

# THEOLOGY PROPER

## Lesson Three

- I. WHY THEOLOGY PROPER
- II. AN APOLOGY FOR GOD
- III. WHO IS GOD?
- IV. WHAT IS GOD?
  - A. God Is Spirit (Zechariah 4:6; John 4:24)
  - B. God Is Living (1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 4:10 [contrast this with Jere. 10:10, 11; John 5:26])
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  - D. God Is Purposeful (Isaiah 14:26-27; Ephesians 3:11)
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# TEN QUESTION QUIZ

## THEOLOGY PROPER

In your "small group," discuss and answer the following questions.

### REVIEW QUESTIONS | BIBLIOLOGY

1. Is all Revelation written?
2. Is all Inspiration revelation?
3. Is our English Bible an exact translation of the original document as received from God?
4. Is the Bible, as received from God, without error and when properly handled will not lead the reader astray?
5. Do we have copies of the original document as received by God and written by man?

### THEOLOGY PROPER

1. Is the Christian God the only God?
2. Is Trinitarianism monotheistic?
3. Is God more than the sum total of His attributes?
4. What is the most essential or fundamental attribute of God?
5. What does a study of God lead to?

## INTRODUCTION

If we understand why God created all things in general and us in particular, then we might properly begin our approach to God.

God, as Trinity, created us so that we might know and experience the joy He has within Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and this joy is only known and experienced in His presence. He created a universe through which this encounter with Him might be known and experienced.

Thus, God isn't a lifeless and unknown cadaver that we dissect as a medical student hoping to learn all we can for future procedures and treatments. We do not learn God so we can avoid what displeases Him or how to maximize result. We "learn" God so that we might enjoy Him forever.

All of what follows is for the singular intent of knowing God, not as information, but for adoration. We adore Him. He is the object of our adoration and affection.

- "Salvation. I don't know what that means. The concept of atonement has never made sense to me . . . Here's my bottom line on the whole issue: any god who would send Gandhi (or, for that matter, George Burns) to hell for not having accepted Jesus as his personal savior is not someone I'd want to spend a day with, much less all of eternity."<sup>1</sup>

In a world where information is exhaustive and immediate, do we know God? Do we really know God? What practical difference does a belief in God make in our relationship to others and our material possessions? Does God even matter in our daily life?

### I. WHY STUDY THEOLOGY PROPER?

The concept of God is universally held, yet one of the most grossly misunderstood beliefs among man. It is hoped that through the asking of the six questions, we will come away with a better understanding of God.

The purpose of this study is to know God. Why should one study theology proper? There are *six reasons* why one needs to study the doctrine of God.

**First**, to study the Scripture is to know God and to know Him is life eternal (John 5:39).

**Second**, all other views are false views of God to the mind and conscience. We must have an accurate knowledge of just who He is.

**Third**, False faiths worship a different god(s). For the true believer there can be no religious fellowship with those who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, unless we commit treason.

**Fourth**, our knowledge of God's plan is founded on this doctrine.<sup>2</sup> "One's view of God might even be thought of as supplying the whole framework within which one's theology is constructed and life is lived."<sup>3</sup>

**Fifth**, "a knowledge of God should deepen our relationship with Him which in turn increase our desire to know more about Him."<sup>4</sup>

**Sixth**, "To the degree [that] we truly comprehend what God is like, we will respond to Him in worship."<sup>5</sup>

The word **theology** comes from the Greek word, *theos*, meaning “God,” and *logos*, meaning “word” or “discourse”; hence, theology is a discourse about God. Theology is generally taken as a broad term covering the entire field of Christian belief (the study of Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, etc.). Hence, the designation given to the study of God the Father is *theology proper*.<sup>6</sup>

**“Theology Proper:** “Theology proper deals with the existence, knowability, attributes, and triune nature of God.”<sup>7</sup>

God alone has written a *Story* whereby He makes known who He is and what He does to those whom He created. This revelation or unveiling of His person and work enable His people to know Him. **The relationship between God and man is one of gracious condescension.** He has written each part of the *Story* with the intent of reflecting the glory of His being. For it is only in this self-disclosure that humanity finds its ultimate joy. His people are the beneficiaries of this pursuit. Their quest is to seek God in the self-disclosure of His person as explained in His attributes and reflected in His work.<sup>8</sup>

## II. AN APOLOGY FOR “GOD”<sup>9</sup>

1 Peter 3:13-16

- <sup>13</sup> Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, <sup>15</sup> but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, **always being ready to make a defense** to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; <sup>16</sup> and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

The word “defense” is apologia. It occurs in eight verses in the NT.

- Ac 22:1 Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my **defence** which I make now unto you.
- Ac 25:16 To whom I answered [apokrinomai], It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to **answer** for himself concerning the crime laid against him.
- 1Co 9:3 Mine **answer** to them that do examine me is this,
- 2Co 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, **what clearing of yourselves**, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.
- Php 1:7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the **defence** and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.
- Php 1:17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the **defence** of the gospel.
- 2Ti 4:16 At my first **answer** no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

- 1Pe 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an **answer** to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Thus, one might offer a defense for “God” through two platforms.

#### A. General Revelation

##### 1. Teleological Argument

The teleological argument may be defined thus: The world everywhere evidences intelligence, purpose, and harmony; there must be a master architect behind all this evidence.

##### 2. Anthropological Argument

Contrary to the secular humanist who sees man simply as a biological being, the Biblicist sees man as created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28). The image of God in man is spiritual, not physical (cf. Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). Man is not simply a physical being, but a moral being with a conscience, intellect, emotion, and will.

Humanity, as a moral agent, acknowledges that man has an awareness of right and wrong, a sense of morality. Where did this sense of moral justice come from? If man is only a biological creature, why does he have a sense of moral obligation? Recognition of moral standards and concepts cannot be attributed to any evolutionary process. The Biblicist recognizes that God has placed a sense of moral justice within the human race in contradistinction to all other creation. Romans 2:14-15 indicates that Gentiles who have no revelation of the law have an inner, moral witness placed there by God.

##### 3. Cosmological Argument

The term *cosmological* comes from the Greek word *cosmos*, meaning “world.” This argument is based on the fact that a cosmos, or world, exists. Because something cannot come from nothing, there must be an original cause that is the reason for the world’s existence. The cosmological argument says that every effect must have a cause.

##### 4. Ontological Argument

The term *ontological* comes from the Greek present participle *ontos* (from the verb *eimi*) and means “being” or “existence.” The ontological argument is philosophical rather than inductive.

- ♦ The argument rests on the fact that all men have an awareness of God. Because the concept of God is universal, God must have placed the idea within man.

#### B. Special Revelation

The rest of our study will focus on the information provided in the sixty-six books of Christian Bible for our understanding of God.

### III. WHO IS GOD?

Some believe that God is in everything and everything is God. Others would maintain that there are a multiplicity of gods and we can simply choose the number or type of god(s) we would worship. Still others believe in one god who created and set all things in motion, but then removed himself from its daily maintenance.

The Bible presents the concept of Deity as being **singular** (there is only one [Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 2:5] and **personal** (He cares for you [John 3:16]). In Him all things have their source, support, and ultimate meaning for existence (Colossians 1:16,17).

### IV. WHAT IS GOD?

The Bible has much to say about what God is. There are several descriptive truths that help us to identify what God is and in answering what God is we will also note what He is not.

“The biblical view of humanity is critical to our understanding of the Scriptures and God. Anthropology is an essential element of theology. Man-talk and God-talk are closely related and only possible as they are related one to the other.”<sup>10</sup> **Defining Personhood works top down.** God is not defined by what we are, but by what He is.

#### A. God Is Spirit (John 4:24)

“The non-corporeality of God is clearly stated and the personality of God also. All this is put in three words for the first time.”<sup>11</sup>

God is pure spirit. We are incapable of understanding this statement to its fullest because we have no idea of what pure spirit consists. Spirit has no necessary connection with matter. We operate in a framework of time, space, and mass. God does not. He is not matter, He is not restricted by time nor by space. He is pure spirit. Thus, God is invisible and indestructible.

This does not mean God did not physically manifest Himself in time. Such manifestations are understood in one of three ways. Either it is an **anthropomorphism**, a **Christophany** or and **theophany**. When we attribute to God human attributes it is called an anthropomorphism. When we see Christ in His preincarnate state it is called a Christophany. And when God the Father reveals Himself in any form it is called a theophany.

#### B. God Is Living (1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 4:10 [contrast this with Jere. 10:10,11; John 5:26])

God is the source of all living matter either animate or inanimate. He has within His own being the source of being (He alone is uncaused) and activity for Himself. He is self-sustaining. “The continuation of God’s

existence does not depend upon anything outside of Himself."<sup>12</sup> He is a self-contained unit that can be neither added to nor subtracted from for either His immediate or ultimate satisfaction.

