

The Omniscience and Omnipotence of God

The God Who Knows Everything and Can Do All His Holy Will

A Teaching Lesson · Seminary-level content, high-school-level clarity

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Big Idea: God knows all things perfectly (omniscience) and can do all His holy will (omnipotence). Nothing is hidden from His knowledge, and nothing is too hard for His power. Perfect wisdom joined to unlimited power means His good plans cannot fail.

Memory Verse: “Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power... Nothing is too hard for you.” — Jeremiah 32:17 (ESV)

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PART ONE

Teaching Outline (Leader Notes)

This lesson covers two of God's greatest perfections: His omniscience (He knows everything) and His omnipotence (He can do all His holy will). They belong together because knowledge without power is only a wish, and power without knowledge is only a danger. In God, perfect knowledge and perfect power are joined together with perfect goodness — which is why we can trust Him completely. This builds on the earlier lessons: because God is infinite and not made of parts, His knowledge and power have no limits and never run out. Part One is your full teaching material; Part Two is a handout to copy for students.

I. Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Define omniscience and omnipotence in their own words.
2. Give at least two Bible passages for each truth.
3. Explain how God knows the future without forcing people to sin.
4. Answer the trick question: "Can God make a rock too heavy to lift?"
5. Say why knowledge, power, and goodness together make God trustworthy.

II. Part A — The Omniscience of God

What the word means

Omniscience (from *omni*, "all," + *scientia*, "knowledge") means God knows everything — all things past, present, and future; all facts; every thought and motive of every heart; and even everything that could possibly happen. And God does not learn. He never discovers, forgets, or is surprised. He has always fully known all things at once.

A key distinction for older students: We know things one at a time, by reasoning, and we can be wrong. God knows all things immediately, perfectly, and effortlessly — not by studying the world, but out of His own infinite mind. His knowledge is the source of truth, not a report of it.

The Bible's teaching

"Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure."

— Psalm 147:5 (ESV)

- **Psalm 139:1-4** — God knows when we sit and rise, and "even before a word is on my tongue" He knows it completely.
- **Hebrews 4:13** — "All are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account." Nothing is hidden from Him.
- **1 John 3:20** — "God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything."

- **Isaiah 46:9-10** — God declares “the end from the beginning.” His knowledge of the future is complete because He rules the future.
- **Matthew 10:29-30** — Not one sparrow falls apart from the Father, and even the hairs of your head are numbered.

III. Part B — The Omnipotence of God

What the word means

Omnipotence (from *omni*, “all,” + *potentia*, “power”) means God is almighty — He can do everything that is consistent with His nature. Notice the careful wording: omnipotence does NOT mean God can do literally anything you can put into words. It means God has all power to accomplish all His holy will. No task He wills is too hard, and no force can stop Him.

The Bible’s teaching

“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.”

— Job 42:2 (ESV)

- **Genesis 18:14** — “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” The expected answer is no.
- **Jeremiah 32:17** — God made heaven and earth by His great power; “nothing is too hard” for Him.
- **Matthew 19:26** — “With God all things are possible.”
- **Psalms 115:3** — “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.”
- **Revelation 19:6** — “The Lord our God the Almighty reigns.”

The important limits (that are not really limits)

Scripture itself lists things God “cannot” do — and each one is a perfection, not a weakness:

God cannot lie	“It is impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6:18). His truthfulness is unbreakable.
God cannot be tempted / do evil	God “cannot be tempted with evil” (James 1:13). His holiness is complete.
God cannot deny Himself	“He cannot deny himself” (2 Timothy 2:13). He is always perfectly faithful to His own nature.

Teach this clearly: These are not gaps in God’s power. A God who COULD lie or sin would be less perfect, not more powerful. God’s inability to do evil is the strength of His goodness, not a limit on His might.

IV. The Hard Questions

“Can God make a rock too heavy for Him to lift?”

This old riddle sounds clever but is actually nonsense — like asking for a square circle. It asks whether an all-powerful God can make Himself not all-powerful. The question contradicts itself. Omnipotence means God can do all that is truly doable; it does not mean He can make logical nonsense come true. God’s power is not limited by this — the riddle simply fails to describe a real “thing” to be done. A good answer for students: “God can lift any rock He makes, and no amount of nonsense words can trap Him.”

“If God knows the future, are we just robots? Do we have real choices?”

God knowing what you will do does not force you to do it. Think of it this way: if a friend watches a recording of a game he already knows the outcome of, his knowing the score does not make the players move. God’s knowledge is even greater than that — He truly ordains all things — yet Scripture insists our choices are genuine and we are responsible for them. The Bible holds both together: God is completely sovereign, AND human beings make real, accountable decisions. We do not have to fully explain how they fit; we affirm both because Scripture does.

“If God is all-powerful and all-knowing, why is there evil and suffering?”

This is the hardest question, and it deserves honesty. The Bible does not give us a tidy formula, but it gives us solid ground. God is powerful enough to stop all evil, wise enough to have good reasons we cannot fully see, and good enough that we can trust those reasons. The clearest proof is the cross: the worst evil ever committed — the murder of God’s own Son — God turned into the greatest good, the salvation of His people (Genesis 50:20; Acts 2:23). A God this wise and powerful can be trusted even when we do not understand.

