



THE WELL INSTITUTE

**THEOLOGY (PROPER)
[THE NATURE OF GOD]**

THEOLOGY (PROPER)

THE PERSON AND NATURE OF GOD THE FATHER

Introduction

"You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of [a]unscrupulous people and lose your own [b]firm commitment, ¹⁸ but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." (2 Peter 3:17-18)

"This is what the Lord says: "Let no wise man boast of his wisdom, nor let the mighty man boast of his might, nor a rich man boast of his riches; ²⁴ but let the one who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises [a]mercy, justice, and righteousness on the earth; for I delight in these things," declares the Lord." (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

There is no greater subject one can apply himself to than the study of God. The essence of theology (*Theos* + *Logos*) is the study of God, of His perfect Nature, His Being, and the characteristics which are self-defining for His Person. You will do well to pay attention to God's nature, because as you learn more about God – your life should change! No really! Don't forget, your very existence is tied to the Creator (Ps. 100:3; Is. 43:7, 21) and you exist solely for God's pleasure and glory (Ps. 8:3-6; 1 Pet. 4:11; Ro. 11:36; Pr. 16:4). What God has created, God creates for His own glory and pleasure (Ps. 19:1; 104:1, 4, 24, 31; 145:3-13; Is. 43:7; Rev. 4:11). **We cannot truly know ourselves until we know God.** French Theologian John Calvin (1536) states, *"Without knowledge of God there is no knowledge of self. . . it is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself."*

Overview of the Doctrine of God

The Importance of the Doctrine of God

1. The doctrine of God is important because the Bible is primarily a book about God, who He is, what He is like, and what He does. If that occupies the Bible – it should occupy us, our hearts, minds, and lives!
2. The possibility of knowing God: God is both incomprehensible AND yet, God is also knowable. Both are true, but not in the absolute sense. Finite man cannot know everything about a God who is infinite. Yet, God is knowable because He is a person who has revealed Himself to humanity to be known and who and can be known. We can and are called to grow in the knowledge of God (2 Pet. 3:18).

God IS Knowable:

*"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on **you know Him**, and have seen Him." John 14:7*

*"And this is eternal life, that they **may know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent." John 17:3*

*"And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that **we might know Him** who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."* 1 John 5:20

"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" Matthew 7:23

God is Incomprehensible: (READ Isa. 55:8-9; Deut. 29:29)

"Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?" Job 11:7

"To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him?" Isaiah 40:18

3. Understanding the reality that God is both knowable and incomprehensible is the difference between life and death; between a sense of significance, fulfillment, joy and peace AND a life besotted to self, misery, and meaninglessness. If God wants to be known and has made a way for us to know Him (although not fully while we are on this earth – 1 Cor. 13:12), then our very purpose in this life is to get to know Him and make Him the very center of our lives in all ways (Acts 17:28).
4. God is speaking (self-revealing), and has spoken, in order to reveal Himself (His nature and works) to mankind. Everyone has their presuppositions that undergird their perspectives, which mold how a person thinks and acts - "For as he thinks within himself, so he is." Proverbs 23:7. Thus, for us to be complete human beings, fulfilled in the purpose of our very creation, we do well to pursue knowledge of the Most High God who is worthy of every intellectual, mental, and spiritual ascent to KNOW Him!
5. The most important thing about any one of us is *what we know about God* and *that we know God*!
6. Knowing God, who He is, what He does, what He is like and what He requires of us, is the spiritual foundation for life, faith, joy, obedience, love, and worship (Ps. 119:97-101).
7. Neglecting the doctrine (knowledge) of God or thinking wrongly about God is a heinous sin. Which is worse? Not knowing God or not believing in His existence OR believing incorrectly about Him? i.e. Basing one's life on a wholly incorrect perception about God?? = tragedy. In the end, at death, everyone will be a theologian and scholar – and in death ALL will discover what is True about God, themselves, and their eternity (Hebrews 9:27)

*A note on the immensity of the subject (this is a life-long pursuit).

- **OUR THEOLOGY** should always lead to **Doxology!** = "Right knowledge leads to right worship."

God's Chief End and Man's Chief End

The *Westminster Confession* (1646) asks on behalf of every person "*What is the chief end of man?*" (i.e. What is man's very purpose? Why does mankind even exist at all?) The Answer resounds: "**Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.**" How could one ever understand *how* to glorify a God he knows nothing about: If our chief aim is to glorify God in all things (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17), with our very being (existence), then we are bound to seek, investigate, study, learn, and apply what it means to "know" God and His nature. **The most important thing about any one of us is what we know about God and that we know God.**

Reflection Questions: Why are **you** on the earth? Why now? What have you learned so far about God through your Life? Through your mistakes, failures, pain, loss, suffering, and victories? What have you learned most about God through His WORD? His Church? Your family?

- Why are you doing this study right now? What do you hope to learn? How/with whom will you share what you learn about God? Who else in your life needs to learn this? Apply this? Find Joy?

- Doesn't God deserve your very best effort in studying and trying to understand more about His nature? Right now you have the opportunity to apply your best energy, intelligence, life experiences, and heart (willing spirit) toward soaking in all of this study as God reveals more of Himself to you. It is for His glory and your benefit that you learn and apply it!

