



- b) Truth: wisdom and faithfulness.
- c) Love: mercy and grace.
- 2) All three attributes are specifically related to each of the three persons of the trinity [see notes below].
- c. Of the three central attributes of God's goodness, His holiness seems to be the central attribute of God [see notes below]. If there is only one thing we could say about God, we should say that He is holy!

2. Holiness

- a. The central position of God's holiness
 - 1) The only trait of God that is given a triple declaration: holy, holy, holy.
 - a) In Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 6:3)
 - b) The heavenly vision of John (Revelation 4:8)
 - 2) A central trait of all three persons of the Godhead
 - a) The Father is holy. He is often called the Holy One or the Holy One of Israel in scripture (2Kings 19:22; Job 6:10; Psalm 71:22; 78:41; Isaiah 43:3, 14, 15; Habakkuk 1:12).
 - b) The Son is holy.
 - i. The holy thing born of Mary (Luke 1:35)
 - ii. The holy child Jesus (Acts 4:27, 30)
 - iii. The Holy One of God (Mark 1:24)
 - iv. The Holy One not to see corruption (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27)
 - v. The holy high priest (Hebrews 7:26)
 - vi. The most Holy who will be anointed (Daniel 9:24)
 - vii. He that is holy (Revelation 3:7)
 - c) The Spirit is holy.
 - i. The Holy Spirit (Isaiah 63:10; Luke 11:13; Ephesians 4:30)
 - ii. The Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:18; Luke 4:1; Romans 14:17)
 - iii. The spirit of holiness (Romans 1:4)
 - 3) The title of service to God
 - a) For the priesthood (Exodus 39:30-31)
 - b) For the kingdom age: even the bells on the horses and the pots in the houses (Zechariah 14:20-21)
 - 4) The name of the Lord, which is the revelation of His essence, is holy (1 Chronicles 16:10; Psalm 103:1; 111:9; Luke 1:49). The "holy name" in reference to God is used twenty times in the Bible.
 - 5) God alone is truly holy (1 Samuel 2:2; Revelation 15:4).
 - 6) God swears by His holiness (Psalm 89:35; Amos 4:2).
 - 7) The beauty of God is seen in His holiness (1 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 96:9).



- b. The meaning of holiness
 - 1) Holiness in humans and earthly objects. Although earthly things are a poor example of holiness, we must begin here if we hope to have any real understanding of God's holiness. Earthly holiness has both a positive and a negative aspect.
 - a) Negative: that which is holy must be separated from the world; from other things. As such, holiness indicates purity from the defiling things of this world. That which is holy is clean and pure from defilement.
 - b) Positive: that which is holy must be set apart unto God. This is the idea of consecration and is the fullest meaning of sanctification. Notice the importance of the order. We cannot set apart unto God's use that which is still defiled. Separation must come first; then sanctification can follow (Exodus 28:1 before Exodus 28:40-41; Leviticus 10:10 before Leviticus 20:7; 2 Timothy 2:20-21; Romans 12:1-2 – "be not conformed" before "be ye transformed").
 - 2) The holiness of God
 - a) Negative: God is absolutely pure. There is no uncleanness, no sin, and no defilement of any kind in Him. He is so pure that He cannot look on iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13).
 - b) Positive: God is completely set apart from this world and its fallen nature. He has been called Wholly Other. He is the "high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isaiah 57:15).
 - 3) The two aspects of the holiness of God are revealed to us through two aspects of His greatness. This links the goodness of God with the greatness of God.
 - a) Because of God's holiness, He is set apart from the world. This set apart nature is revealed in His glory. He is high and lofty because He is holy.
 - i. God is "glorious in holiness" (Exodus 15:11)
 - ii. His holiness is displayed on earth in His glory (Isaiah 6:3)
 - b) Because of God's holiness, He is pure from all defilement. This purity is revealed to us in His power.
 - i. The power of judgment proceeds from His holiness (1 Samuel 6:20).
 - ii. The power of resurrection proceeds from His holiness (Romans 1:3-4).
 - iii. The power of miracles proceeds from His holiness (Acts 3:12).
- c. The response of the saints to the holiness of God
 - 1) Initially, the holiness of God repels us.
 - a) The experience of Job (Job 40:1-5; 42:5-6)
 - b) The experience of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:5)
 - c) The experience of Daniel (Daniel 10:5-8)



