



- 3) Although Jesus maintains the authority of the Jewish teachings (“salvation is of the Jews”), He points to the time when the Father will not be worshipped in a particular location (“neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem”).
 - 4) The reason for this development has to do with the essential nature of God. He is a Spirit and therefore His worship is not limited to a physical location. True worship of Him is not physical worship in a physical location; it is spiritual worship.
 - 5) The point of the argument contrasts the physical with the spiritual and declares that God is spiritual; not physical.
2. Distinction between flesh and spirit
- a. Numerous scriptures contrast flesh and spirit as two opposites (Matthew 26:41; Luke 24:39; John 3:6; John 6:63).
 - b. Men and horses as flesh are contrasted to God as spirit. Isaiah 31:3 states, "Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together."
 - c. The biblically-defined distinctions between flesh and spirit can help us to understand the significance of God being a Spirit.
 - 1) Flesh is visible; but spirit is invisible--as is God (Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:16; Hebrews 11:27).
 - 2) Flesh as matter takes up space and has weight; but spirit is not matter and is incorporeal (Isaiah 31:3; Luke 24:39).
 - 3) Flesh is corruptible; but spirit is incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:50).
 - 4) Flesh is temporal and time-limited; but spirit is eternal (2Corinthians 4:18).
 - 5) Flesh is weak (Matthew 26:41); but spirit is powerful (Luke 4:14; Romans 15:19; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 5:4).
 - 6) Note: Men often think of flesh as being real and spirit as being not quite so real. This is an absolute fallacy brought on by our complete lack of understanding the divine perspective. It is the flesh that is fleeting and temporary the spirit that is permanent in the universe. We have very little knowledge of the spiritual, but we must begin by questioning our assumptions about the spirit in the light of biblical teaching.
3. Warnings against thinking of God the Father in physical terms
- a. Isaiah 40:18 asks, "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" This is in the context of the sin of making idols of God in any form. God is not to be conceived of as having a likeness understandable to man.
 - b. The Lord pointed out to the Israelites that when He appeared to them they "saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake



unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female" (Deuteronomy 4:15-16). That is, God did not appear to them in any form; therefore, they are not to think of Him in any form--even in human form, either male or female.

- c. In Psalm 50:21, God reproves the wicked because, "thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." We are not to imagine or picture God as being like ourselves.
- d. Romans 1:23 states that depraved men "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." Some may think that this only has to do with physical idols that are worshipped. However, images come from the imaginations of the heart. We are not to imagine (or put into an image) the glory of God in the form of a man.

B. His Self-existence (Exodus 3:14) – This doctrine is covered in the previous notes dealing with the name Jehovah as referring to the self-sufficient God.

1. Here is a repetition of some of those notes:
 - a. He revealed Himself to Moses as the great I AM (Exodus 3:13-15). He calls Himself. I AM THAT I AM. This is an identification of who the LORD is.
 - b. According to John 5:26, "the Father hath life in himself." That is, the life of God comes from God. According to John 5:26, "the Father hath life in himself." That is, the life of God comes from God.
 - c. Of Him scripture declares, "Who only hath immortality" (1 Timothy 6:16). Only God has full control over His own existence.
 - d. God powerfully proclaims His own existence in Deuteronomy 32:40 - "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever." Coming from anyone other than God, this would be the ravings of a madman. From God, it is simply the truth.
 - e. Seven times in the Bible, God declares Himself to be the first and the last (Isaiah 41:4; Isaiah 44:6; Isaiah 48:12; Revelation 1:11, 17; Revelation 2:8; Revelation 22:13). Nothing came before Him and nothing will exist beyond Him.
 - f. Thirty times the scriptures refer to him as the "living God" (Deuteronomy 5:26 [first reference]; 1 Samuel 17:36; Psalm 42:2; Jeremiah 10:10; 23:36; Daniel 6:20; John 6:69; 2 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Timothy 4:10; Revelation 7:2 [last reference]).
2. Further thoughts on the self-existence of God
 - a. Theologically, this is called the aseity of God. Other synonyms for this quality are independence, self-existence, and self-sufficiency.
 - b. In this matter of independence, the relationship of God to His creation is one of great contrast:



- 1) God is the possessor of all things (Psalm 24:1; Psalm 50:10-12)
- 2) Everything we possess came from God (1 Chronicles 29:11-16; John 3:27; 1 Corinthians 4:7)
- 3) We can only give back to God that which He has already given us (1 Chronicles 29:11)
- 4) No man can give to God anything that makes God obligated to Him (Job 22:2; Job 35:7-8; Job 41:11; Luke 17:10; Romans 11:35-36).
- 5) God needs nothing from man that He cannot accomplish for Himself without man (Psalm 50:8-15).
- 6) Therefore, God is independent of man and has no need of him. His dealings with man are purely from the motives of love and grace; not need (Exodus 3:14).
- 7) Man, on the other hand, must depend on God for everything. Even his ability to breathe (Job 12:10), live, move, and to have his very being (Acts 17:28).

