

1. Come to the attributes or perfections of God

Attributes defined = Anything that God has revealed to be true about Himself.

- A. The attributes answer the most important question – “What is God like?”
- B. In the attributes we see what God has chosen to reveal about Himself to us in His Word
 - 1). His nature – those qualities and characteristics that make up who He is
Such as His love, patience, mercy, sovereignty, wrath, wisdom, goodness
- C. This takes out the guess work about God – He has shown us what He’s like

2. There are two categories of attributes – incommunicable and communicable

- A. **Incommunicable attributes** = Those characteristics of God that humans don’t share
 - 1). Omnipresence – being infinite – His self-sufficiency (In need of nothing else)
- B. **Communicable attributes** = Those characteristics of God that human beings do have
 - 1). Though of course not in the same proportions as God
 - a). Such things as love, mercy, sense of justice...
 - b). These are the things we have because we are created in His image

3. Two things we must remember about the attributes of God

First: Each attribute is found in perfection in God

- A. God’s love, wisdom, mercy, justice, wrath...and all other attributes are all perfect
 - 1). There is absolutely no imperfection, error or flaws in them at any point
- B. Let’s take wrath for instance – His wrath unlike ours is perfect
 - 1). Unlike our anger which can be over the wrong things and be way out of proportion
 - a). God is always angry over the right things
 - b). And that amount of anger He expresses is the perfect amount for the offense committed
 - 2). It can also go the other way – were not angry enough over some things we should be
 - a). Things we should have a righteous anger over might not affect us at all

Point: God has none of these problems

- A. His response of love, anger, mercy, justice is always perfect – no flaws whatsoever

Second: Each attribute works in conjunction with all the others (important)

- A. One attribute affects all the others and at the same time is affected by all the others
- B. Ex. God’s love is affected by God’s justice
 - 1). Therefore God is not the lopsided God we’ve made Him – God is love!
Yes but God is also just and that justice affects His love
 - a). Therefore, it is not a sloppy love that overlooks every offense
It is a love that will deal with sin in a person’s life
- C. At the same time, it is a justice that is affected by His love
 - 1). Therefore it is a loving justice that doesn’t lash out with no compassion or understanding
 - a). If there was justice without love – we’d all be in hell right now
 - 1a). Scripture says “The soul that sins shall die” and “the wages of sin is death”
 - 2). But God’s justice is mixed with the attributes of love and patience
 - a). Therefore God lovingly gives man time to repent
But if He doesn’t he will experience God’s justice expressed in wrath
- D. C. All attributes are affected by God’s wisdom
 - 1). This means that God will always express all those other attributes in the best way possible
- E. And God is holy – therefore there will be no trace of sin in the way any of His attributes are expressed

Transition: Where we are headed – in the next few weeks we will be looking at the attributes of God

- A. Those characteristics that make God who He is
- B. Tonight we'll look at the Sovereignty of God and the Omnipotence of God
 - 1). Each of the attributes could be a study in itself but for time's sake we won't do that

I. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

1. Sovereignty defined = God's absolute rule over all creation

Arthur Pink (Gleanings in the Godhead): Sovereignty of God may be defined as the exercise of His supremacy. Infinitely elevated above the highest creature, He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth; subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent. God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him. So His own Word expressly declares: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Is 46:10); "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand" (Dan 4:35). Divine sovereignty means that God is God in fact, as well as in name, that He is on the throne of the universe, directing all things, working all things "after the counsel of His own will" (Eph 1:11).

- A. It is the absolute authority and rule of God over all of His creation
 - 1). It is a rule that covers everything without exception: Creation, animals, weather, man

2. The importance of understanding this doctrine clearly

- A. Any understanding of God that limits His sovereignty will cause us serious problems

Pink: "When the sovereignty of God is denied there will be no holy awe of Him"
- B. Important because this holy awe affects everything
 - 1). We are wired to be thrilled by God – to see His glory – to be awestruck by His majesty
 - 2). When we lose that holy awe – it will affect our worship, prayer life, service, obedience
 - a). We will go through the motions with a dull coldness with no holy compulsion
- C. We need a renewed sense of awe when we think of our creator
 - 1). We need to stop settling for mere religion to be thrilled by relationship
- D. This awe starts with the thought of His Sovereignty – Almighty God in absolute control
 - 1). This is a subject that needs to be lingered over in prayer before Him

Transition: Let's look for it in Scripture and prove that it is there

The Sovereign God in Scripture

1. We need to remind ourselves constantly of what He is really like

Daniel's view of God's sovereignty: 1 Ch 29:11–12 (ESV) Yours, O LORD, is the *greatness* and the *power* and the *glory* and the *victory* and the *majesty*, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the *kingdom*, O LORD, *and you are exalted as head above all*. ⁽¹²⁾ Both riches and honor come from you, and *you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all*.

