**Systematic Biblical Truth  
God the Father: The Communicable Perfections**

I. The communicable perfections.

A. Attributes/perfections that are more “shared” with us.

B. Each of these perfections are to be imitated in our own lives.

Of course we will not imitate them perfectly or even come close. But each one of these are perfections we can relate to and partially incorporate in our lives. How much depends on one’s level of commitment to obedience to God.

Also these do not mean we can do al of these, but they are understandable by us because they are in our reality. We can’t comprehend the Incommunicable attributes…. Even though I can’t become “invisible”… invisibility is within my realm: Wind, biological cells, etc.

II. The five categories of communicable perfections.

A. Perfections describing God’s being.

1. Spirituality

Someone asked me “what is God made of?”… Is He made of flesh and blood like we are?... Is God made of matter at all? Is God just pure energy?... Or is He simply pure thought?

The answer the Bible gives is that God is none of these… He is spirit (John 4:24).

Remember the woman at the well?... the discussion Jesus and she get into is “where are we supposed to worship?... where is that location?... and Jesus tells her.. “true worship does not require one to be in either Jerusalem or Samaria, for true worship has nothing to do with a physical location…. But rather in one’s inner self…. Inner condition”… that is because God is spirit.

**24God is [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=NASB&search=John%204:24#fen-NASB-26181a)**]spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”**

So, God does not have “size”… neither small nor large in the physical sense.

a. *Definition*—God’s spirituality means that God exists as a being that is  
 not made of matter, has no parts or dimensions, is unable to be perceived  
 by our bodily senses, and is more excellent than any other kind of   
 existence.

b. How are we to imitate this?

-- We have a spirit. Our spirit will pass on to eternity when we die.

-- We have been given the Spirit to help us in life and in worship.

John 4:24; 1st Cor. 14:14; Phil. 3:3.

1 Corinthians 14:14 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**14**For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

Philippians 3:3 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**3**for we are the *true* [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+3%3A3&version=NASB#fen-NASB-29425a)]circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

2. Invisibility.

a. *Definition*—God’s invisibility means that God’s total essence, all of His  
 spiritual being will never be able to be seen by us, yet God shows   
 Himself to us through His created things.

b. The Bible supports the fact that one cannot see God—John 1:18; 1st  Timothy 1:17.

# John 1:18 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**18**No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

1 Timothy 1:17 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**17**Now to the King [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+TImothy+1%3A17&version=NASB#fen-NASB-29714a)]eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+TImothy+1%3A17&version=NASB#fen-NASB-29714b)]forever and ever. Amen.

c. God wants us to “think” about Him. How do we do that when He is   
 invisible?

-- See God through His Son Jesus Christ.

-- When we die, those in Christ will “see” God—Matthew 5:8

# Matthew 5:8 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**8**“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

In heaven we will still be finite beings. We will have limitations. Our seeing God will be a greater spiritual realization. Not a physical revelation of Him.

When we realize that God is the perfection of all that we long for and desire, that He is the summation of everything beautiful or desirable, then we realize that the greatest joy in life to come wil be that “we shall see His face” (1st Cor. 13:12) .

This seeing God “face to face” has been called *beatific vision*—the vision that makes us happy or blessed.

-- To look at God changes us and makes us like Him: “**We shall be  
 like Him, for we shall see Him as He is**.” (1st John 3:2).

This vision of God will be the consummation of our knowing God and will give us full delight and joy for all eternity.

B. Mental Attributes.

1. Knowledge (Omniscience).

a. *Definition*—God fully knows Himself and all things actual and possible in  
 one simple and eternal act.

In the book of Job, Elihu says that God is the one “who is perfect in knowledge”. In 1st John 3:20, John says “God knows everything”.

b. For God to truly, completely know Himself is an amazing thing when you  
 consider that God is infinite or unlimited in any way!

We are like God in that we have knowledge. But we have to obtain knowledge… we also know how limititations in knowledge…. God is complete in knowledge… can’t learn anything. Knows all before all happens, knows what has happened and what will happen.

Matt. 6:8 tells us that “Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him”… Matt. 10:30 “even the number of the hairs on your head are numbered.