READ: 1 Pet. 4:11 *"That God in all things may be glorified."*

- The glory of God is a life filter through which we should sift every motive, belief, thought, and action:
WHY?

READ 1 Cor. 10:31 *"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."*

- Everything works to some end in things natural and artificial; man, being a rational creature, must propose some end to himself, and that should be, that he may lift up God in the world. To do this **He had better lose his own life than the end of his living**. The great truth asserted is that the end of every man's living should be to glorify God. Glorifying God has respect to all the persons in the Trinity; it respects God the Father who gave us life; God the Son, who gave and lost His life for us; and God the Holy Spirit, who produces a new life in us; **we must bring glory to GOD in the whole Trinity!**

The Practical Importance of Theology Proper

-One must *know* God in order to relate to Him. This is not a sterile, scholastic, abstract body of knowledge. **If we understand who God is, we should be awed by His greatness and goodness, and be motivated to worship Him. Not only should we praise God for what He *does*, but also for who He *is*; and specifically, Who He is to us.**

READ (Ex. 33:18) *Then Moses said, "I BEG YOU, show me your glory!"*

(Ex. 34:6-8) *"Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; (7) who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." (8) And Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship."*

This passage is in response to Moses' request "**show me YOUR glory!**" Note that God's glory is revealed not primarily in experiencing His power, but by understanding His **CHARACTER** revealed by His Word. This is an important realization today when people seek a subjective experience of God's power (or gifts) more than an understanding of His character as revealed through Scripture.

WARNING: In BAD theology, we tend to *humanize* God, to make Him from our own images.

Too many have tried to understand God by first looking at **our** own human natures and reflecting our attributes back onto God. *This is dangerous and unbiblical!* Unless we have a biblical view of God and stay focused on Him first, our understanding of Christianity will tend to be humanistic and self-focused, comprehended only by our feeble power, perspective, and too dependent on human wisdom (Ps. 50:21 " . . . you thought that I was just like you; in this, I will reprove you . . . ").

"Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and *lose your soul*." J.I. Packer.

AXIOMS: UNDENIABLE & SELF-ATTESTING PRINCIPLES ABOUT GOD'S GLORY, PURPOSE, & CREATIVE ACTS

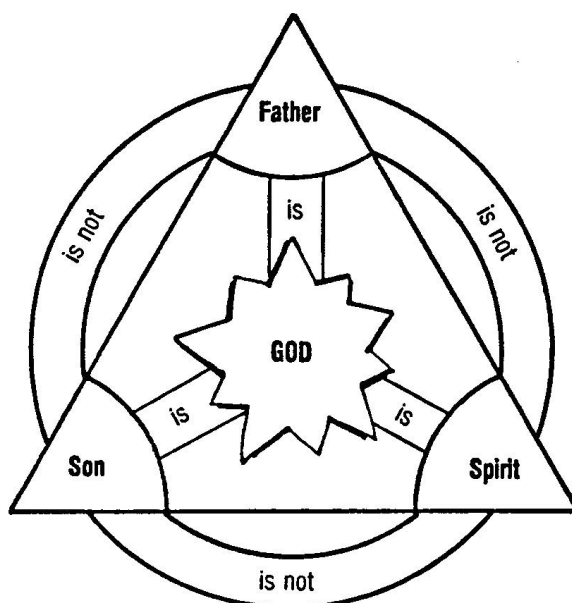
1. All of creation **EXISTS** for His glory (Rev. 4:11; Psalms 146:1-6; 19:1-2)
2. God created **YOU** for His glory (Isaiah 43:6-7; Psalm 8:3-6)
3. You are an image-bearer; created in God's image to reflect His **NATURE** (Genesis 1:26-27)
4. You were created to be a **glory-reflector** (Psalm 36:8-9)
5. You were created to be a **glory-enjoyer** (Psalm 63:1-5)

REVIEW: **The Trinity**

Within the study of God (THEOLOGY) perhaps there is no more glorious and yet confusing doctrine than the subject of the Trinity. Nowhere does the Bible EXPLAIN the Trinity – That God exists eternally in Three distinct Triune Personages – rather, the Bible assumes the Trinity's existence and nature (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Genesis 1:26). The Bible teaches that God is most perfectly expressed through the Triadic Nature of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (each Person perfectly related to the Other in essence and purpose, yet distinct in role and reality). Thus, our God is a Triune God. No one can explain why or how this is possible. The concept of the Trinity is beyond our mind and ability to truly understand or explain (Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:34; 1 Corinthians 2:16). God's infinite and perfect nature will never be fully understood by finite, incomplete, and depraved man (1 Corinthians 13:12). However, God has called us to search His truth and accept His self-revealed, self-attesting nature as God, just as He has proven Himself to be the only true and wise God in this universe (Romans 16:27).

