

**I. Introduction and review. *What makes God, God?*****A. Why study the attributes of God? Eph. 1:18ff 3:14ff**

1. We need to know and worship God as He truly is. *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you will know what is the hope of His calling..., and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe...*
2. We need to guard against false views of God.
3. It is only through knowing God that you can understand yourself. Gen. 1:27 **1**
4. The lost need to know Who God is (evangelism). Acts 17:22-31 **2**

**B. Can you prove God exists? **3****

1. Philosophers have made various attempts to prove God.
2. God reveals Himself plainly in creation. Rom. 1:20 *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through that which has been made, so that they are without excuse.*
3. Deep down everyone knows God exists. Ro. 1:19,21a **4** *That which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them...*
4. The atheist is a fool who suppresses the knowledge of God. Ps. 14:1 Ro. 1:21-23 *The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God.".. For even though they knew God they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise they became fools and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image...*

**C. How can we know God?**

1. Our infinite God is incomprehensible (transcendent). Is. 40:18-20,28 Job. 11:7 36:26 37:5,23 I Kings 8:23 Rom. 11:33ff Ecc. 3:11 8:17 I Co. 2:16 *To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with him?.. His understanding is inscrutable... Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?.. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways.*
2. God is knowable because He has chosen to reveal Himself to us (imminent). John 17:3 Phil. 3:10 Gal. 4:9 *This is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*
  - a. God has revealed Himself through creation (general revelation). Ro. 1:19-20 Psalm. 19:1-6 *The heavens declare the glory of God.*
  - b. God has revealed Himself through His Word (special revelation). Heb. 1:1-2 II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pe. 1:20-21 Ps. 19:7ff *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son...*
  - c. God the Son became man. Jo. 1:1-2,14,18 *No one has seen God at any time; but the only begotten God Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him*
3. False religions focus exclusively on God's transcendence (infinity), making Him unknowable; or His imminence (He is personal) rendering Him finite. **5**
4. Our ability to know God is limited because our minds corrupted by sin. I Co. 1:18 2:14a Col. 1:21 John 8:43 Mark 4:12 Eph. 4:18 Rom. 8:6-8 *A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised.*
5. We are also limited because we are finite. Deut. 29:29

6. The Holy Spirit enables us to understand God's revelation. I Co. 2:12 12:3  
John 15:26 16:13-14 Mt. 11:25-27 13:11,16 *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God...He will guide you into all truth.*

D. Our approach to studying the attributes of God.

1. There is no comprehensive list of God's attributes. **6**
2. All of God's attributes are interrelated. **7**
3. How do we classify God's attributes? Communicable and incommunicable? **8**

II. God is Triune (see last week's message and outline).

- A. There is one God. Deut. 6:4 Isa. 44:6
- B. God exists eternally as three distinct Persons each of Whom possesses the whole of the Divine Essence. John 1:1ff Acts 5:3-4
- C. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are eternally in relationship with One Another. John 17:1-5 Mt. 3:16-17
- D. May we pray to the Son and the Holy Spirit? John 14:14 Acts 7:59 I Cor. 1:2 I Tim. 1:12 II Co. 13:14

III. God is Spirit. John 4:24 Deut. 4:12,15 I Tim. 1:17 6:15-16 *God is spirit... Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever. Amen.*

- A. He is not limited by space.
- B. The incomparable God cannot be accurately represented by idols. Ex. 20:4-6 *You shall not make for yourself an idol..* Ps. 86:8 *There is no one like You...* **9**
- C. We are both body and spirit. II Cor. 5:8 Phil. 1:23 Rev. 6:9-11 *We prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord... I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God...* **10**

IV. God is self-existent and self-sufficient (Aseity). Isa. 40:28 *Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired.*

- A. The eternal uncreated One created all things. Acts 17:24 Ex. 3:14 *The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands... Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'*
- B. He is the living God who has life in Himself. John 5:26 *Just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have Life in Himself.*
- C. He does not need us. Acts 17:25a Ro. 11:35 *Nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything... Who has ever given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things...* **11**
- D. He owns everything. Ps. 24:1 50:10-12,15 Gen. 14:19,22 *The earth is the LORD's and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it... Every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is Mine and all it contains.*

- E. We, in contrast, are totally dependent beings. Acts 17:25b,28 *He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things... for in Him we live and move and exist...*
1. All we have is from Him. Deut. 8:17-18 *(Do not) say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth...*
  2. Honor God by acknowledging your dependence upon Him and by being thankful. Ps. 104:14-18,27ff 50:15 Mt. 6:25ff *They all wait for You to give them their food in due season... You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good....Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.*