God does not need us. "God has chosen to use us to accomplish His purpose, and in that sense He now needs us. He could, however, if he so chose, have by passed us."<sup>13</sup>

#### C. God Is Intelligent (Isaiah 40:12-26)

What is intelligence? Intelligence is defined as "the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills."<sup>14</sup>

God not only knows all knowable facts but knows how all the facts fit together for His ultimate glory and goal. His knowledge of subjects is not devoid of His ability to apply that knowledge in the most efficient and effective way.

#### D. God Is Purposeful (Isaiah 14:24-32; Ephesians 3:11)

God is never caught off-guard nor surprised by the unfolding of events. There are no accidents with God. Everything is planned and serves His [its design] purpose. Every act that transpires is always unfolding toward the completion of His ultimate goal.

All the same "word" [prothesis] "a setting forth." This is a selected representation of the word.

- Ro 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his **purpose**.
- Ro 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the **purpose** of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the **purpose** of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal **purpose** which he **purposed** in Christ Jesus our Lord:
- 2Ti 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own **purpose** and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

God has intent and design and purpose behind creation and what He does with it.

#### E. God Is Active (John 5:17; 9:4; Philippians 2:13)

The word "work" transliterates as "energy."

God is actually and actively involved in the affairs of creation. **He not only promises but acts toward the fulfillment of those things He has promised.**

**God is known to us through His actions and attributes.** As to His actions, we know God through creation and salvation. We will note His actions in salvation under soteriology. As to His attributes, we will consider them in this lesson.

## V. WHEN DID GOD BEGIN?

The Bible simply assumes God's existence. "His very nature is to exist."<sup>15</sup> Genesis 1:1 begins by stating, "In the beginning God." There is neither argumentation nor explanation for His existence. It simply states the fact of His existence, "In the beginning God . . ."

The central affirmation of the Scripture is not that God is, but that God has spoken. If God has spoken, then of course He exists. Thus, His speech not only determines His existence but our obligations and responsibilities.

There was never a time when God was not. He always has been and will forever be. This is indeed a fathomless truth.

## VI. HOW DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF [HOW IS HE KNOWN]?

Initially, we noted how God is known through His actions [what He does] and His attributes [who He is]. We know God through His words [His revelation] and through His works [creation in general and redemption in particular]. There is, however, a third way in which God is known and this is through incarnation. We encounter God in Jesus. Repeatedly, the NT states, "He who has seen me [Jesus], has seen the Father [YHWH {**John 10:30; 12:45; 14:9; Heb. 1:3**}]." Just as God is revealed through His actions [soteriology], and His attributes [theology proper], so also is He fully revealed in the incarnation [Christology]. In each of these three categories, God is known.

**God reveals Himself in the expression of His attributes.** The study of His attributes will take up the remainder of this study. The expressions of His attributes are the means by which we come to know Him. Attributes are "those qualities of God which constitute what He is."<sup>16</sup>

"What are God's attributes? When we talk about the attributes of God, we are trying to answer questions like, *Who is God, What is God like, and What kind of God is he?* An attribute of God is something true about him. While fully comprehending who God is impossible for us as limited beings, God does make himself known in a variety of ways, and through what he reveals about himself in his Word and in his creation, we can begin to wrap our minds around our awesome Creator and God.

God is unlike anything or anyone we could ever know or imagine. He is one of a kind, unique and without comparison. Even describing him with mere words truly falls short of capturing who he is – our words simply cannot to justice to describe our holy God."<sup>17</sup>

Attributes are those distinguishing characteristics of the divine nature which are inseparable from the idea of God and which constitute the basis and ground for His various manifestations to His creatures. Notice eight initial observations.

- **First**, the attributes have an objective existence. We do not give God these attributes, they are inherent within the very make-up of God.

- **Second**, the attributes exist in the divine essence. We speak of the simplicity of God in that He cannot be cut up or compartmentalized. God is the sum total of His attributes.
  - **For example: there is no singular attribute defining God. Some argue this singular attribute is love or holiness. The idea polarizes and pits one against the other. Such opposition is simply not right. God’s love is just, as is His justice is loving. God as God is intrinsically separate from all He creates. This separation is His holiness.**
- **Third**, the attributes manifest the divine essence. The essence of God is revealed and knowable only through the attributes.
- **Fourth**, the attributes are qualities of the entire Godhead.
- **Fifth**, the attributes are permanent qualities. They cannot be gained or lost. They are intrinsic to His existence.
- **Sixth**, “the attributes are inseparable from the being or essence of God.”<sup>18</sup>
- **Seventh**, “God is more than the sum total of His perfections (attributes).”<sup>19</sup>
- **Eighth**, the attributes of God can be divided into two classes: what God is in Himself (for example, His greatness / the incommunicable attributes), and what He is in relation to others (for example, His goodness / the communicable attributes). The idea of “compartmentalizing” God does not contradict point number two. The classification of God’s attributes is more for convenience and assimilation on our part than any attempt at compartmentalizing God.

“Across the Old Testament the names of God give very strong clues as to God’s nature. These names often signified both the otherness (transcendence) of God and also his nearness (immanence). God could be known by his name, but his name(s) was unlike any other name. God character was manifest in both directions. As a result of this distinction, reformed theology has often distinguished the communicable and incommunicable attributes of God. There were certain characteristics or attributes of God which could more readily be understood and which in some sense were shared by both God and humans. There were also other kind of characteristics or attributes of God which were not as readily understood because they belonged to God alone.”<sup>20</sup>

<b>Absolute</b>		<b>Relative</b>
<b>Incommunicable</b>		<b>Communicable</b>
<b>Intransitive</b>		<b>Transitive</b>
<b>Moral</b>		<b>Non-moral</b>
<b>Greatness</b>		<b>Goodness</b>

A question needing to be asked is, “why do we meditate on these things?” Let me suggest three practical reasons as to why we need to study and thus meditate on the attributes of God.

**First**, meditation on the attributes of God cultivate a spirit of reverence and belief.

**Second**, we should meditate on the divine disclosures of His perfect self. Thus, creating a spirit of awe and grandeur.

**Third**, the conception we have of God determines the character of our religion. When faulty behavior is

seen it is always traced back to a faulty belief of God. Thus, the better one's understanding of God, the better one's practical religion.<sup>21</sup>

God's attributes are usually classified under two categories. The pairs of titles that are used depend on which of many contrasts the theologian wishes to emphasize.

I am intentionally being selective in my first usage. I am not going to list many, but a few.

#### A. The Greatness of God

These are the incommunicable attributes of God. These are those attributes in which no likeness has been or could have been given to man. There are ten noted qualities of God's greatness that will be studied.

##### 1. God Is Self-Existent

###### a. Self-Existence Defined

**"Aseity** (from Latin *ā* "from" and *sē* "self", plus *-ity*) is the property by which a being exists in and of itself, from itself, or exists as so-and-such of and from itself. The word is often used to refer to the Christian belief that God contains within himself the cause of himself, is the first cause, or rather is simply uncaused, though many Jewish and Muslim theologians have also believed God to be independent in this way. Notions of aseity as the highest principle go back at least to Plato and have been in wide circulation since Augustine, though the use of the word 'aseity' began only in the Middle Ages."<sup>22</sup>

"Aseity has two aspects, one positive and one negative: absolute independence and self-existence. W. N. Clarke writes:

In its negative meaning, which emerged first in the history of thought, it [aseity] affirms that God is uncaused, depending on no other being for the source of His existence. In its positive meaning, it affirms that God is completely self-sufficient, having within Himself the sufficient reason for His own existence.<sup>23</sup>

The first concept derives from "the God of philosophers", while the second one derives from "the living God of Revelation" (*I Am Who I Am*: Exodus 3:14).<sup>24</sup>

God is the source or ground of His own existence. God's existence is wholly in Himself. He is totally uncaused and independent of all things external to Himself. Creation is everything outside of God and He does not rely on it for His existence in any way. God needs nothing for the perpetuation of His being. **There was never a time when God was not.**

###### b. Self-Existence Defended (Exodus 3:14; 6:3 [YHWH – "I AM"]; John 5:24-29 [v.26 {"Life in Himself"}]; 8:58, 59 [Jews understand what Jesus says and look to stone Him])

- Exodus 3:<sup>13</sup> Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to

them?” <sup>14</sup> God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” <sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

The issue within the passage is two-fold. First, the usage of the name YHWH as His personal name. Second, the word YHWH.

