

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

*“Let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me....”*

### Jeremiah 9:23-24

When Christians speak about the attributes of God, we mean the qualities or characteristics that reveal what God is like. Scripture describes God as holy, loving, eternal, wise, just, merciful, and powerful. These are not qualities added onto God from the outside, as though God could gain or lose them. Rather, they describe who God eternally is. The Bible does not present God as a vague spiritual force, but as the living and true God who makes himself known through revelation. For this reason, theologians have often referred to God’s “perfections” or “excellencies” (1 Peter 2:9), emphasizing that every attribute of God exists in complete fullness and harmony.

Christians have commonly grouped God’s attributes into two broad categories: *incommunicable* attributes and *communicable* attributes. Incommunicable attributes belong uniquely to God, such as eternity, infinity, immensity, and immutability. Human beings cannot possess these qualities absolutely. By contrast, communicable attributes are qualities reflected, in part, in God’s creatures, such as love, mercy, goodness, wisdom, and righteousness. Even here, important differences remain. Human love is finite and inconsistent, while God’s love is eternal and perfect. Our goodness is dependent and derived, while God alone is good in and of himself. As Jesus said, “No one is good except God alone” (Mark 10:18).

These attributes help us hold together two truths about God. On the one hand, God is transcendent. His greatness, eternity, and power remind us that he is far above creation and beyond human limitation. On the other hand, God is personal and near to his people. The same God who is infinite in majesty is also merciful, gracious, and loving. His greatness does not diminish his compassion; it magnifies it.

Some worry that studying God’s attributes reduces him to abstract theological formulas. But rightly understood, the attributes of God deepen our understanding of the God revealed in Scripture. Careful theology does not replace worship; it strengthens worship by helping us think rightly about the One we adore. Scripture teaches that true wisdom is found not in boasting about ourselves, but in knowing the Lord “who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth” (Jeremiah 9:23–24). For everyday faith, the attributes of God remind us that what we believe about God shapes how we live before him.

*Which attribute of God most strengthens or encourages your faith right now, and why?*