

God's Non-Transmittable Attributes (Part Three): Omniscience

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Forerunner, "Bible Study,"

God fully knows Himself and all things—seen and unseen, physical and spiritual—past, present, and future. I John 3:20 confirms this by declaring that God “knows all things.” All God’s thoughts and actions are wholly informed by His perfect knowledge and character, making Him unconditionally and eternally trustworthy (Psalm 147:5; Proverbs 8:14; Isaiah 46:10).

This fact brings us to a third non-transmittable attribute: God’s omniscience. To be omniscient means to know all things—to possess infinite knowledge. Despite all its expertise, intelligence, and achievement, humanity will never know all things, even as God’s people anticipate spending all eternity learning.

1. Does God actually perceive all things? Psalm 139:1-12; Acts 15:18; II Chronicles 16:9.

Comment: The Bible employs numerous idioms, metaphors, and literal descriptions to declare and confirm that God indeed perceives everything. He is thoroughly and intimately acquainted with His entire creation, including all of the innumerable stars and each of us (Psalm 147:4). No place exists where we can hide ourselves, our thoughts, or anything from God. He knew every move David made. Anticipating our sins, He prepared a plan of salvation for us from before the foundation of the earth (Matthew 25:34; Revelation 13:8; Ephesians 1:4; I Peter 1:20). He understands our desires, intentions, and motivations—our nature—and why we make our decisions.

2. Can anything escape God’s senses? Jeremiah 32:19; Hebrews 4:12-13.

Comment: We humans discover and perceive the physical world through the five physical senses, but God designed limitations to what our senses allow

us to see, grasp, discern, or understand. On the other hand, God's senses are not limited. Since He designed and created everything, He observes the entire spectrum of light and energy, and He hears the whole range of sound. Nothing escapes His understanding.

Even though some humans have a weak intuitive sense through which some can instinctively predict the actions of others, it is only marginally accurate, especially outside a person's limited sphere of influence. God, however, has no such constraints. His Spirit searches all things, including our most secretive thoughts (Psalm 69:5; 90:8; I Corinthians 2:10). He knows us more thoroughly and intimately than we know ourselves (Psalm 139:13-16), so predicting our future actions is but child's play to His immeasurable intellect. This divine ability explains His confidence in men like Noah, Abraham, and Moses, and even more significantly, His willingness to lay the responsibility of His entire creation plan—including our salvation—on the shoulders of Jesus Christ (John 1:29).

3. Does God's omniscience limit our free-will choices? Isaiah 46:9-11; Genesis 22:1-18.

Comment: Our omniscient God is sovereign over all His creation, “declaring the end from the beginning.” When we use the term “omniscient” to describe God, it does not mean that He *always* knows our every decision and action before we make them. Consider the account of Abraham and God's command for him to sacrifice Isaac. God arranged this test to confirm His trust in Abraham as the father of the faithful and to show the rest of us the level of faith He desires.

While He possesses the power and authority to force any person's hand in any matter, His greater priority is the development of righteous character in His children. Because He is preparing us for eternity in His Family, He has given us a vital role in our development. To that end, God prepares scenarios in our lives to facilitate and measure our growth (II Corinthians 4:17; James 1:2-4).

So, He requires us to exercise our faith and use our free will—just like Abraham—to make choices that are, by His flawless design, unpredictable. However, just as God chooses to act and intervene in history to accomplish

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His ends (Psalm 135:6; Proverbs 16:9; Isaiah 46:11), He always retains the right to restrain Himself from *controlling* our free will.

Indeed, our great omnipotent and omnipresent God is also omniscient. “The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable” (Isaiah 40:28).