

The Pursuit Of God

Session Four / July 13, 2016

The Attributes Of God

1 An "attribute of God" is anything that is true of Him. Tonight we begin by studying

2 THE KNOWLEDGE AND POWER OF GOD

3
4 A BRIEF REVIEW:

5
6 Some of the issues we have contemplated in our first three sessions of The Pursuit of God
7 include:

8
9 1. What is idolatry? Tozer's definition: *The essence of idolatry is the entertainment*
10 *of thoughts about God that are not worthy of Him.* Bluntly put: any concept we might
11 have of God that is not actual or true of Him is an idol, and therefore that consideration is
12 idolatry.

13
14 2. A lower standard. Again Tozer: *The heaviest obligation upon the Christian Church*
15 *today is to purify and elevate her concept of God until it is once more worthy of Him.*
16 The "dumbing down" of the church today is frightening and is altogether unworthy of
17 Him Who created us all.

18
19 3. We studied several proofs of God's existence - the cosmos, the Scriptures, Israel, etc.

20
21 4. We began a short series, including tonight, of the ATTRIBUTES OF GOD. An
22 "attribute" of God is anything that is true of Him. We considered the fact that God is
23 Spirit....that He is invisible to our current physical sight...that He is alive (the "living
24 God")....that He has distinct personalities.

25
26 5. In session 2 we studied THE HOLINESS OF GOD. 1 Peter 1:16 **Because it is**
27 **written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.**

28
29 6. Last week we studied the "self-existence" of God Thiessen clarifies: "....we mean
30 that God has the ground of His existence in Himself." We have parents; but God has
31 always been - and always will be.

32
33 -0-0-
34

1 It was early in the third game of the 1989 World Series between the San Francisco Giants
2 and the Oakland A's. A little after five p.m., an earthquake that lasted for 17 minutes hit
3 the area, killing 63 people and causing hundreds of millions of dollars damage. It was
4 all caught "live" on TV during the Series game at Candlestick Park. That night, down in
5 Los Angeles, Johnny Carson opened his monologue on the "Tonight" show with this line:
6 "The God is dead rally scheduled for tonight has been cancelled."
7

8 Some years earlier, I was sitting in ancient Lakefront Park in downtown Cleveland to
9 watch an Indians baseball game. It was a Friday night and the game was to be followed
10 by a major fireworks show. Beyond the centerfield fence was Lake Erie. As the game
11 ended, we were all anticipating the fireworks which began in a spectacular way. The
12 sounds shook the stands. What no one knew was that out on the lake a major electrical
13 storm was brewing. All of a sudden thunder and lightning erupted such as I have never
14 heard or seen, drowning out the sound of the fireworks and eclipsing even the fireworks
15 themselves. It was as if God said, "You want fireworks? I'll show you fireworks!"
16 The man-made fireworks disappeared as God caused the skies to erupt violently.
17

18 Before we even begin to explore the wisdom and power of God, let us consider the fact
19 that God is everywhere at one and the same time. We call that His OMNIPRESENCE.
20 Satan does not have that prerogative for he can be only in one place at a time while God is
21 everywhere. We know this from Scripture.
22

23 Psalm 139:1-24

24 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

25 **O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. [2] Thou knowest my downsit-
26 ting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. [3] Thou compass-
27 est my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. [4] For there is not a
28 word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. [5] Thou hast beset
29 me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. [6] Such knowledge is too
30 wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. [7] Whither shall I go from thy
31 spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? [8] If I ascend up into heaven, thou
32 art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. [9] If I take the wings of
33 the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; [10] Even there shall thy
34 hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. [11] If I say, Surely the darkness
35 shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. [12] Yea, the darkness hideth
36 not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both
37 alike to thee.**
38

39 In the New Testament, author Luke (quoting Paul on Mars Hill in Athens) helps us:
40 Acts 17:27-28 : ... he (is) not far from every one of us: [28] For in him we live, and

1 **move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are**
2 **also his offspring.**

3
4 What a comfort this is to the follower of Jesus! Even in those times we feel alone and
5 sense such helplessness, God is there whether we feel Him or not.