- d) The experience of John (Revelation 1:17)
 - 2) Then, the holiness of God draws us.
 - a) We are drawn to its beauty (1 Chronicles 16:29; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 29:2; 96:9).
 - b) We desire to behold the beauty of the Lord (Psalm 27:4).
 - c) The see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).
 - d) God inhabits the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3).
 - 3) Finally, the holiness of God transforms us.
 - a) We are to be holy as He is holy (Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:8; 1 Peter 1:15-16).
 - b) While beholding His glory, we are transformed from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).
 - c) We are to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Corinthians 7:1); compare to the pattern of holiness repelling us, drawing us, and then transforming us.
 - d) We are to make a living sacrifice that is holy unto God (Romans 12:1).
 - e) Our righteousness is to lead to holiness (Romans 6:19, 22; 1 Thessalonians 4:7).
 - f) The new man is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24).
 - g) We are to be partakers of His own holiness (Hebrews 12:10).
 - d. Attributes connected to the holiness of God
 - 1) Righteousness
 - a) Meaning: God always does what is right.
 - b) God is not controlled by a standard of righteousness higher than Himself. What He is and what He does is righteousness (Genesis 18:25; Psalm 50:6; 92:15; Daniel 9:14)
 - 2) Justice
 - a) Meaning: Righteousness in the giving of rewards or punishment; a legal term. God as a righteous judge.
 - b) The death of Christ and His suffering for the sins of others is the only solution to a guilty world. In this way only can God be both just and the justifier (Romans 3:26).
3. Truth
- a. Titles of God connected with truth
 - 1) The true God (2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 10:10; John 17:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 John 5:20)
 - 2) The God of truth (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 31:5; Isaiah 65:16)
 - b. The identity of the trinity with truth
 - 1) The Father is truth (John 3:33; 2 Corinthians 1:18).
 - 2) The Son is truth (John 14:6; 1 John 5:20)
 - a) The true Light (John 1:9)



- b) The true bread (John 6:32)
- c) The way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)
- d) The true vine (John 15:1)
- e) The truth is in Jesus (Ephesians 4:21)
 - i. He that is true (Revelation 3:7)
 - ii. The faithful and true witness (Revelation 3:14)
 - iii. Called Faithful and True (Revelation 19:11)
- 2) The Spirit is truth (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6)
- b. The definition of truth – “What is truth?” (John 18:37-38)
 - 1) An exact and faithful expression of the facts; as on the witness stand – “the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.” The truth is that which is no lie (1John 2:21) and God is truth because He cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18).
 - 2) The standard by which to judge all else, a final authority.
 - 3) The unchanging and unchangeable measure of all things; those things that remain (Hebrews 12:26-28).
- c. Bible concepts associated with truth. Note: these concepts are not necessarily synonyms, but are rather additional concepts. They tend to fill out the fullness of God’s attributes. As such, they are either related to the holiness of God or the love of God.
 - 1) Triple concepts that are parallel to holiness, truth, and love
 - a) 2 Chronicles 31:20 – “And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God.”
 - i. Good – love
 - ii. Right – holiness
 - iii. Truth – truth
 - b) Psalm 45:4 – “And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.”
 - i. Truth – truth
 - ii. Meekness – love
 - iii. Righteousness – holiness
 - c) Psalm 85:10 – “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”
 - i. Mercy and peace – love
 - ii. Truth – truth
 - iii. Righteousness – holiness
 - iv. Note: Psalm 85:9 taken with verse ten show that these attributes are brought together in God’s salvation for the purpose of bringing glory to Him.
 - d) Ephesians 5:9 – “(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)”
 - i. Goodness – love
 - ii. Righteousness – holiness
 - iii. Truth - truth



