

# Systematic Theology

A study of the major doctrines of Scripture.

## Topic 2 - The Doctrine of God Lesson 22 - The Attributes of God: Omnipotence

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# Omnipotence

- God has the ability (power) to do anything consistent with His nature. - MacArthur, pg. 177
- God's omnipotence means that He is able to do all His holy will. - Grudem, pg. 216
- Omnipotence means "all-powerful" and means that God is indeed Almighty, however, there are things that He cannot do, things that would deny His character (make Him imperfect) and nature.
- Berkhof, Hodge, Shedd, Grudem, and others consider God's omnipotence to be a communicable attribute because we also have the power to act within the constraints of our nature, however, MacArthur assigns this incommunicable status because we are not "all-powerful" while God is powerful enough to do even more than He has already done.



# Omnipotence

- Many of the names of God demonstrate His power as an attribute.
- Elohim - God
- El Shaddai - God Almighty
- Adonai - Lord
- Yahweh Sabaoth - LORD of Hosts
- King of kings and Lord of lords
- The Lord Almighty
- The Blessed and Only Sovereign

# Omnipotence

- Nothing is too hard for God; He can do what for us is impossible.
- Genesis 18:14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”
- Job 42:2 “I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.
- Jeremiah 32:27 “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?
- Matthew 19:26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”
- Luke 18:27 But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”



# Omnipotence

- God does whatever He pleases.
- Psalm 115:3 But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.
- Isaiah 14:24 The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, “Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand.
- Isaiah 14:27 For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?”
- Isaiah 46:10 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,’
- Daniel 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?”

# Omnipotence

- God's works reveal His omnipotence.
- Psalm 18:1 I will love You, O Lord, my strength. 2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 3 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.
- Psalm 24:8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. 10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.



# Omnipotence

- Power belongs to the Lord.
- Psalm 62:11 God has spoken once, twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God.
- Psalm 96:7 Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, give to the Lord glory and strength.
- Revelation 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.”
- Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!

# Omnipotence

- God is able to do more than we can ask or think.
- Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
- God is able to do more than He has actually done.
- Matthew 3:9 and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.
- Exodus 32:10 Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.”



# Omnipotence

- Things God cannot do. If God were able to do these things He would be acting contrary to His nature and therefore would not be perfect.
- Repent like men
- Lie
- Deny Himself
- Be Tempted
- Change His essence, purposes, or promises
- Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Heb. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:13; James 1:13; James 1:7; Malachi 3:6

# Distinctions in God's Power

- Faulty - Many have contended that God has absolute power in the sense that He is able to do absolutely anything, including sinning, suffering, dying (in His divine essence), changing, making contradictory things (a stone so large He could not lift it), changing the past, or making the false true and the true false. Others say that God can only do what He wills to do and nothing else.
- - MacArthur, pg. 178



# Distinctions in God's Power

- Factual - Scripture shows us that God in His power is technically able to do more than what actually occurs but that His power operates within the context of His will and all His other perfections. So the correct distinction in God's power is that He has a theoretically absolute power to do more than what He actually does but not anything inconsistent with His essence.
- God's ordinate power is the power (ability) to do whatever He has decreed He will do. If He says He will do it, it will be done.
- Since God's decree is the result of all His perfections, then He would only do what He has decreed He will do, therefore His ability is confined to what He eternally wills to do.
- - MacArthur, pg. 178

# Sovereignty

- God's power to execute His will, without any hindrance, is defined as His sovereignty. He is the absolute and highest causality.
- God's power is exercised without the intervention of secondary causes.
- "Absolute, is that power whereby God is able to do that which He will not do, but is possible to be done. Ordinate, is that power whereby God doth that which He hath decreed to do, that is, which He hath ordained or appointed to be exercised. His ordinate power is part of His absolute power, for if He had not power to do everything that He could will, He might not have the power to do everything that He doth will." - Charnock
- The exercise of God's power does not represent its limits. God could do more if He were so minded.
- -Berkhof, pg. 67-68