

Capitol Commission - AL



"Ut omnes cognoscant Christum"



2025 Bible Study – Out-of-Session

As we enter fully into autumn, we continue our study about *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, and incomprehensibility—this list is getting long!), as revealed in Scripture. Recall His essential attributes are not shared with His creatures; these apply to God alone. This month, we will inspect attributes revealed by Him and that are particular to our perception of Him (NOTE: If you need to catch up with any previous lesson you can find it at my website: <https://capitolcom.org/bible-studies/alabama/>).

LESSON 5. Essential Attributes as We Can Perceive Him

This lesson will look at terms you may already be familiar with when examining God, what some may refer to as the three "omnis": omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience. *Omni-* is a Latin prefix meaning "all". By definition, these are superlative concepts but scientifically unprovable. E.g., how do we *know* God is omnipresent if we have not been everywhere ourselves? We depend on what God has mercifully revealed and receive it by faith. He is worthy of your trust!

Omnipresence. Simply put, this means God is everywhere in His creation at once. We touched on this last month when we looked at God's incomprehensibility—His attribute of being unmeasurable and thus, unlimited. Recall we looked at Psalm 139 in a previous lesson—read it again.

When God called Abram to go from Ur to Canaan, Abram and his family were pagans, worshipping idols. Their false gods were geographically oriented; they had their own turf. But God exhibited His omnipresence by teaching Abram to trust Him, as He was God over all the earth. And of course, we care deeply about this attribute because it means when He promises through Jesus, "I am with you always, to the end of the age" there is nowhere we can go where He is not there. We are never outside of His protection and watchful care.

*Who is like you, O LORD,
among the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in
holiness, awesome in glorious
deeds, doing wonders?
Exodus 15:11*

Omnipotence. To be potent is to be powerful; to be omnipotent is to be all-powerful. Our God possesses and exercises such a totality of power. As sovereign over His creation, nothing is outside His ability.

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).

A.W. Pink observed (ref below):

At his pleasure the Red Sea divided and its waters stood up as walls (Ex 14); and the earth opened her mouth, and guilty rebels went down into the pit (Num 16). When he so ordered, the sun stood still (Josh 10); and on another occasion went backward ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz (Isa 38:8). To exemplify his supremacy, he made ravens carry food to Elijah (1 Ki 17), iron to swim on top of the waters (2 Ki 6:5), lions to be tame when Daniel was cast into their den, fire to burn not when the three Hebrews were flung into its flames (Dan 3 & 6). (pg 38)

Of special significance is a statement by Professor Gerald Bray (ref below) that “whatever God does, he is capable of undoing, because his creation is by nature inferior to his essence.” (pg 68). God promises to roll up the sky like a scroll (Rev 6:14) and then create anew: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth has passed away.” (Rev 21:1). This is a power unmatched in our realm.

But this also may beg a question, if God is all powerful, then why is there still suffering and evil in the world? Christians should not dodge such a query, we should lean into it to explain the Gospel, the true state of fallen man and our need of a savior. As Dr. MacArthur (ref below) puts it: “As the final authority over all creation, God permits evil to exist...He has a purpose in it, and it’s a good purpose.” (pg 59). What is good about evil? Our omnipotent God uses it to for His purpose to save souls and display righteousness! Additionally, God has planned a new creation in which all evil, sin, sickness and death will be absent. Glory!

Omniscience. Science, which is of course a whole area of study, derives from the Latin word *scientia*, meaning “knowledge or knowing”. To be omniscient, then, is to be all-knowing. Unlike many we may have encountered who are “know-it-alls”, God actually does know everything! There is nothing anyone, anywhere can teach the LORD. And there is nothing hidden from His knowledge (e.g., see Ezekiel 8).

A following point on God knowing everything brings up the theological quandary: What does God know about the future, specifically each of our futures? And does his foreknowledge overrule our wills? We know God does not force Himself on us, right? Except what happened to Paul (then Saul) in Acts 9? He was knocked down and blinded, then after recovering followed Jesus! Is God’s omniscience a grant for Him to then program us, like robots? Actually not, and this is a grand theological argument in every generation of the church. He gives His children (those who have repented and are in Christ) much leeway in deciding whether to obey Him everyday, whether we will participate in His mission, or do our own thing. He works His will in spite of us. But one of those obedient disciplines is to pray without ceasing, that others may be saved, healed, or even corrected by Him. We do play a role in His kingdom work, so get busy!

Applications to Us.

Author Gerald Bray notes in his book (ref below) that these three attributes of God are interdependent, that each one implies the other two must also be true or else they would prove irrelevant: “*What would be the point if God were present everywhere but lacked power or knowledge? How could he be omnipotent if he were periodically absent from the scene or ignorant of it? And what use would he be if he knew everything but were powerless to do anything about it?*” (pg 62). Reflect on how your own incomplete knowledge of God may have contributed to errant views of Him in the past. Do you see Him differently now? How does increasing knowledge about God’s attributes increase your faith? Let me know how I can help on your faith walk!

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.

Contact me with questions or prayer concerns:
ron.comoglio@capitolcom.org
334-476-9333
capitolcom.org/state/alabama/