

**Behold Our God**  
**Session 4: The Self-Existence and Self-Sufficiency of God**  
**(Select Scriptures)**

**Introduction:**

The older you get, the more you will come to appreciate a deal.

I remember as a boy, going with my dad whenever he would buy a new car. He loves the process of negotiating a car deal. Before we'd go into a dealership, dad would tell me, "Here's the highest amount I am willing to pay. I won't spend one penny over it." He was a man of his word. If the dealership wasn't willing to give him the price he wanted, he would walk. I remember on multiple occasions, salesmen following us as we walked out the door, begging us to stay so that they could talk to their managers to see if they could offer us a better price.

There are few things that bring my dad more satisfaction than getting a deal, in particular, on a car.

I have found that now that I am an adult, I love a good deal as well. We recently bought a sofa, and in my humble opinion, I think we got a deal. It's very satisfying.

Well tonight, here at The Outlet, I've got a deal for you! This is the best deal that you'll find anywhere within a 25-mile radius. It's a two for one special.

Tonight, we're not just going to talk about one attribute; we're going to learn about two attributes of God. God's self-existence and self-sufficiency.

I'm feeling pretty generous tonight and I know that y'all are excited to receive this two for one blessing!

I know when I throw around words like "Self-Existence" and "Self-Sufficiency", it may sound daunting or complicated. My goal is to explain these amazing attributes of God as clearly and concisely as possible.

Tonight, just like in previous weeks, we will answer the following three questions:

- 1) What does it mean for God to be self-existent and self-sufficient?
- 2) Where does the Bible teach that God is self-existent and self-sufficient?
- 3) What difference does God's self-existence and self-sufficiency make in our lives?

**Take Home Truth: God is self-existent and self-sufficient.**

- I. What does it mean for God to be self-existent and self-sufficient?
  - A. Self-Existence

1. **Self-Existent:** “existing of or by oneself or itself independently of any other being or cause : not caused to exist by someone or something else.”<sup>1</sup>
  - a) I think this is an excellent definition.
2. When we say that God is self-existent, we mean that He is existing of or by Himself, independently of any other being or cause.
  - a) As the early church theologian Novatian wrote, “God has no origin.”<sup>2</sup>
    - (i) God’s self-existence speaks to the truth that He has no beginning.
    - (ii) I know this is difficult to wrap our minds around, because as human beings, we have a beginning, and everything around us in the observable world and universe has a beginning.
      - (a) Probably one of the top three questions I get asked by the kids at Good News Club is, “Who made God?”
      - (b) I’ll respond by saying that no one made God. He has always been. He has no beginning.
      - (c) The kids usually look at me so perplexed by my answer.
      - (d) Let’s be honest, on this side of eternity, we will never be able to fully understand this truth.
  - b) God is the uncaused cause of everything else.
  - c) He is the only necessary being. Everything and everyone else is contingent upon Him for their existence.

#### **B. Self-Sufficiency (Aseity)**

1. **Self-Sufficient:** “able to maintain oneself or itself without outside aid : capable of providing for one's own needs.”<sup>3</sup>
  - a) Once again, I think this definition captures the meaning of God’s self-sufficiency.
2. When we say that God is self-sufficient, we mean that He has no need; He is in need of no one or no thing. He is truly independent.
  - a) As AW Tozer puts it, “Whatever God is, and all that God is, He is in Himself.....To admit the existence of a need in God is to admit incompleteness in the divine Being. Need is a creature-word and cannot be spoken of the Creator.”<sup>4</sup>
3. God remains unchanging in who He is and is able to accomplish all that He does without any external aid.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self-existent>

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in AW Tozer’s, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 25.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self-sufficient>

<sup>4</sup> AW Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 32.