Psalm 139

**139 O Lord, You have searched me and known *me*.  
2You know [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16242a)**]when I sit down and [**[**b**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16242b)**]when I rise up;  
You understand my thought from afar.  
3You [**[**c**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16243c)**]scrutinize my [**[**d**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16243d)**]path and my lying down,  
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.  
4 [**[**e**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16244e)**]Even before there is a word on my tongue,  
Behold, O Lord, You know it all.  
5You have enclosed me behind and before,  
And laid Your hand upon me.  
6*Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.**

**7Where can I go from Your Spirit?  
Or where can I flee from Your presence?  
8If I ascend to heaven, You are there;  
If I make my bed in [**[**f**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16248f)**]Sheol, behold, You are there.  
9If I take the wings of the dawn,  
If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,  
10Even there Your hand will lead me,  
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.  
11If I say, “Surely the darkness will [**[**g**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16251g)**]overwhelm me,  
And the light around me will be night,”  
12Even the darkness is not dark [**[**h**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16252h)**]to You,  
And the night is as bright as the day.  
Darkness and light are alike *to You*.**

**13For You formed my [[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB" \l "fen-NASB-16253i" \o "See footnote i)]inward parts;  
You wove me in my mother’s womb.  
14I will give thanks to You, for [**[**j**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16254j)**]I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Wonderful are Your works,  
And my soul knows it very well.  
15My [**[**k**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16255k)**]frame was not hidden from You,  
When I was made in secret,  
*And* skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;  
16Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;  
And in Your book were all written  
The days that were ordained *for me*,  
When as yet there was not one of them.**

**17How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
18If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand.  
When I awake, I am still with You.**

**19O that You would slay the wicked, O God;  
Depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed.  
20For they speak [**[**l**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16260l)**]against You wickedly,  
And Your enemies [**[**m**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16260m)**]take *Your name* in vain.  
21Do I not hate those who hate You, O Lord?  
And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?  
22I hate them with the utmost hatred;  
They have become my enemies.**

**23Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;  
24And see if there be any [**[**n**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+139&version=NASB#fen-NASB-16264n)**]hurtful way in me,  
And lead me in the everlasting way.**

c. God knows “all things possible”.

There are some instances in Scripture when God gives information about events that might happen but that do not actually come to pass… Example: When David was fleeing from Saul he rescued the city of Keilah from the Philistines and then stayed for a time in Keilah. He decided to ask God whether Saul would come to Keilah to attack him… and if Saul came, whether the men of Keilah would surrender him into Saul’s hands….. this is what David said:

**1 Samuel 23:11-13 New American Standard Bible (NASB)**

**11Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down just as Your servant has heard? O Lord God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant.” And the Lord said, “He will come down.” 12Then David said, “Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?” And the Lord said, “They will surrender you.” 13Then David and his men, about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah, and they went wherever they could go. When it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, he [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+23%3A11-13&version=NASB#fen-NASB-7824a)**]gave up the pursuit.**

Jesus stated that Tyre and Sidon would have repented if Jesus’ own miracles had been done in former days: “**Woe to you Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes** (Matt. 11:21).

* What are some of the consequences of God’s full knowledge for our lives?
* If God knows EVERYTHING, how can we still be “free”?

Augustine’s suggestion of God having given each one of us “reasonable self-determinism”… avoids the words “free/freedom”. Our choices really do determine what will happen… it is NOT as if some event will happen regardless of what we decide to do or not…but rather tha thtey occur because of what we decide and do.

We might should let go of the words “free” and “freedom”… they don’t really matter in the long run. The important thing for us what we think… choose… and act.. and these thoughts, choices and actions are real and actually have significance.

IF GOD KNOWS ALL OUR THOUGHTS, WORDS AND ACTIONS LONG BEFORE THEY OCCUR, THEN THERE MUST BE SOME SENSE IN WHICH OUR CHOICES ARE NOT ABSOLUTELY FREE. (We’ll get more into this later when we discuss God’s providence”.

2. Wisdom.

a. *Definition*—God’s wisdom means that God ALWAYS chooses the best  
 goals and the best means to these goals.

b. Not only does God know all things, what God decides to do with all  
 these things are always wise.

c. Perfect wisdom requires perfect knowledge. Wisdom is taking that  
 knowledge and doing with it what is always best and right and  
 appropriate.

How does this perfection of God impact our lives?

3. Truthfulness and faithfulness.

a. *Definition*—God’s truthfulness means that He is the true God and that all  
 His knowledge and words are both true and the final standard of the  
 truth.

b. His perfect truthfulness and faithfulness results in being 100% reliable.

c. God’s words then are the final standard of truth.

How does this perfection of God impact our lives?

C. Moral Perfections.

1. Goodness.

a. *Definition*—The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of  
 good, and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval.

-- Approval by whom? We are not worthy to be the one’s to approve what  
 God does.

God’s being and actions are perfectly worthy of His own approval. Therefore He is the inventor and final determiner of what is good. All His perfections play in concert and result in that which is good.

Luke 18:19 “**No one is good but God alone”**

Psalm 34:8 **“O taste and see that the Lord is good!**” (David).

It is God who created goodness through His attributes (wisdom, knowledge, etc.) and He has given us all a sense of what is good.

b. God is the source of ALL goodness in the world: James 1:17

James 1:17 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

17Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1%3A17&version=NASB#fen-NASB-30284a)]shifting shadow.

c. We are to imitate this perfection of God’s: Galatians 6:10.

