

The Moral Attributes of God

Introduction:

The moral attributes of God are those which are relative to man, i.e. those which are revealed in God's relationship with man.

There are 12 moral attributes, and these are grouped into 3 categories:

Holiness	Love	Truth
Justice	Mercy	Wisdom
Righteousness	Grace	
Wrath	Patience	
	Goodness	
	Faithfulness	

Note, that these attributes are "communicable," meaning man in his relationship with God may exhibit these attributes himself.

I. The Holiness of God

This is without doubt the greatest or most exalted attribute of God.

It has been termed the EMPHATIC ATTRIBUTE — the one which God would have us most remember Him by.

The Holiness of God is the "attribute of attributes!"

"Power is in His arm, omniscience His eye, mercy His bowels, eternity His duration; but holiness is His beauty."

Holiness transcends and determines all other attributes.

A. The meaning of the Word "Holiness."

The word "Holiness," like "Sanctification," means to be "set apart." God is infinitely set apart from sin, Himself being infinitely perfect in all things.

Note: It is not God's will to be holy — it is His nature!

B. Demonstration of God's Holiness.

1. Abraham — Genesis 15:17
2. Moses — Exodus 3:2-6
3. Isaiah — Isaiah 6:1-4
4. Ezekiel — Ezekiel 1:4-28
5. Daniel — Daniel 7:9-10
6. John — Revelation 1:12-15

Note 1: Fire evidently is a symbol of holiness.

Note 2: Observe the reaction of these men when faced with a realization of God's holiness.

C. The Scriptural Fact of God's Holiness.

"God is more often called Holy than Almighty."

The Moral Attributes of God

1. In General Terms.
Psalm 5:4; 30:4; 47:8; 89:35; 99:9; 110:3; 145:17; Habakuk 1:13; Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 57:15; I John 1:5; Revelation 15:4
2. A Holy Trinity.
 - a) A “Holy” Father — John 17:11
 - b) A “Holy” Son — Acts 3:14
 - c) A “Holy” Spirit — Ephesians 4:30

D. Manifestation of God’s Holiness

1. In a Hatred of Sin
Habakuk 1:13; Job 34:10; Proverbs 6:16
2. In a Delight Toward That which is Holy.
Proverbs 15:9
3. In a Separation from Sinners.
Isaiah 59:1-2
4. In His Works.
Psalm 145:17
5. In His Law.
Romans 7:12

The law of God forbids sin in all of its modifications: in its most refined as well as its grossest forms; the intent of the mind as well as the pollution of the body; the secret desire as well as the overt act.

6. In the Cross of Christ
Wondrously, yet most solemnly does the atonement display God’s infinite holiness and atonement of sin.

“Not all the vials of judgment that have or shall be poured out upon the wicked world, nor the flaming furnace of a sinner’s conscience, nor the irreversible sentence pronounced against the rebellious demons, for the groans of the damned creatures, give such a demonstration of God’s hatred of sin, as the wrath of God let loose upon His Son. Never did divine holiness appear more beautiful and lonely than at the time our Savior’s countenance was most marred in the midst of His dying groans. This Himself acknowledges in Psalm 22. When God had turned His smiling face from Him, and thrust His sharp knife into His heart, which forced that terrible cry from Him, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” He adores this perfection — Thou art holy.” -S. Chamock

E. The Applications of God’s Holiness.

1. Because God is Holy — the utmost reverence becomes our approach to Him.
Hebrews 12:28-29; Exodus 3:5; Joshua 5:13-15; Psalm 89:7; 99:5
2. Because God is Holy — acceptance with Him on the grounds of works is utterly impossible.
Isaiah 64:6; Hebrews 9:22
3. Because God is Holy — our utmost desire should be to be conformed to Him.
I Peter 1:15-16

The Moral Attributes of God

II. The Righteousness of God

A. The Meaning of God's Righteousness

The righteousness of God is a manifestation of His holiness.

God's righteousness has been termed "legislative holiness." This attribute reveals God's love of holiness, and is the imposing of righteous laws and demands.

All God's requirements of man are absolutely righteous.

B. The Scriptural fact of God's Righteousness.

Psalms 116:5; 145:17; Jeremiah 12:1; John 17:25

C. The Manifestation of God's Righteousness.

1. God Loves Righteousness and Hates Sin. — Psalm 11:7
2. God's Righteousness Leads Him Always to do right. — Genesis 18:25

III. The Justice of God

The Justice of God is that perfection whereby He cannot look upon sin.

Justice is the execution of righteousness, and has been termed "judicial holiness."

A. The Scriptural Fact of God's Justice.

Psalms 97:2; Zephaniah 3:5; Deuteronomy 32:4; Micah 6:8

B. The Manifestation of God's Justice.

1. God is Just in the Punishment of Unrighteousness.

Every sin MUST, and will be punished.

Romans 6:23; Daniel 9:11-16; II Thessalonians 1:8-9; Romans 2:9; 12:19;
Matthew 7:23

2. God is Just in Forgiving those who Trust Christ.

Justice has been done in that the penalty for sin has been paid in full. God would be unjust if He required the believer to pay further.

I John 1:9; Romans 3:25-26

3. God is Just in Keeping His Word and His Promises.

Nehemiah 9:7-8

4. God is Just in Delivering and Vindicating His People.

Psalms 103:6

5. God is Just in Rewarding the Righteous.

II Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 6:10; 11:26

IV. The Wrath of God

The wrath of God is His eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is "holiness stirred into activity."

