



# attributes of *God*

WEEK 20 — GOD'S MAJESTY AND GLORY



**Martin Luther**

“Your thoughts of God are too human.”

**Psalm 72 : 19**

“Blessed be his glorious name forever;  
may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!”

**Psalm 145 : 5**

“On the glorious splendor of your majesty,  
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.”

## THE “SUMMARY ATTRIBUTES” OF GOD

Summary attributes are not attributes in the same sense as what we previously have studied. They are descriptions of God in all of His perfection.

**Four primary summary attributes are discussed:**

**1. Perfection**

*“God’s ‘highest perfection’ is the sum and substance of all the attributes which has been discussed so far.... God is the sum-total of all excellencies, the One than whom no greater, higher, better can exist either in thought or in reality” (Herman Bavinck).*

**2. Blessedness**

*“God’s blessedness means that God delights fully in himself and in all that reflects his character.” (Wayne Grudem)*

**3. Majesty**

**4. Glory**

## WHAT IS MAJESTY & GLORY?

**GENERALLY:**

Majesty means greatness, impressive beauty, or royal power.

Glory means honor or excellent reputation.



**ATTEMPTS TO DEFINE GOD’S GLORY AND MAJESTY:**

**Thomas Watson** – *“the sparkling of the Deity”*

**Wayne Grudem** – *“God’s glory is the created brightness that surrounds God’s revelation of Himself... It is very appropriate that God’s revelation of himself should be accompanied by such splendor and brightness, for this glory of God is the visible manifestation of the excellence of God’s character.”*

**Herman Bavinck** – *“God’s glory indicates the splendor and brilliancy that is inseparably connected with all of God’s virtues and with his self-revelation in nature and grace.”*

**Mark Jones** - *“There are basically two ways that we can speak of God’s glory, a term that denotes his divine splendor and the magnificence for which he is worthy of honor. First, God’s essential glory represents the sum of his attributes, which together make him the ‘God of glory’.... Second, there is a glory ascribed to God in terms of what his creatures bring to him. This latter glory has in view our praise, worship, obedience, and delight as we keep the name of the Lord holy in all that we do.”*

## **GOD'S MAJESTY AND GLORY IS SEEN THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE:**

### **Majesty and Glory Used to Describe the Light of God's Presence**

**Exodus 16:10** - "And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud."

**Psalms 104:1-2** - "Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent."

**Luke 2:9** - "And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear."

**Revelation 21:23** - "And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb."

### **Majesty and Glory Used as a Title of God**

**Psalms 24:7-10** - "Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!"

**1 Corinthians 2:8** - "None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

**Hebrews 1:3** - "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

### **Majesty and Glory Used as a Description of God Himself**

**Psalms 145:5** - "On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate."

**2 Peter 1:16** - "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty."

## Majesty and Glory Used as a Description of God's Greatness

**1 Chronicles 29:11** – “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.”

**Job 37:22-24** – “Out of the north comes golden splendor; God is clothed with awesome majesty. The Almighty-- we cannot find him; he is great in power; justice and abundant righteousness he will not violate. Therefore men fear him; he does not regard any who are wise in their own conceit.”

**Job 40:9-10** – “Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like his? Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity; clothe yourself with glory and splendor.”

**Psalms 93:1-2** - “The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed; he has put on strength as his belt. Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved. Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.”

## ASPECTS OF GOD'S MAJESTY AND GLORY

### 1. God is zealous for His glory

**Isaiah 48:11** – “For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another. “

#### **REMEMBER THE ATTRIBUTE OF GOD'S JEALOUSY:**

*“God's jealousy is not the sinful emotion of envy that characterizes human jealousy. It is God's righteous concern to protect the truth that he is the Creator of the universe and that he alone, not ‘gods’ of human invention, deserves human praise.” (ESV Study Bible)*

**God being jealous and zealous for His honor is good.**

### 2. God has to reveal His glory for us to see It

*“God – and thus also his glory – remains incomprehensible to us. He condescends to give us a little taste of his glory, because he freely chooses, in his glory, to reveal himself to us.” (Mark Jones)*

*“His majesty, holiness, power and knowledge are utterly beyond our comprehension. Far from causing despair, this truth should comfort us. We do not need a God we can manage but one utterly beyond our ability to comprehend.” (Mark Jones)*

**Exodus 33:18-20** – “Moses said, ‘Please show me your glory.’ And he said, ‘I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The LORD.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But,’ he said, ‘you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.’”

