

BIBLE CHALLENGE 2019

Week 7: February 10-16

What is God Like?

Read: Exodus 3:14; 4:14; 32:35; 33:12-23; 34:5-7,14; Leviticus 11:44-45; 27:30; Numbers 11:1,33; 12:9; 22:27; 32:10,13-14; Deuteronomy 1:34; 4:25; 5:9; 6:4; 7:6,12-13,15; 31:17,29; Joshua 4:24; Judges 2:12,14,20; 6:24; 2 Samuel 6:7; 2 Kings 19:31; 1 Chronicles 13:10; 29:10-12; 2 Chronicles 12:6; Job 11:7-9; 42:7; Psalm 2:4; 11:7; 58:11; 78:31; 84:2; 90:2; 92:15; 99:4; 102:12,27; 137:7-10; 144:4; 145:3,9,16; 147:5; Isaiah 6:3; 9:6-7; 33:22; 40:28; 44:6; 66:1; Jeremiah 12:1; Ezekiel 13:13; 25:14; 35:11; Amos 1:11; Nahum 1:2; Zephaniah 2:2-3; Zechariah 10:3; Malachi 3:6; Matthew 5:45; 6:19-21; 19:17; Luke 1:54,72,78; 18:19; John 3:33; 4:24; Acts 7:48-49; Romans 1:20,32; 2:9; 3:30; 9:3; 11:29,33; 16:27; 1 Corinthians 1:9,20; 8:6; 13:6; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 12:20; Ephesians 3:21; 4:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2:5; 6:15; 2 Timothy 2:13; Titus 2:11; Hebrews 1:3; 6:13,18; James 1:17-18; 3:16; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 5:7; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:15; 1 John 1:5; 4:8; Revelation 4:8. Read Psalm 89 in full.

Boy, that is a wide open question, and we sure are covering a lot of territory in the Scriptures above...but then again the Scriptures tell us a great deal about what our God is like. So, take your time and dig through as many of the above references as you can while knowing that there are many more which we could list.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism (Question 4) defines God as: *"God is Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being are wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."*

The Belgic Confession (Article 1) states: *"We believe with the heart and confess with the mouth, that there is only one simple, and spiritual Being, which we call God; and that He is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and overflowing fountain of all good."*

The Second Helvetic Confession (Article 3.1) reads: *"We believe and teach that God is one in essence or nature, subsisting by Himself, all sufficient in Himself, invisible, without a body, infinite, eternal, the Creator of all things both visible and invisible, the chief good, living, quickening and preserving all things, almighty and supremely wise, gentle or merciful, just and true."*

Saint Anselm, when defending the existence of a God, defined God as: *"A being, greater than which no greater being can be imagined."*

Okay, all of that is a mouth full, but it is a reminder that when we talk about God, we are talking not only about God's being, but also about his character. And, if you look closely at the descriptions above, you will quickly see that there are some themes that run through all of the language. God is a spirit, for example. God is eternal and infinite, etc... These are character traits that belong to him by virtue of him being God. Were he not to have any one of these traits he would no longer be God.

One character trait that often throws people off is that God is "simple." When we use the word, "simple," we often think of someone as being "simple-minded" or foolish. That is clearly not what theologians mean when they use this language. What they mean by simple is that God cannot be divided. There was a point, for example, that Atoms were considered "simple" in the sense that they could not be broken down. That view has changed because now we know they are made up of protons, neutrons, and electrons. At the same time, the word "Atom" means "indivisible." God, is indivisible.

As we continue to talk about God, we also talk about

those attributes that God alone has and those attributes that we share with God (because we are made in His image). Theologians call the first group the "Incommunicable Attributes" and the second group the "Communicable Attributes."

Incommunicable Attributes of God

These attributes are ones which God alone has by virtue of being God. To begin with, we talk about God being "Independent and Self-Existent." In other words, while all of creation requires something else to allow it to exist (humans need a planet to live on, air to breath, food to eat, a creator, etc...), God needs none of it. He simply is — hence the divine name Yahweh, which means "I am that I am" or the New Testament phrase, "He was and is and is to come." This is why it is silly to ask the question, "But who created God?", for by definition, God is uncreated and needs no creator. He simply is and all of creation derives its existence from Him.

You will also note above that God is referred to as "immutable" or unchanging. In other words, God simply is and it is impossible for him to change. That is good news because that means his Word and his promises are also immutable and are not subject to change like human ones often are. This also means that all God ordained must come to pass for otherwise he would always be changing plans to react to foibles or problems.

We talk about the infinite nature of God under several different headings. For example, we say that God is omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), omnipresent (all-present), omnipotent (all-perfect), omnitemporal (at all times), and omnixistent (the infinitely existent).

