

Session 3

The Doctrine of God

(Communicable/Incommunicable Attributes)

1. Discipleship Scenario

2. Discussion Questions

- a. *“The Character of God: “Incommunicable” Attributes”* (Chap. 4 of Bible Doctrine)

Review Questions

- In addition to the Bible, what evidence do we have that God exists?
- How would you reconcile the incomprehensibility of God and the fact that we can know God truly?
- Differentiate between incommunicable and communicable attributes of God.
- In light of God’s unchangeableness, what does Scripture mean when it speaks of God changing His mind?
- Does time have any effect on God? Explain.
- Is there any attribute of God that is *more* true about Him than any other attributes? Explain.

Questions for Personal Application

- What are some reasons why people deny the existence of God? Does Romans 1:18 suggest there is often a moral factor influencing their intellectual denial of God’s existence? (compare Psalm 14:1-3)
- Why do you think God decided to reveal Himself to us? Do you learn more about God from His revelation in nature, or His revelation in Scripture? Why do you think that God’s thoughts are “precious” to us (Psalm 139:17)? Would you call your present relationship to God a personal relationship? How is it similar to your relationships with other people, and how is it different? What would make your relationship with God better?
- As you think of God’s independence, unchangeableness, eternity, omnipresence, and unity, can you see some faint reflections of these five incommunicable attributes in yourself as God created you to be? What would it mean to strive to become more like God in these areas? At what point would it be wrong to even want to be like God in each of these areas because it would be attempting to usurp his unique role as Creator and Lord?

- If you sin against God today, when would it start bringing sorrow to God's heart? When would it *stop* bringing sorrow to God's heart? Does this reflection help you understand why God's character requires that He punish sin? Why did God have to send his Son to bear the punishment for sin, instead of simply forgetting about sin and welcoming sinners into heaven without having given the punishment for sin to anyone? Does God now think of your sins as forgiven or as unforgiven sins?

b. *"The "Communicable" Attribute of Gods"* (Chap. 5 of Bible Doctrine)

Review Questions

- What does it mean that God knows all things "actual and possible"?
- Differentiate between God's attributes of mercy, grace, and patience.
- Why is it appropriate for God to be jealous for his own honor?
- Is God's wrath inconsistent with his love? Explain.
- Are there any limitations to God's power? Explain using the definition of his attribute of omnipotence.

Questions for Personal Application

- (Spirituality) Why is God so strongly displeased at carved idols, even those that are intended to represent him? How then shall we picture God or think of God in our minds when we pray to him?
- (Knowledge) With regard to the circumstances of your life, will God ever make a mistake, or fail to plan ahead, or fail to take into account all the eventualities that will occur? How is the answer to this question a blessing in your life?
- (Wisdom) Do you really believe that God is working wisely in your life today? In the world? If you find this difficult to believe at times, what might you do to change this attitude?
- (Mercy) If you were to reflect God's mercy more fully, for whom among those you know would you show special care to in the next week?
- (Holiness) Are there activities or relationships in your present pattern of life that are hindering your growth in holiness because they make it difficult for you to be separated from sin and devoted to seeing God's honor?
- (Righteousness) Do you ever find yourself wishing that some of God's laws were different than they are? If so, does such a wish reflect a dislike for some aspect of God's moral character? What passages of Scripture might you read

to convince yourself more fully that God's character and his laws are right in these areas?

- (Jealousy) Do you reflect God's jealousy for his own honor instinctively when you hear him dishonored in conversation or on television or in other contexts? What can we do to deepen our jealousy for God's honor?
- (Wrath) Should we love the fact that God is a God of wrath who hates sin? In what ways is it right that we imitate this wrath, and in what ways is it wrong for us to do so?
- (Power) If God's power is his ability to do what he wills to do, then is power for us the ability to obey God's will and bring about results in the world that are pleasing to him? Name several ways in which we can increase in such power in our lives.
- (Perfection) How does God's attribute of perfection remind us that we can never be satisfied with the reflection of only some of God's character in our own lives? Can you describe some aspects of what it would mean to be "perfect" as our heavenly Father is perfect, with respect to your own life?

3. Scripture Memory Verse

Psalm 102:25-27 ²⁵ Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ²⁶ They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, ²⁷ but you are the same, and your years have no end.

Exodus 34:6-7 ⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

4. Exercise

Take an extended time (15+ minutes) at the close of the discussion to worship God. Read Scriptures that celebrate His attributes and declare His praises together. Instruct the group to worship with passionate hearts that have been affected by the truths studied in this session.

5. Assignment for Next Time

Read chapters 6 & 14 in Bible Doctrine. There is quite a bit of reading in this assignment so get started early. Next meeting is _____.