### 3. In Scripture, revelations of God's glory often cause fear

**Job 13:11** – “Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you?”

**Isaiah 6:1-6** – “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!' And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: 'Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!'”

**Luke 2:9** – “And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.”

*“We know that his majesty is his power is his justice is his dominion. The majestic God cannot dwell with or tolerate the proud, and his dominion over them means he can and will judge them.” (Mark Jones)*

### 4. God's glory cannot increase or decrease

#### REMEMBER THE ATTRIBUTE OF GOD'S UNCHANGEABLENESS (IMMUTABILITY)

*“God is perpetually the same; subject to no change in his being, attributes, or determination. Therefore God is compared to a rock (Deut. 32:4, etc.) which remains immovable, when the entire ocean surrounding it is continually in a fluctuating state... Because God has no beginning and no ending, he can know no change.” (A. W. Pink)*

**PSALM 102:25-28** – “Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end.”

### 5. We can give God glory

#### REMEMBER THE ATTRIBUTE OF GOD'S INDEPENDENCE:

*“God does not need us or the rest of creation for anything, yet we and the rest of creation can glorify Him and bring Him joy.” (Wayne Grudem)*

*“When we glorify God, we add nothing to his essential glory, the glory he already possesses in himself. We glorify God only as we give him the honor due him in this world according to the way he has dictated in his Word.... This latter glory has in view our praise, worship, obedience, and delight as we keep the name of the Lord holy in all that we do.” (Mark Jones)*

**Psalms 86:9-12** – “All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God. Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name. I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever.”

**1 Corinthians 10:31** – “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”



## HOW SHOULD GOD'S MAJESTY AND GLORY AFFECT US?

### 1. It should lead us to seek God's grace to keep Him first in our lives.

There is nothing in our lives, and no one, who is as glorious and majestic as God.

God will not settle for second place in our lives.

**Matthew 6:33** – “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness...”

**Matthew 22:37-39** – “And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

### 2. It should lead us to seek God's grace to be holy.

**Hebrews 12:14** – “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.”

*“Hence that dread and wonder with which Scripture commonly represents the saints as stricken and overcome whenever they felt the presence of God. Thus it comes about that we see men who in his absence normally remained firm and constant, but who, when he manifests his glory, are so shaken and struck dumb as to be laid low by the dread of death – are in fact overwhelmed by it and almost annihilated. As a consequence, we must infer that man is never sufficiently touched and affected by the awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God's majesty.” (John Calvin)*

### 3. It should lead us to reverence, awe, and worship.

**Hebrews 12:28-29** – “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.”

**Psalms 27:4** – “One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.”

*“The greatness of God's being, the perfection of all his attributes, is something that we can never fully comprehend, but before which we can only stand in awe and worship.” (Wayne Grudem)*

## **HOW CAN WE GROW IN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THESE THINGS?**

J. I. Packer in *Knowing God* suggests two ways we can grow in our thinking about God's glory:

### **1) "Remove from our thoughts of God limits that would make Him small."**

**For example, consider the vastness of God as seen in Psalms 139:**

"<sup>1</sup> O LORD, you have searched me and known me! <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. <sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. <sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. <sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. <sup>7</sup> Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! <sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, <sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. <sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," <sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. <sup>13</sup> For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. <sup>17</sup> How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you."

### **2) Compare God with powers and forces we regard as great**

**For example, consider the power of God as seen in Isaiah 40:**

"<sup>12</sup> Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? <sup>13</sup> Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel? <sup>14</sup> Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? <sup>15</sup> Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust. <sup>16</sup> Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering. <sup>17</sup> All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness. <sup>18</sup> To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? <sup>19</sup> An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. <sup>20</sup> He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. <sup>21</sup> Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? <sup>22</sup> It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; <sup>23</sup> who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. <sup>24</sup> Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. <sup>25</sup> To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. <sup>26</sup> Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. <sup>27</sup> Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? <sup>28</sup> Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. God has revealed to us how glorious and majestic He is. Yet, as Martin Luther once said, “Your thoughts of God are too human.” Why do our thoughts about God fall so short?
2. Psalm 27:4 says, *“One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.”* How can we grow in our desire to see the majesty and glory of the Lord?
3. If we reflected more about God’s majesty and glory, how would our daily lives be different?
4. Reread Luke 2:9 and Revelation 21:23 on page three.  
Throughout Scripture, the response of people to God’s glory is fear, much like the shepherds in Luke 2. Will we have that fear when we see God face to face in the future?
5. John Piper popularized the saying, *“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”* How does our finding great satisfaction and joy in God bring Him more glory?
6. What songs do you know that describe God’s majesty and glory?

