniscience - God is all knowing.
 - Jude 25 - “To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.”
 - Psalm 147:4-5 - “He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. 5 Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.”
 - He knows every detail from every moment of every human being who ever lived.

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Oneness - There is only one God as three Divine persons or hypostases (beings that are in the condition of Deity): the Father (Jehovah), the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit.
- The Three Persons are distinct, yet are One in condition, essence, and nature. A nature is what one is, while a person is who one is.

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Heb. 1:1-3 - “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”
- John 15:26 - “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Patience - God's goodness in withholding of punishment toward those who sin over a period of time.
 - Num. 14:18 - "The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Jonah 4:2 - “So he prayed to the LORD, and said, ‘Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness, One who relents from doing harm.’”
- Rom. 2:4 - “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Peace (order) - In His actions, God is separate from all confusion and chaos.
 - 1Cor. 14:33 - “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”
 - Rom. 15:33 - “Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.”
 - 2Thes. 3:16 - “Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Perfection (completeness) - God completely possesses all excellent qualities and lacks no part of any qualities that would be desirable for Him.
 - Matt. 5:48 - “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”
 - Psalm 18:30 - “As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- “God’s... perfection is the sum and substance of all the... ‘noble’ (*prb*) attributes... Accordingly, when we speak of God’s perfection, we do not refer exclusively to His moral excellence, whether ‘goodness or holiness,’ but we mean that God is the sum-total of all excellences, the One (for) whom no greater, higher, better can exist either in thought or in reality. In other words, God answers fully to the idea of God.” (*Bavinck 246*)

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Providence - Refers to God's activity in the world and His sustainment of the universe.
- General Providence refers to God's continuous upholding of the existence and natural order of the universe.
 - Gen. 8:22 - “While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Special Providence refers to God's intervention in the lives of people, especially the righteous.
 - Psalm 37:23-28 - "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. 26 He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed. 27 Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore. 28 For the LORD loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Sovereignty - There is no one greater than God.
 - Psalm 71:19 - “Also Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You?”
 - Jer. 16:20-21 - “Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods? 21 Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Sovereignty - There is no one greater than God.
 - John 17:3 - “And this is eternal life, that they may know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”
 - 1Cor. 15:27 - “For He has put all things under His feet. But when He says all things are put under Him, it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Transcendence (Beyond this world) - God is outside space and time, and therefore eternal and unable to be changed by forces within the universe. It is closely related to His immutability.
 - 2Peter 3:8 - “But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Veracity - God never lies.
 - Titus 1:2 - “In hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began.”
 - Num. 23:19 - “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”
 - Psalm 12:6 - “The words of the LORD are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Veracity - God never lies.
 - Prov. 30:5-6 - “Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. 6 Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.”
 - John 17:17 - “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

This Foreshadows the Kingdom of God Today

2Sam. 7:18-24 - "Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: Who am I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? 19 And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord GOD; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. Is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD? 20 Now what more can David say to You? For You, Lord GOD, know Your servant. 21 For Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know them. 22 Therefore You are great, O LORD GOD. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23 And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name-and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land-before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? 24 For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, LORD, have become their God."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Will - God's will is the final reason for everything that happens.
 - Eph. 1:11 - "In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will"
 - Rev. 4:11 - "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."
 - Dan. 4:28-37

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Necessary Will is everything that God must will according to His own nature. He cannot choose to be different than who He is.
 - Ex. 3:14 - “And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Free Will is everything that God decided to will but had no necessity to will according to His nature: creation, redemption, revelation of Himself to humankind.

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Secret Will includes God's hidden decrees by which He governs the universe and determines everything that will happen.
 - Deut. 29:29 - "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."
 - Gen. 50:20 - "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."
 - Acts 2:23 - "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Revealed Will - God's declared will concerning what we should do or what God commands us to do.
 - Matt. 7:21 - "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."
 - Eph. 5:17 - "Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Wisdom - “Wisdom is the power to see and the inclination to choose the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it. Wisdom is, in fact, the practical side of moral goodness. As such, it is found in its fullness only in God. He alone is naturally and entirely and invariable wise.” *(J. I. Packer)*
 - Rom. 11:33 - “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Apprehending the wisdom of God requires will and work.
 - James 1:5 - “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”
 - James 3:13, 17 - “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Apprehending the wisdom of God requires will and work.
 - Psalm 19:7 - “The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”
 - Psalm 111:10 - “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Wrath - “Wrath is the personal manifestation of God's holy, moral character in judgment against sin. Wrath is neither an impersonal process nor is it irrational and fitful anger; it is in no way vindictive or malicious. It is holy indignation; God's anger directed against sin.”

(Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, 1986 ed., p. 1108)

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Wrath of men is dangerous when it has no cause, is taken to excess, or is held for an extended period of time.
 - Matt. 5:22 - “But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.”
 - Eph. 4:26 - “Be angry, and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your wrath.”

Revealed Attributes Of God

- But the wrath of God is sinless, a true example of righteous indignation.
 - Psalm 7:11 - “God judges the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day”
- “God's wrath is a demonstration of His holy love. If God is not a God of wrath, His love is no more than frail, worthless sentimentality; the concept of mercy is meaningless; and the Cross was a cruel and unnecessary experience for his Son.” *(Nelson, ibid, p.1108)*

Revealed Attributes Of God

- Has it occurred to you yet that these are only the revealed attributes of God? He has revealed only those things that He wants us to know in this world, that is the things we are capable of apprehending in this realm.
- In view of His infinite Greatness, it necessarily follows that there is much about Himself that He has chosen to reserve until He is fully revealed in all of His Glory in Heaven.

