

What Is God Like?

I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

A. NATURAL ARGUMENTS. There are certain arguments that can be made from nature which argue, logically and compellingly, for the existence of God.

1. **The Cosmological Argument.** Argument from **Cause and Effect**. The only big enough cause for this gigantic physical universe in which we live is God.
2. **The Teleological Argument.** Argument from **Design**. This incredibly intricate and complex universe in which we live demands an Intelligent Designer. That Designer is God.
3. **The Anthropological Argument.** Argument from the **Make-up of Man**.
 - a. Man's intelligence requires a Maker with **Intelligence**.
 - b. Man's personality requires a Maker with **Personality**.
 - c. Man's morality requires a Maker with **Morality**.
 - d. Man's spirituality requires a Maker who is essentially **Spirit**.
 - e. Man's creativity requires a Maker who is **Creative**.

B. SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENTS. The Bible never, strictly speaking, *argues* for the existence of God. Rather, it *assumes* the existence of God: "In the beginning God ..." (Genesis 1:1). Having said that, there are Scriptures which make a powerful case for God's existence and power. Following are some representative samples.

1. Only God is a sufficient cause for the distant galaxies: (Isa 40:26) "Lift up your eyes on high And see who has created these *stars*, The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of *His* power, Not one of *them* is missing."
2. The stars and planets, which God made, brilliantly declare His glory. (Psa 19:1) "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands."

3. It is sheer audacity for man to opine on the complexities of the origin of the earth since he was not there when God created it, and he has neither the wisdom nor the power to create it himself. (Job 38:4-7) "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding, {5} Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? {6} "On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, {7} When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy?"
4. God's Eternity, Power, and Divinity are so clearly revealed in all creation that no man has any excuse whatever for not believing in Him. (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 what has been made, so that they are without excuse."
5. God has borne witness to Himself by showering man with good gifts, which He intended would lead man to worship Him. (Acts 14:16-17) "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; {17} and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."
6. The existence of man's conscience demonstrates the existence of God's Law written on his heart. We will be held responsible as to whether or not we violate our own conscience. (Rom 2:14-15) For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, {15} in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them."

II. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

A. Attributes Which Describe God's POWERFUL Nature.

1. INFINITE

- a. Statement: With regard to LIMITATIONS, God is INFINITE.
- b. Meaning: God has no Limits or Boundaries.
- c. Scripture: (1 Kings 8:27) "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!"

d. Explanation.

- (1) King Solomon had been commissioned by God and his father, King David, to build a temple, a permanent dwelling place for Yahweh, in Jerusalem. God would condescend to dwell among the Israelis in Jerusalem, but Solomon, in his dedicatory prayer, understood that God is so vast, so infinite, that neither the sky nor what we would call outer space is sufficient to contain or restrain Him.
- (2) God has no limitations. All His attributes are Infinite. He has no limitations with regard to stability, time, knowledge, space, power, or authority. His holiness, justice, love, and truth are boundless.
- (3) At the same time, all God's attributes are perfectly in balance. It is fruitless, for example, to ask the question, "Could God create a rock so large He could not move it?" God's power never outstrips His wisdom, nor does His love exceed His justice.

e. Application.

- (1) Since God is Infinite, there is no problem I have which God cannot solve.
- (2) Since God has Infinite Wisdom, if I am one of God's children (John 1:11-12), I must take the position by faith that God's plans for me and my family are wise and good (Romans 8:28), even though, like Job, my faith may be stretched to the limit. Since God is Infinite, I should never question whether the plans God has for me or my family are wise.
- (3) Since God's power is Infinite, there is no problem or difficulty I have that is insurmountable. With God, all things are possible (Luke 1:37)!

2. IMMUTABLE.

- a. Statement: With regard to STABILITY, God is IMMUTABLE.
- b. Meaning: God never Changes.

