

In His Image

Attributes of God Given to Humankind - Lesson Five, Conclusion
(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Multiple Sources)

Introduction:

A. Job 11:7-9

B. Characteristics Unique to God the Father

- Aseity
- Holiness
- Omni-benevolence
- Omnipotence
- Omnipresence
- Omniscience
- Oneness
- Providence
- Sovereignty
- Grace
- Mercy
- Infinity

C. Characteristics Conferred to the Children of God at the Judgment

- Knowledge (of Himself)
- Invisibility
- Immanence
- Transcendence
- Immutability
- Impassibility
- Impeccability
- Non-corporeality
- Incomprehensibility

D. Characteristics Conferred in Part to Humankind at Creation or Salvation

- Jealousy (Divinely approved)
- Love
- Veracity
- Wrath (Divinely approved)
- Wisdom
- Will
- Freedom
- Perfection (completeness)
- Blessedness
- Beauty
- Glory
- Patience
- Peace (Order)

II. COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES SHARED ON A LIMITED BASIS WITH HUMANS

- A. God's incommunicable attributes, those attributes that God does not share with others: sovereignty, independence, unchangeableness, timelessness, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, and omni-benevolence.
 - 1. These are attributes of God's nature that can never and in no sense be shared with humanity. These attributes define and characterize God's God-ness in a way that makes Him unique and singular.
- B. God's communicable attributes, those attributes that God does share with others. In other words, God shares to some extent these attributes with us.
 - 1. Communicable attributes are those aspects of God's character that we have in common with God, but not in the same measure as God.
 - 2. Even in those attributes that God chooses to share with humanity, we must remember that God is always infinitely characterized by those attributes that saved humanity only shares in a finite sense. God cannot give us any of His attributes in this world in a perfect, fulfilled manner.
 - 3. A. A. Hodge in "Outlines of Theology": "God is infinite in his relation to space and time; we are finite in our relation to both. But he is no less infinite as to his knowledge, will, goodness, and righteousness in all their modes, and we are finite in all these respects. All God's attributes known to us, or conceivable by us, are communicable, inasmuch as they have their analogy in us, but they are all alike incommunicable, inasmuch as they are all infinite."
- C. Why would God share attributes with us?
 - 1. This is one of the most loving acts God can do, because by sharing Himself with humanity, He gives of the greatest good to humanity.
- D. How does God share attributes with us? How does man manifest the communicable Divine attributes?
 - 1. In Creation - Gen. 1:26-27; Ecc. 7:29
 - a. Man is born an eternal spirit - John 5:28-29
 - b. Man is born a free moral agent - Joshua 24:15
 - c. Man is born with the capacity to reason - Rom. 12:3
 - d. Man is born with the ability to design and create - Ecc. 2:4-9
 - e. Man is born with the capacity for goodness - Ecc. 7:29
 - f. Man is born with the capacity to develop all good qualities within the limits of existence in this world - Gal. 5:22-23
 - 2. In salvation - 2Peter 1:3-4
 - a. Man is born into Christ as a pure being - Acts 22:16
 - b. Man is born into Christ with the power to partake in the Divine Nature in all of its manifestations in a limited world - 2Peter 1:3-4
 - c. Born into Christ with power to enter heaven - John 3:16, 1:12
 - 3. In the word - 1John 2:3-5
 - a. Man transforms into the image of God as much as is possible in this world - 2Cor. 3:18
 - b. Man transcends flesh to live and walk in the spirit - Rom. 8:1-5

4. In the Judgment - 1John 3:1-3

- a. Man is transformed into the actual nature and form of Christ; he achieves his fulfilled design intended by God - Eph. 1:3-6

Conclusion:

A. This world is a temporary proving ground for humankind. God gave us our nature; part of that nature is the power to choose our course of life in this world and our eternal destination in the world to come. God did not give that power to any other created thing, living or inanimate, in this world. God did not give the power to become His children to anyone except humankind, not even angels and beings of power. Man is uniquely created in the image of God.

B. "The man who comes to a right belief about God is relieved of ten thousand temporal problems, for he sees at once that these have to do with matters which at the most cannot concern him for very long; but even if the multiple burdens of time may be lifted from him, the one mighty single burden of eternity begins to press down upon him with a weight more crushing than all the woes of the world piled one upon another. That mighty burden is his obligation to God. It includes an instant and lifelong duty to love God with every power of mind and soul, to obey Him completely, and to worship Him acceptably. And when the man's laboring conscience tells him that he has done none of these things, the inner pressure of self-accusation may become too heavy to bear. The gospel can lift this destroying burden from the mind, give beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. But unless the weight of the burden is felt, the gospel can mean nothing to the man; and until he sees a vision of God high and lifted up, he will feel no woe and no burden." (A. W. Tozer, Knowledge of the Holy, 5)