

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 12, Incommunicable Attributes, Part 3 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 12, Incommunicable Attributes, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's Theology Proper, Session 12, Part 3 focuses on the **incommunicable attributes of God**, specifically **omniscience (all-knowing)** and **eternity (existing outside of and within time)**. The lecture explores scriptural evidence for God's limitless knowledge of the past, present, and future, contrasting it with the ignorance of idols. Furthermore, it examines God's eternal nature as the Lord of time, emphasizing his transcendence and immanence in relation to it and offering comfort and assurance to believers.

**2. 22 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 12 – Double click
icon to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Theology → Theology, Peterson → Theology Proper:
God).**



**Peterson_TheoProp
er_Session 12.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 12, Incommunicable Attributes, Part 3

Briefing Document: Dr. Robert A. Peterson on Incommunicable Attributes of God (Part 3)

Overview:

This document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Robert A. Peterson in the twelfth session of his "Theology Proper" series, focusing on the incommunicable attributes of God, specifically His omniscience (all-knowingness) and eternity (timelessness/everlastingness). Peterson emphasizes that these are unique attributes with little parallel in humanity.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. God's Omniscience (All-Knowingness):

- **Definition:** Peterson defines omniscience as God being "limitless in knowledge and understanding. He knows all things." He connects it to God's infinity interrelated with His knowledge.
- **Quote:** "By all-knowing or omniscient, we mean that God is limitless in knowledge and understanding. He knows all things."
- **Biblical Basis:** Peterson draws heavily from the Psalms (especially Psalm 147 and Psalm 33), Isaiah (highlighting God's ability to predict the future as a mark of His deity against idols in Isaiah 42, 44, and 46), Job, Proverbs, 1 Chronicles, Jeremiah, Hebrews, and Colossians to illustrate God's comprehensive knowledge.
- **Quote (Psalm 147:5):** "Great is our Lord, Psalm 147:5, and abundant in power. His understanding is beyond measure."
- **Quote (Isaiah 40:28):** "The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not grow faint or weary. His understanding is unsearchable..."
- **Quote (Hebrews 4:13):** "...no creature is hidden from him, but all things are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."
- **Quote (1 Chronicles 28:9):** "...the Lord searches every heart and understands the intention of every thought..."

- **Scope of God's Knowledge:** God knows the past, present, and future. His knowledge of creation is comprehensive, observing all human beings and their works. He knows not only external actions but also the intentions of the heart.
- **Contrast with Idols:** Isaiah is used extensively to contrast God's profound and predictive knowledge with the ignorance and powerlessness of idols and their makers.
- **Quote (Isaiah 46:9-10):** "Remember what happened long ago. For I am God, and there is no other. I am God, and no one is like me. I declare the end from the beginning and from long ago what is not yet done, saying my plan will take place and I will do all my will."
- **Implications of God's Omniscience: Bad News for Sinners:** God's knowledge of the heart reveals the deceitfulness of sin.
- **Quote (Jeremiah 17:9-10):** "The heart is deceitful and wicked above all things. Who can know it? Next verse, I, the Lord, test the hearts."
- **Transformative Good News for Believers:** It can lead to repentance as we recognize God's complete awareness of our being (Psalm 51:4).
- **Quote (Psalm 51:4):** "For I know my transgression, and my sin is ever before me."
- **Reassurance and Comfort:** Knowing God sees, hears, knows, cares, and acts for His people (Exodus 3:7-10).
- **Hidden Wisdom:** Some things belong to God's knowledge alone, revealed through the gospel concerning the crucified Christ (1 Corinthians 2, Romans 11:33-34).
- **Quote (Romans 11:33-34):** "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments and untraceable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"
- **Omniscience of Christ:** Jesus is also depicted with infinite knowledge, with all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in Him (Colossians 2:3). His disciples eventually confess His omniscience (John 16:29-30, John 21:17).
- **Quote (John 21:17, Peter's confession):** "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you."

