

MORE SEED & BREAD, ISSUE NO. 278

God's Attributes

By M.B. Hammond

What sort of attributes and character traits does God have? The character of our God is multi-dimensional and complex beyond the imagination of mankind. And, we would know almost nothing about Him if He had not revealed Himself to men in His written Word, the Bible.

The One who reveals Him to us is Jesus Christ (the Word in John 1:1) of the New Testament, even the Creator (Heb.-Elohim), even Jehovah Messiah of the Old Testament. He had conversations with many men and revealed bits and hints about Himself even before He came to earth as God's visible expression, Jesus Christ. These contacts are recorded in the pages of the Bible. God the Father (source) is not limited by time and space. He operates in dimensions that are far outside our human senses, well beyond our grasp. Proverbs 25:2 confirms: **It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.** If we desire to know more about the character of God, we must go to the Word and search out what it says about Him. In Scripture, God reveals what He likes and dislikes, what He knows is good and bad for mankind, and what He has determined for the future of mankind and this earth. We have learned that an attribute of God is something God intrinsically IS, not something God HAS. God has the purpose to dwell with men (Rev. 21:22-27) so men will need to possess and emulate His righteousness and His grace, which will be learned in His Kingdom. (Most subtitles were first identified in A.W. Tozer's *The Attributes of God, Volumes One and Two.*)

Love - The Most Important Attribute. This is the most important attribute of God. God seeks the greatest good for His created beings. It is clear that it emanates from God's innate goodness and righteousness, which the premillennial Kingdom will teach to all mankind. Scripture says, **Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born (generated) of God. And knoweth God (1 John 4:7); also and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him (1 John 4:16).**

Justice. God is a God of justice, but most men understand this as His wrath and punishments to offending men. "Justice" is practically not distinguishable from "righteousness" in the Old Testament. It is the same root word with variations according to the part of speech used. Psalm 89:14 says, **Justice and judgment are the habitations of**

Thy throne while Psalm 97:2 says, **Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne.** God's justice is His righteous order in the world, where God is infinitely righteous, and wants mankind to be gracious to one another.

Mercy and Grace. These are closely related attributes. But, with the distinguishing idea that so great is God's mercy towards them that fear Him (Psalm 103:11), God finds in them a deserving quality. Psalm 103:8 says, **The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy,** thus "mercy" is God's love and favor toward those who have the special quality of fearing God. By comparison, God's grace in the **present** day is His love and favor toward all undeserving ones of mankind and not just believers. Indeed, **by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God** (Eph. 2:8). **Good.** When we say, "God is good," we recognize that God is infinitely and perfectly good and He knows everything that is good and evil. The Psalms say: **Thou art good and doest good. . . .** (119:68), and **O taste and see that the Lord is good** (34:8). The idea of "good" means "kindhearted, gracious, good-natured and benevolent in intention." Today He is acting in grace toward all men, and yet most men fear the severity of God. Mankind's paradox of His grace and justice is clear when we see the polarity of His love, and how justice is His righteousness taught to unrighteous and sinful men.

Righteous. This means that the Lord God will dwell among men (Psa. 68:18). In 1 John 4:16 it affirms: "God is love"; this is what God is. Love is that attribute that seeks the greatest good for the object of his love. Since God is always righteous, He knows what is good for His creatures, but His love is manifested in both blessing and punishment. The enigma to most believers is that God's polarity puts His love in both His justice and His grace. Our righteousness is with our guaranteed belief in Jesus Christ (see **More Seed & Bread** No. 277, *My Righteous God.*)

Infinite. In mathematics, we use the "concept of infinity." God is infinite; He is truly boundless and unlimited. However, this expresses that we are incapable of knowing how great our God is in wisdom, sovereignty or love.

Immeasurably Immense. He contains the universe and is immeasurably immense. His immensity goes beyond anything we can know or visualize. Isaiah 40:12 (NIV) says, **Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, or with the breadth of His hand marked off the heavens?** The chapter contents declare His greatness and asks, **To whom then will ye liken God?** (Isa. 40:18, 25). There is NO one like Him!

Omnipresent. God is all-present and is equally near to ALL parts of His creation; God is everywhere at all times. Jeremiah 23:24 ends with, **Do not I fill heaven and earth?** Paul says in Acts 17:27-28, **That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being**

Immanent. Our God is both ever-present and immanent, meaning God penetrates everything and gives freely all men the "breath of life." God not only "contains" everything in the universe, but He is within everything at the same time—another paradox to mankind!

Holy and Separate. Psalm 22:3 says, **But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.** God is different from all His creation, separate from the whole of it, yet containing ALL of it. In Isaiah 40:18 and 25, God questions His people Israel: **To whom will ye liken Me?** Clearly, NOT anybody NOR anything is like Him!

Perfection of Work. God is invisible and inaudible, but His Word and the discoveries of men through nature have all shown the perfection of God. His work represents THE highest degree of excellence. Psalm 50:2 says, **Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.** In the Kingdom of God, Zion (Jerusalem) is the perfection of beauty, because He shines out of her.

Self-Existent. God is the Great “I AM”—the ever Self-existent One with no origin. Exodus 3:14 notes God’s name: **I AM THAT I AM.** In John 8:58, Jesus says, **Before Abraham was, I AM.**

Transcendent. God is here with us, pervading all things. His transcendence is so far beyond us that no man can conceive words to express His greatness. Psalm 145:3 says, **Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.**

Immortal—Eternal. God is forever “flowing out: to all His creation. Time cannot apply to God for He is the Creator of it. We understand the words *olam* (Heb.) and *aion* (Gk.) to mean not just “everlasting,” but that “God is the Ever-flowing One.” The description of God in 1 Tim. 6:16 says, **Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting (ever-flowing), Amen.**

Omnipotent. God has an infinite and absolute plenitude of power; He is able to do all things and contains all the power in the universe: . . . **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth** (Rev. 19:6). Clearly, God is THE only One who is truly Almighty.

Immutable. “Mutable,” from the Latin, means “subject to change.” However, “immutable” means that God is not subject to change: **Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever (ever-flowing)** (Heb. 13:8).

Omniscient. God knows everything and nothing is hidden from Him. The things of God no man can know, but that which the Spirit of God reveals: **Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do** (Heb. 4:13).

All-Wise. This is God’s skill to achieve the most perfect ends by the most perfect means: **With Him is wisdom and strength, He hath counsel and understanding** (Job 12:13); and **To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places (among the mighty ones) might be known by the church (out-called ones) the manifold wisdom of God** (Eph. 3:10).

All-Sovereign. God is THE King over all; He contains all authority and power in the universe. Since He is infinite, if He delegates a part of this to men, He is still infinite and

loses nothing: **Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD He is God in heaven above, and upon earth beneath: there is none else** (Deut. 4:39).

Faithful One. God is always true to Himself. Out of His immutability, God guarantees He will never act inconsistently: **If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself** (2 Tim. 2:13).

Light. “God is light.” (1 John 1:5). His light is THE energy source for all the material things in the world. His light, consisting of His infinite wisdom, knowledge and understanding (Prov. 2:6-8), enlightens us daily (see *More Seed & Bread* No. 275, *God Is Light*): **For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: He is a buckler (shield) to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgement, and preserveth the way of His saints** (out-called ones/believers in Him). Also, **Every Word of God is pure** (tested): **He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him** (Prov. 30:5).

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MORE SEED & BREAD, ISSUE NO. 278, Published September 2007