“The verb form used here is אֶהְיֶה (’ehyeh), the Qal imperfect, first person common singular, of the verb הָיָה (hayah, “to be”). It forms an excellent paronomasia with the name. So when God used the verb to express his name, he used this form saying, “I am.” When his people refer to him as Yahweh, which is the third person masculine singular form of the same verb, they say “he is.” Some commentators argue for a future tense translation, “I will be who I will be,” because the verb has an active quality about it, and the Israelites lived in the light of the promises for the future. They argue that “I am” would be of little help to the Israelites in bondage. But a translation of “I will be” does not effectively do much more except restrict it to the future. **The idea of the verb would certainly indicate that God is not bound by time, and while he is present (“I am”) he will always be present, even in the future, and so “I am” would embrace that as well (see also Ruth 2:13; Ps 50:21; Hos 1:9). The Greek translation of the OT used a participle to capture the idea, and several times in the Gospels Jesus used the powerful “I am” with this significance (e.g., John 8:58). The point is that Yahweh is sovereignly independent of all creation and that his presence guarantees the fulfillment of the covenant (cf. Isa 41:4; 42:6, 8; 43:10-11; 44:6; 45:5-7).** Others argue for a causative Hiphil translation of “I will cause to be,” but nowhere in the Bible does this verb appear in Hiphil or Piel. A good summary of the views can be found in G. H. Parke-Taylor, *Yahweh, the Divine Name in the Bible*. See among the many articles: B. Beitzel, “Exodus 3:14 and the Divine Name: A Case of Biblical Paronomasia,” *TJ* 1 (1980): 5-20; C. D. Isbell, “The Divine Name ehyeh as a Symbol of Presence in Israelite Tradition,” *HAR* 2 (1978): 101-18; J. G. Janzen, “What’s in a Name? Yahweh in Exodus 3 and the Wider Biblical Context,” *Int* 33 (1979): 227-39; J. R. Lundbom, “God’s Use of the *Idem per Idem* to Terminate Debate,” *HTR* 71 (1978): 193-201; A. R. Millard, “Yw and Yhw Names,” *VT* 30 (1980): 208-12; and R. Youngblood, “A New Occurrence of the Divine Name ‘I AM,’” *JETS* 15 (1972): 144-52.”<sup>25</sup>

- John 8: <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” <sup>59</sup> So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

A.T. Robertson notes, “I am (egô eimi). Undoubtedly here Jesus claims eternal existence with the absolute phrase used of God. The contrast between genesthai (entrance into existence of Abraham) and eimi (timeless being) is complete.”<sup>26</sup>

### c. Self-Existence Applied

God will never run out. There is never any fear of God simply 'running out of power.' His existence is self-perpetuating or maintaining. The same God that created all things and that is written of in both the Old and New Testament is our God. He has not diminished one iota.

## 2. God is Eternal

## a. His Eternality Defined

God is the cause or author of time, and His existence cannot be measured by time. "Time is the duration of the creature."<sup>27</sup> He is above all temporal limitations and is without beginning or end. The past, present and future of His existence is possessed in one undivided present.

There is no past or future with God, there is only an eternal present. Time is created and creaturely. God is outside of the time/space/mass realm.

## b. His Eternality Defended (Comp. Gen 1:1 w/ John 1:1-3; Ps 90:1,2; 102:11,12)

## c. His Eternality Applied

First, God is our eternal spectator (Gen. 21:33). Second, God is our eternal dwelling place (Ps 90:1,2). Third, He is always there to assist (Deut. 33:27). Fourth, He is always there to answer (Gen. 21:33). Fifth, His throne/rule is everlasting. It is never overthrown (Ps. 93:2).

## 3. God Is Infinite

## a. Infinitude Defined

God is without outside limitations. He is not restricted or bound by creation (time-space-mass). He has only the self-imposed limits of His nature and His work. God never acts contrary to His will or plan. God could never make a rock so big that even He Himself could not lift it. God could never allow an unregenerate man into 'heaven.'

The infinitude of God overlaps with His attribute of **incomprehensible**. God is so boundless and vast that finite humanity cannot begin to comprehend the richness of just who God is.

"Infinite, as an adjective, is defined as "limitless or endless in space, extent, or size; impossible to measure or calculate." When we think of God, our minds cannot truly conceive the width, depth, and true magnitude of God's presence. A.W. Tozer put it this way

'He is measureless. Measurement is the way created things have of accounting for themselves. It describes limitations, imperfections, and cannot apply to God.'<sup>28</sup>

In order to wrap our heads around the infinitude of God, **scripture uses metaphors and imagery that our minds can semi-conceive**. We speak of the hand of God, His breath, God walking in the garden, and Him seeing, smelling, and speaking. **This anthropomorphic language** allows the finitude of our minds to catch a glimpse of the *infinitude* of God."<sup>29</sup>

## b. Infinitude Defended (Ps. 147:5; Rom. 11:33)

Paul grasped for words to describe the infinitude of God. His selection accented the abundance of God. If God is so vast and measureless, how are we to know Him? **Though God is all this and more, we can know Him truly and personally, though not exhaustively.** This is part of the Creator/creature distinction that shall be forever. However, our knowledge of God is only secured through a diligent and focused study of Scripture and a dependence on the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 147:

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

For it is good to sing praises to our God;

for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD builds up Jerusalem;

he gathers the outcasts of Israel.

<sup>3</sup> He heals the brokenhearted

and binds up their wounds.

<sup>4</sup> He determines the number of the stars;

he gives to all of them their names.

<sup>5</sup> **Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;**

**his understanding is beyond measure.**

<sup>6</sup> The LORD lifts up the humble;

he casts the wicked to the ground.

Romans 11:33-36

<sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! <sup>34</sup> For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" <sup>35</sup> Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? <sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

## c. Infinitude Applied

In noting His infinitude as it relates to believers we see that His resources are without limitations (John 1:50; Rom. 8:31, 32; Phil. 4:19). Because He is without outside limitations all that we need is to be found in Him (1 Cor. 1:5; Eph. 1:3; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Peter 1:3). However, for the unbeliever this truth is an ominous cloud of destruction. God's wrath against sin is equally without limitations (John 3:36; Heb. 10:31).

## 4. God Is Incomprehensible

## a. His Incomprehensibility Defined

God cannot be completely known by a finite mind. It is true that we cannot know God completely, but we are not therefore to assume that we cannot know Him certainly and truly.

There are three reasons as to suggest why God is unknowable. First, because of who He is. Second, because of who we are. And third, because of the inadequacies of language.

- b. His incomprehensibility Defended (Psalm 145:3; Romans 11:33; Eph. 3:8)
- c. His Incomprehensibility Applied

His incomprehensibility provides for us an inexhaustible field of knowledge (Pro 25:2). Second, His incomprehensibility provides for us the highest spiritual worship possible (Rom. 11:33).

#### 5. God Is Perfect

- a. Perfection Defined

“Divine perfection in later Reformed theology was understood as the corollary of divine necessity and independence, his uncreatedness. God does not need anything; he is underived, complete. Perfection is not among God’s attributes, but each of these can be understood as perfections, for they are complete.”<sup>30</sup>

God is complete in Himself. He is all that God ought to be. He lacks nothing. He falls short in nothing. It speaks of His 'wholeness' or 'complete integrity' or 'lack of any flaw.'

- b. Perfection Defended

God is perfect and as such all His acts are perfect. There are *four expressions* of God’s perfection.

**First**, His work is perfect (Deut. 32:4; Job 37:16).

**Second**, His way is perfect (2 Sam. 22:31; Ps 18:30 [exactly the same is both passages]).

**Third**, His word [Law] is perfect (Psalm 19:7).

**Fourth**, His will is perfect (Romans 12:1, 2).

- c. Perfection Applied

Because He is perfect there is nothing God cannot choose to do in relation to His creation. There is nothing you can ask Him that He is incapable of doing or does not have the resources within Himself to achieve.

#### 6. God Is Immutable

- a. His Immutability Defined

God is changeless in His nature, attributes and purposes, and is incapable of growth or decay in any respect.

**First**, God is unchanging in His purpose. The exact English phrase "the LORD have spoken it" occurs 13 times in the Old Testament and all are in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 5:13,15,17; 17:21,24; 21:32; 22:14; 24:14; 26:14; 30:12; 34:24; 36:36; 37:14). What God has spoken is an expression of His will and what He wills comes to pass.

**Second**, He is unchanging in His plan (Psalm 33:11; Pr 19:21; Isa. 19:17; Jere. 49:20; 50:45). Points one and two overlap. The sovereignty, immutability and eternity of God are so intertwined as to be almost inseparable. **The separation of His attributes are for study. They are, however, inseparable.**

**Third**, He is unchanging in His promises (Numbers 23:19). What God promises to His people shall come to pass, it is inescapable.

**Fourth**, He is unchanging in His person (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17). **God can never act or be something He isn't and He will always act and be who He is.**

#### b. His Immutability Applied

God's immutability gives us two foundational concepts. First, God is predictable. We know what He will do with respect to sin and with respect to obedience. Second, God is dependable. We know that He will do it toward sin and toward obedience.

### 7. God Is Omnipotent

#### a. Omnipotence Defined

Omnipotence is a compound word coming from the Latin meaning "all-power." By this we mean that God's power is exhaustless and inclusive. Nothing can increase, decrease nor evade the reach of His power.

"By His exhaustless power, God can do all things consistent with His character and will. God can do all that He wills, but He will not do all that He can."<sup>31</sup> "Three thoughts will clarify what is meant.

**First**, He cannot do the logically absurd or contradictory.

- Is it logically absurd for God to invite the sinner to believe?