V. God is immutable - He never changes. Mal. 3:6 Ex. 3:14 Js. 1:17 *For I, the LORD do not change... Every good things given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.*

A. God's character, nature, and attributes never change. Ps. 102:25-28 He. 1:12 13:8 Deut. 32:3-4 *Like a garment they (the heavens) will also be changed, but You are the same...Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect .*

B. He cannot get better because He is already perfect. Ex. 3:14 **12**

C. God's eternal plan and purpose never changes. Ps. 119:89 Eph. 1:4,11 Nu. 23:19 **13** *Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled (stands firm) in heaven. He chose us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world...having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.*

D. God is immutable, but not immobile or inactive.

E. What about cases when God is said to 'change His mind'? Gen. 6:6 I Sa. 15:11 Ex. 23:14 Joel 2:13-14 Jonah 3:10 *When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them.*

F. God interacts with mankind in history as He offers sinners the opportunity to repent. Jer. 18:5-10 I Sa. 15:11 Jonah 4:2 *"Behold like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot to pull down, or to destroy it; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it."... Please LORD, was this what I said when I was still in my own country? ..for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.*

G. Application.

1. We are constantly changing - unstable and inconsistent. I Sa. 15:29 Num. 23:19 *The Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.*
2. While people let us down, God never will. Ps. 146:3 Jer. 17:5-8 I Ki. 8:56 Is. 54:10 *Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation... For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not removed from you..*
3. Praise God that His promise and calling are irrevocable. Ro. 11:29 Heb. 6:17ff Jer. 31:3 *God desiring to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong*

*encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast... I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with kindness.*

4. **The unchanging God continues to change us.** Col. 2:13-14 Phil. 1:6 **II Co. 3:18**  
*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.*
5. **We await the ultimate change.** **I Co. 15:50-52** I Jo. 3:1-2 *The trumpet will sound...and we will be changed.*

**VI. God is eternal.** **I Tim. 1:17** **Ps. 90:1-2** Isa. 40:28 Eph. 3:21 John 5:21,26 *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God... Lord You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting You are God.*

- A. **He has no beginning or end.** Gen. 1:1 John 1:1 Rev. 1:8 Ps. 102:27b Ecc. 3:11 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... In the beginning was the Word... "I am the Alpha and the Omega", says the Lord God, "Who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."... Your years will never come to an end.*
- B. **God is involved in time, but is not limited by time.** Ps. 90:4 **II Pe. 3:8** *A thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or as a watch in the night.*
- C. **We by contrast are limited by time.** **Ps. 90:3,5-6,10** *You turn man back into dust... You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew; Toward evening it fades and withers away... The days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength is eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow. For soon it is gone and we fly away.*
- D. **Are we in any sense eternal?** **Jo. 10:28** 3:16 17:2 **Mt. 25:46** **14** *I give them eternal life... These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*
- E. **Live in light of the shortness of this life.** **Ps. 90:12,17** *So teach us to number our days, That we may present to you a heart of wisdom... Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And confirm for us the work of our hands...*
- F. **Live in expectation of eternal life in God's presence.** **Rom. 8:18** **II Co. 5:16-18** *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us... Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory, far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

## **VII. Concluding applications.**

- A. **Do you know God?** Jer. 9:23-24 *Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.*
- B. **Worship God!**

**Attributes of God: Part 1 Quiz (True or false. Explain your answers)**

- 1. You need to understand God before you can truly understand yourself.**
- 2. The study of the attributes of God is for mature Christians and is of little use for evangelism.**
- 3. The Bible devotes extensive space to proving the existence of God.**
- 4. Deep down everyone knows God exists.**
- 5. Christianity is unique in that we view God both as transcendent (above us) and imminent (near us).**
- 6. God has exactly fifteen attributes.**
- 7. God's attributes are interrelated.**
- 8. We can't reflect God's communicable attributes.**
- 9. Because God is Spirit, every idol misrepresents and demeans Him.**
- 10. We are unlike God because we are merely physical.**
- 11. God needs our worship and service.**
- 12. God keeps getting better and better (especially from the Old Testament to the New).**
- 13. When God's original plan for humanity in the garden of Eden failed, He implemented the Mosaic Law. When that failed, He sent His Son to save us.**
- 14. We can become eternal just like God.**