V. What the Church Has Taught

- **Augustine** taught that God’s knowledge causes and upholds all things, and that God is called almighty precisely because He does whatever He wills.
- **Thomas Aquinas** explained that God’s power extends to all that is possible in itself, and that things involving contradiction are not exceptions to His power — they are simply not “things” at all.
- **The Reformed and Baptist confessions** confess God as “most wise... almighty,” whose knowledge is “infinite, infallible” and to whom “all things are open and manifest” (Westminster and Second London Baptist Confessions, ch. 2).

The phrase to memorize: **God’s knowledge is “infinite, infallible” and His power almighty — no purpose of His can be thwarted.**

A word of caution (open theism)

Some modern teachers claim God does not know our free future choices in advance (a view called “open theism”). The historic church has firmly rejected this. Isaiah 46 and Psalm 139 make clear that God’s

knowledge of the future is complete. A God who could be surprised is not the God of the Bible — and could not promise that all things will work together for our good.

VI. The One-Sentence Guardrail

God knows all that can be known and can do all that can be done — and He never uses His power apart from His perfect wisdom and goodness. His “cannots” are perfections, not weaknesses.

VII. Why This Matters for Us

- **God fully knows you — and still loves you.** He sees every sin and every secret, and He still sent His Son for His people. His love is not based on missing information.
- **His promises cannot fail.** A God with perfect knowledge cannot be caught off guard, and a God with all power cannot be overpowered. Nothing can stop His plan for His people.
- **Prayer makes sense.** We bring our biggest problems to the One for whom nothing is too hard, and our deepest secrets to the One who already knows and welcomes us.
- **We can rest in hard times.** When life makes no sense, we trust a God wise enough to understand it and strong enough to work it for good.

PART TWO

Student Handout

The Omniscience and Omnipotence of God. Fill in the blanks and follow along as we work through the lesson together.

The Big Idea

God knows all things perfectly (omniscience) and can do all His holy will (omnipotence). Nothing is hidden from Him, and nothing is too hard for Him. Perfect wisdom joined to unlimited power means His good plans cannot fail.

Two Words to Know

- **Omniscience** (omni = “all” + knowledge) — God knows everything, past, present, and future, and never learns or is surprised.
- **Omnipotence** (omni = “all” + power) — God can do all His holy will; no task He wills is too hard.

Key Verses

- **Psalm 147:5** — “His understanding is beyond measure.”
- **Hebrews 4:13** — “All are naked and exposed to [His] eyes.”
- **Jeremiah 32:17** — “Nothing is too hard for you.”
- **Job 42:2** — “No purpose of yours can be thwarted.”

Things God “Cannot” Do (and Why That’s Good)

Cannot lie	His truth is unbreakable (Hebrews 6:18).
Cannot sin	His holiness is complete (James 1:13).
Cannot deny Himself	He is always faithful (2 Timothy 2:13).

Two Tricky Questions

- **“Can God make a rock too heavy to lift?”** That’s nonsense, like a square circle. God can lift any rock He makes; word-games can’t trap Him.
- **“If God knows my future, am I a robot?”** No. God knowing what you’ll choose doesn’t force the choice. The Bible affirms both God’s control and your real, responsible choices.

Fill in the Blanks

1. God’s understanding is “beyond _____.” (Psalm 147:5)
2. “Nothing is too _____ for you.” (Jeremiah 32:17)

3. Omnipotence means God can do all His _____ will — not logical nonsense.
4. God cannot _____, cannot _____, and cannot deny Himself — and these are perfections.

Discussion Questions

1. God knows every secret thing about you — and loves you anyway. How does that feel?
2. Why is a God who CANNOT lie or sin better than a God who could do absolutely anything?
3. How does the cross help us trust God when we don't understand why He allows suffering?
4. What is one big problem you could bring to the God for whom “nothing is too hard”?

One Sentence to Remember

God knows everything and can do all His holy will — so His good plans cannot fail.

This Week

Memorize Jeremiah 32:17. Each day, name one thing that feels too big or too broken, then pray: “Lord, You know all about this, and nothing is too hard for You. I trust Your wisdom and Your power.”

Sources & Further Study

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV). Key passages and classic sources referenced in this lesson:

- Scripture: Genesis 18:14; Genesis 50:20; Job 42:2; Psalm 115:3; Psalm 139:1–4; Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 46:9–10; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 10:29–30; Matthew 19:26; Acts 2:23; Hebrews 4:13; Hebrews 6:18; James 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:13; 1 John 3:20; Revelation 19:6.
- Augustine, *The City of God* and *On the Trinity* (God's knowledge and almighty will).
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, QQ. 14 & 25 (the knowledge and the power of God).
- Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), ch. 2; Second London Baptist Confession (1689), ch. 2 — God “most wise... almighty... his knowledge is infinite, infallible.”
- For modern treatment: Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics* vol. 2; Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God* (discourses on God's knowledge and power).