- c. Scripture: (Mal 3:6) "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."
- d. Explanation.
 - (1) In the opening chapters of Malachi, God accuses Israel of disdainning Him. They question His love for them (1:2); the priests despise God's name by offering blind and lame and sick animals to God (1:6-8); the priests have led people astray by giving them false instruction (2:7-8); the people of Judah have committed abomination, desecrating the temple by marrying foreign women who do not worship God (2:11); the men have treacherously and violently violated the marriage covenant with their wives of many years, have divorced them, and have married younger, more beautiful women (2:14-16); the people have wearied God by claiming that God doesn't punish evil doers and that He is unjust (2:17).
 - (2) God would be justified in abandoning fickle Israel and destroying them. But God does not make promises or covenants and then not keep them. God is eternally committed to the nation of Israel. God DOES NOT CHANGE. Consequently, God will work to refine His people (3:1-3). He will draw near in judgment to them and purge out the evildoers (3:5). He will purify His people because God DOES NOT CHANGE. He has made an eternal covenant to adopt the people of Israel as His own. If they are faithless, and they have been, God will ultimately change them to be faithful!
 - (3) If God were a changeable God, He would have destroyed Israel for her evil long ago! He has not done that. He refines Israel, but He does not destroy His chosen nation!
 - (4) As the evil prophet Balaam was forced to prophesy under the all-powerful hand of God, God does not abdicate His promises: (Num 23:19) "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

- (5) God does not change His mind about issues. In Genesis 6:7 God promises to destroy man from the planet “for it **repenteth** me that I have made them” (KJV, emphasis mine). *Nacham* (Strong’s # 5162) does not mean God has changed His mind. It means that God was sorrowful He had made man; in 1 Sam. 15:11, God was sorrowful He had made Saul king. Even though Israel is presently an enemy of the gospel (Rom. 11:28), God will not sever His eternal relationship with them, “for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom 11:29). He does not choose someone and then “unchoose” them.

e. Application.

- (1) Since God is unchangeable, we can count on His promises. God, “who cannot lie” (Titus 1:2), has promised us eternal life.
- (2) Since God is unchangeable, we can count on His loyal love (*chesed*, Strong = 2617) (Psalm 136:1 and throughout [KJV = mercy; NASB = lovingkindness]).
- (3) Since God is unchangeable, we can expect that He will not set aside His rules and laws. We will always reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7-8).

3. ETERNAL.

a. Statement. With regard to TIME, God is ETERNAL.

b. Meaning. God has no Beginning or End.

c. Scripture. (Psa 90:1-2) “Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. {2} Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

d. Explanation.

- (1) God has always existed, He exists now, and He will exist forever.
- (2) God is not bound by time because He is Infinite. In a certain sense, time exists for God’s creatures. For God all of time is the forever now. The passage of time is a

creature experience, not a Divine necessity. It is in this sense that the passage of time is irrelevant to God. To Him the past is as great a reality as is the future as is the present, all at the same time. That is the sense in which it can be said of God, that with Him, one day is no different than a thousand years (Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8).

- (3) Let it never be said that God does not act in Time in a Timely fashion. (Gal 4:4-5) “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, {5} so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”
- (4) God is a long-suffering God, but the precise day of judgment will arrive with inexorable certainty. (2 Peter 3:10) “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. “

e. Application.

- (1) Because God is longsuffering and patient, we humans are the beneficiaries of God’s imperviousness to time. He waits and waits and waits for us to repent of our evil and come to Him, because He is unwilling that any of us should perish (2 Peter 3:9).
- (2) Because God transcends time, a prayer uttered about an event already having occurred can, in my estimation, affect the outcome of that event. God, who is Omniscient in knowledge, knows in advance the contents of my tardy prayer, and acts accordingly in His disposition of all matters.
- (3) Because God is Eternal, He can be “our dwelling place in all generations” (Psalm 90:1-2).
- (4) Since our times are in God’s hand, we can trust Him to deliver us from our enemies and shower us with loyal love at the proper time (Psalm 31:15-16).