- 2) Concepts related to God's holiness
 - a) Holy (Revelation 6:10)
 - b) Just (Revelation 15:3)
 - c) Righteous and righteousness (Psalm 19:9; 45:4; 85:1; Proverbs 12:17; Zechariah 8:8; Revelation 19:2)
 - d) Judgment (Jeremiah 4:2)
- 3) Concepts related to God's love
 - a) Goodness (Exodus 34:6)
 - b) Kindness or lovingkindness (2 Samuel 2:6; Psalm 26:3; 40:10-11; 89:49; 138:2)
 - c) Mercy (2 Samuel 15:20; Psalm 25:10; 57:3, 10; 61:7; 85:10; 86:15; 89:14; 98:3; 100:5; 108:5; 115:1; Proverbs 3:3; 14:22; 16:6; 20:38)
 - d) Peace (2 Kings 20:19; Esther 9:30; Isaiah 39:8; Jeremiah 33:6; Zechariah 8:19).
 - e) Grace (John 1:14, 17; Colossians 1:6)
 - f) Love (Ephesians 4:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:10; 2 John 1:3; 3 John 1:1)
- d. God as the truth
 - 1) God as the true God is the real God as opposed to all that is false; not a false god or idol (1 Thessalonians 1:9).
 - 2) God as truth is all that He is supposed to be (Jeremiah 10:9-10); compare to true gold.
 - 3) God as truth speaks true words. He is the source of all truth (2 Samuel 7:28; John 17:17).
 - 4) God as truth is faithful to His own integrity and can be trusted to keep His word in entirety.
 - a) Truth and faithfulness are closely connected in scripture (Isaiah 25:1; Jeremiah 42:5; Revelation 3:14; 22:6).
 - b) God keeps truth forever (Psalm 146:5-6).
 - c) God has no need to repent (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29)
 - d) Jesus is called "Faithful and True" (Revelation 19:11).
 - e) God can be trusted to do what He says He will do. He is faithful who promised (Hebrews 10:23; 11:11). For God to go against who He is and against His own words would be a denial of Himself; but God cannot deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13).
 - f) Therefore, God is the God who keeps covenant; that is, He keeps His promises (Deuteronomy 7:9; 1 Kings 8:23; 2 Chronicles 6:14; Nehemiah 1:5; 9:32; Daniel 9:4).
 - g) God's promises are yea and amen (2 Corinthians 1:18-20).
- e. God's word as the truth
 - 1) Titles
 - a) Scripture of truth (Daniel 10:21)
 - b) Word of truth (Psalm 119:43; 2 Corinthians 6:7; Ephesians 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:18)



- 2) Teachings
 - a) All God's commandments are truth (Psalm 119:151)
 - b) God's word true from the beginning (Psalm 119:160)
 - c) God's word is truth (John 17:17)
 - d) We are sanctified through the word of truth (John 17:17-19)
- f. Fruits of the truth of God
 - 1) God's judgment proceeds from His truth (Psalm 19:9; 96:13; Zechariah 7:9; Zechariah 8:16; Romans 2:2; Revelation 16:7; Revelation 19:2)
 - 2) God's wisdom proceeds from His truth (Psalm 51:6; Proverbs 23:23).
 - 3) The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15).
 - 4) Jerusalem will be the city of truth (Zechariah 8:3).
- g. Rejection of God's truth
 - 1) No truth in the devil who is a liar (John 8:44).
 - 2) The wicked change the truth of God into a lie (Romans 1:25).
 - 3) The fall of truth (Isaiah 59:14-15; Jeremiah 7:28; Hosea 4:1)
 - 4) Compared to the truth of God, every man is a liar (Romans 3:4).
- h. Acceptance of God's truth
 - 1) Believe the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:12-13; 1 Timothy 2:4; 1 Timothy 4:3; 2 Timothy 2:25; 3:7; Titus 1:1)
 - 2) Be men of truth (Exodus 18:21)
 - 3) Serve in truth (Joshua 14:14; 1 Samuel 12:24)
 - 4) Walk in truth (1 Kings 2:4; 1 Kings 3:6; 2 Kings 20:3; Psalm 26:3; Psalm 86:11; Isaiah 38:3; 3 John 1:3-4)
 - 5) Speak truth (Psalm 15:2; Proverbs 8:7; Proverbs 12:17; Jeremiah 9:5; Ephesians 4:25)
 - 6) Be lead in truth (Psalm 25:5)
 - 7) Have truth in the inward parts (Psalm 51:6; 15:2)
 - 8) Call on God in truth (Psalm 145:18)
 - 9) Buy the truth (Proverbs 23:23)
 - 10) Stay upon the Lord in truth (Isaiah 10:20)
 - 11) Keep the truth (Isaiah 26:2)
 - 12) Seek the truth (Jeremiah 5:1)
 - 13) Be valiant for the truth (Jeremiah 9:3)
 - 14) Do the truth (John 3:21)
 - 15) Worship in truth (John 4:23-24)
 - 16) Freed by the truth (John 8:32)
 - 17) Obey the truth (Romans 2:8; Galatians 3:1; 5:7; 1 Peter 1:22)
 - 18) Loins girt with truth (Ephesians 6:14)

4. Love

- a. The connection of God with love
 - 1) He is the "God of love" (2 Corinthians 13:11).
 - 2) God is love (1 John 4:8, 16).