2. God's Eternity:

- **Definition:** Eternity means that the living and true God is the Lord of time, infinite in relationship to time. God exists before time, which He created.
- **Quote:** "By eternal, we mean that the living and true God is the Lord of time. He is infinite in relationship to time. Indeed, God exists before time."
- **Biblical Basis:** Psalm 90 (attributed to Moses) is highlighted as the most important proof passage for God's eternity. Other supporting scriptures include 1 Timothy 1:17 and Revelation 1:8.
- **Quote (Psalm 90:2):** "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God."
- **Quote (1 Timothy 1:17):** "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."
- **Quote (Revelation 1:8):** "I am the Alpha and the Omega... the one who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."
- **God's Relationship to Time:** God is both beyond time (transcendent) as its creator and voluntarily enters into it to relate to humanity (imminent). He is not trapped in time but controls it.
- **Quote (Psalm 90:4, 2 Peter 3:8):** "For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night."
- **Salvation in Time:** While God planned salvation in eternity past, He accomplished and applies it in space and time through historical events like the sacrificial system and the incarnation of Jesus Christ.
- **Quote:** "Salvation is historical, for God saves in history and thus in time. The Son of God was not always incarnate but became a man at a point in time."
- **Timeless vs. Everlasting Debate:** Peterson acknowledges the philosophical debate between the view that God is timelessly infinite (living outside of time in an eternal present) and the view that He is temporally infinite (existing endlessly through all time). He refrains from taking an official stance, preferring the analogy of God's transcendence and immanence with respect to space.
- **Practical Implications of God's Eternity:** God is our refuge and protector in every generation, despite the transience of human life (Psalm 90:1).

- The everlasting God does not grow weary but gives strength to the faint (Isaiah 40:28-30).
- Believers can face the future with confidence in the eternal God who dwells in eternity and within them (Romans 16:26).

Looking Ahead:

The next session will cover God's immutability (unchangeableness) and the greatness of God, followed by the communicable attributes of God, including His personality, sovereignty, wisdom, truthfulness, faithfulness, holiness, righteousness/justice, love, graciousness, mercy, goodness, patience/long-suffering, and glory.

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's lecture provides a detailed overview of God's omniscience and eternity as key incommunicable attributes. He grounds his teaching firmly in Scripture, offering numerous examples and emphasizing the implications of these attributes for understanding God's nature and His relationship with humanity. The contrast with the ignorance of idols in the Old Testament and the comfort and reassurance offered to believers through God's all-knowing and eternal nature are central to this session.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 12, Incommunicable Attributes, Part 3

Study Guide: Incommunicable Attributes of God (Part 3)

Key Concepts:

- **Omniscience:** God's attribute of being all-knowing, limitless in knowledge and understanding, encompassing past, present, and future.
- **Eternity:** God's attribute of being the Lord of time, existing before time, beyond time, and without end. He is infinite in relation to time.
- **Incommunicable Attributes:** The unique attributes of God that have little or no parallel in human beings.
- **Transcendence (with respect to time):** God's existence outside of and beyond the limitations of time, as its creator.
- **Immanence (with respect to time):** God's active involvement within time, relating to His creation and saving His people.
- **Divine Timelessness:** The view that God exists eternally in a perpetual present, outside of the flow of time.
- **Divine Everlastingness:** The view that God exists endlessly throughout all of time, both past and future.

Quiz:

1. Define God's omniscience in your own words. Provide one scriptural reference that supports this attribute.
2. Explain why God's omniscience can be both "bad news for sinners" and "transformative good news" for believers.
3. According to the lecture, how does God's ability to predict the future demonstrate his deity in contrast to idols? Provide a specific example from Isaiah.
4. What does it mean for God to be eternal? Explain the distinction between God existing before time and existing within time.
5. Summarize Psalm 90 as it relates to God's eternity and humanity's temporal existence.