**Second**, He cannot act contrary to His nature.

**Third**, He cannot fail to do what He has promised."<sup>32</sup>

"God is free. God's decisions and actions are not determined by consideration of any factors outside Himself. They are simply a matter of His own free choice."<sup>33</sup>

#### b. Omnipotence Defended

- Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all (1 Chronicles 29:11)
- Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me? (Jeremiah 32:27)
- Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable (Psalm 145:3)
- To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen (1 Timothy 1:17)

For further consideration see Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25; Ex. 6:3; Nu. 24:4, 16; Ru. 1:20,21; Pss. 68:14; 91:1; 104:3; Isa. 13:6; Ez. 1:24; 10:5; Joel 1:15; Job 5:17; 6:4,14; 8:3,5; etc.).

To think that an all-powerful Creator seeks to communicate with a powerless creature is [i.e. logically absurd?] really beyond humanity to lay hold of.

### c. Omnipotence Applied

The application of God's omnipotence can be seen in three distinct areas.

**First**, God's omnipotence is seen in creation (Jeremiah 10:12). Notice how the power of God is integrated with His wisdom and discretion. His power is not capricious and flighty. His power is coupled with His wisdom and discretion; thus, it is used to the greater good of man and glory of God. God's omnipotence is seen in nature (Jeremiah 10:13; Job 38:34; Pss. 29:3-9; 135:7; Gen. 1,2). If the Bible is read with an unbiased mind, then one cannot help but see that all of creation without exception is attributed to the creative power of God. His power is also seen in history (Daniel 4:17).

History must be seen as "His Story". History is simply the unfolding of God's immutable plan. There are no accidents in the world today, there are only assignments. God has providentially placed in motion the events of life. Our decisions act within the sphere of dealings, but not ultimate designs. God's ultimate design is efficacious being based on sovereign omnipotence. God's omnipotence is likewise seen in men and angels (Dan. 4:35). It is also displayed in His dealings with Satan (Job 1:12; 2:6). Whether Satan acts or not is dictated by an omnipotent God. Satan does not seek permission every time he acts. He has liberty to act within certain ordained parameters or limitations. However, for special assignments or acts, he must first seek the consent or permission of God.

**Second**, we see His omnipotence in the act of redemption (Eph. 1:17-22). Our redemption is built on the very foundation of God's omnipotence. His desire is expressed through His omnipotence. What God desires or wills He is able to bring to pass. There is no one else in all the world that has that kind of relationship between desire and completion.

**Third**, God's omnipotence is seen in the fulfillment of His promises (Gen. 17:1). It is also seen in the upholding of the feeble (Isa. 40:28-31). His omnipotence is displayed in the saving of the lost (Matt. 19:25,26; Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:15).

## 8. God Is Omniscient

### a. Omniscience Defined and Defended

Omniscience is a Latin word meaning "all knowing." When speaking of His omniscience we mean that God's knowledge includes all things past, present, and future (Isa. 46:9-11), immediately and simultaneously (God sees everything in one panoramic, instantaneous moment), whether actual or possible (God knows what would have happened should He have allowed such an event to have taken place [1 Sam 23:11,12; Matt 11:21,23]).

What does this mean? It means that "we are all completely transparent before God. He sees and knows us totally. He knows every truth, even those not yet discovered by man, for it was He who built them into the creation. And He therefore knows every genuine possibility, even when they seem limitless in number."<sup>34</sup>

God knows everything, not because He is there, but because He is God.

- 1a. God's Knowledge Is Perfect (Job 37:16)
- 2b. God's Knowledge Is Complete (Hebrews 4:13)
- 3c. God's Knowledge Is Eternal (Acts 15:18)
- 4d. God's Knowledge Has A Moral Purpose (Proverbs 15:3)

**God's knowledge is not arbitrary, careless, or undisciplined.** It is not simply like a computer; He knows how to put it to good ends (Romans 8:28; 1 Thess. 5:24). God sees the motives of man (Matt. 12:36).

For further consideration see 1 John 3:20; Isa 46:9-11

#### b. Omniscience Applied

**First**, notice the scope of God's knowledge. He knows the stars by name (Psalm 147:4). The very idea of naming speaks of ownership in the Ancient Near East. He knows the dealings of the sparrow (Matt 10:29). He knows the essence of our being (Ps 139:1-4; Pro 5:21). He knows the number of hairs upon each head (Matt 10:30).

**Second**, notice the significance of God's knowledge. Because God knows us, He is aware of our frailty and our vulnerability toward unfaithfulness and sin (1 Cor. 10:13). God knows us completely. When you think of the vastness of His knowledge it should strike a chord of utter awe in us toward Him. Scripture speaks of several truths concerning His knowledge of us. Listen to the evidence; He knows our thoughts (Ps. 139:2; 44:21), our words (Ps. 139:4); our deeds (Ps. 139:2,3), our sorrows (Exo. 3:7), our needs (Matt. 6:32), our frailties (Ps. 103:14) and our foolishness (Ps. 69:5). Remember Matthew 10:24-33, God's Omniscience should solicit what type of response from us (NO FEAR!)? The context is persecution, yet no matter what the circumstances might bring, no matter how adverse the situation, we must remain faithful to God and fear not for He sees us and knows everything.

The Omniscience is protective as well as detective. He sees us in our most trying moments and He sees us in our most tempting circumstances.

God's omniscience raises several interesting questions.

**First**, Is God ever caught off guard? Think of how many stars are in our galaxy, how many galaxies in the universe. All of this God knows intimately and can summon them together at the expression of His will.

**Second**, how can God declare the end from the beginning in Isaiah 46:10? Is it because He sees what is going to happen? or Because He has planned what was going to happen? (Isa. 46:10-11)? God knows what will happen because it is unfolding according to His wise master plan.

### 9. God Is All-wise

#### a. God's Wisdom Defined

God applies His knowledge in such a way that the best means are employed to achieve the highest ends in order to glorify Him the most.

b. God's Wisdom Defended (Romans 8:29; 11:33; 16:27)

God's wisdom is so vast that there are 'things' which cross our paths which are incapable of being understood by finite man.

God, in His wisdom, stands alone. There is nothing that can come along side of God and be His equal or companion in the area of wisdom!

c. God's Wisdom Applied

We can be confident that there are no accidents in life (Job 23:10).

10. God Is Omnipresent

a. Omnipresence Defined

"God is in the universe, everywhere present at the same time, and fills every part of it with His whole being."<sup>35</sup> God is everywhere, at the same time, in the fullness of His being.

A.H. Strong said it this way, "God, in the totality of His essence, without diffusion or expansion, multiplication or division, penetrates and fills the universe in all its parts"<sup>36</sup>

1a. **This does not mean** that God is everything and everything is God (Pantheism). God is not bound by the time/space/mass continuum. He is everywhere, but not in everything.

2b. **This does not mean** that part of God is in one place and part in another. The idea of God holding the world in His hands as if to insinuate that we are looking at His left hand and the people of China are looking at His right hand and those people are either poles are looking at opposite ends of His torso is absurd.

3b. **This does not mean** that God is everywhere present in the same sense. He does not dwell on earth as He does in heaven. God does choose to localize His presence. He did this in the wilderness by way of a cloud by day and fire of pillar by night. He did it with the tabernacle and temple in the Holy of Holies (2 Chron. 7:16) and He does it today being at the right hand of the Father.

b. Omnipresence Defended (1 Kings 8:27 [2Chron 6:8]; Ps 139:7-12; Jere. 23:23,24; Acts 17:27,28)

This ties in with the Holiness of God. God, in His majesty, is transcendent. He is above and apart from His creation. This is what causes Him to be holy. He is apart from. Yet, He is imminent. He is intimately involved with His creation. This is the idea of "Emmanuel" = "God with Us (Isa. 7:14; 8:8; Matt 1:23)."

Again, like omniscience, the doctrine of His omnipresence raises several questions.

**First**, What of Hell? Is God there? God is there yet refraining from acknowledging its inhabitants (Pro. 15:3; Ps. 88:5; 139:8; Rev.14:10).

**Second**, The Scripture speaks of God being localized in heaven (Ps. 123:1; Matt. 6:9) and in the Old Testament Temple (Deut. 16:5 [*Shekinah* Gory]). How can this be so, yet still be everywhere at the same time? God has specially and visibly chosen to manifest Himself "physically" in these locations. **Third**, how does omnipresence differ from pantheism (For example, everything is God, God is everything)? Pantheism says, "Here is God" whereas Christianity says, "God is here!" **Fourth**, When Christ became man, did He cease to be omnipresent? Christ was omnipresent through the *logos* (John. 1:1; Heb. 1:3). To say that He ceased to be omnipresent would make Him out to be less than God. **Fifth**, If God is here, then why don't we sense His presence? Because He is 'seen' with the eyes of our intellect, not 'felt' with the hands of our emotions (Heb. 11:27). Our expectation and concept is distorted thus we fail to appropriate the certain truth.

### c. Omnipresence Applied

**First**, negatively considered. You cannot run from God. He sees you in your rebellion (Gen. 3:7-10; Jonah 1:1-3; Amos 9:1-4).