- 3) We are blessed by the love of God (Romans 5:5; Romans 8:39; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; Titus 3:4; 1 John 3:16-17; John 4:9).
- 4) Love is of God (1John 4:7).
- b. The meaning of love
 - 1) Feelings of strong personal attachment (Genesis 22:2).
 - 2) Preference for one over all others (Genesis 29:29-30; Mathew 10:37 with Luke 14:26; Romans 9:13).
 - 3) A willingness to sacrifice personal good for the benefit of another (John 3:16).
 - 4) A readiness to show love before love is shown to the lover (1John 4:19).
- c. The identity of the trinity with love
 - 1) The Father is love (1 John 4:8, 16).
 - 2) The Son is love (Romans 8:35; 1 Corinthians 5:14-15; Ephesians 3:17-19).
 - 3) The Spirit is love (Romans 15:30).
- d. An understanding of God as love
 - 1) Negatively, God is not love alone. God's love must operate in conjunction with His righteousness and His demand for justice. To love all without any demand for justice is to hate the just. To allow Adolf Hitler into heaven without justice is to hate those he murdered.
 - 2) Positively, God loved us so much as to give His Son as a sacrifice for sin (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10). God is the sun, sending forth the brightness of His love without cause; we are the moon, receiving the light of the sun and sending out only a portion that light which we have already received.
- e. The three love commandments
 - 1) Love the Lord thy God (Matthew 22:36-38).
 - 2) Love thy neighbor as thyself (Matthew 22:39).
 - 3) Love other believers as Christ loved us (John 13:34-35).
- f. The love of God and the believer
 - 1) Salvation and the love of God
 - a) Salvation came by the love of God
 - i. God sent His Son to die because of His love (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1John 4:9-10).
 - ii. God makes us the sons of God through His love (1John 3:1; Titus 3:4-6).
 - iii. God will bless His children in the ages to come because of His love (Ephesians 2:4-7).
 - b) The love of God separates the saved from the lost
 - i. The lost do not have the love of God in them (John 5:42).
 - ii. The man who loves God is known of God (1 Corinthians 8:3).
 - iii. Salvation involves knowing and believing the love of God (1 John 4:16). Love comes to us by faith (Ephesians 6:23).



- 2) God desires believers to know the shedding abroad of the love of God in their hearts (Romans 5:5 – “because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”).
 - a) The word, shed, is used mostly in the Bible of the shedding of blood. To shed, therefore, means *to cause to flow*. God enables His love to flow in and out of us (compare John 7:38-39).
 - b) The present tense of the verb (“is shed”) indicates a continual, living flow of the love of God in our hearts.
 - c) The word, shed, is also used of the promise of the Spirit given at Pentecost (Acts 2:33) and of the renewing of the Holy Ghost at salvation (Titus 3:5-6). The power that enables this flow of the love of God is the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 2:16-19; 2 Timothy 1:7).
 - d) This shedding abroad of the love of God is a work that occurs in the hearts of believers (2 Thessalonians 3:5).
 - e) This shedding abroad of the love of God is increased through tribulations (Romans 5:3-5).
 - f) The love of God is to be shed **abroad**. That is, it flows out of the believer’s life to touch the lives of others (Colossians 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 4:7-11).
 - g) This working of the love of God was a great emphasis of John Wesley and the early Methodists.
- 3) The believer’s continuing relationship with the love of God
 - a) Our love to God is a response of God’s love to us (1 John 4:19).
 - b) We are to walk in the love of Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2).
 - c) We are to keep ourselves in the love of God (Jude 1:21).
 - d) We are to rest secure in the love of God knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ (Romans 8:35-39).
 - e) We will experience the fact that love casts out fear (1 John 4:18; 2 Timothy 1:7).
- 4) How believers grow in the love of God
 - a) Faith enables the love of God in us (Ephesians 3:17-19; Galatians 5:6).
 - b) Tribulation perfects God’s love (Romans 5:3-5).
 - c) Obedience perfects God’s love (1 John 2:5; 5:3).
 - d) Loving others perfects God’s love (1 John 4:12).
- g. The attributes connected to the love of God
 - 1) The goodness of God: God works in our lives in such a way as to always seek our ultimate good (Psalm 33:5; Psalm 107:8). In His goodness, He seeks to lead the lost to repentance (Romans 2:4).
 - 2) The mercy of God: God withholds judgment and does not give to us the evil that we deserve (Psalm 25:6; Psalm 100:5; Psalm 103:8; Psalm 116:5).
 - 3) The grace of God: God gives to us blessings and gifts that we do not deserve (2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; 4:7)