

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 Truthfulness of God

God is not man, that He should lie, or a son of man, that He should change His mind. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not fulfill it? – Numbers 23:19

1. The Meaning

- **Hebrew:** (אֱמֶת) 'ēmet — truth, reliability, faithfulness
- **Greek:** *alētheia* (ἀλήθεια) — truth, reality, genuineness, integrity
- **Meaning:** Biblical Truth is reality as God defines and reveals it—grounded in His faithful, covenant-keeping character; disclosed supremely in Jesus Christ; inscribed in God's Word; and embodied in truthful, trustworthy living
- There is no greater Truth than what God speaks about Himself

2. The Nature

- **Objective**
 - Truth is not based on how things may appear to, nor is it something people may want it to be (Prov. 14:12; Isa. 5:20; 2 Cor. 13:8)
 - The written Word of God is not to be subjectively understood by personal whims of readers, and it cannot mean one thing to one person and something else to another person (Deut. 4:2; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 2:15; Gal. 1:8-9)
 - What God says is absolutely true, whether it coincides with a person's preconceived notions or not (Num. 23:19; Ps. 33:4; John 17:17; Rom. 3:4).
- **Precise/Everlasting**
 - God is incapable of making any mistake—a perfect God can only speak perfect words (Ps. 31:5; Isa. 65:16; John 14:6)
 - The Word of God is not merely one of many voices contributing to a collective body of truth, but the only authoritative vessel through which God reveals Himself in the person and work of His One and true witness—Christ (John 1:9, 14, 17; Eph. 4:21)
 - The Truth of God endures throughout time and eternity (Ps. 119:89; Isa. 40:8)

- **Revealed/Accessible**

- The Holy Spirit is the agent through which Truth is revealed from God to man (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13)
- By the work of the Spirit, Scripture has been written (2 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 3:7)
- To know and understand the Truth, every person must be personally taught by the Holy Spirit Himself (John 16:8; Eph. 4:11)
- There is one infallible and primary Teacher of Truth—God the Holy Spirit

3. The Blessing (of knowing the Truth)

Illumination

- Those whom the Spirit calls, he also instructs (Matt. 16:17; Eph. 1:17-18)
- God is sovereign in revealing His Truth to man (Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23)

Sanctification

- Those whom the Spirit calls, He also sanctifies (John 17:17; 18:17)
- Those whom the Spirit calls, He also rebukes (Jude)

Freedom

- Those whom the Spirit calls, He frees them from the bondage of the evil one (John 8:32; Rom. 6:6-7, 18; 8:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:16; Rev. 1:5)
- Those whom the Spirit calls, He frees from the bondage of sin (Gen. 6:5; Ps. 51:5; Ecc. 7:20)

Questions

1. In a world that often defines truth by personal feelings or popular opinion, how can we as believers practically live out Truth as God defines and reveals?
2. Since God's Word is not open to private interpretation, what steps can we take in our Bible reading to ensure we are "rightly handling the word of truth" rather than reading our own ideas into it?

Recommended Books:

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