6. Explain the concepts of God's transcendence and immanence with respect to time. How do these relate to his interaction with humanity?
7. Briefly describe the "timeless" and "everlasting" views of God's eternity. According to the lecturer, what is a helpful way to understand God's relationship with time without fully committing to either view?
8. How does the incarnation of Jesus Christ demonstrate God's relationship with time? Provide a specific example from the lecture.
9. Explain how God's eternity provides comfort and confidence for believers facing the future, referencing Isaiah 40:28-31.
10. How does Hebrews 4:13-16 relate to God's omniscience and his role as lawgiver and judge?

Answer Key:

1. God's omniscience means that He possesses complete and perfect knowledge of all things, leaving nothing unknown to Him. Psalm 147:5 states, "Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure."
2. It is bad news for sinners because God sees and understands all sin, including the hidden intentions of the heart, leading to accountability. It is good news for believers because God's complete knowledge can lead to repentance and the assurance that He sees, hears, knows, cares for, and acts on their behalf.
3. God asserts his deity by declaring the end from the beginning, showcasing his ability to know and bring about future events, unlike powerless idols. In Isaiah 46:9-10, God says, "Remember what happened long ago, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and no one is like me. I declare the end from the beginning, and from long ago what is not yet done..."
4. For God to be eternal means He has no beginning and no end, existing infinitely in relation to time. He existed before the creation of time itself and is not bound by its constraints. While He exists beyond time, He also voluntarily enters into time to interact with His creation.
5. Psalm 90 contrasts God's eternal nature with the brevity and frailty of human life, emphasizing that God has been a dwelling place for His people through all generations, existing "from everlasting to everlasting," while human life is transient and subject to His judgment.

6. God's transcendence with respect to time means He, as the creator, stands outside and above the limitations of time. His immanence with respect to time means He actively engages within time, relating to and saving humanity through historical events like the incarnation of Christ.
7. The timeless view suggests God exists eternally in a single, unending present moment, while the everlasting view posits that God extends infinitely in both the past and the future of time. The lecturer suggests focusing on God as the Lord of time, not trapped within it, yet genuinely relating to it, similar to His transcendence and immanence in space.
8. The incarnation demonstrates God's active entry into time, as the eternal Son became a man at a specific point in history. Jesus lived, died, and rose again within the confines of time, showing God's willingness to relate to His creation within its temporal framework.
9. Knowing that God is the everlasting God (Isaiah 40:28) reassures believers that He does not grow faint or weary and that He empowers those who wait on Him, giving them renewed strength to face the challenges of the future with confidence in His unchanging nature and care.
10. Hebrews 4:13 states that no creature is hidden from God's sight, and all things are naked and exposed before Him, highlighting His omniscience. Verses 14-16 then encourage believers to approach the throne of grace with confidence in this all-knowing God who is also their high priest and judge.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Discuss the practical implications of God's omniscience for the life of a Christian, considering both its challenging and comforting aspects. Support your arguments with scriptural references.
2. Analyze the relationship between God's eternity and His involvement in human history, particularly focusing on the incarnation of Jesus Christ as a central point of intersection.
3. Compare and contrast the concepts of divine timelessness and divine everlastingness. Evaluate which view, in your understanding, best aligns with the scriptural portrayal of God's relationship with time.

4. Explore how the attribute of God's omniscience is presented in at least two different Old Testament books and discuss what these passages reveal about God's character and actions.
5. Consider the ways in which the incommunicable attributes of omniscience and eternity distinguish God from created beings and how these attributes should shape our worship and understanding of Him.