- (5) Because God is Eternal, His Word is Eternal (Psalm 119:89). It doesn't change and we can always rely upon His faithfulness (Psalm 119:90).
- (6) Because God is Eternal, His Kingdom is Eternal. There will never be a time when God is not in control (Daniel 4:3, 34). There will come a time when the day of human antagonism toward God will be terminated and God will reign Supreme (Daniel 2:44).

4. OMNISCIENT.

- a. Statement. With regard to KNOWLEDGE, God is OMNISCIENT.
- b. Meaning. God is All-Knowing.
- c. Scripture.
 - (1) (Psa 139:4) "Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all."
 - (2) (Psa 147:4-5) "He counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them. {5} Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite."
- d. Explanation.
 - (1) God knows Everything. God knows everything actual or potential, irrespective of time. God knows everything in the Past, everything in the Present, and everything in the Future.
 - (2) God knows information as varied and diverse as the number and names of all the stars in all the galaxies in the entire universe (Psalm 147:4-5), which is evidently finite; every human thought (Psalm 139:2), including speech before it is spoken (Psalm 139:4); every activity of every human (Psalm 139:3); the always fluctuating number of the human hair on every human's head (Matthew 10:30); and the fortunes and deaths of every insect and animal in the entire world (Matthew 10:29).

- (3) Because God is Infinite, He knows all things Hypothetical and Contingent. God revealed to Elisha what would have happened to Israel's military success had King Joash struck the ground fervently with the arrows five or six times instead of unenthusiastically only three times. (2 Kings 13:19) So the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you would have destroyed *it*. But now you shall strike Aram *only* three times." So God knows everything that would have happened or everything that will happen IF That is mind-boggling, and incomprehensible to the finite human mind. To know all things that have happened, that are happening, that will happen is staggering. But to be able to know everything that WOULD HAVE HAPPENED had any DETAIL of any human or animal or chemical or physical action along the way been slightly altered ... the infinite possibilities blow the circuitry of the human mind! But since God is Infinite, the complexity presents no difficulty whatever with Him!
- (4) Because God is eternal, He knows things *before* they happen. (Acts 15:18) "SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM LONG AGO."

e. Application.

- (1) Because God is Omniscient, we can know and believe that God knows every difficulty we endure. He knows what we can endure because He understands our human limitations (Psalm 103:13-14).
- (2) Because God knows everything, He knows my motives. He knows when I am performing a simple unseen task for His glory (Matthew 10:42; Mark 9:41; 2 Corinthians 10:31).
- (3) Because God knows everything, He will never forget the things I have done for Him, and He will reward me in His time (Matt. 10:42; Mark 9:41; 1 Corinthians 4:5).
- (4) There are many times when we don't want others to know what we are doing or thinking. The fact that God knows all things was, frankly, unsettling to the Psalmist David (Psalm 139:1-6). For humans who choose to do evil, God's Omniscience is alarming!

5. OMNIPRESENT.

- a. Statement. With regard to LOCATION, God is OMNIPRESENT.
- b. Meaning. God is Everywhere.
- c. Scripture. (Psa 139:8) “If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.”
- d. Explanation.
 - (1) God is Spirit (John 4:24). He is not confined to a body and as such, He is not confined to any particular locality as we humans are. God exists outside of and independently of His Creation. But that does not mean He cannot enter into His creation. Just as God does not need time and is above time, yet enters into time to work out His plan, so He pervades all of nature to accomplish His will. This is true because God is Infinite with regard to space, time and matter. He pervades it all.
 - (2) Unlike eastern religions, which preach pantheism, God is NOT a PART of nature, nor is nature God. He is independent of nature, for He created it, and it operates according to His rules. But there is no place in the created universe where God is not.
 - (3) Psalm 139:7-12 discusses God’s Omnipresence. David asserts that it is impossible to evade God’s Spirit, for He is everywhere (Ps 139:7). David says that if he goes to the highest place man can go, to heaven, God is there. If he goes to the lowest place it is possible for man to go, Sheol, the place of the dead, God is there (Ps. 139:8). If he goes as far east or as far west as he can go, God is still there (Ps. 139:9)! If he tries to hide in the darkness, it makes no difference to God, for night and day are alike to Him (Ps. 139:11-12).
- e. Application.
 - (1) Because God is everywhere present, we cannot escape from God (Jeremiah 23:23-24). Like Jonah, if we try to flee from God’s will for us, He will seek us out and it will not go well with us.

