

Foundations II | The Attributes of God

Definitions

- God's attributes are character qualities that uniquely define Him
- Each of God's attributes are permanent, essential, and intrinsic qualities of the entirety Godhead (Father, Son, and Spirit), which cannot be lost.
- What you know and believe about God inevitably becomes the lens through which you see everything else in life.

The Aseity of God

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. – Genesis 1:1

1. What it Means

- **Two Latin Words:** *a* "from" and *se* "self"
- Meaning: "from oneself," "within oneself," "without anything else."
- God exists in and of Himself. He is not dependent on anything or anyone for His existence, purpose, or fulfillment
- He lacks nothing within Himself; He needs nothing outside Himself. Yet, everyone and everything is dependent on Him
- God is self-existing and self-sufficient (Gen.1:1)

2. The Nature

- **Eternal**
 - God is uncreated and uncaused (Gen.1:1; Psalm 90:2)
 - He derives from nothing outside Himself (Isaiah 40:28)
 - He is who He is (Exodus 3:14)
- **Independent**
 - God did not create us because He was lonely neither to fulfill any need he had.
 - God does not need creation, worship, service, or help from anything He created (Acts 17:24-25; John 1:1-4)
 - He is the source of life but is Himself sustained by nothing (Exodus 3:1-4; Job 41:11; John 1:4; Rom. 11:35-36)
 - It is precisely because God has no beginning that He is dependent on no one and no thing.
 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever" – Heb. 13:8
- **Immutable**
 - God's self-sufficiency means He does not change, grow, or evolve (Mal. 3:6)
 - He is perfectly complete and satisfied in Himself (Rom. 11:36; Colossians 1:17)

3. The Danger

- **Arianism**
 - Taught by Arius (Bishop of Alexandria, 256-336 AD)
 - Arius claimed that God the Son (Christ) was a created being, not eternal, and this not of the same essence as the Father
- **Pelagianism**
 - Taught by Pelagius (Theologian who lived in Rome, 410-418)
 - Claimed that the whole human race was not tainted by Adam's sin—making man a morally good being able to achieve salvation by his own perceived goodness
- **Nestorianism**
 - Taught by Nestorius (Patriarch of Constantinople, 451 AD)
 - Claimed that Christ existed as two separate persons—one divine and one human, undermining and detaching the Godhead from its essence

4. The Blessings

Humility

- We are not necessary to God's existence or plan—yet He graciously includes us (Psalm 8:3–4).
- We must shed any illusions of self-sufficiency (John 15:5).

Assurance

- Because God is not dependent, He is not vulnerable or limited—our hope is secure in Him (Isaiah 26:4).

Worship

- Our worship is not to meet God's needs, but to reflect His glory (Psalm 50:10–12).
- True worship comes from awe at God's sufficiency and majesty.

Questions

1. In what ways does the self-sufficiency of God challenge modern ideas of independence and self-reliance?
2. How should the doctrine of God's self-sufficiency shape the way we think about worship and service?

Recommended Books:

1. A. W. Pink. *The Attributes of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1975.
2. Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. New York City, NY: Sola Scriptura Press, 1686.
3. Charnock, Stephen. *The Existence & Attributes of God*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022.