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Incommunicable Attributes:** The unique characteristics or perfections that belong solely to God and have no direct equivalent in humanity.
- **Omniscience:** The attribute of God that describes His perfect and complete knowledge of all things, past, present, and future, including all possibilities and the thoughts and intentions of every creature.
- **Eternity:** The attribute of God that describes His existence without beginning or end, and His transcendence over the limitations of time.
- **Transcendence:** God's existence and being are beyond and independent of the created order.
- **Immanence:** God's presence and active involvement within His creation.
- **Divine Timelessness:** The theological view that God exists outside of the sequential flow of time in an eternal present.
- **Divine Everlastingness:** The theological view that God exists throughout all of time, extending infinitely into the past and future.
- **Doxology:** An expression of praise or glory to God.
- **Psalter:** The biblical Book of Psalms.
- **Incarnation:** The act by which the eternal Son of God took on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.
- **Providence:** God's active and ongoing governance and direction of the universe and all that is in it.
- **Atonement:** The work Christ did in His life and death to earn our forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 12, Incommunicable Attributes, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: God's Incommunicable Attributes (Omniscience and Eternity)

1. What does it mean that God is omniscient? Omniscience means that God is all-knowing. His knowledge and understanding are limitless and infinite. He knows all things, past, present, and future, comprehensively and perfectly. This isn't just intellectual awareness; it's God's infinite being intertwined with his knowledge.

2. How does the Bible illustrate God's omniscience? The Bible provides numerous examples. Psalm 147 highlights God's infinite understanding and his knowledge in naming the stars. Isaiah 40 declares that there is no limit to God's understanding. Job 28 and Psalm 33 emphasize God's comprehensive knowledge of his creation and his observation of all humanity and their deeds from heaven. Furthermore, Isaiah showcases God's ability to predict future events as a demonstration of his deity against powerless idols.

3. Does God's omniscience extend to knowing our thoughts and intentions? Yes, Scripture clearly teaches that God's knowledge penetrates beyond outward actions to our inner thoughts and intentions. Proverbs 15:3 states that the eyes of the Lord are everywhere, observing the wicked and the good. 1 Chronicles 28:9 affirms that the Lord searches every heart and understands the intention of every thought. Jeremiah 17:9-10 further emphasizes that the Lord tests hearts, knowing their deceitfulness, which is hidden from human understanding but fully open to Him (Hebrews 4:13).

4. How does God's omniscience impact believers? While God's complete knowledge is a sobering reality for sinners, for believers, it can be transformative good news. Knowing that God fully knows our hearts, thoughts, and actions can lead to repentance and confession, as seen in Psalm 51. Furthermore, it offers comfort and reassurance that God sees, hears, knows, and cares for his people, acting on their behalf, as demonstrated in Exodus 3:7-10 with the Israelites in Egypt.

5. What does it mean that God is eternal? To say God is eternal means that He is the Lord of time, infinite in relation to it, and exists before time itself began. Time was created by God, while He has no beginning or end. He is both beyond time and voluntarily enters into it to relate to humanity.

6. How does the Bible describe God's eternity? Psalm 90 is a foundational passage emphasizing God's eternal nature, declaring "from everlasting to everlasting, you are God." 1 Timothy 1:17 refers to God as the "king eternal." Revelation 1:8 identifies God as the Alpha and the Omega, the one "who is, who was, and who is to come." The imagery of God as the "first and the last" in Isaiah 44:6-7 also signifies his eternal existence, with none before or after Him.

7. How does God relate to time? Is He timeless or everlasting? God is both transcendent and immanent with respect to time, similar to his relationship with space. As the Creator, He is transcendent, standing outside of time and not bound by it. However, He is also immanent, genuinely relating to time through His actions in creation, salvation history, and His ongoing interaction with humanity. While theologians debate whether this means God is "timeless" (living outside of time in an eternal present) or "everlasting" (existing endlessly through all time), the key understanding is that God is the Lord of time, not trapped within it, yet He actively engages with it to love and save us.

8. How should the understanding of God's eternity affect believers? Recognizing God's eternal nature provides a sense of refuge and security amidst the transient nature of human life, as highlighted in Psalm 90. While our days are fleeting and marked by sin, the everlasting God is our keeper and protector. This understanding should lead us to seek wisdom in how we live our lives, "numbering our days" carefully (Psalm 90:12). Furthermore, knowing the everlasting God does not grow weary but gives strength to the faint (Isaiah 40:28-31) offers confidence and hope for the future, empowering believers in their weakness.