- A. What words: Greatness, power, glory, victory, majesty, exalted as head above all. Rule over all
 - 1). In your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all
- B. Is that your God? That would bring peace in time of adversity

2 Ch 20:6 (ESV) and said, "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. *In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you.*

- A. That is our God! That is our Father. Why do we worry so? Nothing too hard for Him!

Job 23:13 (NIV) "But he stands alone, and who can oppose him? *He does whatever he pleases.*

Question: Is that how you view your God? Running everything through this? His greatness. His power.

- A. He commanded the Red Sea to open up and it did – Ex. 14
- B. He ordered the Sun to stand still and it did – Joshua 10
- C. He told the Sun to go backwards and it did – Isaiah 38

- 1). Spend time forcing these thoughts into your mind – here is where you want to dwell
That will change how you view the circumstances of your life
- 2). So few hold themselves under the truth long enough for it to affect them – become part of them
 - a). Then they wonder why they have no peace. No victory. So much worry

Transition: God might be powerful – but is He personally involved – or is He unattached – unaffected

The Personal Rule of a Sovereign God

1. Some suggest He rules more as a spectator than a participant

- A. Created the universe – set in place laws of nature – it now runs on its own
- B. Term for that theory is Deism – it is unbiblical and destructive
 - 1). It removes God from having a personal touch on His creation or in our life

2. Scripture tells us that God is intimately involved in running His creation

Mt 10:29 (ESV) ‘Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And *not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.*

- A. Not just without his knowledge – BUT – apart from His will – He is personally involved
- B. Jesus was teaching that if God controls the timing and circumstances of insignificant events
 - 1). How much more will our loving Father be involved in the circumstances of our life

Thought: This is so comforting – there is nothing to insignificant for Him to care about

- A. Nothing He too little to get involved in to take care of His children
- B. Great truths IF you apply them by faith and use them to fight against anxiety and worry

Transition: Let’s look at the comfort of understanding the Sovereignty of God

The Comfort of Understanding the Sovereignty of God

1. I need this when I see evil seemingly triumphing in the world

- A. I find my rest in knowing God is in control – even if I can’t see it at the moment
 - 1). I know He has reasons for allowing it – those reasons flow out of His wisdom – no mistakes
 - 2). Even if I don’t understand it – I don’t have too – I know His ways are perfect
- B. And I do know He is sovereign - one day He will bring sin to an end
 - 1). He will simply say “It’s over – no more” and sin will cease to exist

Thought: I think this is important – we won’t always know why God allows things (tsunami’s etc.)

- A. But we can fall back on what we do know – His ways are perfect – He never makes a mistake
 - 1). One day it will all make sense – today I rest in what I know about His character - perfect

2. I need this when adversity comes into my life

- A. I realize it comes through the sovereign hands of a loving Father – “Father filtered”
 - 1). Therefore I know that it has come into my life with good purposes behind it – even when it hurts
 - a). God is using it to strengthen me, mature me, make me more dependent upon Him
 - b). He’s using it to work hope into me – cause me to know His love in a greater way
 - c). He is using it to test my faith and work a greater perseverance into my life
- B. My rest is that He is in control – governing it all for my good and His glory

CHS: “There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God’s sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that sovereignty overrules them, and that sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children ought more earnestly to contend than the doctrine of the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands.”

- 1). I know He will stop the trial the moment it accomplishes what it was sent for

1 Pe 5:10 (ESV) And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Thought 1: What comfort this doctrine brings to God's people

- A. Isaiah 40 (worth reading on your own) – He's speaking to God's people who felt hopeless
 - 1). Been in Babylonian captivity for so long they thought nothing would ever change
 - 2). Isaiah comforts them by pointing them to their God – reminding them of His sovereignty
- B. Points them to creation, to the great and powerful nations, to the universe
 - 1). Reminds them God the creator is greater than all of those things He created
- C. IOW "Behold your God!" How can you be hopeless when He is on your side
 - 1). He will move in His perfect timing – but the wait is guided by perfect wisdom
 - a). He is accomplishing necessary things during that time – it is directed by Him
- D. The Christian should be an optimist – every circumstance is directed by our Father's love