- (2) Because God is present everywhere, when we go through the most difficult and disastrous pathway imaginable, God is right there with us (Psalm 23:4). For that reason we need fear no evil because God comforts us.
- (3) “I need to be serving God everywhere, not just at certain places like church or with my family. I need to be aware of God's presence at all times and walk with Him always.”¹

6. OMNIPOTENT.

- a. Statement. God is OMNIPOTENT.
- b. Meaning. With regard to POWER, God is All-Powerful.
- c. Scripture.
 - (1) God's Micro-Power: (Psa 139:13) For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.
 - (2) God's Macro-Power: (Gen 1:1) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- d. Explanation.
 - (1) God is Infinite with regard to Power. The most breathtaking example of His power is the physical universe. In the beginning of time with regard to the cosmos, God created both the heavens (the atmosphere around the earth as well as deep space) and the earth, the home of man and the stage for the historic fight between Good and Evil (Genesis 1:1).
 - (2) God's power is incomparable, dwarfing that of all rivals (Isa. 40:25-26).
 - (3) On the other end of the scale, the brilliantly designed human body and the marvelously intricate and inexplicable human mind, operating within, yet separate from the brain,

¹ The Parent Company, Awareness of God, Lesson 11.
http://www.parentcompany.com/awareness_of_god/aog11.htm

is beyond human comprehension (Psalm 139:13-15).

e. Application.

- (1) Because God is all Powerful, nothing is too difficult for Him to accomplish (Jeremiah 32:26-27).
- (2) If God asks us to serve Him, no matter how difficult it might be, we can rest assured God will provide us the necessary resources to accomplish His will. Nothing is too difficult for God (Luke 1:37).
- (3) God's power is so great He is able to take every detail that happens in my life and work out the end package for good (Romans 8:28)! I'm grateful God has that much power!
- (4) I am grateful God's power is so great He is able to conform me to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).
- (5) I am grateful God's power is so great that He can prevent trouble, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, weapon, death, life, angels, demonic powers, things in my present, things in my future, any height, any depth, and any other entity in all of creation from detaching me from His love for me through Jesus Christ (Romans 8:35-39)!

7. SOVEREIGN.

- a. Statement. With regard to AUTHORITY, God is SOVEREIGN.
- b. Meaning. God is the Supreme Ruler.
- c. Scripture. (Acts 4:27-28) "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, {28} to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur."
- d. Explanation. God is the Supreme Sovereign. He maintains absolute control over whatever happens in His Universe.
 - (1) His control over human actions is so powerful and yet so intricate that even if man defiantly devises the most hideous

act against God imaginable, killing God, it turns out to be exactly what God from eternity past has predestined shall happen (Acts 4:27-28)! God had planned from eternity past, through the death of His Son, to provide salvation for anyone in the rebellious human race who wishes to forsake his rebellion and embrace in faith God's Savior! Now that is Sovereignty!

- (2) God's Sovereignty is vast. In Ephesians 1:11 Paul states that believers are predestined according to the purpose of Him "who works all things after the counsel of His will," and He does so "for the praise of His glory" (1:12). The language Paul used is explicit. God constantly works "the all things" in accordance with His will.
- (3) God's Sovereignty is microscopic. Man rolls the dice or casts the lots, but God controls every outcome! (Proverbs 16:33).
- (4) A great many people don't like the idea of God's Sovereignty. They scream shrilly about protecting man's free will. Or they redefine God's sovereignty almost to the point of making His actions contingent on man's decisions. (God chose me because He knew I would choose Him.)
- (5) The Bible is full of moral commands: "Thou shalt;" "Thou shalt not." Clearly God holds man responsible for whether he obeys or not. The Bible is full of invitations: "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost" (Rev 22:17). Clearly God holds man responsible for whether or not he accepts the invitations. But to say that man is free is open to debate. When was man the freest? It was when he lived in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. Once he sinned, he died and was in bondage to sin. He lost the lion's share of his freedom, but that question must be reserved for another discussion. Suffice it to say that God has never lost even a tiny bit of His Sovereignty. A Biblical approach is to say that God is Sovereign, and He holds man responsible.

