



T H E O L O G Y

T H U R S D A Y S

# **FINDING REST IN THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD**

# MEANING MAKERS

## When Natural Disasters Occur:

1. God (or the gods) are angry and punishing us.
2. God does not exist, because if he did he wouldn't allow this to occur.
3. God is good, the world is fallen (including creation) and He can use this event to focus me on truth and His goodness.

# MEANING MAKERS

4. Bad things happen to bad people.

Job and his lousy friends.

Psalm 73

# MEANING MAKERS

To suffer biblically requires that we trust God  
**as He has revealed Himself.**

“What comes to our minds when  
we think about God is the most  
important thing about us.”

A.W. Tozer

# **COMMON VIEWS**

The loving grandfather –  
maximizes his love and kindness.

**Moral Therapeutic Deism**

# COMMON VIEWS

The distant creator – maximizes his transcendence.

**Deism**

# COMMON VIEWS

The back-scratching egomaniac  
that may maximize justice or  
omnipresence

**Paganism or Polytheism**

# **WHEN WE SEE GOD RIGHTLY...**

**We worship the God who is...**

**Exodus 34:8**

**“...And Moses quickly bowed his  
head toward the earth and  
worshiped.”**

# **GOD IS!**

Our **personal concept** of God is worthless unless it is logical, consistent and **agrees** with His self-revelation.

# **GOD IS!**

**God's existence and identity** are NOT determined by man's notions about God. He is an external reality who can only be known by personal self-revelation

Exodus 3:6, 3:14, 19, 34:6

Hebrews 1:1-4

## Hebrews 1:1-3

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

# **THE NATURE OF GOD: HIS ATTRIBUTES**

**Attribute** – an essential quality that characterizes an individual or an object.

**Incommunicable Attributes** – are not shared with humanity

# THE NATURE OF GOD -ATTRIBUTES

**Communicable Attributes** – are shared (in part) with humanity

# **INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES**

**Independent** - God is completely other. He is separate, independent and above all creation.

Transcendent. He is Free. -- **Psalm 115:3; Acts 17:24-25;**

## **Acts 17:24-25**

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,<sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

# SELF-SUFFICIENT NOT DISTANT

God does not need us or the rest of creation for anything, **yet** we and the rest of creation can glorify him and bring him joy.

# **INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES**

**Unchangeable / Immutable –**  
God is not moody or fickle. He is steadfast, faithful, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. --  
Jas. 1:17

# **SELF-SUFFICIENT NOT DISTANT**

## **Challenges to God's Self-Sufficiency and Immutability**

God “needs” us...

“Process Theology” – God is changing/developing as he interacts with his creation.

# UNCHANGING

God is not the “God of Wrath” in the Old Testament and the “God of Love” in the New Testament.

# **INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES**

**Infinite** – God is not limited or confined to the universe. He is not bound by space, time, physics, or anything.

# INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

He is infinite **and** personal...apart from orthodox Christianity, no system of religion has a God who is both infinite and personal.

# INFINITE

**Omnipotent** – All Powerful. Consistent with His natural attributes. Jer.32:17

## **Jeremiah 32:17**

‘Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

# INFINITE

**Omnipresent** – All Present. Fully.  
Everywhere. All the time. Psalm  
139; Jer. 23:23-24

## **Psalm 139:7-8**

Where shall I go from your Spirit?

Or where shall I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there!

If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

# INFINITE

**Omniscient** – All knowing. Past, present and future. He is knowledge itself. 1 John 1:5-10

# INFINITE

## Challenges to God's Omniscience

“Open” Theology - God does not know the future. He responds to the actions of man

# **INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES**

**Eternal** – God is self-existent, no beginning and no end. “In the beginning, God...” He sees all time equally vividly --

Is. 57:15; Deut. 33:27;

# **INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES**

“...in God’s perspective, any extremely long period of time is as if it just happened. And any very short period of time (such as one day seems to God to last forever: it never ceases to be present in His consciousness.”

Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8

# FINDING REST

NO CONTROL	

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<b>1. Past</b>	

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# FINDING REST

NO CONTROL	CONTROL
1. Past	
2. Outcomes (Future)	
3. Genetics	
4. Others: Thoughts; Feelings, Actions	

# FINDING REST

NO CONTROL	CONTROL
1. Past	<b>1. Self</b>
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# FINDING REST

NO CONTROL	CONTROL
1. Past	<b>1. Self</b>
2. Outcomes (Future)	<b>Thoughts</b>
3. Genetics	<b>Feelings</b>
4. Others: Thoughts; Feelings, Actions	<b>Actions</b>

# **COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES**

**Personal** – God is a knowable person with intellect, feelings and will. He made mankind in His own image to reflect His character and presence in the world. Jesus modeled a relationship with God as His Abba Father

Psalm 56:8-11; Rom 8:26-27

## **Romans 8:26-27**

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

## **Psalm 116:1**

I love the LORD, because he has heard  
my voice and my pleas for mercy.

<sup>2</sup> Because he inclined his ear to me,  
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

# COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

**Holiness** – God is morally perfect and excellent. There is no contradiction between His attributes and all of his attributes come together in His holiness.

Psalm 99:1-5; Ex. 34:6-7

## **1Peter 1:15-16**

<sup>15</sup> but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup> since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

# COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

**Good** – God is the ultimate standard of goodness and all He does is good. He cannot do evil or be wrong.

Psalm 119:68; 145:9; Romans 8:28-29

## **Psalm 145:9**

The LORD is good to all,  
and his mercy is over all that he has made.

# COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

**Love** – God is love and all He does is from love. He is benevolent, giving, merciful, and kind. He extends Himself and yet His attribute of love in no way contradicts His wrath and justice.

# LOVE – THE SUPREME ETHIC

Ex. 34:6-7 Hebrew word: – *Hesed*

247 occurrences Often translated  
throughout the English OT as  
“Steadfast Love”

1 John 4:7-12

## **1 John 4:7-12**

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

<sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

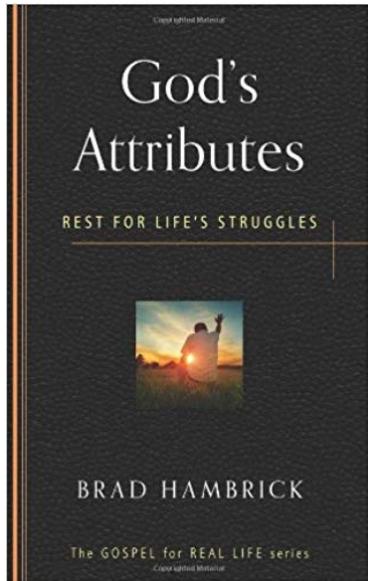
# APPLICATION

1. Some have said that anger at God is normal and expected in some circumstances. How does the attribute of God's goodness inform a response to the idea of being angry at God?
  
2. Some have said they hesitate to bring some issues before God in prayer because they seem unimportant. How can the attributes of God being personal and omnipotent help us think more accurately?

# RESOURCES

*God's Attributes: Rest for Life's Struggles.*

Brad Hambrick



*With: Reimagining the Way you Relate to God*

Skye Jethani