**10So then, [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+6%3A10&version=NASB#fen-NASB-29199a)**]while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.**

3. Love.

a. *Definition*—God’s love means that God eternally gives Himself to others.

b. God IS love (1st John 4:8). Love is as eternal as God is eternal. It never  
 had a beginning and will never end (as all the perfections!).

c. This love is reciprocal: John 14:31; 1st John 4:10.

Jesus: **31but so that the world may know that I love the Father, [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14%3A31&version=NASB#fen-NASB-26700a)**]I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.**

**1st John 4:10In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.** We imitate this perfection of God’s by first loving God in return for His loving us, then we love others in imitation of how He loves others.

4. Mercy, grace and patience.

a. Definitions.

-- God’s mercy—means God’s goodness towards those in misery and  
 distress.

-- God’s grace—means God’s goodness toward those who deserve only  
 punishment.

-- God’s patience—means God’s goodness in withholding punishment  
 toward those who sin over a period of time.

b. These three perfections tend to be mentioned together in Scripture: Ex.  
 34:6.

**6Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and [**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+34%3A6&version=NASB#fen-NASB-2503a)**]truth;**

c. The entirety of the Christian life can be seen as a combination of all  
 three of God’s perfections of mercy, grace and patience.

5. Holiness.

a. *Definition*—God’s holiness means that He is separated from sin and  
 devoted to seeking His own honor.

-- The temple is an example of the separating of sin and that which is  
 holy.

-- The Sabbath day was to be holy.

b. God’s people were to be holy”.

-- God’s holiness provides a pattern of holiness for His people to   
 follow.

-- Even though we cannot achieve holiness, we are to strive for it.

**Hebrews 12:14-15 New American Standard Bible (NASB)** 14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

Hebrews 12:10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**10**For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness.

c. There will come a day when God’s people will become holy.

Zechariah 14:20-21 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**20**In that day there will *be inscribed* on the bells of the horses, “HOLY TO THE LORD.” And the cooking pots in the Lord’s house will be like the bowls before the altar. **21**Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the Lord of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Zechariah+14%3A20-21&version=NASB#fen-NASB-23090a)]Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts in that day.

6. Peace.

a. *Definition*—God’s peace means that in God’s being and in His actions  
 he is separate from all confusion and disorder, yet He is continually  
 active in innumerable well-ordered, fully controlled, simultaneous   
 actions.

This is not traditionally thought of as a “perfection” of God, it is not found in our White Book. But the apostle Paul tells us that God’s actions are characterized by peace and order and not by disorder. Rom. 15:33.

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# 1 Corinthians 14:33 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**33**for God is not *a God* of confusion but of [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+14%3A33&version=NASB#fen-NASB-28712a)]peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

We are to imitate God’s example of peace and order in our own lives.

7. Righteousness, Justice.

This is one place where the English has more words for something than does the original Greek and Hebrew. In Scripture, there is only one word for both Righteousness and Justice.

a. *Definition*—God’s righteousness means that God always acts in  
 accordance with what is right and is Himself the final standard of  
 what is right.

Genesis 18:25 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**25**Far be it from You to do [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+18%3A25&version=NASB#fen-NASB-450a)]such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+18%3A25&version=NASB#fen-NASB-450b)]deal justly?”

Isaiah 45:19 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**19**“I have not spoken in secret,  
In [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+45%3A19&version=NASB#fen-NASB-18581a)]some dark land;  
I did not say to the [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+45%3A19&version=NASB#fen-NASB-18581b)]offspring of Jacob,  
‘Seek Me in [[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+45%3A19&version=NASB#fen-NASB-18581c)]a waste place’;  
I, the Lord, speak righteousness,  
Declaring things that are upright.

“*What is right*?”… in other words “*what ought to be and what ought to happen*?” – whatever conforms to God’s moral character.

[See copy]

8. Jealousy.

a. *Definition*—God’s jealousy means that God continually seeks to  
 protect His own honor.

Exodus 34:14 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**14**—for you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God—

The reason we have difficulty a positive attribute because our jealousy is for OUR own honor, and that trumps God…. WE CAN BE JEALOUS FOR GOD!

# Paul had righteous jealousy for the Corinthian people…..2 Corinthians 11:2

**2**For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin.

9. Wrath.

a. *Definition*—God intensely hates all sin!

God to Moses about Israel

Exodus 32:9-10 **9**The Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, they are [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+32%3A9-10&version=NASB#fen-NASB-2448a)]an obstinate people. **10**Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation.”

Why should we praise God that He has this attribute?

What would it be like if our God did not hate sin?

Also… we should not fear God’s wrath if we are in Christ!