Thought 2: Listen to how Isaiah finishes this reminder to those who were feeling hopeless

Is 40:29–31 (ESV) He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ⁽³⁰⁾ Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ⁽³¹⁾ but they who wait (**some translate "hope in"**) for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

- A. Even in the midst of adversity when our eyes are confidently fixed on who God really is
 - 1). We can still soar, still run without getting weary, can still walk with God without growing faint
- B. That is what understanding God's sovereignty can do for you
 - 1). You rest in His strength – in His abilities
 - 2). If you don't you will grow weary and faint – you will be relying on your own strength
 - a). Instead of soaring you'll be crushed under the burdens of life

II. THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD

1. Omnipotence goes hand-in-hand with Sovereignty

Linked together: Rev 19:6 (NKJV) And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the **Lord God Omnipotent reigns!**

- A. The sovereignty of God – the Lord reigns
- B. The attribute that is necessary to reign – **Omnipotent**

2. Omnipotence defined: To have all power. To have absolute power

- A. Without omnipotence – sovereignty means nothing
 - 1). The absolute rule of sovereignty needs the absolute power of omnipotence to enforce it
 - 2). Without it He could declare His will but not have the power to carry out that will

STEPHEN CHARNOCK: The power of God is that ability and strength whereby He can bring to pass whatsoever He pleases, whatsoever His infinite wisdom may direct, and whatsoever the infinite purity of His will may resolve...

How vain would be the eternal counsels, if power did not step in to execute them. Without power His mercy would be but feeble pity, His promises an empty sound, His threatenings a mere scare-crow. God's power is like Himself: infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; it can neither be checked, restrained, nor frustrated by the creature.

The Difficulty of Understanding this Doctrine

1. How can we understand this kind of power?

- A. We think of creating this universe and the circuit flips – how is that possible – with a word!
 - 1). But Job says that was nothing to Him
- B. Job speaks of the works of God in creation then makes this astonishing statement

Job 26:14 (NLT) “These are some of the minor things he does, merely a *whisper* of his power. *Who can understand the thunder of his power?*”

- 1). Easy stuff. Never taxed God at all. Just a whisper, a faint hint of His power.
 - B. Understanding that power is beyond us. Absolutely unlimited. Nothing too hard.
 - 1). This is the awesome God who is our Father. Who is our shepherd taking care of us.
- Transition:** To get us thinking in terms of God’s awesome power I want to show you a few areas.
- A. Just some areas we can see the power of God on display – see His movements in the world

The Power of God on Display

1. The power of God in restraining the evil of man

- A. While God does allow man to have freedom of choice – freedom to choose sin
 - 1). At the same time He powerfully restrains man’s evil
 - As bad as the world is – it is nothing like it would be if God didn’t do this
- B. Here is the nature of every descendant of Adam – man outside of a saving relationship with Christ

Ro 3:10–18 (ESV) as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; ⁽¹¹⁾ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ⁽¹²⁾ All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” ⁽¹³⁾ “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps is under their lips.” ⁽¹⁴⁾ “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.” ⁽¹⁵⁾ “Their feet are swift to shed blood; ⁽¹⁶⁾ in their paths are ruin and misery, ⁽¹⁷⁾ and the way of peace they have not known.” ⁽¹⁸⁾ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

 - 1). Leave that group without restraint – have hell on earth – earth would be uninhabitable
 - 2). How thankful we should be that God’s powerfully intervenes with restraining power

2. The power of God seen in the judgment on man

- A. How solemn is this power of judgment when it is put on display
- B. The *flood*: Because of man’s love affair with sin and their continual rejection of their creator
 - 1). God swept away the entire human race except for Noah and his family in the Ark
- C. *Sodom and Gomorrah*: Became so corrupt that God’s holy nature had to react
 - 1). Fire and Brimstone rained down – destroying all but Lot and his family

Thought: How this should make mankind think about their standing before a holy God

- A. He is love but He is also holy, righteous and just

Therefore: Psalms 99:1 (NIV) The LORD reigns, *let the nations tremble...*

Arthur Pink is correct: "To treat with disrespect one who can crush us more easily than we can a moth, is suicidal policy. To openly defy Him who is clothed with omnipotence, who can rend in pieces or cast into hell any moment He pleases, is the very height of insanity."