**Second**, positively considered. God can dwell with and in us and still be everywhere at any time. A relationship can be sustained with all of us with the same intensity and interest (John 14:23).

His presence provides *ten comforting and strengthening* truths.

**First**, His presence solicits steadfastness (Pss. 16:8; 139:10).

**Second**, His presence supports the sorrowing (Ps. 34:18).

**Third**, His presence answers prayer (Ps. 145:18).

**Fourth**, His presence tested by truth (Ps. 119:150,151). God is near His word and in the studying, learning and teaching of it.

**Fifth**, His presence restrains rebellion (Jere. 23:23, 24).

**Sixth**, His presence gives guidance (Ps. 139:10a).

**Seventh**, His presence humbles our spirits (Ps. 139:5, 6).

**Eighth**, His presence is inescapable (Jonah 1:1-3).

**Ninth**, His presence permeates His people (John 14:23).

**Tenth**, His presence gives courage (Matt. 28:19, 20; Deut. 20:1).

### B. The Goodness Of God

The communicable attributes of God can and are reflected in man's image of God. It is the communicable attributes of God most "mirrored" in humanities salvation.

For example, consider the Book of Ephesians.

- Eph. 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would **walk** in them.
- Eph. 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to **walk** in a manner worthy of the

calling with which you have been called,

- Eph. 4:17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you **walk** no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,
- Eph. 5:2 and **walk** in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.
- Eph. 5:8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; **walk** as children of Light
- Eph. 5:15 Therefore be careful how you **walk**, not as unwise men but as wise,

WHAT WE “WALK” IN, are His communicable attributes. We are not walking in His incommunicable attributes. In His gifting to us of His Holy Spirit and placement into the “body” of Christ, He works in us and through us to those around us His communicable attributes. The NT moral imperative is the showing of His communicable attributes one to another. Just like with us, they are always grace based expressions.

### 1. God Is True

#### a. His Truth Defined

This speaks of His authenticity. He is true or valid, the real thing. There is no falsehood in Him. There is no deception or contradiction in God. He will never lead us astray.

God is the 'True God' or genuine God in that He alone in His Being, attributes, activities, etc., conforms to all which God ought to be. He alone fully answers to the idea of God. He alone is genuinely, veritably and authentically God. God is the 'God of truth' in that all truth has its foundation in His being and nature. He is the source of all truth.

Interestingly enough God truth is often coupled with other qualities that emanate from His being such as light (Psalm 43:3), kindness (2 Sam. 2:6), uprightness (Psalm 111:8), peace (Jeremiah 33:6), and grace (John 1:17). This speaks to the inseparable nature of His attributes one from the other.

#### b. His Truth Defended (Deut. 32:4; Ps 31:5; Jeremiah 10:10; John 3:33; 14:6; 17:3; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 John 5:6, 20)

#### c. His Truth Applied

First, God will never lie to us, thus we can trust Him fully (Ps 31:5). Second, God will never lead us astray, thus we can follow Him completely (Jere 10:1-10).

### 2. God Is Loving

#### a. His Love Defined

God gives of Himself and His gifts. God does not have to will to be these things, this is simply what God is!

Love is that element in God which moves Him to give Himself and His gifts spontaneously, voluntarily, righteously, and eternally, for the good of personal beings, regardless of their merit or response.

Love is not, however, the fundamental attribute of God. God is not moved by His love as He is moved by His holiness. Some would argue that a Loving God would condemn no one. Yet, Love is not the center of His attributes, it is Holiness. A Holy God demands the exacting of a penalty against crimes committed. There are *five ways* in which God's love is described.

**First**, His love is voluntary. He is under no compulsion and does not wait for a response from the object loved (Hos. 14:4; 1 John 4:10). God has simply willed to love.

**Second**, His love is unselfish. It is not for personal benefit or for what He can get selfishly from people (Romans 8:28-35 [v32]). Ultimately, however, it is for His glory. God has withheld nothing from us that would be for our betterment. And nothing crosses our paths that will not be for our betterment.

**Third**, He loves in a righteous way. It is not sentimental, does not condone sin, and does not do wrong for the sake of the loved one (Pss. 11:7; 33:5). God's love is not arbitrary. God's love is not sentimental or emotion driven. God's not going to buckle under pressure to do wrong because of His great love for you.

**Fourth**, His love is eternal. God is eternally self-giving, although not always to the same objects. His love is not fickle (Jere. 31:3; 1 Corinthians 13:8).

**Fifth**, Love is the essence of His being (1 John 4:7-8). To say that God is love is not the same as saying love is God. His nature is to love. **Wrath is a reaction against sin.** God does not have an attribute of wrath. Love, however, is part of His nature. God spontaneously loves His creation.

#### b. His love Displayed

The love of God is vividly portrayed *in six distinct actions*.

**First**, in His goodwill toward all men (Matt 5:43-48 [Common Grace]). The fact that everyone is treated equally within providence is an expression of God's goodwill/love toward all of humanity.

**Second**, in His gift of His Son for sin (John 3:16; Rom. 8:32; 5:8). We have already noted this above.

**Third**, in making believers His children (1 John 3:1).

**Fourth**, in His hatred of evil (Ps 45:7; Zech. 8:17; Pro 6:16-19).

**Fifth**, in molding His children through trials (Heb. 12:5-8; Rev. 3:19).

**Sixth**, in electing believers to eternal life (1 Thess. 1:4; Deut 7:7-9). God loves all of His creatures, yet especially loves the elect. His love is so great in quantity that it covers everyone, yet it is qualitatively distinct on those who are the elect.

#### c. His Love Applied

- 1a. His love toward us should solicit our love toward Him.
- 2b. His love toward us provides for us an example of how we should love one another.
- 3c. Just as His love toward us is unconditional, so to should our love for others be unconditional.
- 4d. Just as His love is for my benefit, so to should our love be for the benefit of others.

## 3. God Is Righteous

## a. His Righteousness Defined

God's righteousness is that attribute where His actions are always in conformity with His own perfect being and by which He demands absolute conformity to perfect right in others.

God's justice is that which rewards conformity and punishes non-conformity to His perfect right.

## b. His Righteousness Applied

God's righteousness as stated in the above verses deals with His actions toward sinful humanity. God's dealings with our sinfulness are always just and lawful. We can be sure that we will always get what is due us (Heb. 2:2; Rom. 1:32; 6:23).

## 4. God Is Faithful

## a. His Faithfulness Defined

God's faithfulness is His trustworthiness or dependability to act or perform in accordance with His promises or word (Pss. 36:5; 89:1, 2, 5, 8; 119:90; Lamentation 3:23; 1 Cor. 10:13; 1Thess. 5:24).

## b. His Faithfulness Applied

**First**, faith on our part demands believing in the unseen and unknown. We have to believe in what we cannot see nor completely understand. Our faith has an object and the object is valid. It is not blind nor stupid. Our faith is validated or confirmed by the object believed. God's faithfulness is seen in keeping His promises (Heb. 10:23). We cannot see the forgiveness of sin, the person of Christ, nor the hope of heaven. We cannot see the stain of sin, the reality of Satan, nor the horrors of hell. Yet, they are true. God will bring to pass all that He has declared to be true.

**Second**, God's faithfulness is seen in preserving His people in temptation (1Cor 10:13). Could you imagine what would happen if God ceased helping us in the midst of our temptations? If I do this poorly with His help, I cannot begin to imagine what would happen without it!

No matter how pitiful the situation might appear, God is there assisting and enabling.

**Third**, God's faithfulness is seen in forgiving sin (1John 1:9; 2:1). Should we not rejoice that God is faithful to forgive us of our sin?

**Fourth**, God's faithfulness is seen in the answering of prayer (Ps. 143:1). What if, when we called upon Him, He was too busy or not interested or simply forgot that we existed? God is faithful in the answering of our prayers and supplications.

**Fifth**, God's faithfulness is seen in completing salvation (1Thess 5:24). God said He would save us and He did, He said He would protect us and He does, and He said He would glorify us and He will!! He is the author and finisher of our faith.

**Sixth**, God's faithfulness is seen in sending affliction (Ps. 119:75, 71). God's use of affliction calls us to trust in His wise application of providence for the outworking of His eternal purpose. What if sin had no

intrinsic consequence, what would life be like?

5. God Is Merciful

a. His Mercy Defined

God's mercy is His compassion, pity, kindness, tenderness, and gentleness toward miserable sinners.

The difference between God's mercy and love is that mercy withholds what is justly deserved. Love grants to the recipient what they cannot earn.

Grace is unprovoked. It simply acts unselfishly toward its object. Mercy is the action carried out in place of justice. There would be no mercy if unprovoked. Mercy manifests itself because justice does.

Grace is God giving us what we do not deserve. Mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve.

b. His Mercy Applied

The mercy of God is seen first, in saving lost sinners (Eph. 2:4-8; 1 Tim. 1:13). Second, in the caring for His creatures (Ps 145:9, 15, 16). Third, in the helping His people (Neh. 9:17-21, 27-32).