- (6) God reveals His Sovereignty in a number of ways:
- (a) He is called King (Psalm 47:2; 95:3; Jer. 10:10; 46:18; 48:15; Dan. 4:37; Mal. 1:14).
 - (b) He rules as King (Ps. 93:1; 96:10; 97:1-2; 99:1; Micah 4:7).
 - (c) He takes sole responsibility for the survival or the death of all animals (Psalm 104:27-30).
 - (d) He takes responsibility for making people “mute or deaf, or seeing or blind” (Exodus 4:11).
 - (e) Because of man’s great evil, God drowned all land animals and birds and all humans on the face of the earth except those preserved aboard the ark (Genesis 6-8).
 - (f) He issues decrees to all the nations (Isa. 2:1-3; 51:4; Micah 4:1-2) and imposes His will on the earth (Ps. 46:9).
 - (g) God uses one nation to judge another nation for its evil, and then turns around and judges the conquering nation (Habakkuk 1-2).
 - (h) He will judge all the nations, all peoples (1 Sam. 2:10; Ps. 82:8; 96:13; Isa. 2:4; 11:3-4; 51:5; Micah 4:3).
 - (i) All nations will come to worship Him and submit to Him (Ps 22:28-29; 86:9; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 8:21-23).
 - (j) His Kingdom will conquer the earth and displace all rival kingdoms (Dan. 2:44-45).
 - (k) He both removes and installs kings and rulers (Dan. 2:20-21; Isa 40:21-25).
 - (l) He declares the future before it comes to pass (Genesis 15:13-15; Psalm 22:1, 6-8, 14-18; Daniel 2:36-47; 7:1-27; 8:1-26; 9:24-27; 11:1-45; 12:1-3; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; 53:1-12; Revelation 6 - 22).

- (m) He imposes His will on individuals for His own purposes (Gen. 25:21-23; Malachi 1:2-3; Romans 9:10-13, 17-18).
- (n) He has chosen Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the nation of Israel as His own unique possession, has determined to bless them, and has allotted them the land of Canaan as their eternal possession (Gen. 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:14-17; 15:7, 18-21; 17:1-8, 15-19, 21; 18:10-15; 21:12; 22:15-18; 24:7; 25:11, 21-23; 26:1-6, 12-14, 24-25; 27:19-29; 28:1-4, 10-15; Ex. 19:5-6; 33:1; Deut. 34:4; Nehemiah 9:7-8; Psalm 105:6, 42-25; 135:4; Isa. 41:8-9; 43:1; 44:1-2; 44:21; 48:12; 49:3; Jer. 31:31-37).
- (o) He has graciously chosen some from among all nations unto eternal salvation apart from any merits of their own, for they have none (Acts 9:15; Romans 8:29-31, 33; Eph. 1:4-5; 2:8-9; Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; Titus 1:1; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:2; 2:4, 9; 2 Pet. 1:10; Rev. 17:14).

e. Application.

- (1) I am glad that God is in control of time. I entrust my times into His hand! (Psalm 31:15).
- (2) I am glad that God, in His Sovereignty, is able to control events to such a degree that all things can work out together for good in my life (Romans 8:28).
- (3) I am grateful that God can control my environment to such a degree that He will faithfully ensure that I am not tempted above my ability to resist (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- (4) I am grateful God sovereignly controls human history (Daniel 2:20-21). Otherwise I might think elections in my country are exercises in futility.
- (5) I am grateful God controls the actions of Satan (Job 1-2). Otherwise I would be petrified at his power.
- (6) I am grateful the Father drew me to the Lord Jesus; otherwise I would never have come (John 6:44).