- a) This is a humbling truth.
- b) God isn't in need of any of His creation and that includes His image bearers.
- c) He didn't create us because He was lacking in some way.
- d) No, He created us because He wanted to. He chooses to use us because He wants to.
- e) Listen to what Tozer writes about this:
  - (i) "God has a voluntary relation to everything He has made, but He has no *necessary* relation to anything outside of Himself. His interest in His creatures arises from His sovereign good pleasure, not from any need those creatures can supply nor from any completeness they can bring to Him who is complete in Himself."<sup>5</sup>
- f) The reason that you are here and the reason that God uses you is because of His sovereign good pleasure.
  - (i) Please don't be deluded; God, in no way, needs you.
  - (ii) God, in no way, needs me.
  - (iii) I know this is getting into the "So What?" question already, but this blows my mind, that God would choose to use any of us. It shows how much He loves us.
    - (a) But let's not get too ahead of ourselves.

**Application:**

What I hope you understand so far is what is meant by God's self-existence and self-sufficiency.

God's self-existence teaches us that God has no origin (no beginning). He is the uncaused cause of everything and everyone else.

God's self-sufficiency teaches us that God is in need of nothing outside of Himself. He is free of dependence. In all that He is, He is in Himself.

By the way, do you think these two attributes are communicable or incommunicable?

They are incommunicable attributes, just like God's infinitude.

Any questions so far?

Now, we once again move on to the most important question:

Where does the Bible teach that God is self-existent and self-sufficient?

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<sup>5</sup> AW Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 32.

## **II. Where does the Bible teach that God is self-existent and self-sufficient?**

### **A. God's Self-Existence**

- 1. Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."**
  - a) Genesis 1:1 is a really important verse because it tells us that our Triune God created the heavens and the earth, in the beginning.**
  - b) This points to the reality that the universe, and all that's in it, was created by the One with no beginning.**
  - c) This is a truth that the Apostle John writes in greater detail about in John 1:1-3.**
- 2. John 1:1-3: "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."**
  - a) Here, the Apostle John writes about "the Word", who is Jesus Christ.**
    - (i) Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity.**
    - (ii) As a reminder, all Three Persons of the Trinity equally share the divine attributes, including Self-Existence and Self-Sufficiency.**
  - b) John teaches us that Jesus is God and was in the beginning with God the Father.**
  - c) In v. 3, we read that everything that was made, was made through Jesus Christ.**
    - (i) This means that Jesus Christ isn't a created being.**
    - (ii) He, like God the Father and God the Spirit, has no origin.**
    - (iii) He has always been.**
    - (iv) He is self-existent.**
  - d) This is a teaching that is affirmed by the Apostle Paul.**
- 3. Colossians 1:15-17: 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.**
  - a) When Paul says that Jesus is the "firstborn of all creation" in v. 15, he isn't teaching that Jesus is the first of God's creations.**
    - (i) He is simply saying that Jesus is the preeminent one through whom everything and everyone was made.**
    - (ii) The idea that Jesus is God's first creation is a heresy, that is taught by cults, like the Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons.**
    - (iii) Jesus can't be both created and the creator of all at the same time.**

(a) Remember, everything that was created was created through Him.

(b) Therefore, Jesus can't be a created being.

(c) He is entirely self-existent.

b) So the consistent teaching of Scripture is that all Three Persons of the Trinity are Self-Existent.

## **B. God's Self-Sufficiency**

1. Acts 17:22-28: 22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 28 for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring."
  - a) Paul speaks to the men of Athens and teaches them how the One True God is different from their gods.
  - b) One of the major ways He is different is that He is self-sufficient.
  - c) As Paul says in v. 25, "nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything."
  - d) God has no need for anything!
  - e) All that He is, He is in Himself.
  - f) For instance, God is life, and life is found in Himself.
  - g) As Jesus taught in John 5....
2. John 5:25-27: 25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man."
  - a) Life is found in God and God alone.
  - b) God depends on no external source for life. He alone is the source.
  - c) All that He is, He is in Himself.