6. God Is Gracious

a. His Grace Defined

Grace is God's undeserved and unearned and undesired favor toward condemned sinners. God didn't have to do what He did, but He did what He didn't have to do. There was nothing within humanity that moved God to act in a gracious manner toward him.

Grace and works are mutually exclusive (Rom. 11:6). Grace, by its very nature, is undeserved. Thus, it is referred to as a 'gift' (John 4:10; Rom. 5:15; Heb. 6:4). In fact, notice how this idea of a gift is translated in other passages of Scripture ('freely' Matt 10:8; 'without a cause' John 15:25; 'in vain' Gal 2:21; 'for naught' 2Thess 3:8).

“Works” are a consequence of grace. Works cannot “earn” grace.

Noticing these several passages helps us in understanding the extent of just how gracious God truly is (2 Kings 13:23; Romans 5:17; Eph. 1:7).

b. His Grace Applied

The application of God's grace is seen first in the area of justification (Romans 3:23, 24; Titus 3:7). It is an act of His grace whereby we are declared to be righteous before a holy God.

**Second**, His grace is seen in the area of regeneration (Rom. 5:15; Eph. 2:5, 8, 9; Gal 1:15). It is an act of His grace whereby we are saved from the penalty of our own sin. How can salvation be of works or how

could I even begin to think that somehow, I can earn salvation based on some merit that I produce?

**Third**, His grace is seen in the area of our sanctification (Titus 2:11, 12).

Grace teaches us to denounce sin not to partake of it!!! Grace and sin are mutually incompatible and exclusive. Grace erects walls, fences and barriers.

## SUMMARY OF HIS ATTRIBUTES

IN THE TOTALITY of His Attributes God is holy. God, as God, is intrinsically holy. He is simply by being God is holy.

- God Is Holy
  - His Holiness Defined

By this is meant that God is **separated** from sin and apart from the created order. This is referred to as His majestic transcendence and His moral purity. Both ideas are found in Isaiah 6:1-5. **God is different from His creation. Thus, He is holy.**

Holiness carries the simple idea of **separation or apartness**. It means to be set apart from common use. God's holiness is seen in two realms. **First**, His apartness from all that is created (a holiness of majestic transcendence [Ps. 99:1-3; Isa. 57:15 "high and lofty One"]). **Second**, His separation from all that is ethically unclean (a holiness of moral purity [Hab. 1:13; Ps 4:4,5; 1 Sam. 6:19-20; 2 Sam. 6:6-9; Mal 3:2]).

This is the quality that we typically accent or highlight when we speak of God's essence.

- His Holiness Defended

Pagan gods are made in the image of sinful humanity (for example, the Ashtoreth cult). From various passages it is typically concluded that God's fundamental attribute is that of His holiness (Exodus 15:11 'glorious in holiness'; Lev 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7; Psalms 89:35 'swears by His holiness'; 98:1 'holy arm'; 99:4-9 'exalt him'; 1 Thess. 4:7; 1 Peter 1:15,16. The entire book of Leviticus.)

Thus, holiness appears fundamental in so far that in the totality of His word and work, He is necessarily different than that which He creates. Such a claim is supported by the following *four Scriptural evidences*. **First**, the seraphim (angelic beings) impressed with God's holiness (Isa. 6:1-3). **Second**, His name is holy (Isa. 57:15). His name is a synonym for the character or person of God. At His core element God is holy. **Third**, His throne is holy (Psalm 47:8). The throne of God speaks of His administration, His rule. God in His actions toward His creation deals off of a holiness platform. It is the basis for His dealings with humanity. **Fourth**, He swears by His holiness (Psalm 89:35). To swear by His holiness is to bring His holiness into account or as a witness against the statement or event.

- His Holiness Applied

In looking at God's holiness we must endeavor to understand that He will never be my 'best buddy.' He is forever and always 'my God.' This is the Creator and creature distinction.

## VII. HOW DOES GOD EXIST?

When speaking of His existence we are referring to the unity and trinity of God. Initially we need to ask ourselves the value of studying His existence. What is the value of this study?

**First**, the basic economy for proper relationships between men and women is found in the Trinity (1 Cor. 11:3).

**Second**, a proper means of approaching God in prayer is seen. By considering and properly understanding the unity and trinity of God it is hoped that these two areas of concern will be clarified.

By the unity and trinity of God we mean that there is but one essence in the Godhead which wholly and equally pervades each of the three persons without division or multiplication.

God is three persons in one essence. Compare what we are saying against three false concepts concerning the trinity.

**Each of the following errors is an over correction of what they believed was an area of weakness or obscurity.**

**First**, modal trinity [Sabellianism]. This holds that there are but three aspects or manifestations of one person (i.e. one actor plays three parts).

“Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) rejected the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in God, saying instead that there is a Trinity of *essential components* in a *single* Person of God.”<sup>37</sup>

**Second**, *Swedenborgianism*. This holds that 'the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three essentials or elements of one God,' which make one, just as the spirit, soul, and body make one man;

“Swedenborg does agree with modalists, including Oneness Pentecostals, in affirming the full divinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while **denying that they are three persons**. This has led to the common error of labeling Swedenborg and Swedenborgians ‘modalist.’ However, Swedenborg rejects the essential, defining modalist doctrine: that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three different *modes* or *manifestations* of God to human beings. Swedenborg, and Swedenborgians, are therefore *not* modalist in their doctrines and beliefs.”<sup>38</sup>

**Third**, *Tritheism*. This holds that there are three gods rather than the three personal distinctions in the one God. The persons in the Godhead taken to mean three, as though they were three deified beings, constitute not a trinity at all but a triad.<sup>39</sup> These three false concepts stand as walls against which we should not lean.

	<p><b>Modalism</b> One God manifested in three ways   Unity without Distinction</p>	
<p><b>Subordinationism</b> Father above Son and Spirit Order without Equality</p>	<p><b>Trinitarianism</b> One being – Three persons Unity and Distinction Equality and Order</p>	<p><b>Pantheism</b> God becomes God via Incarnation Equality without Order</p>
	<p><b>Tritheism</b> Three Gods Distinction without Unity</p>	

Within the scope of this study we see two different aspects of the Godhead.

“When we speak of how they relate to each other and the world, we are speaking of the economic trinity (economic - from the Greek **oikonomikos**, which means relating to arrangement of activities). To be overly simplistic, we could say that the ontological trinity deals with **what God is** and the economic trinity deals with **what God does [in relation to His creation]** and how He functions **[in relation to each other]**.”<sup>40</sup>

**The Great Schism of 1052AD**

“The theological genius of the East was different from that of the West. The Eastern theology had its roots in Greek philosophy, whereas a great deal of Western theology was based on Roman law. This gave rise to misunderstandings and at last led to two widely separate ways of regarding and defining one important doctrine—the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father or from the Father and the Son. The Roman churches, without consulting the East, added “and from the Son” (Latin: *Filioque*) to the Nicene Creed. Also, the Eastern churches resented the Roman enforcement of clerical celibacy, the limitation of the right of confirmation to the bishop, and the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist.”<sup>41</sup>

“***Filioque*** Ecclesiastical Latin: [fili'okwe]) is a Latin term ("and from the Son") added to the original Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (commonly known as the Nicene Creed), and which has been the subject of great controversy between Eastern and Western Christianity. It is a term that refers to the Son, Jesus Christ, as an additional origin point of the Holy Spirit. It is not in the original text of the Creed, attributed to the First Council of Constantinople (381), which says that the Holy Spirit proceeds "from the Father", without additions of any kind, such as "and the Son" or "alone".”<sup>42</sup>

A. The Ontological Trinity

This deals with unity and equality. Each member of the Godhead is fully and undiminished God. There is no superiority of essence or being. This is clearly seen in the fact that each member within the Godhead is referred to as God.

1. The Father Is God  
(John 6:27; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal 1:1,3; Eph. 6:23; Phil

2:11; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; 1 Pt. 1:2;  
2 Pt. 1:17; 2 John 1:3; Jude 1)

2. Jesus Christ the Son Is God  
(Heb. 1:8; 1 John 5:20; John 1:1-3, 18; Titus 2:13)
3. The Holy Spirit Is God  
(Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3,4; 1Cor. 3:16)

In the concept of deity, fall all of the rights and privileges of that thought (i.e. creating, judging, preserving, etc.). However, with such a thought as the doctrine of monotheism there does arise several questions that can be asked.

**First**, if there is only one God, then everyone must be worshipping Him? Unfortunately, this is not the case. If people think they are worshipping God, but at the denial of Christ, then they are worshipping the devil (John 8:41-44). By splintering God, man attempts to rid himself of the notion of responsibility to one ultimate moral lawgiver and judge. If your god is fine and my god is fine, then who is wrong?

**Second**, if there is only one God, then what are the implications of it? Friends, if there is only one God, then there is only one doctrine, one duty, and one destiny.

However, within the equality you have another truth that runs parallel to the Ontological Trinity.

