

Attributes of God

Week 2 – Aseity and Immutability

Aseity: God is self-existent, self-sufficient, and not dependent on anything or anyone else.

1. God is self-existent (Acts 17:28, Exodus 3:14, Psalm 90:2, Isaiah 43:10)

“God has all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He has made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them.” – Westminster Confession of Faith

“He is the uncaused first Cause, the uncreated Creator, unmade Maker, the unsustained Sustainer.” – Steve Lawson

2. God is self-sufficient (Acts 17:25, Romans 11:34-36)

“All things are from His sovereign will, through His sovereign activity, and to His sovereign glory. Put another way, God is the Planner, Provider, and Purpose of everything.” – Steve Lawson

3. God is self-exalting (Psalm 46:10, Isaiah 48:11)

- The **Father** glorifies the Son (John 17:1, Philippians 2:9)
- The **Son** glorifies the Father (John 14:13)
- The **Holy Spirit** glorifies the Son (John 16:14)

“There is a mutual delight in each other in the persons of the blessed Trinity, so that each divine person delights to glorify the rest. God even thus glorifies Himself.” – Charles Spurgeon

4. God is self-content (John 17:5)

“God is infinitely happy in the enjoyment of Himself in perfectly beholding and infinitely loving, and rejoicing in, His own essence and perfections.” – Jonathan Edwards

5. God is self-giving (John 11:25, Acts 17:25, Philippians 4:19, Colossians 2:19)

“Not only does He sustain this universe (as He once founded it) by His boundless might, regulate it by His wisdom, preserve it by His goodness, and especially rule mankind by His righteousness and judgment, bear with it in His mercy, watch over it by His protection... no drop will be found either of wisdom and light, or of righteousness or power or rectitude, or of genuine truth, which does not flow from Him, and of which He is not the cause.” – John Calvin

Take aways – Aseity

1. God’s creation did not add to His attributes, but is a platform to display His attributes.
2. Anything good we see in ourselves or others that reflects God’s communicable attributes comes from God alone.

“God is the beauty without which there is no beauty, the wisdom without which there is no wisdom, the righteousness without which there is no righteousness, and so on... He is not only the source but the cause of every good quality we witness in this world.” – Matthew Barrett

3. In recognizing God’s self-sufficiency, our worship does not add to God anything He is lacking. Rather our worship should reflect our need, God’s greatness, and our satisfaction in Him. Whatever we give to Him, He first gave to us.

Immutability: God is not subject to change in His being, character, or will.

1. God is **never-changing** (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8)

“God is perpetually the same: subject to no change.” – A.W. Pink

“If God changed for the better, then He was not the best possible being when we first trusted Him. And how could we be sure that He is the best possible being now? If God could change for the worse, then what kind of God might He become? Might He become, for instance, a little bit evil rather than wholly good? And if He could become a little bit evil, then how do we know He could not change to become largely evil – or wholly evil? It is hard to imagine any thought more terrifying. How could we ever trust such a God who could change?” – Wayne Grudem

2. God is **self-consistent** (Numbers 23:19, Psalm 119:89, Matthew 5:18)

3. God is **rock-solid** (2 Samuel 22:2-3; Psalm 18:2; 19:14; 62:2)

“The contrast between being and becoming marks the difference between the Creator and the creature. Every creature is continually becoming. It is changeable, constantly striving, seeks rest and satisfaction, and finds this rest in God, in Him alone, for only He is pure being and not becoming. Hence, in Scripture God is often called the Rock.” – Herman Bavinck

4. God is **strong-willed** (Psalm 33:10-11, Proverbs 19:21)

5. God is **ever-saving** (Romans 8:29-30, John 14:16)

6. God is **self-controlled** (Psalm 102:26-27)

You may be asking:

- What about Scripture that says God changed His mind or repented? (Hint: phenomenological language)
- If Jesus is God – and God is immutable – what about all the change He experienced in His incarnation? (Hint: human vs. divine natures)

“For had He ceased to be God, He [would have] been a mere creature, and His sufferings would have been of as little value and satisfaction as the sufferings of a creature. He could not have been a sufficient Mediator, had He ceased to be God.” – Stephen Charnock

Take aways – Immutability

1. Be comforted by the fact that God never changes. The God described in Scripture is the same today and will forever be. He can be trusted.
2. Since God is immutable, all of His attributes are perfectly fixed.

“How cloudy would His blessedness be if it were changeable! How dim His wisdom, if it might be obscured! How feeble His power, if it were capable to be sickly and languish! How would mercy lose much of its lustre, if it could change into wrath ... But unchangeableness is a thread that runs through the whole web; it is the enamel of all the rest.” – Stephen Charnock

3. Since God’s sovereign will is immutable, His redeeming of believers is irrevocable.

*“Get an interest in the unchangeable God, then thou art as a rock in the sea, immovable in the midst of all changes.
– Thomas Watson*