



Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

“Character of God” Series Lesson 3 – August 14, 2016 Incommunicable Attributes of Self-Existence/Independence

I. **Lesson Starters:**

Previously we covered the topic of 1) Truly knowing God and 2) Classifying God’s attributes and the various names/words used to describe God’s character. We will now begin studying God’s Incommunicable attributes of Independence, Unchangeableness, Eternity, Omnipresence and Unity. Today we will look at Self-Existence or Independence, summarized as:

God does not need humanity or anything else in creation, yet we and the rest of creation need God to the fullest and are here on earth to glorify and bring him joy

Scripture tells us that God does not need any part of creation in order to exist or for any other reason. God is absolutely independent and self-sufficient.

II. **Self-Sufficient and Independence:**

Acts 17:24-25

24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything; since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything.

Job 41:11

11 Who has given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under heaven is mine.

- No one has ever contributed to anything to God that did not first come from God who created all

Psalms 50:10-12

10 For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. 11 I know every bird in the mountains, and the insect in the fields are mine. 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.

- God did not create man because he was lonely and needed fellowship; This would imply that there was some type of reliance on man for God’s fulfillment

III. **Trinity and Existence:**

With the Doctrine of the Trinity, we learn that there has always been perfect love, fellowship and communication for all eternity.

- God in three persons, yet one God means that there was no loneliness or lack of fellowship on God’s part prior to creation
- The fellowship and sharing of glory has always been there from eternity with the Trinity

With respect to God’s existence, God has always existed and was never created or came into being. He always was.

Revelation 4:11

11 For you created all things and by your will they existed and were created.

Psalms 90:2

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

- Sharing of glory between the Father and Son was before the foundation of the world:
 - John 17:5, John 17:24 – “My glory which you have given me in your love for me before the foundation of the world”.

Exodus 3:14

14 God said to Moses, “I am Who I am”

- Implication is that God’s existence and character are determined by himself alone and are not dependent on anybody or anything else.
- God has always been
- God’s being is totally unique and different in every way from man, more than just his eternity
 - Fundamentally different order of being
 - No limitation or imperfection in creation should be projected onto our thoughts of God
 - He alone necessarily exists forever

IV. If God Does not need anything, then what is our purpose?

The balancing consideration with respect to this doctrine is the fact that we and the rest of creation can glorify God and bring him joy. This is a very important point to make since we should not think that because of God’s Independence, it renders man meaningless.

- If God does not need us for anything, then why are we important or what is our purpose?
- What is our significance or the rest of creation?

In response, God did create us and determined that we are meaningful to Him and have genuine significance.

Isaiah 43:7

7 Every one who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Isaiah 62:3-5

3 You will be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. 4 No longer will you be called Forsaken and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My delight is in her, and your land Married; For the Lord delights in you and your land shall be married as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride so shall your God rejoice over you.

Zephaniah 3:17-18

17 ...will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; He will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival”.

Our existence God chooses to delight in and to allow us to bring joy to His heart. This is the basis for personal significance in all of God’s people: To be significant to God and in the most ultimate sense.

V. Group Questions:

1. Why is it so hard for us to truly grasp the concept of self-existence and eternity as an attribute of God?
2. Have you ever thought about the Trinity with respect to Self-existence and being there from eternity? Do people have a tendency to think God was eternal but the Son and Holy Spirit were created even though this is not supported by scriptures? Discuss
3. With respect to God’s Independence and lack of any need from man, how do we begin to explain why we were created?
4. With respect to the last 4 scripture verses; Discuss how God derives gladness or delight in His children? Can you get your head around why He would do this?