

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 Righteousness of God

The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His works – Psalm 145:7

1. The Meaning

- **Hebrew:** צִדְקָה (tsedeq); **Greek:** δικαιοσύνη (dikaiosynē)
- Meaning: “conformed to the highest standard of justice and moral integrity.”
- Biblically used in legal, relational, and covenantal contexts.
- All of God's acts are just and fair according to His standards, because He is the standard (Ps. 71:19)
- Therefore, God always does what is right, and a charge of injustice can never be brought against God (Rom.9:20-21)

2. The Nature

- **Moral Perfection**
 - He cannot lie, deceive, or approve of evil (Titus 1:2; James 1:13)
 - The righteousness of God is a necessary aspect of his holiness, and He never misuses His power by violating His Law (Matt. 5:17)
- **Impartial Justice**
 - God has no “favorites” (Deut. 10:17; Rom.2:5-11; Acts 10:34-35)
 - From His throne, He executes perfect justice over the world (1 Samuel 2:10)
- **Covenantal Faithfulness**
 - God's righteousness is displayed in His faithfulness to His promises (Gen.17:5-8; Ps. 36:5-6; Lam. 3:23)
 - By the saving work of Christ, the perfect justice of God was put on display (1 John 1:9; Rom. 3:21:26). By believing in Christ, the righteousness of God is imputed to us (2 Cor. 5:21)
 - The cross is where divine justice and mercy are perfectly united (John 12:31)

3. The Danger (of missing it)

- **Legalism**
 - Believing we can earn God's favor through our own righteousness, rather than trusting in Christ's righteousness alone (Lk. 18:9-14; Gal. 2:16)

- **Antinomianism**

- A theological belief that asserts that Christians are not bound by moral law, particularly the moral laws of the Old Testament, because of the grace provided through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Abusing God's grace by neglecting personal holiness, which contradicts the righteousness of God (Rom. 6:1-2; Titus 2:11-12)

- **Relativism**

- The philosophical view that truth, morality, and knowledge are not absolute or objective, but are instead relative to the perspectives, cultures, or individual preferences of those who hold them.
- Rejecting God as the standard of right and wrong leads to a self-defined ethics and societal decay (Judges 21:25; Isaiah 5:20)
- The Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of Truth (John 8:32; 17:17)

4. The Blessing (of knowing it)

Conviction

- God's righteousness exposes our sin and need for grace (Jer. 30:23-24; Lk. 12:5; Rom. 3:10-12; Heb. 10:31).
- There are 470 references to God's wrath against sin throughout Scripture (Gen. 6:9-13; 17-18; 19:23-29; Ps. 7:11; 95:11).

Justification

- We are declared righteous before God by grace through faith in Christ (Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:21)
- God the Father has appointed the Son to judge the living and the dead on the day of judgment (John 17:12; Acts 10:42; Heb. 9:27)

Eternal Hope and Security

- His righteousness guarantees final justice and vindication for His people
- God will make all things new (right)—No more injustice in the eternal state (Ps. 89:14; Rev. 19:11)

Questions

1. How does understanding God's righteousness affect the way we respond to personal suffering or injustice in the world?
2. How can we reflect God's righteousness in our daily lives?

Recommended Books:

1. Athanasius of Alexandria, *On the Incarnation*. Oxford, UK: Pantianos Classics, 1944.
2. Charnock, Stephen. *The Existence & Attributes of God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022.
3. Owen, John, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 1852.
4. A. W. Pink. *The Attributes of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1975.
5. Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. New York City, NY: Sola Scriptura Press, 1686.