Transition: We see the power of God on display

- A. Through the restraining of the evil in natural man – we are still somewhat safe
- B. In the solemn power of judgement upon all who reject Him
 - 1). Global judgments such as the flood
 - 2). National judgments such as Sodom and Gomorrah – the Israelites in minor prophets
 - 3). Individual judgement on all who reject His Son
 - a). He will cast them into hell and force them to bow on the way
- C. Let’s turn to sweeter things – the power of God in the life of His child

The Power of God and the Believer

1. Understanding the power of God gives the believer confidence to act

A. W. Tozer: The church began in power, moved in power and moved just as long as she had power. When she no longer had power she dug in for safety and sought to conserve her gains. But her blessings were like manna; when they

tried to keep it over night it bred worms and stank... In church history every return to New Testament power has marked a new advance somewhere, a fresh proclamation of the Gospel, an upsurge of missionary zeal; and every reduction of power has seen the rise of some new mechanism for conservation and defense.'

- A. When the church understand and begins to rely on the power of God
 - 1). That instills a confidence and boldness to attempt great things for God in this world
 - 2). The people begin to rise up and progress like they should
 - 3). They begin to lose the fear of man that has been ensnaring them

Ps 27:1 (ESV) The LORD is my light and my salvation; *whom shall I fear?* The LORD is the stronghold of my life; *of whom shall I be afraid?*
- B. But when the church loses this sense of God's power it loses its confidence
 - 1). Rather than advancing – they simply try to maintain ground gained in the past
 - 2). When you stop moving forward you will always move backward
 - a). When a church stops impacting the world around it – it will be influenced by the world

Point: The thought of an Omnipotent God is so encouraging – means anything is possible

- A. If He weren't Omnipotent despair would be the right emotion – because He is there is always hope
 - 1). No prayer is too hard for Him to answer
 - 2). No need is too great for Him to supply
 - 3). No Passion is too strong for Him to subdue
 - 4). No temptation is too powerful for Him to deliver from
 - 5). No misery is too deep for Him to relieve
 - 6). No unbeliever's heart too hard for Him to soften
- B. The truth of God's omnipotence allows us to dream big for the kingdom – expect great things

2. The Power of God seen in restraining the evil intents of Satan

1 Pe 5:8 (ESV) Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

- A. The devil hates God and His children – would devour us in a second if he could
 - 1). What holds him back – it's not us – it is God powerfully restraining his evil intent
 - a). Job – he has to ask God for permission to touch us

When God grants it – always within limits we can handle
And God always flips it for our good

Stephen Charnock: "God makes the devil a polisher while he intends to be a destroyer."

Point: I don't have to be terrified of the devil – God is handling him

- A. I'm aware of his schemes – but I turn him over to God and rest in His victory

3. Understanding the power of God and the believer's incompetence

- A. How comforting to know that divine omnipotence overcomes individual incompetence
 - 1). Because we are so familiar with our own weakness and inabilities

This thought paralyzes many – keeps them from stepping out to serve God

"Who am I to attempt something like that – what if I make a mistake" *Listen you will!*
- B. God is not depending upon your ability – your great, charismatic personality
 - 1). He's looking for a person that just wants to bring Him glory
 - a). When He finds that person His power will overcome all that weakness

"It is the glory of Omnipotence to work by improbabilities"
 - 2). God loves to take the weak things of the world and pour Himself through them

When they accomplish great things He gets all the glory

Point: This is where the understanding of omnipotence gives us the boldness to move forward

- A. To hear His voice and attempt things that are beyond us

4. The power of God and our assurance of salvation

A. It is only because of His unlimited power that I can find a place of rest in my salvation

1). This assures me that He is able to finish what He has started in my life

Php 1:6 (ESV) And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Samuel Rutherford "My faith has no bed to sleep upon but omnipotency"

5. The power of God and our worship

A. When we begin to understand what God is like – what else can we do but worship Him

CONCLUSION

Intro: Putting this further understanding of both sovereignty and omnipotence together – I think we need too:

1. We need to Repent

A. Or our living like the problems of this world are too great for this God! So little faith

2. Learn to rest

A. By applying these truths to every situation in our life – they are meant to be applied not just read

3. Begin to respond

A. To the call of God upon our life to serve Him – in whatever way He is calling us

1). Realizing that when we step out we step out with this God

2). Realizing when we do step out we will make mistakes – but God is able to deal with that

4. Continue to reflect

A. Diligently reflecting upon these great truths that are all over our Bible

1). Spend the time bringing before our mind the truths of a sovereign – omnipotent God

B. More these truths grip our minds & hearts the more they will begin to affect our lives in a wonderful way

1). Bringing in a greater confidence, rest, boldness and effectiveness to serve God