6
7 *For God is never so far off, as even to be near. He is within. Our spirit is the home
He holds most dear. To think of Him as by our side is almost as untrue as to remove
His shrine beyond those skies of starry blue. So all the while I thought myself
homeless, forlorn and weary, missing my joy, I walked the earth myself God's
sanctuary. - Faber*

8
9 Now there are two ways to digest this fact: 1) God is always present to enable and
10 strengthen us - no matter where we might be on Planet Earth for He is everywhere at one
11 and the same time. That's a great inspiration to us! 2) But it also means that there is
12 no escape from Him. Hebrews 4:13 **Neither is there any creature that is not**
13 **manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with**
14 **whom we have to do.**

15
16 *United States astronaut James Irwin who was one of the twelve human beings to ever
walk on the moon, told me that while there he felt the most amazing presence of God.
But then no matter where anyone would go in the entire cosmos....God would be there!*

17
18 So mark this down as the of the most vital truths any human can ever learn: **GOD IS**
19 **EVERYWHERE - HE IS OMNIPRESENT.**

20
21 **GOD'S OMNISCIENCE - HE IS ALL-KNOWING (DIVINE KNOWLEDGE)**

22
23 Thiessen: *By the omniscience of God we mean that He knows Himself and all other*
24 *things, whether they be actual or merely possible, whether they be past, present or*
25 *future, and that He knows them perfectly and from all eternity. He knows things*

- 26 • *Immediately*
27 • *Simultaneously*
28 • *Exhaustively*
29 • *Truly*

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31
32 Psalm 147:5 **Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.**

1 **Isaiah 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the**
2 **things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my**
3 **pleasure:**

4
5 **Hebrews 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all**
6 **things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.**

7
8 **Matthew 10:30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Those are the**
words from Jesus Himself. Note: Jesus did not say God knew how many hairs there
were on your head; He said they are “numbered” – or inventoried. So when a hair
came out on your brush this morning, God knew that was Hair # 891-2b914.

9
10 **HE KNOWS HIMSELF**

11
12 **Matthew 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man**
13 **knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son,**
14 **and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**

15
16 **None of us really knows himself or herself. We know a lot of things - but not everything**
17 **about ourselves. There are parts of our nature well tucked away from our conscious**
18 **awareness. Paul put it like this: 1 Cor. 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a**
19 **man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no**
20 **man, but the Spirit of God. I may do something in life that surprises me. We**
21 **sometimes say, “I didn’t know I had that in me.” God would never say that for His**
22 **omniscience demands He knows Himself fully.**

23
24 **HOW MUCH DOES GOD KNOW?**

25
26 **1. He knows everything about His creation Psalm 147:4 He telleth the number of the**
27 **stars; he calleth them all by their names.**

28
29 **Let’s talk about that for a moment – God knows the stars, which He created, by name.**
30 **On a good, clear night, there are sometimes 5,000 stars that can be seen by the human**
31 **naked eye. That would be pretty awesome - to know 5,000 stars by name. However,**
32 **astronomers estimate there are around 170 BILLION GALAXIES in the observable**
33 **universe, stretching out over a radius of some 45.7 billion light years. Some spiral**
34 **galaxies have more than a trillion stars. Some giant elliptical galaxies have 100**
35 **TRILLION stars. Our Milky Way, by the way, has some 400 BILLION stars. So there**
36 **are a septillion stars in the OBSERVABLE universe. To put that in numbers, here it is:**

1 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 stars – AND GOD KNOWS THEM ALL BY
2 NAME.

3
4 2. God knows everything about all of His creation. Matthew 10:29 Are not two
5 sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without
6 your Father.

7
8 3. He knows what's in your heart (mind). Psalm 139:1-4 New American Standard
9 For the choir director.