#### B. The Economical Trinity

This deals with diversity and function/administration. This explains how the Godhead operates. In order for three equal persons to function orderly there must be subordination in procedure or process.

Notice the preponderance of the references in John's Gospel.

1. The Father (Paternity) Sends the Son  
(John 3:16; 4:34; 5:24,30,36,37; 6:38,39,40,44,57;  
7:16,28,29,33; 8:16,18,26,29,42; 9:4; 11:42;  
12:44,45,49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5;  
17:18,21,23,25; 20:21; 1 John 4:9,10,14)

Close to forty times John states that Jesus clearly acknowledges and identifies Himself as one who had been sent by the Father. He exists of Himself, He is not begotten by another, and He eternally generates the Son, and with the Son sends the Holy Spirit.

2. The Son (Filiation) Sends the Spirit  
(John 15:26; 16:7)

He is eternally begotten of the Father, and with the Father, sends the Holy Spirit. Notice the person, the enfleshment, and not the being is begotten.

### 3. The Father and Son Send the Spirit (Procession) (John 14:16,26)

He proceeds from the Father and the Son forever. Perhaps in a simplistic way it can be said that the Father is viewed as the Planner (Creator/Architect/Framer), the Son is the Provider (Mediator/Supplier) and the Holy Spirit is seen as the Power (Agent/Instrument/Energy) behind the various acts of the Godhead.

It is not a hard and fast rule but it is worth stating. See 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Ephesians 2:18.

Note the prepositions:

"Of" the Father	(εκ - Source)
"Through" the Son	(διὰ - Channel)
"By" the Spirit	(εἰς - Agent)
"Unto" the Father	(πρὸς - Goal)

In the unity of the Godhead all are equal, without division or multiplication. However, in the operation or function of the trinity one can and does take antecedence over the other and some are in a role of submission.

#### QUESTIONS

- What Is Implied by The Statement, "MY FATHER SENT ME"?
- Does This Assume Same Natures but Different Persons?
- Is There an Implied Economy or Is there An Equality of Function?
- Consider the statement, "MY FATHER"

Notice the four practical implications this has in the administration of our lives.

**First**, in the area of the home (Eph. 5:21-24; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1Pt 3:1, 5).

In the equality of the believer, both husband and wife are equal. The same word used of God as being one in Deut. 6:4 is used in Genesis 2:24 (Eph. 5:31) to describe the union that exists between Adam and Eve, husband and wife.

**Second**, in the area of the Church (Eph. 5:30; 1 Cor. 12:12-20). The point of the passage is that there is diversity in gifts, yet one body. The diversity is crucial to the forming of the body. However, diversity does not mean inferiority nor superiority. Diversity is equality. Ontologically, the believers are equal, however, functionally, we are different. Different in what way? In exposure not, essence.

**Third**, in the area of the work place (Eph. 6:5-8; Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18).

**Fourth**, in the area of the government (Rom. 13:1,5; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13). This leads us to ask a very basic question. "What would happen if men refused to submit?" Without the practice of submission there would be complete anarchy. There would be no government, everyone would be doing that which is 'right' in their own eyes. There would be complete chaos and disorder.

## VIII. WHY IS THERE A GOD?

I would like to give two statements representing an unending stream of information as to why we have “religion.”

*Why Do We Have Religion Anyway?* November 9, 2011

<https://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/were-only-human/why-do-we-have-religion-anyway.html>

“The vast majority of the world’s 7 billion people practice some kind of religion, ranging from massive worldwide churches to obscure spiritual traditions and local sects. Nobody really knows how many religions there are on the planet, but whatever the number, there are at least that many theories about why we have religion at all. One idea is that, as humans evolved from small hunter-gatherer tribes into large agrarian cultures, our ancestors needed to encourage cooperation and tolerance among relative strangers. Religion then—along with the belief in a moralizing God—was a cultural adaptation to these challenges.

But that’s just one idea. There are many others—or make up your own. But they are all just theories. None has been empirically tested. A team of psychological scientists at Queen’s University, Ontario, is now offering a novel idea about the origin of religion, and what’s more they’re delivering some preliminary scientific evidence to support their reasoning. Researcher Kevin Rounding and his colleagues are arguing that the primary purpose of religious belief is to enhance the basic cognitive process of self-control, which in turn promotes any number of valuable social behaviors.”

“The point I’m making – that religious experiences emerge from very specific, very long histories – could be made with most religious phenomena. That’s because, in the words of the late sociologist Robert Bellah, “Nothing is ever lost.” History goes all the way back, and who and how and where we are now is the result of its winding forward. Any human phenomenon that exists is a human phenomenon that *became* what it is. This is no less true of religion.”<sup>43</sup>

Have you ever considered what life would be without God? The existence of God gives life meaning. By contrasting the two thoughts of God's existence against His non-existence will perhaps provide a clearer answer to the question, “Why is there is a God?”.

### BIBLICAL THEISM

### HUMANISTIC ATHEISM

1. Makes Life Personal

Makes Life Impersonal

Psalm 139 tells us that there is a personal, loving, caring, and compassionate God who is watching over every phase of my life from its inception within the womb to its culmination in the grave.

2. Makes Life Purposeful & Meaningful

Makes Life Purposeless & Meaningless

Romans 8:28 and Ephesians 1:1-12 tells us that there is a personal God who has planned the events of life to unfold according to His wise master plan. If there was no God, then life would become temporal and meaningless.

3. Makes Life Objective                      Makes Life Subjective

Herein lies man's greatest problem, the abandonment of moral absolutes. Today's society is governed by relativism. Psalm 119:128 tells us that there is an absolute standard by which right and wrong can be evaluated and judged. If there was no God, then everyone could do that which is accepted in their own eyes.

4. A God Who Is Active                      A Force That Is Passive

If God has considered fallen sparrows and knows the number of hairs upon my head (Luke 12:6,7), then surely, He is intimately involved in the affairs of this life.

5. Fills the Future with Hope                      Fills the Future W/ Uncertainty

First Thessalonians 5:24 assures me that the work begun by the Creator of my faith shall find its completion in the finisher of my faith (Heb. 12:2).

#### APPLICATION

- Do you recognize just how miserable your life would be without God?
- Perhaps you are sitting here and you do not know God, you are miserable. Only God can give you that which your heart truly longs for. He can give your life purpose and meaning. He alone can give you hope.

## IX. UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEOLOGY PROPER IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

It Should Not Surprise Us That the Articulation of The Trinity Was Progressive and Extended Over Centuries. That Some Would Get This Wrong Is to Be Expected. To Get It Wrong After 2,000 Years of Clarifying Is Indefensible.

We consistently argue that there are three categories or streams feeding our theological shaping. First, historical theology, second, biblical theology, and finally, systematic theology. Not all carry the same weight, but all must be considered to stay within the confines of ORTHODOXY. To abandon any, is to begin straying from the straight-way and narrow-gate.

**“Athenagoras (@180) the Trinity:** The Son is the Intelligence, Reason, Wisdom of the Father, and the Spirit an effluence, as light from fire. While the word Trinity is used, most of the early church fathers explained the trinity as God, His Word and His Wisdom or Spirit -- not as three people.”<sup>44</sup>

#### **Clement of Rome – 96 AD**

“Let us cleave, therefore, to the innocent and righteous, since these are the elect of God. Why are there strifes, and tumults, and divisions, and schisms, and wars among you? Have we not [all] **one God and one Christ?** Is there not **one Spirit of grace** poured out upon us? And have we not one calling in **Christ?**” (Epistle of Clement 46:17, 18).

**Ignatius of Antioch – 110-117 AD**

“... being united and elected through the true passion **by the will of the Father, and Jesus Christ, our God** ...” (Ignatius to the Ephesians 1:1).

“For our God, Jesus Christ, was, according to the appointment of God, conceived in the womb by Mary, of the seed of David, but **by the Holy Ghost**” (Ignatius to the Ephesians 18:2, 3).

**Irenaeus – 130-200 AD**

There are several early summaries of the Christian faith which predate the later creeds, such as the “Rule of Faith” as recorded by Irenaeus: “... this faith: **in one God, the Father Almighty, who made the heaven and the earth and the seas and all the things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, . . .**”

**Hippolytus – 200 AD**

The Baptismal Service:

“When the person being baptized goes down into the water, he who baptizes him, putting his hand on him, shall say: ‘**Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?**’ ‘**Do you believe in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, Do you believe in the Holy Spirit**, in the holy church, and the resurrection of the body?’ The person being baptized shall say: ‘I believe,’ and then he is baptized a third time.”

**The Apostles’ Creed**

I Believe In God The Father Almighty; Maker Of Heaven And Earth. . .

**The Nicene Creed** (Adopted A.D. 325; Revised At Constantinople, A.D. 381)

I Believe In One God The Father Almighty; Maker Of Heaven And Earth, And Of All Things Visible And Invisible. . .

**The Athanasian Creed**

The Athanasian Creed has been used by Christian churches since the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. It is the first creed in which the equality of the three persons of the Trinity is explicitly stated.

