

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD?

WEEK 22 – SPIRITUAL

<p><u>** Communicable – We share with God</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Love2. Jealousy3. Graciousness4. Just5. Wrath6. Merciful7. Goodness8. Faithfulness9. Wisdom	<p><u>** Incommunicable – Unique to God</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">10. Omniscience11. Incomprehensibility12. Glory13. Majesty14. Sovereignty15. Omnipresence (& Immanence)16. Holiness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">17. Righteousness18. Omnipotence19. Immutability20. Impassability21. Spiritual
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Introduction

What Does This Attribute Mean?

- *Spiritual = incorporeal, possessing the nature or qualities of a spirit;*
- *Spirituality = the state or quality of being spiritual; essence as distinguished from matter*

- *Invisible = unseen, imperceptible, impalpable, unperceivable*
- *Incorporeal = immaterial, intangible*

Biblical Definition:

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. **2** The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. **3** And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. **4** And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

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John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Is. 31:1 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD! **2** And yet he is wise and brings disaster; he does not call back his words, but will arise against the house of the evildoers and against the helpers of those who work iniquity. **3** The Egyptians are man, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out his hand, the helper will stumble, and he who is helped will fall, and they will all perish together.

Calvin's Commentary

"And their horses are flesh and not spirit. By the word flesh he means weakness and frailty; for what is there in "flesh" but corruption? He speaks of "horses," but to the Egyptians also belongs a weakness of the same or of a kindred nature; as if he had said that they, and all their forces, have nothing that is solid or permanent. Although the Egyptians had a soul as well as a body, yet, so far as they were creatures, and dwelt in a frail tabernacle, they must hold an inferior rank; as if he had said, that they do not possess heavenly or spiritual power;" (John Calvin, Commentary on Isaiah)

New Testament Passage:

John 4:19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. **20** Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." **21** Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. **22** You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. **23** But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. **24** God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." **25** The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." **26** Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

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Not Made of Parts

Charnock expresses this who concept well...long but worth it quote:

When we say God is a Spirit, it is to be understood by way of negation. There are two ways of knowing or describing God: by way of affirmation, affirming that of him by way of eminency, which is excellent in the creature, as when we say God is wise, good; the other, by way of negation, when we remove from God in our conceptions what is tainted with imperfection in the creature. The first ascribes to him whatsoever is excellent; the other separates from him whatsoever is imperfect. The first is like a limning, which adds one color to another to make a comely picture; the other is like a carving, which pares and cuts away whatsoever is superfluous, to make a complete statue. This way of negation is more easy; we better understand what God is not, than what he is; and most of our knowledge of God is by this way; as when we say God is infinite, immense, immutable, they are negatives; he hath no limits, is confined to no place, admits of no change. When we remove from him what is inconsistent with his being, we do more strongly assert his being, and know more of him when we elevate him above all, above our own capacity. And when we say God is a Spirit, it is a negation; he is not a body; he consists not of various parts, extended one without and beyond another. He is not a spirit, so as our souls are, to be the form of any body; a spirit, not as angels and souls are, but infinitely higher. We call him so, because, in regard of our weakness, we have not any other term of excellency to express or conceive of him by; we transfer it to God in honor, because spirit is the highest excellency in our nature: yet we must apprehend God above any spirit, since his nature is so great that he cannot be declared by human speech, perceived by human sense, or conceived by human understanding. (Stephen Charnock. The Existence and Attributes of God, P181-182).

Anthropomorphic Language

Gen. 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Ex. 6:6 Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.

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Gen. 2:2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.

Num. 6:25 the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

Psa. 33:6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

Psa. 34:15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.

Psa. 89:10 You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.

Psa. 57:1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by.

Does Scripture Teach That God Exhibits This Attribute?

Ex. 20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying, **2** "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **3** "You shall have no other gods before me. **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. **5** You shall not bow down to them or 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 the fourth generation of those who hate me,

Deut 4:14 And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess. **15** "Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, **16** beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, **17** the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, **18** the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.

New Testament Passages:

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Col. 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. **16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **17** And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

1Tim. 1:17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

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1Tim. 6:16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

How Does This Attribute Affect the Christian?

1 – God as Spirit & No Limits

2 – God as Spirit & The Word of God

It seems trifling to ask such questions, but is the eternal and infinite God so much more within the grasp of human reason? No, indeed. The God of Scripture can only be known by those to whom He makes Himself known. Nor is God known by the intellect. “God is Spirit” (Joh 4:24), and therefore can only be known spiritually. But fallen man is not spiritual; he is carnal. He is dead to all that is spiritual. Unless he is born again, supernaturally brought from death unto life, miraculously translated out of darkness into light, he cannot even see the things of God (Joh 3:3), still less apprehend them (1Co 2:14). The Holy Spirit has to shine in our hearts (not intellects) in order to give us “the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2Co 4:6). And even that spiritual knowledge is but fragmentary. The regenerated soul has to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus (2Pe 3:18). The principal prayer and aim of Christians should be that we “walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, & increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:10). (Pink A. W., The Attributes of God)

3 – God as Spirit & Avoiding False Representations