10 A Psalm of David.

11 O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me.

12 [2] Thou dost know when I sit down and when I rise up;

13 Thou dost understand my thought from afar.

14 [3] Thou dost scrutinize my path and my lying down,

15 And art intimately acquainted with all my ways.

16 [4] Even before there is a word on my tongue,

17 Behold, O Lord, Thou dost know it all.

18 Does any man or woman really think he or she can hide anything from God Who can
19 name every star in the cosmos?

20
21 4. God knows all things possible, even though they have not yet taken place. For
22 example, God knew that Sodom and Gomorrah would never have been destroyed by God
23 had they seen the miracles Jesus performed in Capernaum: Matthew 11:23-24 And
24 thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for
25 if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it
26 would have remained until this day. [24] But I say unto you, That it shall be more
27 tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. In other
28 words, God knows that which is POSSIBLE as well as that which is ACTUAL.

29
30 5. God knows the future. This is FOREKNOWLEDGE. For example, God knew that
31 Israel would be unfaithful to Him long before they actually were: Deut. 31:20-21 For
32 when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that
33 floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and
34 waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and
35 break my covenant. [21] And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are
36 befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be
37 forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go
38 about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

39
40 Here is a major issue: Events in the future do not happen simply because they have been

1 foreseen. Extreme Calvinists insist that God PREORDAINED who would be saved and
2 who would be lost even before creation. No....no, God KNEW WHO WOULD BE
3 SAVED AND WHO WOULD BE LOST.....BUT THE FACT THAT HE KNEW IT DID
4 NOT MAKE IT HAPPEN. GOD NEVER VIOLATES FREE WILL Thiessen
5 observes: *Prescience is not itself causative; we must not confuse foreknowledge with the*
6 *predetermining will of God. Free actions do not take place because they are foreseen,*
7 *but are foreseen because they will take place. (Ibid - page 126)*
8

9 Here is a bit of strong - very strong - theology: All the stars, mountains, forests,
humankind, free will - you name it - all these things created by our Heavenly Father do
not exist for their own sake: **THEY EXIST FOR GOD'S GLORY!** Ephesians 3:10
To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places
might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

10
11 **GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE - HIS POWER**
12

13 I often speak of God's "sovereignty" which means He can anything, anywhere, with
14 anyone within the boundaries of His divine nature. That would mean, for example, that
15 God cannot sin. But God can do everything that is in harmony with His perfections.
16

17 I have met friends who turn against God because they believe He arbitrarily does not
18 answer their prayers or wishes. They want to determine how and when God acts, if,
19 indeed, He acts at all. But here is the premise that is essential: **GOD CAN DO**
20 **WHATEVER HE WILLS TO DO, HE HAS THE POWER TO DO SO; BUT THAT**
21 **DOES NOT IMPLY THAT HE WILL DO IT.**
22

23 Why, one would ask, if God is so powerful does He not eradicate sin from the universe.
24 It appears that God has put a self-limit on His actions because of the free will of His
25 rational creatures. It is also why He does not save anyone by commanding it. You and
26 I have been granted free will - volition - to do as we choose. If God just arbitrarily
27 cleaned up the universe, our free will would fly out the window. God created us to
28 worship Him because we WANT to, not because we HAVE to.
29

30 God testifies of Himself that He is all-powerful: Genesis 17:1 **And when Abram was**
31 **ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the**
32 **Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.**
33

34 Job added his "amen" to this: Job 42:2 **I know that thou canst do every thing, and**
35 **that no thought can be withholden from thee.** One biblical version has it this way:

1 **“No purpose of thine can be restrained.”**

2
3 Jeremiah, the great Old Testament prophet who knew God intimately, cried out:
4 Jeremiah 32:17

5 **Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great**
6 **power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee: And then he**
7 **added God’s own statement: Jeremiah 32:27 Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all**
8 **flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?**

9
10 Jesus Himself gave witness of the Father’s power: Matthew 19:26 **But Jesus beheld**
11 **them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are**
12 **possible.**

13
14 And we have the grand conclusion of the matter found in Rev. 19:6: **And I heard as it**
15 **were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice**
16 **of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.**

17
18 With our own eyes and ears we see and hear of God’s omnipotence: we see His creation,
19 we see miracles, we experience saving regeneration - all manifestations of God’s absolute
20 power.