- (7) I am grateful God's control is so tight that no one can take me out of His hand (John 10:29).
- (8) I am grateful God's authority is so great He is able to conform me to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).
- (9) I am glad God controls the future, and that good and God will win! If it were not for that, life would really not be worth living.

B. Attributes Which Describe God's MORAL Nature.

1. HOLY.

- a. Statement. With regard to ETHICS, God is HOLY.
- b. Meaning. God is All Good and is Absent Any Evil.
- c. Scripture. (1 John 1:5) This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.
- d. Explanation.
 - (1) God is by nature totally set apart from all that is evil; He is by nature totally set apart to all that is good. By nature God is morally and ethically pure. He is all good, and no evil. Appropriately, God's Spirit is the Holy Spirit (Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 63:10-11; Matthew 1:18; Romans 5:5).
 - (2) Habakkuk said that God's eyes are too pure to look on evil or approve of wickedness (1:13). God is so holy He ultimately will not tolerate the slightest little bit of evil in His universe. He will purge out all evil from His universe with a raging, roaring inferno (2 Peter 3:7, 10-13), and He will create a brand new universe in which only righteousness exists (2 Pet. 3:3).
 - (3) The reason God does not act more quickly to purge out evil is that He is longsuffering, not wanting any to perish, but desiring all to repent. God is so holy that He cannot sweep evil under the carpet, so to speak, or merely overlook it. Man often has a cheap view of forgiveness, but never God.

Since the wages of sin is death (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23a), the death penalty must be paid.

- (4) Holy God, knowing that the penalty must be paid, exhibited His great love in His holiness by providing the Messiah to die in the place of sinful man when man was still an enemy of God's (Rom. 5:8, 10).

e. Application.

- (1) We can be grateful that God is a holy God. If God were not good, He would be capricious, and we would stand in terror of Him, never knowing when we would experience evil or good at His hand.
- (2) God's holiness is a quality He commands us to emulate (Leviticus 11:44-45).
- (3) Since God is absolutely and complete holy, it is absurd for us humans to think we can ever be holy enough to satisfy a perfect God. We are morally and spiritually flawed. All of our righteous deeds are to God as a filthy garment (Isaiah 64:6). We could never satisfy God's demands for holiness apart from His intervention in Jesus, because our hearts are deceitful and incurably sick (Jeremiah 17:9).
- (4) It is absurd for us humans to think that God will let our unholiness go unjudged. There comes a time when every person will be judged for what he has done (Daniel 12:2; Ezekiel 20:37-38; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15).

2. JUST.

- a. Statement. With regard to PROPRIETY, God is JUST.
- b. Meaning. God is Fair in His Dealings with Man.
- c. Scripture. (1 Sam 16:6-7) When they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD'S anointed is before Him." {7} But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God *sees* not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

d. Explanation.

- (1) God is a God of justice, which is directly related to His holiness. God's Holiness is His moral and spiritual perfection primarily as it relates to His own character, although it certainly has implications for man. God's Justice is the extension of His personal Holiness to His dealings with man and also to His other created beings.
- (2) God had assigned Samuel to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the next king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:1). Samuel was impressed by Eliab's outward appearance, but God was not, for God is omniscient. Because God is omniscient, he knows all the factors and can be just, or fair in His dealing with man.
- (3) The most notable point in history at which God's justice is most clearly seen is in His willingness to sacrifice His own well-being so that man might have the potential to be justified. Jesus' blood is the ground on which a righteous God can overlook past sin and remain just while justifying sinners who trust in Jesus (Romans 3:25-26). God's justice would not permit Him to declare righteous sinners whose indebtedness had not been paid and who had not accepted by faith the gift of forgiveness. The Justice of God is supremely revealed in the Good News (Romans 1:16-17).

e. Application.

