### God’s Infinite Nature

God is infinite. His nature and essence exceed not only the limits of human understanding, but all limitations in any respect.[[1]](#footnote-1) He is boundless in all His attributes. Scripture confirms this claim and expresses it in various ways. For example: “Great is Yahweh, and highly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable” (Ps 145:3); “His understanding is infinite” (Ps 147:5); “My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness {and} of Your salvation all day long; for I do not know the sum {of them}” (Ps 71:15); “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!” (Rom 11:33, also see Job 11:7-9).[[2]](#footnote-2)

Tozer writes about this marvelous feature of God’s nature, “We mean by infinite that God knows no limits, no bounds and no end. What God is, He is without boundaries. All that God is, He is without bounds or limits.”[[3]](#footnote-3) Charles Hodge confirms, “An infinite spirit is a spirit to whose attributes as a spirit no limits can be set.”[[4]](#footnote-4) At the same time, we must affirm with Bloesch that God may enter into time and space for our sake.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Infinity is typically ascribed to God in the sense of time and space – He is eternal and omnipresent. Still, we must affirm that God is infinite in all His attributes: in His power, love, holiness, wisdom, etc. None of His attributes can be exhausted.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In relation to God’s other attributes, we make the following qualifications. We claim that God is limitless in knowledge, power, love, etc. However, God’s infinite nature does not imply that His attributes are beyond conceptual boundaries. God’s attributes do not merge with one another. His attributes are limitless in respect to that quality alone. In other words, each attribute is infinite in a “vertical relationship,” but not in a “horizontal relationship,” that is, in relation to itself, but not in relation to other qualities in God’s nature. Simply said, God possesses infinite *attributes*.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Nonetheless, God’s attributes interact with one another and exert an influence on each other, sometimes limiting their expression. For example, in Exodus 34:6-7, God’s love is juxtaposed with His righteousness. On the one hand, His is good and full of mercy, but on the other hand, He never compromises His holiness. Therefore, in order for God to show mercy to an individual, He must receive satisfaction for His justice in punishing transgressions, which Christ did when He took upon Himself the sins of the world.

The question also arises about God’s infinite nature and the possible existence of other entities. Is God infinite in the sense that He “crowds out” other items and makes their simultaneous existence with Him impossible? If God is “all in all,” then where is the place for other entities to exist?

We respond as follows. First, God is the one who initiated the creation of all things. He created all things separate from Himself and remains distinct from them. The fact that God did create other entities proves that such an act is possible, and that there exists a “place” for other things to occupy simultaneously with an infinite God.

Second, we take into consideration the concept of God’s “self-limitation.” In order to “free up space” for the existence of other entities, God can limit Himself. Since God is limitless in power and wisdom, He is able to perform this act. Strong explains, “Infinity implies simply that God exists in no necessary relation to finite things or beings, and that whatever limitation of the divine nature results from their existence is, on the part of God, a self-limitation.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

The theologian Carl Henry sees the incarnation of God’s Son as an excellent example of God’s self-limitation. He writes, “On the surface the doctrine of divine incarnation might seem to relativize the conception of divine infinity. Yet the doctrine affirms that the infinite Logos stepped into history in one Jesus of Nazareth who bears both divine and human natures. The infinite is no less infinite because of its distinctive infinite-finite disclosure.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

Our final observation is that God’s infinite nature includes the idea of “inexhaustibility.” God will never exhaust Himself of any of His attributes. He always has a “reserve” of power, wisdom, etc. According to Strong, in God there is “ever more to follow.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

Some distortions have arisen in respect to this doctrine. Pantheism teaches that God’s infinite nature extends to the point of “crowding out” all other beings and objects in reality. All that exists is God. God is all, and all is God. This view, however, clearly contradicts the biblical revelation.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Others mistakenly think that God has limits – He is not omniscient or omnipotent. This is how they explain the presence and persistence of evil and suffering in the world. God does not eliminate evil, either because He is not able to, or He does not know how to. Again, this is not the biblical picture of God.

Still others posit that not only is God limitless, but the universe is boundless as well. It is thought that an infinite Creator must create an infinite universe. However, according to Isaiah 40:12, the universe has boundaries: “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and marked off the heavens by the span, and calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in a balance and the hills in a pair of scales?”[[12]](#footnote-12)

The doctrine of God’s infinite nature contains many practical items of value, of which we will mention only two. Since God is infinite, He can fellowship with all people simultaneously and hear all their prayers. In addition, since God’s greatness is inexhaustible, we will continue to grow in our knowledge of Him eternally. Eternity will not be characterized by monotonous stagnation, but an ongoing experience of learning and adventure.[[13]](#footnote-13)

1. Strong A. H. Systematic Theology. – 1886. – P. 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Pieper F. Christian Dogmatics. – St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1953. – V. 1. – P. 441; Strong, p. 254-256; Shedd W., Thayer G., Gomes A. W. Dogmatic Theology. – 3rd ed. – Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Pub., 2003. – P. 277. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Tozer A. W. The Attributes of God. – Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1997. – V. 1. – P. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Hodge C. Systematic Theology. – 1872. – V. 1. – P. 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Bloesch D. G. God the Almighty. – Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1995. – P. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Henry C. F. H. God, Revelation, and Authority. – Waco, TX: Word Books, 1976-1983. – V. 5. – P. 221. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid., p. 232-233. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Strong, p. 255; also see Henry, v. 5, p. 226. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Henry, v. 5, p. 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Strong, p. 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Hodge, v. 1, p. 382ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Henry, v. 5, p. 222-227; Strong, p. 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Strong, p. 256. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)