Characteristics God Has Reserved For Himself Versus The Characteristics He Has And Will Share With Humankind

- Job 11:7-9 - “Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty? 8 They are higher than heaven - - what can you do? Deeper than Sheol -- what can you know? 9 Their measure is longer than the earth And broader than the sea.” *(Zophar, the Naamathite)*

Characteristics Unique to God the Father

- Aseity
- Holiness
- Omni-benevolence
- Omnipotence
- Omnipresence
- Omniscience
- Oneness
- Providence
- Sovereignty
- Grace
- Mercy
- Infinity

Characteristics Conferred to the Children of God at the Judgment

- Knowledge (of Himself)
- Invisibility
- Immanence
- Transcendence
- Immutability
- Impassibility
- Impeccability
- Non-corporeality
- Incomprehensibility

Characteristics Conferred in Part to Humankind at Creation or Salvation

- Jealousy (Divinely approved)
- Love
- Veracity
- Wrath (Divinely approved)
- Wisdom
- Will
- Freedom
- Perfection (completeness)
- Blessedness
- Beauty
- Glory
- Patience
- Peace (Order)

Communicable Attributes Shared On A Limited Basis With Humans

- God's incommunicable attributes, those attributes that God does not share with others: sovereignty, independence, unchangeableness, timelessness, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, and omni-benevolence.
- These are attributes of God's nature that can never and in no sense be shared with humanity. These attributes define and characterize God's "God-ness" in a way that makes Him unique and singular.

Communicable Attributes Shared On A Limited Basis With Humans

- God's communicable attributes, those attributes that God does share with others **to some extent.**
- Communicable attributes are those aspects of God's character that we have in common with God, but not in the same measure as God.
- Even in those attributes that God chooses to share with humanity, we must remember that God is always infinitely characterized by those attributes that saved humanity only shares in a finite sense.
- God cannot give us any of His attributes in this world in an infinite, perfect, fulfilled manner.

Communicable Attributes Shared On A Limited Basis With Humans

- “God is infinite in his relation to space and time; we are finite in our relation to both. But he is no less infinite as to his knowledge, will, goodness, and righteousness in all their modes, and we are finite in all these respects. All God’s attributes known to us, or conceivable by us, are communicable, inasmuch as they have their analogy in us, but they are all alike incommunicable, inasmuch as they are all infinite.” (A. A. Hodge, *“Outlines of Theology”*)

Communicable Attributes Shared On A Limited Basis With Humans

- Why would God share attributes with us?
- This is one of the most loving acts God can do, because by sharing Himself with humanity, He gives of the greatest good to humanity.
- How does God share attributes with us? How does man manifest the communicable Divine attributes?

In Creation

- Gen. 1:26-27 - “Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
- Ecc. 7:29 - “Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright...”

In Creation

- Man is born an eternal spirit.
 - John 5:28-29 - “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”
- Man is born a free moral agent.
 - Joshua 24:15 - “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

In Creation

- Man is born with the capacity to reason.
 - Rom. 12:3 - “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”
- Man is born with the ability to design and create.
 - Ecc. 2:4-6 - “I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. 6 I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove.”

In Creation

- Man is born with the capacity for goodness.
 - Ecc. 7:29 - “Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.”
- Man is born with the capacity to develop all good qualities within the limits of existence in this world.
 - Gal. 5:22-23 - “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

In Salvation

- Man is born into Christ as a pure being.
 - Acts 22:16 - “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
- Man is born into Christ with the power to partake in the Divine Nature in all of its manifestations in a limited world.
 - 2Peter 1:3-4 - “As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust”

In Salvation

- Man is born into Christ with power to enter heaven.
 - John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
 - John 1:12 - “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

In The Word

- 1John 2:3-5 - “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.”

In The Word

- Man transforms into the image of God as much as is possible in this world.
 - 2Cor. 3:18 - “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
- Man transcends flesh to live and walk in the Spirit.
 - Rom. 8:1 - “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

In the Judgment

- 1John 3:1-3 - “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

In the Judgment

- Man is transformed into the actual nature and form of Christ; he achieves his fulfilled design intended by God from before the beginning.
 - Eph. 1:3-6 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.”

In His Image

- This world is a temporary proving ground for humankind. God gave us our nature; part of that nature is the power to choose our course of life in this world and our eternal destination in the world to come. God did not give that power to any other created thing, living or inanimate, in this world. God did not give the power to become His children to anyone except humankind, not even angels and beings of power. Man is uniquely created in the image of God.

“The man who comes to a right belief about God is relieved of ten thousand temporal problems, for he sees at once that these have to do with matters which at the most cannot concern him for very long; but even if the multiple burdens of time may be lifted from him, the one mighty single burden of eternity begins to press down upon him with a weight more crushing than all the woes of the world piled one upon another. That mighty burden is his obligation to God. It includes an instant and lifelong duty to love God with every power of mind and soul, to obey Him completely, and to worship Him acceptably. And when the man’s laboring conscience tells him that he has done none of these things, the inner pressure of self-accusation may become too heavy to bear. The gospel can lift this destroying burden from the mind, give beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. But unless the weight of the burden is felt, the gospel can mean nothing to the man; and until he sees a vision of God high and lifted up, he will feel no woe and no burden.” (A. W. Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, 5)