

## SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY:

### Incommunicable Attributes of God – God’s Independence

Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010

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#### Introduction

The attributes (or character) of God can be grouped broadly into two categories:

- **Incommunicable attributes:** those attributes that God does not share with us  
Eg. independence, immutability, eternity, omnipresence and unity
  - **Communicable attributes:** those attributes that God does share with us  
Eg. love, mercy, justice...
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#### God’s Independence

1. Can you think of an example of someone you know who is “independent” and someone who is not? What distinguishes them?
  - Eg. Adult vs. child; wealthy vs. poor
  - not reliant on others for physical / material / social needs...
  - may be independent in certain dimensions while dependent in others – no completely independent human
2. What do the following passages teach us about the independence of God?
  - Acts 17:24-25 (cf Job 41:11), Psalm 50:7-15
    - independence wrt MATERIAL / PHYSICAL needs
    - Acts 17 / Job 41 – God does not need anything from us / we cannot give to God anything that did not come from Him; everything belongs to God
    - cf with other “gods” – eg. Greek gods who needed humans to provide for them
    - Ps 50:7-15 – in teaching what sacrifices are acceptable to God (thankfulness, obedience), God reminds His people that worship was not ordained out of God’s need; v.15 – in contrast, we need God
  - John 1:1,14; 17:1-5, 24
    - why did God create mankind? Was it because he was lonely?
    - independence wrt RELATIONAL needs
    - love and perfect communion existed between God the Father & God the Son before creation
  - Rev 4:11 (cf. Rom 11:33-36); Psalm 90:2
    - independence wrt His EXISTENCE
    - Rev 4:11, Rom 11:36 - all things were created by God; in contrast, all things are dependent on Him
    - Ps 90:2 – God existed (and is God) before creation and for eternity – ie. God was not created
3. If God does not need anything from us (since He is independent), what is the significance of our existence? (see Isaiah 43:5-7 (cf Eph 1:11-12); Isa 62:3-5)
  - Isa 43:7 - we are created / called to glorify God
    - Eph 1:11-12 – chosen / predestined “for the praise of His glory”
  - Isa 62:3-5 - we are able to bring Him joy and delight
  - it is an act of God’s love and grace to allow us to have relationship with Him
  - we are meaningful b/c God has created us and He has determined that we would be meaningful to Him
4. If God was not fully independent, what would be the implications of this on our faith?

*In summary...*

**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.**