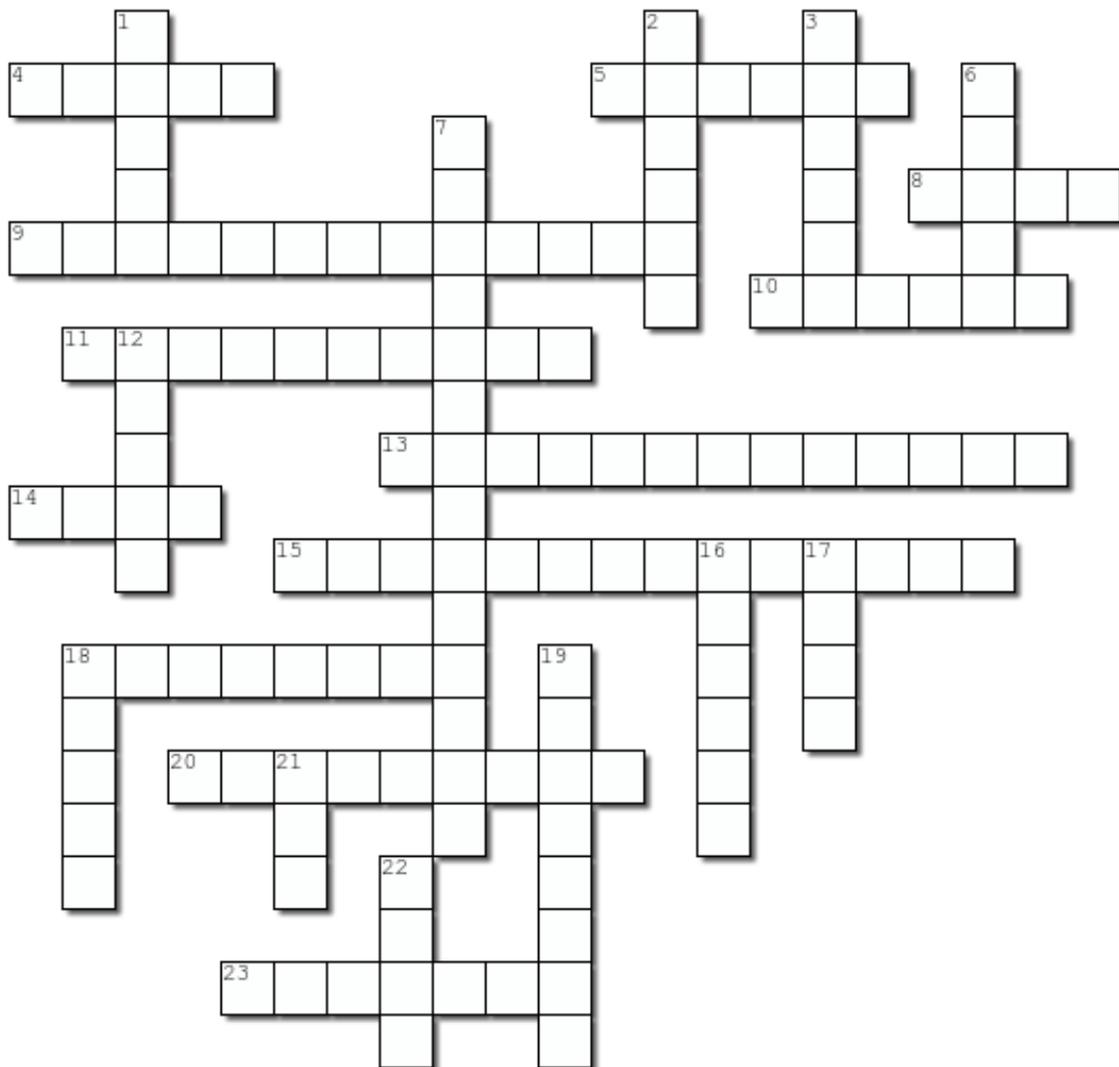
Communicable Attributes:

We are made in the image of God. Thus, it should not be surprising that we share some of God's attributes even though God is perfect in his attributes where we are off-balanced and imperfectly express ours.

Some of these attributes are holiness, blessedness, righteousness, good, orderly, loving, jealous, wrathful, truthful, faithful, knowing, wise, zealous, benevolent, joyous, humorous, willful, and sovereign.

Again, we should remember that we only ever exhibit these attributes in part, while God exhibits them in full and while we oftentimes live out one of these attributes to the exclusion of another, God exhibits all of these attributes at all times and in every way and there is never a conflict or a deficit in their expression.

Week 7: What is God Like?



Created using TheTeachersCorner.net [Crossword Puzzle Maker](http://TheTeachersCorner.net/Crossword-Puzzle-Maker)

Across

4. Go rejoices in this.
5. God does this in derision of those who rebel against His Law.
8. God says the we are to be holy because he is _____.
9. God keeps this for his people by the thousands.
10. Where should we lay up our treasure?
11. God knows how to preserve the godly and to keep the unrighteous under judgment.
13. This is in God's hand. (3 words)
14. The hand of the Lord is mighty and the peoples should _____ his name.
15. The name of Gideon's altar. (4 words)
18. 'God is a jealous and _____ God.'
20. Heaven is God's throne and earth is his _____.
23. 'God is a _____ God.'

Down

1. 'the Lord is our _____'
2. This name of God means: 'I am who I am.'
3. The Lord does not do this.
6. When God made a promise to Abraham, he did this by his own name.
7. Every good gift comes from him (3 words)
12. God struck him down because he disobeyed God's command about not touching the Ark.
16. 'God is _____, those who worship him must do so in spirit and truth.'
17. There will be tribulation for those who desire this.
18. This attribute of God was often kindled when the people rebelled.
19. When Moses asked to see God's glory, God said he would pass this in front of Moses.
21. 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is _____.'
22. God sent a plague against Israel because they made this out of gold.