Capitol Commission - AL

"Ut omnes cognoscant Christum"

CAPITOL® COMMISSION

Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders

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2025 Bible Study – Out-of-Session

It is time for Thanksgiving and reflection on our blessings, including the fact we can learn truths about an infinite but invisible God in our study on *Who God Is*. We have looked at God's *essential* attributes that defined what He is (sovereign, simple, incorporeal, stable, invisible, impassible, immutable, without beginning, uncreatedness, unbegottenness, imperishability, immortality, eternity, infinity, incomprehensibility, omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience—that is a lot!), as revealed in Scripture. Recall His essential attributes are not shared with His creatures; these apply to God alone. This month, we shift to inspect relational attributes revealed by Him which He purposes to share with us, His creation. Another term for this is *communicable* attributes. After all, God is not a distant entity but One who came into our existence in the person of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

(NOTE: If you need to catch up with any lesson you can find it here: https://capitolcom.org/bible-studies/alabama/).

LESSON 6. Relational Attributes of God

When one looks back on the attributes thus far, you may get the sense that God is totally otherworldly, distant, and unapproachable. And in a sense, He is. He is not like us, He is a boundless Spirit. However, from the first day of Creation, He purposed to be with us, making us in His image, and fellowshipping with Adam and Eve. After their failure to obey Him, sin entered our existence but God knowing this would happen had a plan ready for that, too. The plan of salvation from "before the foundation of the world." (Revelation 13:8)

God as a Personal Being. We know that God is immensely powerful and distinctive, but there has always existed a *relationship* within the Godhead, depicted as the Trinity. This threefold expression of God as three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) was inferred from Scripture in the second century A.D. to help explain Jesus' divinity and the role of the Spirit in the church (most notably by Tertullian, Roman theologian from Carthage).

> *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people.*
> Luke 1:68

The doctrine of the Trinity helps us understand how God could have relationship. How else could an infinite God relate to anyone? Only with other divine Persons. Therefore, within that single entity (God), the

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastor-missionaries who in session teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for all those working in state capitols. The Bible studies are hand distributed to each legislative office, available by email, and shared across the Capitol Commission community. This ministry is an extension of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message and help believers mature through Biblical expositional instruction. Prayer is foundational to this ministry, consistent with proper submission to governmental authority (Romans 13:1-7) and obedient to the command to pray for our appointed leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Our desire is to witness God's work in transforming hearts. Capitol Commission is a non-political and non-lobbying 501(c)(3).

Persons of God interact perfectly. Now here is the cool part. Out of that perfection, Jesus (the Son) stepped into our world as a human being in order to reach out to us. God's purpose to include us in this divine relationship is what Christianity is all about. Christmas is coming, praise God for the Incarnation of Christ!

God's love for us is what reaches out to us in our helpless state. The perfect love within the Trinity became revealed by Jesus' earthly ministry and ultimately demonstrated by His sacrificial death on the cross. Notice the evolution of terms as Jesus called disciples, then elevated them to "friends" (see John 15:13-15). Then we know that "In love he [God] predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will…" Ephesians 1:5. His love was not content to just save us, or to make we who were enemies friends. He wants us as His children, co-heirs with the King of kings!

What a great reason for Thanksgiving! Entry into His family allows us to share this attribute, eternally.

God as a Rational Being. The Persons of the Trinity share a common mind and will; there is 100% harmony between Father/Son/Spirit. God's created angels and the saints in heaven perfectly worship God with minds attuned to His. Our minds and wills, however, are deficient and incomplete due to our fallen state into sinfulness. God's intent by saving us out of our sinful state is to give us insight into His mind. We cannot achieve the fullness of God's mind but we are able to reason and, when regenerated by the Holy Spirit, can begin to understand God. As Prof Bray puts it, "if our relationship with God is right, then we can connect with his mind and do his will even though we can ever share them in the way that the divine persons do." (pg 87).

The entire process of sanctification, of being made more holy and thus, more like God, depends on the fact we have minds and wills. Furthermore, salvation is not a mystical or hidden method but one openly documented in Scripture and in peoples' lives who are then called to bear witness. Jesus promised at the Last Supper to send us assistance in this: "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth." John 16:13. As we read this Bible study, you are using your intellect and rational mind to read and comprehend my words (I pray it is clear!). Ask God to help your understanding further.

Applications to Us.

1. If this study has made you feel small compared to the immensity of God, the fact God pursues us to make us friends and children should more than make up for that. The Almighty God of the universe wants to relate to you, personally. Have you answered His call?
2. Some times the Scriptures may seem confusing or obscure, however, when studied with diligence there is an amazing clarity of a central message. That message is the gospel of Jesus Christ, foretold in the Old Testament and revealed in the New. My driving inspiration is to take God's Word and make it known to everyone who will let me teach them. The prerequisite is a right relationship with God!

A closing quote from A.W. Pink's book:

"Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued, investigation of the great subject of the Deity. The most excellent study for expanding the soul is the science of Christ and him crucified and the knowledge of the Godhead in the glorious Trinity."

- Charles H. Spurgeon, 19th Century British Preacher

References:

Gerald Bray, *The Attributes of God: An Introduction*, Crossway, 2021.

Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*, Baker Book House, 1975.

John MacArthur, Jr., *None Other: Discovering the God of the Bible*, Reformation Trust, 2017.

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