C. His Eternity

1. Related titles
 - a. The everlasting God (Genesis 21:33; Isaiah 40:28; Romans 16:26)
 - b. The eternal God (Deuteronomy 33:27)
 - c. The everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6)
 - d. The King eternal (1 Timothy 1:17)
 - e. The eternal Spirit (Hebrews 9:14)
2. The everlasting existence of God (Psalm 90:2; 93:2; Habakkuk 1:12)
 - a. Unto everlasting: His days will never end.
 - b. From everlasting:
 - 1) He never had a beginning.
 - 2) Also, an attribute of the Son (Micah 5:2)
3. The habitation of eternity
 - a. God is the One who inhabits eternity (Isaiah 57:15).
 - b. This is much more than eternal existence. God exists without time and outside of time. His true dwelling is timeless.
 - c. This eternal existence gives special quality to His power (Romans 1:20) and sovereign authority (1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 145:13).
 - d. God's habitation in eternity is connected to His immutability (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).
 - e. God's habitation in eternity is connected to His full knowledge of the future (Isaiah 46:9-10). All events at all times are alike to Him, that is like the present to Him.
 - f. As such, God is a secure dwelling place for His people (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:1-2)



4. The balance of time and eternity
 - a. As to who He is, God inhabits eternity and is unaffected by the events of history.
 - b. As to what He does, God works with His creation in time and operates throughout history.

D. His Immensity

1. Omnipresence, which will be considered under the attributes of God, refers to the presence of God in every part of the universe.
2. Immensity goes further and means that God is more than can be contained in the entire universe (1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chronicles 2:6).
3. Immensity shows God bigger than space as Eternity shows Him to be greater than time.
4. Not only is God the God of the entire universe. He is the God of anything else that may exist. If there are any other universes, then God is the God of those universes as well. There is no escape from God.

E. His Personality

1. The meaning of personality
 - a. To say that God has personality is not to say that He is a nice person to get to know. It means that He is a person. But again, this is not to make Him human in the least, but rather to distinguish Him from impersonal spirit or impersonal energy.
 - b. Three qualities make up the essence of personality: self-consciousness, the psychological qualities of personality, and self-determination. God has all three.
2. The personality of God
 - a. Self-consciousness
 - 1) This is one of the most important qualities that sets humans apart from animals.
 - 2) Consciousness is the ability to think about something outside of the one thinking. Plants are not conscious since they cannot think about what another plant is doing. However, a dog can think about a cat that it sees walking across the lawn. The dog is the subject of thought and the cat is the object. A dog therefore is a conscious being.
 - 3) Self-consciousness is the ability of the thinker to think about himself. That is, the person is both the subject and the object of the thought at the same time. A dog (as well as all other animals) does not consider themselves as an object of thought. Therefore, animals are not self-conscious beings. However, humans do think about themselves. They consider how they appear to others, what



- their purpose in life is, what is lacking in their lives, and much more. Humans are self-conscious beings.
- 4) God is self-conscious. He considers Himself and who He is (Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 45:5; 1Corinthians 2:10).
- b. The psychological qualities of personality are three:
- 1) Intellect: the ability to think. God has intellect (Exodus 3:7; Acts 15:18)
 - 2) Emotion: the ability to feel. God has emotions (Genesis 6:6; John 3:16)
 - 3) Volition: the ability to will or to make decisions. God has volition (Psalm 115:3; John 6:38)
- c. Self-determination
- 1) This is the ability to act from an inner purpose and will and not from an outside force (as a stone might move when it is hit).
 - 2) In scripture, God is represented as speaking (Genesis 1:3), seeing (Genesis 11:5), hearing (Psalm 94:9), repenting (Genesis 6:6), being angry (Deuteronomy 1:37), and doing many other things that demonstrate His self-determining personality.

V. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

A. His Greatness

1. Omnipresence

- a. Definition: God is all-present. There is no place hidden or outside of His presence.
- b. The doctrine of the omnipresence of God can be subdivided into other doctrines:
 - 1) The immensity of God. He is greater in size than the universe (1Kings 8:27).
 - 2) The transcendence of God. He is above the earth and the heavens and especially dwells in the highest heaven (Deuteronomy 26:15; Psalm 2:4; Psalm 11:4; Psalm 13:5-6; Psalm 115:3; Psalm 123:1; Ecclesiastes 5:2; Isaiah 63:15; Matthew 6:9; Ephesians 1:20).
 - 3) The immanence of God. He is present throughout the universe in every place.
 - a) Both in heaven and in earth (Deuteronomy 4:39; Joshua 2:11; Acts 17:24-27).
 - b) In all creation (Psalm 139:7-10)
 - c) He fills heaven and earth (Jeremiah 23:23-24)
 - d) Even in hell (Job 26:6; Psalm 139:8; Proverbs 15:11). Though separation from the presence of the Lord is also a result of the judgment of God (Genesis 3:8, 23-24; Psalm 51:11) and hell (Matthew 25:41; 2 Thessalonians 1:9).



- 4) The special presence of God. This could be called the spiritual presence of God. This is His presence in certain places and at certain times in a way that goes beyond His normal presence in all places (Exodus 33:3, 15).
- c. Forms of the special presence of God:
 - 1) In particular situations
 - a) He descended to the earth (Genesis 11:5-7; Genesis 18:21; Exodus 3:8).
 - b) He walked in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8).
 - c) He came down to Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:9, 11, 18, 20; Deuteronomy 33:2).
 - 2) In holy places
 - a) In and around the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-5)
 - b) In Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 12:11; Deuteronomy 14:23; 2 Kings 21:7; 2 Chronicles 6:6; Psalm 135:21; Isaiah 24:23)
 - c) In the Tabernacle and the later Temple (Exodus 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Matthew 23:21)
 - d) Between the cherubim (1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2; 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chronicles 13:6; Psalm 80:1; 99:1; Isaiah 37:16).
 - e) In the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:3)
 - 3) In Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:9)
 - 4) In the midst of His people
 - a) Old Testament (Exodus 25:8; Leviticus 26:11-12)
 - b) New Testament (Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Timothy 3:15)
 - 5) Indwelling individual believers (John 14:17, 23; Romans 8:9, 11; 1 Corinthians 6:19)
- d. Practical lessons
 - 1) God is larger than space – His immensity.
 - 2) God is above space – His transcendence.
 - 3) God is present in all space – His immanence.
 - 4) God is spiritually present in special places and people.
 - 5) All of the above is part of the omnipresence of God.
 - 6) Sin diminishes the spiritual presence of God (Isaiah 59:1-2; Proverbs 15:29) but not the actual presence of God.

2. Omniscience

- a. Definition: God is all-knowing. God has complete and eternal knowledge of all things.
- b. The character of God's knowledge
 - 1) He is "a God of knowledge" (1 Samuel 2:3)
 - 2) His knowledge is infinite (Psalm 147:4; Hebrews 4:13; 1 John 3:20)
 - 3) His knowledge of the present is related to His omnipresence (Proverbs 15:3; Jeremiah 23:23-25).



- c. The scope of God's knowledge
 - 1) Knowledge of all creation (Psalm 104:24; Psalm 147:4; Isaiah 40:12-13; Matthew 10:30)
 - 2) Knowledge of the hearts of men (1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 94:11; 139:1-4; Proverbs 15:11; 24:12; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Luke 16:15; Romans 8:27)
 - 3) Knowledge of the future (Deuteronomy 31:20-21; Isaiah 46:9-10; Acts 15:18)
 - 4) Knowledge of the possible
 - a) Saul's potential kingdom (1 Samuel 13:13-14) despite prophecy to the contrary (Genesis 49:10)
 - b) What Keilah would have done (1 Samuel 23:10-12)
 - c) What blessings Israel could have enjoyed (Isaiah 48:18-19)
 - d) What deliverance destroyed cities would have had if they had had the miracles given to other cities in another time (Matthew 11:20-24)
- d. The picture of God's knowledge
 - 1) God as light
 - a) God identified as light (1 John 1:5); in Him is no darkness at all.
 - b) God is connected with light (Psalm 27:1; 1 Timothy 6:16; James 1:17)
 - c) Jesus Christ as light (John 1:4-5, 9; John 8:12; John 12:46).
 - d) Light in the New Jerusalem (Isaiah 60:19-20; Revelation 21:23).
 - 2) The significance of God as light
 - a) In His light we see the true light (Psalm 36:9)
 - b) Through His light we see His righteousness (Micah 7:9)
 - c) His light shows our works to be good or evil (John 3:20-21)
 - d) His light will reveal the hidden things of darkness (1 Corinthians 4:5)
 - e) Light is that which makes manifest (Ephesians 5:13)
 - 3) The application of God as light
 - a) God has full knowledge of all things
 - b) God is the only sure revealer of truth
- e. The relationship between God's foreknowledge and God's foreordination.
 - 1) Definitions
 - a) Foreknowledge: God's perfect knowledge of the future
 - b) Foreordination: God's ordering of future events so that they are absolutely determined by His will.
 - 2) Three views:
 - a) Calvinism: God foreknows all future events because He has foreordained all future events. In this view, the two concepts cannot be separated. God's foreknowledge is the same as His foreordination. This doctrine denies the reality of man's free



