

THEOLOGY PROPER (45)

(Incommunicable Attribute #7) - Omniscience.

This is the attribute that means God is unlimited in knowledge, or to state it another way, God is “All-knowing”. **What this actually means is that God knows all things past, present and future, plus He knows all things possible and all things actual.**

The idea of having all knowledge of everything is truly beyond the finite mind to be able to grasp. It is, as Chafer said, “Whatever omniscience is, only omniscience can know in the absolute cognition of it.” (Vol.1, p.192) Even though we cannot grasp omniscience completely, the Bible makes it clear that it is an attribute of God of profound implications:

- 1) I Sam.16:7 – God knows what is in the heart of every man.
- 2) I Sam.23:10-13 – God knows all future possibilities of what may and will happen.
- 3) I Chron.28:9 – God knows every person’s heart and mind, thoughts and imaginations.
- 4) II Chron.20:14-25 – God knows everything about tomorrow, including victories and defeats.
- 5) Job 31:4 – God knows every person’s life and every step a person takes in life.
- 6) Job 34:21 – God knows everything about every person.
- 7) Psalms 138:1-6 – God knows everything about ever one, even what one will actually say.
- 8) Psalms 147:5 – God is unlimited in His knowledge and understanding.
- 9) Is.42:9 – God has knowledge of and control of all things before they happen.
- 10) Is.46:8-11 – God knows and plans every beginning and end and brings it to pass.
- 11) Mt.11:21-23 – God actually knows not only what is but what could have been.
- 12) Acts 15:18 – God makes known things which are known to Him of old.
- 13) Heb.4:13 – God knows all and sees all about all created things.
- 14) I John 3:20 – God knows all things, including what is in a person’s heart.
- 15) Ps. 50:10-11 – God knows all about every single animal and bird.
- 16) Mt.10:30 – God has knowledge of even the very number of hairs on our head.

The Biblical evidence concerning God's Omniscience is overwhelming and clear. Even the full implications of these Biblical statements is beyond our full comprehension. The most gifted secular scholar of the first half of the first century was Seneca. During the reign of Nero, he became acknowledged as the most brilliant figure of his time. It is not known for sure whether he became a Christian, but he certainly had good insight into God’s attribute of omniscience. He wrote: "We ought always so to conduct ourselves as if we lived in public; we ought to think as if someone could see what is passing in our utmost breast; and there is One who does thus behold us. Of what avail is it, then, that any deed is concealed from man? Nothing can be hidden from God. He is present with our very souls, and penetrates our inmost thoughts, and, indeed, is never absent from us" (Ibid.,198) This attribute, is practical in many ways.

1. Omniscience should cause us to stand in of God.
2. Omniscience should cause us to realize how little we know in comparison to God.
3. Omniscience should warn that God knows all things a person has ever thought, said or done.
4. Omniscience should cause us to realize God always judge in truth.
5. Omniscience teaches God knows what has, what is and what will happen at all times
6. Omniscience teaches us God knows all things possible and will do the best thing possible.

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7. Omniscience means the unknown we fear is the known God controls.
8. Omniscience means God knows all future events before they actually happen,
9. Omniscience means God knows all faithfulness which should encourage and comfort.
10. Omniscience means God knows all unfaithfulness which should intimidate and cause fear.

(Incommunicable Attribute #8) - Self-Existence.

This is the that means God is complete in and of Himself and He is dependent on no other being. God is totally independent in Himself and is in need of no one or nothing. **This is a critical incommunicable attribute, for in order for all of creation to depend on One God, God must never have need of depending on any other than Himself.** If God is not self-existent, then He is dependent on something or someone else, which means He is not infinitely perfect. This attribute is very important to God, for His name "Jehovah" (YHWH) "I AM" (Ex.3:14) is clear revelation of God's "self-existence."

God is the **only** Being who can completely exist in Himself, for all other Beings and dependent upon other beings and things. For example- Plants are dependent. Animals are dependent. People are dependent. There is no such thing as an independent created thing. God is the only Being who is completely self-existent. There are many passages that teach this:

- 1) Exodus 3:14 - Dr. Paul Enns says of this verse: "Exodus 3:14 emphasizes His self-existence in His identification, "I AM WHO I AM" The verb "to be" emphasizes He has continual existence in Himself." (Handbook of Theology, p.189)
- 2) Is.40:18-26 - Berkhof said these verses not only prove God is independent of all things, but that all things are dependent and only exist because of God. (Systematic Theology, p.58)
- 3) Jn.5:26 - God has life in Himself, whereas all other Creatures are dependent upon a variety of things, all controlled by God, for their life.
- 4) Acts 17:24-25 - God is the One who made all things, however, He did not need anything, meaning He is complete in Himself, He is self-existent.
- 5) Rom.11:33-36 - God is self-existent and in need of nothing.

God is the **ONLY** Being who never needs to depend on any person or thing. He is the **ONLY** Being who is self-existent. This is a very meaningful attribute in several ways:

1. This attribute should cause us to stand in awe of God- One theologian said "There is nothing more ultimate than God, "
2. This attribute should cause us to realize how dependent we are upon God.
3. This attribute should cause us to realize that God does not need us, but we all need Him.
4. This attribute should cause us to be thankful that God would relate to any of us. He does not need us.
5. This attribute should cause us to realize that since God needs nothing, we can go to God for everything. He is never, at any time, less than He is, which means He always has the ability to answer our requests, in and of Himself. The wisest thing for a believer to do when faced with any insurmountable matter is to take the request to the self-existing God.