The Moral Attributes of God

Psalm 7:11; John 3:36; Romans 1:18

V. The Love of God

A. The meaning of God's Love.

Love is that attribute by which God is eternally moved to self-communication.

“Love is that attribute of God by which He is inclined to seek the highest good for His creatures, and the communication of Himself to them regardless of the sacrifice involved.”

B. The Scriptural fact of God's Love.

John 3:16; I John 3:16; 4:8, 16; Matthew 5:45

C. The Objects of God's Love.

1. His Son. — Matthew 3:17; John 5:20; John 17:23-24
2. The Believer. — John 16:27
3. The Sinner. — John 3:16; Romans 5:8

D. The Manifestations of God's Love.

1. In Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross. — John 3:16
2. In Offering Full and Complete Pardon. — Isaiah 55:7
3. In Ministering to His Own. — Deuteronomy 32:9-12
4. In Chastening His Children. — Hebrews 12:6-11
5. In His Co-affliction with the Oppressed. — Isaiah 63:9

E. The Quality of God's Love.

1. It is Complacent (Satisfied). — Zephaniah 3:17 “...He will rest...”
2. It is Compassionate. — Isaiah 63:9
3. It is Affectionate. — John 17:23
4. It is Benevolent. — Luke 6:35
5. It is Merciful. — Isaiah 55:7 - “...abundantly pardon”
6. It is Uninfluenced. — Deuteronomy 7:7-8; I John 4:19 “We love him, because he first loved us.”
7. It is Eternal. — Ephesians 1:4-5; Jeremiah 31:3 “...I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”
8. It is Infinite. — Ephesians 3:19
9. It is immutable. — John 13:1; Romans 8:35-39; Song of Solomon 8:6-7
10. It is Holy. — Hebrews 12:6

VI. The Mercy of God

This attribute is most frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. It is an act of the Love of God.

A. The Mercy of God Defined.

Mercy is the negative aspect of love. It means the removal or withholding of a just penalty.

“God's mercy is a holy mercy — which knows how to pardon sin, not to protect it.”

God may be merciful, but He must be holy.

The Moral Attributes of God

B. The Scriptural Fact of God's Mercy.

Psalm 103:8; Ephesians 2:4; Luke 1:50, 72; II Corinthians 1:3; Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us..."

VII. The Grace of God

This attribute is most frequently mentioned in the New Testament.

A. The Meaning of Grace

Grace means "unmerited, or underserved favor."

God's

Riches

At

Christ's

Expense

"Grace is any move of God toward man."

B. Grace and Mercy Contrasted

1. Grace = receiving what we do not deserve. (Heaven)
2. Mercy = not receiving what we do deserve. (Hell)

C. The Scriptural Fact of the Grace of God.

Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:7-9; Titus 2:11; 3:4-7

D. The Scope of the Grace of God.

For the believer, everything he is and does is by the grace of God.

1. Saved by Grace — Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:24
2. Living by Grace — Titus 2:11-12
3. Kept by Grace — II Corinthians 12:9

VIII. The Patience or Long-suffering of God

Patience is the power of control God exercises over Himself. Nahum 1:3

God is longsuffering. II Peter 3:9; Romans 2:4

God is slow to anger. Nehemiah 9:17

IX. The Goodness or Lovingkindness of God

This attribute respects the perfection of God's nature — a perfection whereby God manifests His care and concern for the believer.

Romans 8:32; John 16:27

The word "God" is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words, "The Good." All that emanates from God is good. Everything about Him is good.

Psalm 25:6; 52:1.

A. God's Creation is Good. — Genesis 1:31

The Moral Attributes of God

- B. God's Law is Good. — Nehemiah 9:13
- C. God's Providence is Good. — Psalm 23:6; Ezra 8:18; Psalm 84:11; Romans 2:4
- D. God's Word (Promise) is Good. — I Kings 8:56 — What He promises, He will keep.
- E. God's Will is Good. — Romans 12:2

X. The Faithfulness of God

A. The Scriptural fact of God's Faithfulness.

Deuteronomy 7:9; Isaiah 11:5; Psalm 36:5; Lamentations 3:22-23; II Timothy 2:13 "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." ; Hebrews 10:23 "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: (for he is faithful that promised);"; II Corinthians 1:20; James 1:17; I Peter 4:19

B. The Scope of God's Faithfulness.

1. In Prophecy — II Peter 1:19
2. In Preservation — I Corinthians 1:9; I Thessalonians 5:24, II Tim 4:18
3. In Forgiveness. — I John 1:9

C. The Comfort of God's faithfulness.

Knowing (and believing) God is faithful will:

1. Keep us from worry.
2. Keep us from complaining.
3. Give us great confidence.

XI. The Truthfulness of God

God is eternally True. Numbers 23:19; Psalm 33:4; 138:2; Romans 3:4; **Titus 1:2**; Hebrews 6:18; Revelation 19:11

This means that God's Word is not only true, but abiding. Nothing has, or will be contradicted. God will always keep His Word. To deny His Word is to deny Himself — Psalm 138:2

XII. The Wisdom of God

God is "all wise." Everything He does is wise and in wisdom. God does nothing foolish.

Jude 25; Proverbs 8; I Timothy 1:17