will and makes salvation nothing more than a matter of God's arbitrary choice.

- b) Arminianism: God foreknows all future events but has not foreordained all future events. This view is accepted by many who are Arminian in other areas of theology. This view accepts that there are many things foreordained by God, but rejects that all things are predetermined by the will of God.
 - c) Socinianism: God has not foreordained all future events because He does not know all future events. Much about the future is open and unknown. This doctrine has been recently renewed and is called the open view of God. It teaches that the future is open to many possibilities—even in the mind of God. This doctrine limits the greatness of God and is an attack on His person as the absolute God.
- 3) The answer to open theology/Socinianism
- a) The Bible clearly teaches the complete foreknowledge of God [see above]
 - b) The very integrity of God is based on His perfect foreknowledge (Deuteronomy 18:18-22; Isaiah 41:21-23)
- 4) The answer to Calvinism
- a) Foreknowledge is not the same as foreordination or predestination (Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:2)
 - b) Foreknowledge is not of itself causative. That is, to know a future action is not the same as causing that future action to happen. Therefore, foreknowledge is not to be confused with the predetermined will of God. God does have a predetermined will, but it does not determine every action of created beings.

3. Omnipotence

- a. Definition: God is all-powerful.
 - 1) He is able to do anything He wills.
 - 2) Since His will is part of His nature, He is able to do anything that is consistent with His own nature.
 - 3) The things God cannot do because of His nature.
 - a) God cannot look on iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13)
 - b) God cannot lie (Titus 1:2)
 - c) God cannot be tempted to sin (James 1:13)
 - d) God cannot deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13)
 - 4) God cannot do things that are absurd or self-contradictory.
 - a) Examples would include making a square circle, making $2 + 2 = 6$, or making a rock God Himself cannot move.
 - b) These ridiculous challenges are sometimes made by skeptics against the person of God.



- c) However, these are not limitations of power but rather mental tricks.
- b. The character of God's power
 - 1) As seen in the name *Almighty*
 - a) Means to have all might and power
 - b) Used only of God in the Bible
 - c) Found 57 times in the Bible
 - 2) As seen in the direct statements of scripture (1 Chronicles 29:11; 2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalm 62:11; Isaiah 40:26; Daniel 4:35; Romans 1:20; Romans 13:1)
 - 3) As seen in His ability to do whatever pleases Him (Job 23:13; Psalm 115:3; Psalm 135:6)
 - 4) As seen in the fact that God can do all things (Genesis 18:14; Job 42:2; Jeremiah 42:17, 27; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:37)
 - 5) As seen in the heavenly praise: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:6)
- c. The scope of God's power
 - 1) In creation (Jeremiah 10:12; 32:17)
 - 2) In preservation (Psalm 79:11; Hebrews 1:3)
 - 3) In providence (Exodus 9:16; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Job 36:22)
 - 4) In ruling (Psalm 66:7)
 - 5) In battle (Exodus 15:6; Psalm 66:3)
 - 6) In deliverance (Exodus 32:11; Deuteronomy 9:29)
 - 7) In redemption (Psalm 106:8; Nehemiah 1:10; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18)
 - 8) In eternal security (1 Peter 1:5)
 - 9) In resurrection (Psalm 49:15; Hosea 13:14; John 10:18; 1 Corinthians 6:14)
 - 10) In judgment (Nahum 1:3)
- d. The exercise of God's power
 - 1) According to His will
 - a) God does His work according to His will (Ephesians 1:4-11)
 - b) The Bible student must discern between two kinds of the will of God in the scriptures:
 - i. The predetermined will of God
 - (a) This is the will of God that has been determined by Him absolutely and will not change.
 - (b) This predetermined will is seen in prophecy (John 14:3) and in those cases where God has absolutely determined something to be a certain way.
 - (c) The predetermined will of God is something that cannot be resisted (Romans 9:17-23)
 - ii. The preferred will of God
 - (a) This is the will of God in that He desires it as an action of created beings but will not force on them.