- (1) Because God is Just, we believers can know that one day our attackers will experience God's vengeance (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10).
- (2) Because God is Just, we are to be fair and accurate in our business dealings (Leviticus 19:36; Deuteronomy 25:15).
- (3) If we have the heart of God, we will labor to bring the unjust to Him (1 Peter 3:18).
- (4) Because God is Just, the righteous will ultimately win supremacy (Matthew 13:43).

- (5) Man's sense of justice often demands equality of outcomes. ("From each according to his ability; to each according to his need.") God's does not. God's justice does not prevent Him from being more generous to some while being fair to all (Matthew 20:1-16).
- (6) Being just (righteous) in the sight of God takes priority over being just in the sight of man (Acts 4:18-20).
- (7) The Lord is the righteous (Just) Judge (2 Timothy 4:8).
- (8) Because He Himself is Just (righteous), the Lord listens to the prayers of those who are just (righteous) (1 Peter 3:12).
- (9) God can be faithful and Just to forgive us our sins if we confess them, for the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7-9).
- (10) God, whose ways are Just (righteous), is worthy of praise (Revelation 15:3-4).
- (11) In God's sense of Justice, turn-about for the wicked is fair play (Revelation 16:5-7).
- (12) God's Justice permits Him to take revenge on the wicked (Revelation 19:1-3).
- (13) If it is justice, you demand, then all of us humans should be sent to hell. We are all sinners and rebels against God and that's what we deserve (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18, 23; 6:23a). We need more than justice. We need love and mercy, and in Jesus, God has provided both! (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

3. LOVE.

- a. Statement. With regard to POSTURE, God is LOVE.
- b. Meaning. God seeks the Highest Good for Man.
- c. Scripture. (John 3:16) "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

d. Explanation.

- (1) Two Scripture passages state as a proposition that “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16). If you want to capture the essence of God, you capture it in that sublime statement, (lit.) “The God – Love Is.”
- (2) Alongside John 3:16, the two verses immediately following 1 John 4:8 spell out the nature of God’s love: (1 John 4:9-10) “By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. {10} In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”
- (3) The word used in these passages of God’s love is the Greek word *agape*. *Agape* love is as far away from Hollywood love as is imaginable. Hollywood love is being attracted biologically and emotionally to someone because of what he or she has to offer me. God’s *agape* love is self-sacrificial. God reached out in Jesus to pay the death penalty for our sins. We were not attractive to Him. We were rebellious sinners, enemies of God (Romans 5:8, 10). And yet God sacrificed Himself in Jesus to pay for all the sins of all the people of all time in the world (1 John 2:2), all the while knowing that most would reject Him and His sacrifice (Matthew 7:13-14).
- (4) God’s love is in balance with His Holiness and His Justice. Since “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23a, cf. Genesis 2:17), God cannot violate that Law and absolve people who do not accept the gift of forgiveness in Jesus. Those who do not humbly accept God’s love in Jesus consign themselves to eternal damnation.

e. Application.

- (1) There was once a prisoner on death row whom the governor pardoned. When notified of the pardon, the prisoner refused to accept it. The judge finally decreed that a pardon is a piece of paper, and is only valid when accepted. Rejected, the death penalty must be carried out. The prisoner was executed.

- (2) God is the judge who, in the Divine Court of Law, justly pronounced all humanity deserving of eternal separation from Himself because of their violation of His Laws. He turned around and, in Jesus, the God-Man, paid for all our sins. If we reject that only escape from the lake which burns with fire and sulfur (Revelation 20:14-15), there is no other option for our salvation (Acts 4:12). If we go on sinning after hearing about the truth, there remains no other sacrifice for sin but the expectation of fiery, consuming judgment (Hebrews 10:26-27).
- (3) Because God's essence is love (1 John 4:8, 16), we who are the objects of His love have an obligation to love one another (1 John 4:11).
- (4) We cannot both love God, whom we have not seen, and at the same time love our brother, whom we have seen (1 John 4:20).
- (5) Since God's love seeks the best for us, that love includes chastening and discipline. "Whom the Lord loves He disciplines" (Hebrews 12:6). God's love for us incorporates that which will make us the most mature and Christ-like, not necessarily that which makes us feel good. In our "feel-good," politically correct society, many, if not most parents, and many, if not most school teachers, have lost sight of that truth.