“We Worship One God In Trinity, And Trinity In Unity; Neither Confounding The Persons, Nor Dividing The Substance.”

**THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED (451)**

We Then, Following The Holy Fathers, All With One Consent, Teach Men To Confess One And The Same Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, The Same Perfect In Godhead And Also Perfect In Manhood; Truly God And Truly Man, Of A Reasonable Soul And Body; **Consubstantial With The Father** According To The Godhead, And Consubstantial With Us According To The Manhood; In All Things Like Unto Us, Without Sin;

## X. IN CONCLUSION

“God is more than the sum total of His perfections (attributes).”<sup>45</sup> In seeking to understand who God is through a study of His attributes, it is important to keep in mind that God is more than the sum total of His attributes.

Thus, the study of His attributes allows us to get a peek at God, **but it is only a peek!** Consider the words of Moses in Exodus 33:17-23, especially verse 23.

Then I will take My hand away and **you shall see My back**, but My face shall not be seen. (Exod. 33:23)

In studying the attributes of God, all we are seeing are God’s “back parts.” Consider also Job 11:7; 26:7-14 and 1 Timothy 6:16.

<sup>7</sup> **Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?** <sup>8</sup> They are higher than the heavens — what can you do? They are deeper than the depths of the grave — what can you know? <sup>9</sup> **Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea.** (Job 11:7-9 NIV)

<sup>7</sup> He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing. <sup>8</sup> He wraps up the waters in his clouds, yet the clouds do not burst under their weight. <sup>9</sup> He covers the face of the full moon, spreading his clouds over it. <sup>10</sup> He marks out the horizon on the face of the waters for a boundary between light and darkness. <sup>11</sup> The pillars of the heavens quake, aghast at his rebuke. <sup>12</sup> By his power he churned up the sea; by his wisdom he cut Rahab to pieces. <sup>13</sup> By his breath the skies became fair; his hand pierced the gliding serpent. <sup>14</sup> **And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him!** Who then can understand the thunder of his power? (Job 26:7-14 NIV)

**Who alone possesses** immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen. (1 Tim. 6:16)

As we put our study of God in perspective, we know little of God’s majesty. Although God is knowable, this knowledge is not exhaustible. Our God is bigger (Isa. 40:12), wiser (Isa. 40:13, 14) and greater (Isa. 40:15) than all we see. May God be pleased simply to show us His “back parts.” Such a view will transform the way we approach worship and live life and think theology.

As one studies the Scripture, it becomes clear there is no God like the God of the Bible. Although the list is lengthy, consider the following verses.

Then he said, “Tomorrow.” So he said, “*May it be according to your word, that you may know that **there is no one like the LORD our God.***” (Exod. 8:10)

For this time I will send all My plagues on you and your servants and your people, so that you may know that **there is no one like Me in all the earth.** (Exod. 9:14)

**Who is like You** among the gods, O LORD? **Who is like You**, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders? (Exod. 15:11 [Exod. 15:1-21])

**Indeed their rock is not like our Rock**, Even our enemies themselves judge this. (Deut. 32:31 [Deut. 32:28-33])

**There is none like the God of Jeshurun** [Israel], Who rides the heavens to your help, and through the skies in His majesty. (Deut. 33:26 [Deut. 33:26-29])

**O LORD, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You**, according to all that we have heard with our ears.” (1 Chron. 17:20 [Read 1 Chron. 17:16-27])

**There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord**, nor are there any works like Yours. (Ps. 86:8 [Ps. 86:1-10])

<sup>6</sup>**For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD?** Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, <sup>7</sup>A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, And awesome above all those who are around Him? <sup>8</sup>O LORD God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You. (Ps. 89:6-8 [Read Ps. 89:5-18])

**To whom then will you liken Me that I would be his equal?" says the Holy One.** (Isa. 40:25)

**Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me.**” (Isa. 46:9 [Read Isa. 46:1-13])

<sup>6</sup>**There is none like You, O LORD;** You are great, and great is Your name in might. <sup>7</sup>Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, **there is none like You.** (Jer. 10:6, 7 [Read Jere. 10:1-16])

<sup>9</sup> And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day **the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.** (Zech. 14:9 [Read Zech. 14:1-11])

Friend, there is none like our God . . . none. It is for this reason the Psalmist cries out, “Praise Him according to His excellent greatness (Psalm 150:2). So as we study the attributes of God, the intent is that His people would be able to affirm that He is enough in this life and in the life to come. Jesus is not just necessary; Jesus is enough! “When Christ is absolutely everything, then Christ alone is absolutely **enough.**”<sup>46</sup> May the study of God compel us to say, “He is enough in this life and in the life to come.” May this singular truth free us from our self-imposed bondage and cause us to worship Him even when we find ourselves traveling on the path of pain in a context of emotional and spiritual confusion.

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- <sup>1</sup> Karen Hall, p. 40 [Unfortunately, that is not a problem she will have to face]
- <sup>2</sup> Bosma, p. 44.
- <sup>3</sup> Erickson, Christian Theology, p. 263.
- <sup>4</sup> Ryrie, Basic Theo., p. 26.
- <sup>5</sup> Donald S. Whitney, Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life [Colorado Springs, Col.: NavPress, 1991], p. 82.
- <sup>6</sup> Paul Enns, The Moody Handbook of Theology, p.189
- <sup>7</sup>[emphasis added] John Jefferson Davis, Theology Primer: Resources for the Theological Student [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981], 36.
- <sup>8</sup> Patrick Griffiths, Jesus Is Enough, p.5
- <sup>9</sup> Paul Enns, The Moody Handbook of Theology, p.189-191. This material was initially provided by Pastor Giles in his class on Systematic Theology.
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/person-personhood.html>
- <sup>11</sup> A.T. Robertson's NT Word Pictures on John 4:24.
- <sup>12</sup> Erickson, p. 271.
- <sup>13</sup> Erickson, 272.
- <sup>14</sup> <https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>
- <sup>15</sup> Erickson, p. 272.
- <sup>16</sup> Erickson, p. 265.
- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/15-amazing-attributes-of-god-what-they-mean-and-why-they-matter.html>
- <sup>18</sup> Erickson, p. 265.
- <sup>19</sup> Ryrie, Basic Theology, p. 35.
- <sup>20</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-attributes-of-god/>
- <sup>21</sup> Bosma, p. 33.
- <sup>22</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aseity\\_Sauvage,\\_George\\_\(1907\).\\_\"Aseity\".Catholic\\_Encyclopedia,\\_New\\_Advent.\\_Retrieved\\_July\\_15,\\_2012.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aseity_Sauvage,_George_(1907)._\)
- <sup>23</sup> Clarke, W. N. (January 1, 2003). \"Aseity (Aseitas)\". *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Archived from the original on March 28, 2015. Retrieved 2014-11-30. *Aseity has two aspects, one positive and one negative. In its negative meaning, which emerged first in the history of thought, it affirms that God is uncaused, depending on no other being for the source of God's existence. In its positive meaning, it affirms that God is completely self-sufficient, having within Godself the sufficient reason for God's own existence.*
- <sup>24</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aseity>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://netbible.org/bible/Exodus+3>
- <sup>26</sup> A.T. Robertson's NT Word Pictures on John 8:58.
- <sup>27</sup> Bosma, Exposition of Reformed Doctrine, p. 22.
- <sup>28</sup> AW Tozer, The Knowledge of The Holy (New York, NY: Harper One, 1961) 45.
- <sup>29</sup> <https://danielpassini.org/the-infinitude-of-god/>
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/god-the-perfect-being/>
- <sup>31</sup> McCune, \"ST1\" p. 66.
- <sup>32</sup> Erickson, Christian Theology, p. 277.
- <sup>33</sup> Erickson, Christian Theology, p. 278.
- <sup>34</sup> Erickson, Christian Theology, p. 275.
- <sup>35</sup> McCune, p. 69.
- <sup>36</sup> Strong's Theology, p. 279.
- <sup>37</sup> <https://leewoof.org/2015/06/14/what-is-the-difference-between-the-swedenborgian-and-oneness-pentecostal-doctrines-of-god/>
- <sup>38</sup> <https://leewoof.org/2015/06/14/what-is-the-difference-between-the-swedenborgian-and-oneness-pentecostal-doctrines-of-god/>
- <sup>39</sup> Bancroft, Elemental Theology, p. 65.
- <sup>40</sup> <http://www.carm.org/ontological-and-economic-trinity>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/event/East-West-Schism-1054>

<sup>42</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filioque#cite\\_note-FOOTNOTERCA200270-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filioque#cite_note-FOOTNOTERCA200270-1)

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20190418-how-and-why-did-religion-evolve>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.piney.com/HsTrinityAthen.html>

<sup>45</sup> Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 35.

<sup>46</sup> [Emphasis his] Edmund Chan, *Mentoring Paradigms: Reflections on Mentoring, Leadership and Discipleship* (Singapore: Covenant Evangelical Free Church, 2008), 38.