- (b) This preferred will is seen in our acceptance of God's salvation (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).
 - (c) This preferred will is seen in the action of peoples and nations (Mathew 23:37).
 - 2) Through His word
 - a) The power of the word
 - i. The power in the word of a king (Ecclesiastes 8:4)
 - ii. The power of His voice (Psalm 29:4)
 - iii. The power of His word (Luke 4:32, 36)
 - iv. The power of His written word (Hebrews 4:12)
 - b) The working of God's word
 - i. In creation (Genesis 1:1-3; Psalm 33:6, 9; Hebrews 11:3)
 - ii. In preservation (Hebrews 1:3)
 - iii. In the working of miracles (Matthew 8:8)
 - e. The practical value of God's power
 - 1) He is able to guide us (2 Samuel 22:33)
 - 2) We can know something of His power (Psalm 63:1-2; Ephesians 1:18-19; Philippians 3:10)
 - 3) He will strengthen us with His power (Psalm 68:35; Isaiah 40:29; Zechariah 4:6; Ephesians 6:10; 2 Timothy 1:7)
 - 4) By His power we fulfill His will (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 3:7, 20; Colossians 1:10-11)
 - 5) By His power He will establish us (Romans 16:25)
- 4. Immutability
 - a. Definition: God is always the same. He is unchanging and unchangeable.
 - b. The scriptural proof of God's immutability
 - 1) He does not change (Malachi 3:6)
 - 2) He is the same forever (Psalm 102:26-27)
 - 3) He has no variableness or shadow of turning (James 1:17)
 - 4) He does not repent (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29)
 - 5) The immutable God produces immutable promises (Hebrews 6:16-18)
 - a) The immutability of His counsel
 - b) The immutability of His oath
 - 6) Jesus Christ is the same forever (Hebrews 13:8)
 - c. The problem of repentance
 - 1) The times of God's repentance
 - a) He repents (Genesis 6:6; 1 Samuel 15:11; Amos 7:3, 6; Joel 2:13; Jonah 3:9-10; 4:2)
 - b) He changes His purpose (Exodus 32:10-14; Jonah 3:10)
 - c) He turns from the fierceness of His anger (Deuteronomy 13:17; 2 Chronicles 12:12; 2 Chronicles 30:8; Jeremiah 18:8-10; 26:3).



- 2) The tension found in 1 Samuel 15.
 - a) God repents that He had set up Saul to be king (1 Samuel 15:11)
 - b) God is not a man that He should repent (1 Samuel 15:29)
 - c) God repents that He made Saul king (1 Samuel 15:35)
 - d) This is not a mistranslation. The same Hebrew word is used for repent in each case. Unfortunately, many modern translations change the wording in order to remove the apparent contradiction. The seeming contradiction was clearly put there on purpose in order to help define the word.
- 3) The meaning of the two kinds repentance as they refer to the Lord
 - a) As to His character or being, God never repents. He never changes who He is and He never has to apologize for what He says. He does not change as man changes.
 - b) As to His response to man, God does repent. However, it is not God that has changed, but man. If a wicked man changes and turns to righteousness, then God will repent of the evil He would have done to him. However, this is not repentance in the human sense. God is still the same. He still rewards righteousness and judges wickedness. He is simply responding to changes made by the people involved.

B. His Goodness

1. A trinity of God's goodness

- a. It could be argued that the highest level of God glory as God is to be seen in the attributes of His goodness. That means that His moral attributes of goodness are more central to His being than are the powerful attributes of greatness. That is, God is not good because He is great but He is great because He is good. Perhaps God could have absolute greatness without absolute goodness, but He could not have absolute goodness without absolute greatness. Therefore, we will look at the attributes of goodness as the central attributes of God.
 - 1) "Oh how great is thy goodness" – Psalm 31:19
 - 2) "the memory of thy great goodness" – Psalm 145:7
 - 3) "For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!" – Zechariah 9:17
- b. Of the attributes of God's goodness, three (a trinity) seem to be central to all the others: holiness, truth, and love. Although the Bible does not directly these three to be central, there are many evidences.
 - 1) The other attributes of goodness proceed from one of these three attributes (compare 2Timothy 1:7).
 - a) Holiness: righteousness, justice, and beauty. Note: power and glory, even though they are attributes of God's greatness, also proceed from God's holiness).