4. TRUE.

- a. Statement. With regard to INTEGRITY, God is TRUE.
- b. Meaning. God is Consistent with Himself and is Never Self-Contradictory.
- c. Scripture.
 - (1) (Rom 3:4) "May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, 'THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.'"
 - (2) (Titus 1:2) "in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,"

d. Explanation.

- (1) God's essence is Truth. He is Truth personified. His view of everything is the only accurate view.
- (2) God is Absolute Truth.
- (3) Truth implies communication. Whenever God communicates, He communicates Absolute Truth.

e. Application.

- (1) Because God is True and Truthful, we can believe everything He says. In fact, unless we trust Him, it is impossible for us to have any meaningful relationship with Him (Hebrews 11:6).
- (2) God is the only person who is totally Reliable. He is utterly Trustworthy, completely Dependable. Humans will inevitably let us down sooner or later, but God never will.
- (3) Truthfulness implies Communication. Because God is True, everything He communicates is absolutely true. Truth implies the potential existence of non-truth, or error. God has truthfully revealed to us the existence of a real Devil, Satan God's greatest Adversary. God has revealed that Satan's most often used and most formidable weapon is deceit (John 8:44). It is incumbent on us humans, therefore, to have a mechanism to detect Truth and Error.
- (4) God has communicated to mankind through Angels (Messengers). It is important to know, therefore, if we are dealing with one of God's Angels (Acts 5:19-20) or a demon masquerading as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).
- (5) God has communicated to mankind through Prophets. It is our responsibility to determine if some person is a True Prophet (Numbers 12:6-8; Deuteronomy 18:15; 1 Samuel 3:19-20; Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1; Malachi 4:5; Hebrews 1:1) or a False Prophet (Deuteronomy 20:20-22; Jeremiah 14:14; Ezekiel 13:9; Matthew 7:15-16; 24:11, 14; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1; Revelation 16:13).

- (6) When God communicated with the prophets, many of them wrote down what God had revealed. Some of these writings God arranged to have recorded in a permanent record, the Bible, also known as the “writings” or “Scripture.” It is imperative for us that we read, study, understand, obey, and communicate the truths of the Bible, God’s Word to us (Matthew 5:18-19; Luke 16:16-17; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- (7) God’s greatest communication to us is the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (a) He existed in eternity past as the Word of God (John 1:1-3).
 - (b) He appeared intermittently as The Angel (Messenger) Yahweh (The Lord) in Old Testament times. (Genesis 16:7-13; 18:1-33, cf. 19:1 ff.; 22:11-14; Judges 6:11-23; Zechariah 3:1-10).
 - (c) He is the Prophet whom Moses predicted (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), and we had better listen to Him or else!
 - (d) He appeared as God’s Ultimate Message to mankind at His Incarnation (John 1:14), the Uniquely Begotten Son of God (Matthew 26:63-64; 27:54; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; 22:70; John 1:34, 49; 3:16-18; 11:27; 20:30-31; Romans 1:4; Hebrews 1:2-4). He came as the Suffering Savior, the Lamb of God who died and rose again to pay for the sins of the world (Isaiah 53:1-12; John 1:29, 36; 3:16-18; Rev. 5:6, 12).
 - (e) He will appear a second time as Conquering King, returning with His angels in flaming fire to take eternal vengeance on those who do not know God and do not obey the Good News about Jesus; and to be glorified in and marveled at by all His holy people who have believed in Him (Matthew 24:29-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Revelation 19:11-21)!

What Is God Like?

The Existence and Attributes of God

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