## **Application:**

**God is entirely self-existent and self-sufficient. This is the consistent teaching of Scripture.**

**When Moses encounters God at the burning bush in Exodus 3, and asks God for His name, God responds “I AM WHO I AM” (Exodus 3:14). What a perfect summary of His self-existence and self-sufficiency. He is Who He is: the One with no beginning and the One with no need.**

**What difference should these two attributes make in our lives?**

### **III. What difference does God’s self-existence and self-sufficiency make in our lives?**

#### **A. God’s self-existence reminds us of the glorious truth that you and I are a purposeful creation of God.**

- 1. You and I have a beginning.**
- 2. Our beginning reminds us of God’s intimate involvement in our creation.**
- 3. God appointed your mother and your father as the means of your creation.**
- 4. God breathed life into you and He made you in His image.**
- 5. Listen to what David writes about God’s involvement in our creation:**
  - a) Psalm 139:13-16: 13 For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.**
- 6. According to God’s Word, you are no accident. You are here by God’s design.**
- 7. You are here because God loves you and made you with the capacity to have a relationship with Him.**
- 8. The question is, do you actually have a relationship with Him?**
- 9. This is the reason that Jesus came...**
  - a) 1 Peter 3:18: 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,**
- 10. Have you received the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ?**
- 11. This gift is available to you, right here and right now.**
- 12. Never forget that God’s self-existence serves as a reminder that you are a precious creation of the Uncreated One.**

#### **B. God’s self-sufficiency reminds us of our desperate need for God.**

- 1. While God has no need, you and I are very needy.**

2. Just think about all of the needs that we need.
  - a) We need oxygen to breathe
  - b) We need water to drink
  - c) We need food to eat
  - d) We need shelter
  - e) We need our families (parents)
  - f) We need money
  - g) We need rain
  - h) We need the sun
3. You get the picture. We need a lot of things. Who is the giver of these things? Answer: God!
4. Everything I just listed, God gives us
  - a) Once again, not because He needs to, but because He wants to
5. As important as those needs I just mentioned are, they pale in comparison to our greatest need: the need to be forgiven of our sin.
6. God has made a way for our sin to be forgiven, by giving His Son, Jesus Christ.
  - a) Without God, where would we be?
7. It really isn't hyperbole for Jesus to say what He says in John 15:5: "apart from me you can do nothing."
  - a) This is how desperately we need God.
  - b) We rely upon Him for everything, including our greatest need; the need to be forgiven of our sins.
8. Once again, God didn't need to make a way for us to be forgiven. He wanted to make a way for us to be forgiven because He loves us so.
9. The God who needs nothing, loves you more than you could ever imagine.
10. Isn't that amazing?

### **Conclusion:**

**Isn't it amazing how our Self-Existent and Self-Sufficient God desires to use us, His Church, to advance His Kingdom here on earth? He has appointed the Church as His means for spreading the Gospel to every tribe, tongue, and nation. Why has He chosen us for this great task?**

**I think the Apostle Paul's words here are helpful as we close:**

**1 Timothy 1:12-17: 12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus**

**Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**Paul was blown away that the God who has no need would choose to use him, the “foremost” of sinners. Why would God do this? Why would He use any of us? V. 16 is key; we are testimonies of God’s mercy and perfect patience. We are displays of His infinite love for us in Jesus Christ.**

**Now may we, like Paul, go from here, and live for the honor and glory of our self-existent and self-sufficient God.**

**Application Questions:**

- What does it mean for God to be self-existent and self-sufficient?
- Are God’s self-existence and self-sufficiency communicable or incommunicable attributes?
- How would you respond to the question, “Who made God?”? Where would you go to in the Bible to answer this question?
- How would you respond to a Jehovah’s Witness or a Mormon who says that Jesus is the first creation of God?
- What difference does God’s self-existence and self-sufficiency make in our lives?
- What is your main takeaway from tonight’s message?