

Series: Incommunicable Attributes of God #1689

Title: Various Scriptures
God Owes Us Nothing

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Today we continue to establish, from the Scripture, that God is self-sufficient. He has life in Himself. The Lord is self-existent. He has the ground of His existence within Himself. This is in contrast to all of us. We do not have life in ourselves. God has to give us life and sustain us with life if we are to go on living. If He withdraws life from us, we die. God draws His energy from Himself. But we draw our energy from Him.

And Dr. John Frame is helping us with a logical, seven point argument the conclusion of which will be that God is by nature a se (God is self-sufficient). This is God's aseity. To hear all seven points and for the aseity of God to make sense to you, you have to be with us each day because we do not have time to put all of this together in one broadcast or podcast. Continue with us now as we come to point number four after I quickly remind you of points one through three.

First, "As Lord, God owns all things." Second, "Everything possessed by creatures comes from God." Third, "When we give something back to God, we give Him only what He has first given us." Logically, here is point number four: "When we give something back to God, He is not obligated to recompense us." Now *this* is a tough pill to swallow for many people today who have been led to believe that when we serve God, when we give to Him our time, our talents, and our money then *He* really owes us. Sadly, and with very real and tragic consequences, this attitude has slipped or forced its way into many churches and teaching ministries including on the radio, the internet, and television. You have been exposed to this, as have I.

This is one of the basic heresies that feeds the health, wealth, and prosperity false teaching that is prevalent. You make a generous donation to "God," really to the prosperity preacher, and "God" will bless you, tenfold, hundredfold, a thousand fold...depending on the size of your gift, which is based on the size of your faith. You've heard this nonsense, right? And the idea looming behind it all is that if you give to God, plentifully and sacrificially, *then* God will reward you with...health and wealth. He will "prosper" you. To say that when we give something back to God, He is not obligated to recompense us, this flies in the face of that false teaching. Friends, the Lord is never, ever obligated to *us*.

You say, "What about the covenants God has made with us? What about His promises to us? He is obligated to keep those, right?" Yes. But those covenants and promises were initiated *by Him*. In those He is not paying us back. God holds *Himself* to those. And this is not what the prosperity preachers are getting at anyway.

In Luke chapter 17, verses 7-10 Jesus addresses this head-on. He tells this parable. I am in Luke 17, beginning in verse 7, "**Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'? ⁸ But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and *properly* clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink'? ⁹ He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? ¹⁰ So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done *only* that which we ought to have done.'**"

The point of the parable is in verse 10. Those who are slaves of the Lord should not expect any special reward for doing what was always our duty to do. When we obey Christ's commands we must not think that our obedience makes us deserving of a reward; that God must now recompense us for our good and faithful work. No! We are unworthy slaves who are only doing that which we ought to have done. Do not make a big deal out of consistent, daily obedience to the Person of Christ. We are to serve our Master without expecting a return on the service.

In many ways, Luke 17, verse 10 is the one sentence of Scripture that best refutes and exposes the false and heretical teaching most popular in Christian circles today that when we give to God, He owes us. This verse rips to shreds the health, wealth, and prosperity *false* “gospel,” and ought to put out of business all those who peddle it. I certainly hope you have not been seduced by it. Brothers and sisters, let us serve Christ by doing that which we ought to have done without any expectation that He has to somehow “bless” or recompense us, making us “wealthy.”

And this naturally leads into point number five. “God owes nothing to any creature.” Did you hear that? God owes *nothing* to any creature. I have a few Scripture passages and comments to share. In the Old Testament Book of Job, chapter 41 and verse 11 God says this, **“Who has given to Me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine.”** Again, that is really the only verse we need to affirm the point. The Lord says to us, when you give to Me do you really think you are giving to Me something I need? I do not need anything, because whatever is under the whole heaven is already Mine! This is a verse the Apostle Paul exegetes over in the New Testament Book of Romans.

I am reading Romans chapter 11, verses 35 and 36, **“Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? [That’s verse 35 and it comes from Job 41.11.] Who has first given to [God] that it might be paid back to him again? ³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”** We are going to look at this verse in greater detail later, but for now notice that God is the One who takes the initiative with us, not us with Him. It is *not* that we gave to God and then God, having received from us, pays us back. That’s not accurate.

Why? For “from Him” (meaning God has provided everything we have) and “through Him” (meaning nothing comes to us without His power), and “to Him are all things” (meaning God receives everything back to Himself). Friends, God has no needs. He is self-sufficient.

John Frame helps us to understand this in the following way. I am quoting him directly now, “What Paul tells us is that God is not only the First Cause, but the First Giver. He does recompense people for their obedient service. But it is He that has first given them the privilege of serving Him and of receiving that reward (*Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*, 408).” Close quote. There may have been those of you hearing what I said earlier about not being specially rewarded for serving Christ that wondered, “But what about rewards in heaven?” To those of you asking that, I offer you this.

Yes, absolutely I believe based on what we read elsewhere in Scripture, there are rewards for faithful service the Lord Jesus will give obedient stewards, however, we receive those *only because* Christ has first given us the privilege of serving Him. And, to be sure, it *is* an honor and privilege to serve the Lord. I hope you agree. God is the First Cause and the First Giver. He grants us the pleasure of being His servants and expects us to serve Him well, affording to us, later, rewards. He takes the initiative. We do not. We cannot first give to God such that God pays us back. This is just not how it works. We cannot give to God who has everything, anything. We cannot give to God who has everything, anything.

This leads us into the sixth point: “God has no needs.” And this is, again, a logical conclusion from what has already been said. Let me remind you. God owns all things. Everything possessed by creatures comes from God. When we give something back to God, we give Him only what He has first given us. When we give something back to God, He is not obligated to recompense us. God owes nothing to any creature. God has no needs. Therefore, God is a se. God is self-sufficient. This is God’s aseity. This is the argument we are making and this sixth point, God has no needs, has quite a bit to it, so I will leave that for next time.

I hope you are tracking with this, following along, *and* that you will give some serious thought to the all-sufficient, self-existent God. Consider these truths in light of how you *think* about God and how you *live* before Him. Incorporate these truths into your life and let them challenge and even correct false thinking and false teaching you have heard. And then join us again next time as we continue to discover who God Is.

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