21
22 In so observing, our faith is increased. As a result, maturing in the Lord, we learn to trust
23 God in every walk of life. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17); so
24 as we see in Scripture the power of God we are filled with comfort and hope. Such
25 scriptures as these inspire us: Isaiah 45:11-13 **Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of**
26 **Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning**
27 **the work of my hands command ye me. [12] I have made the earth, and created man**
28 **upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I**
29 **commanded. [13] I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his**
30 **ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor**
31 **reward, saith the Lord of hosts. Acts 4:24-31 (When the early Christians were**
32 **threatened - even with death) And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to**
33 **God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and**
34 **earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: [25] Who by the mouth of thy servant**
35 **David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? [26]**
36 **The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the**
37 **Lord, and against his Christ. [27] For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom**
38 **thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people**
39 **of Israel, were gathered together, [28] For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy**
40 **counsel determined before to be done. [29] And now, Lord, behold their**

1 **threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy**
2 **word, [30] By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may**
3 **be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. [31] And when they had prayed, the**
4 **place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with**
5 **the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.**

6
7 We who follow Christ are thrilled to read more and more about God's omnipotence - His
8 power! But the facts can cause consternation and, yes, even terror to those outside of the
9 saving grace of God. You know, even the demons of Satan believe in God. What is
10 their reaction? James 2:19 **Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well:**
11 **the devils also believe, and tremble.** Humans shrink back when confronted with the
12 Almighty God: Psalm 99:1 **The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth**
13 **between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.** Isaiah 66:5 **Hear the word of the**
14 **Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out**
15 **for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy,**
16 **and they shall be ashamed.**

17
18 The final chapter of human history will find every created being falling at God's feet -
19 some in joy and exultation - others in terror. Rev. 6:15-17 **And the kings of the**
20 **earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty**
21 **men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the**
22 **rocks of the mountains; [16] And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and**
23 **hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the**
24 **Lamb: [17] For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?**

25
26 Here is a divine prophecy that should thrill us, even when we are being challenged by
27 people and life: Philip. 2:10 **That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of**
28 **things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;**

29
30 **ONE ADDED ATTRIBUTE OF GOD FOR TODAY: GOD IS IMMUTABLE!**

31
32 That means that God does not change. If tomorrow God were better than today, He
33 would not be God today. Or if God were better today than yesterday, He would not have
34 been God then. God cannot change for the better since He is already perfect. He
35 cannot change for the worse for the same reason. **ANY CHANGE IN GOD'S**
36 **ATTRIBUTES WOULD MAKE HIM LESS THAN GOD.**

37
38 James describes our Heavenly Father in this way: James 1:17 **Every good gift and**
39 **every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with**
40 **whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.**

1 In the Old Testament, Malachi reminds us: Malachi 3:6 **For I am the Lord, I change**
2 **not;**

- 3
- 4 • God's power never changes. Romans 4:20-21 **He (Abraham) staggered not at**
5 **the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to**
6 **God; [21] And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able**
7 **also to perform.**
 - 8
 - 9 • His plans and purposes do not change. Isaiah 46:10 **Declaring the end from**
10 **the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying,**
11 **My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Romans 11:29 For the**
12 **gifts and calling of God are without repentance.**
 - 13
 - 14 • His promises do not get "called back." 2 Cor. 1:20 **For all the promises of**
15 **God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.**
 - 16
 - 17 • His love is not changeable. Psalm 103:17 **But the mercy of the Lord is from**
18 **everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto**
19 **children's children;**
 - 20
 - 21 • Nor does God's divine justice fluctuate (as we will see in next week's lesson):
22 Genesis 18:25 **That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the**
23 **righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked,**
24 **that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Isaiah**
25 **28:17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the**
26 **plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters**
27 **shall overflow the hiding place.**

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31 Next time: THE RIGHTEOUSNESS, GOODNESS AND LOVE OF GOD.
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