- “The Trinity (Latin for *threeness*) speaks of a Triunity (= three in one) and is composed of three united Persons without separate existence – so completely united as to form *one* God.
- The divine nature subsists in three distinctions – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These Triadic Personages form the Unity aspect of the Godhead.
- “There is only one God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three eternal and coequal persons, the same in substance but distinct in subsistence.” –Charles Ryrie.
- Most of us are not able to explain how a Xerox copier works, but that doesn't mean it is not real, irrational, logically absurd, nor immensely helpful.
- The reality of the Trinity makes the incarnation and ultimately redemption, possible.
- Bible verses which detail the action of the Trinity: [2 Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 3:17ff; 1 John 5:7-8; John 17:24]. The Triune nature of the Godhead demonstrated the relational nature of God and hints toward why He created mankind to relationally enjoy Him in divine fellowship. God did not need to create anything, for He was already perfectly related.

ANCIENT DIAGRAM OF THE HOLY TRINITY



THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

- What is an “attribute” anyway?

An attribute is a **self-evident** quality which reflects the essence of that being (object). Within the study of theology, there are various ways to distinguish, categorize, and explain God’s attributes. In principle, God inhabits (contains) natural attributes which can **only** be found in His nature as GOD and which do *not* exist anywhere else in the universe. These are called **Incommunicable attributes** (i.e. His Aseity, Immensity, Immutability). There are other characteristics of God’s nature which He has chosen to share with other beings within His creation called **Communicable attributes** which reflect God’s perfect and holy character (i.e. love, justice, holiness).

The following four categories describe ways in which God alone owns a particular attribute (unique to Him) and those which He has graciously shared (imparted) with His creation:

- **Communicable and incommunicable.** Put forth by the Protestant Reformers, Communicable attributes are those attributes in which humans can participate (e.g. love, holiness) while Incommunicable are those attributes uniquely belonging to God (e.g. omniscience, omnipotence, etc.)
- **Intransitive and Transitive.** Intransitive attributes are those qualities which remain in God’s nature (e.g. Aseity), while Transitive are those qualities which operate on objects outside of God (e.g. grace).
- **Absolute and Relative.** Absolute attributes are qualities that He has within Himself (e.g. infinity, eternal, and omnipresent - being the absolute qualities of His absolute infiniteness). Relative attributes are qualities that are manifest in His relationship with others (e.g. justice, wisdom, forgiveness)
- **Moral and Natural.** God’s moral qualities are those related to His perfect nature of rightness (e.g. holiness, righteousness, justice, glory), while God’s natural qualities expressed within humanity are not necessarily connected to His moral nature (e.g. intellect, knowledge, wisdom, self-awareness, power).

A. The Incommunicable, Absolute, Meta-physical, and Intransitive Attributes of

God: These attributes are self-evident qualities which describe God's "Godness" & are unique to Him within the Universe. God, as One Being expressed in Trinity indicates that all three persons of the Godhood have and express these (18) categorized incommunicable attributes.

1. God exists and is eternally **Self-existent**. God's **Aseity** means He needed nothing by which to exist and exists independent of all aspects of the universe and beyond. (Ex. 3:14; Ps. 102:25-27 [Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:1]; Rev. 1:8)
2. God is **Simple**, the essence of **Unity**, and yet incomprehensible: Deut. 6:4; Is. 55:8-9; Deut. 29:29
3. God is **Self-sufficient** and needs nothing within or from creation. He is non-contingent. Is. 40:12-17; Ps. 50:10-12; Acts 17:24-25; Rom. 11:33-36
4. God is **Spirit** (Immaterial, yet Pure-Actuality) Jn. 4:24; 1 Tim. 6:16
5. God is **Transcendent** (Above all things). Is. 6:1-3; 40:21-25; 66:1-2
6. God is **Immense**. (Vast, limitless, exhaustive) 1 Ki. 8:27; Jer. 23:23-24; Ps. 34:18a; 73:24-25; Is. 7:14
7. God is **Eminent** and Pre-eminent among all creation. Ps. 93:1-2; 97:1-2; Is. 57:15; Rev. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:15-16
8. God is **Eternal** (Exists outside of time and space) Ps. 90:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:17
9. God is **Omnipresent**. Ps. 139:7-12; Prov. 15:3; Is. 66:1-2; Jer. 23:23-24)
10. God is **Omniscient** (All-knowing) Ps. 139:4; 147:4,5; Is. 40:13,14,28; Heb. 4:13; Rev. 2:23.
 *Concerning God's Omniscience - God has infinite, exhaustive and perfect knowledge.
 - Everything that can be said of God's knowledge of the past and the present, can also be said of His knowledge of the future, i.e., His foreknowledge is perfect, vast, limitless and exhaustive.
11. God is **Omnipotent** (All-Powerful) Rev. 19:6; Gen. 18:14; Mt. 19:26; Is. 44:26
12. God is **Omnisapient** (All-wise) Is. 40:28; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:6
13. God is **Infinite** (Not bound by time, need, or events). Ps. 90:2; 102:12; 1 Ki. 8:27
14. God is **Impassable** (Emotionally unmovable and not subject to passions, or suffering) Dt. 3:14; Job 22:2-3; 35:6-7; Ps. 5:10; Is. 40:13-14,28
15. God is **Immutable** (Unchanging) Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Ps. 102:26; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 6:17-18; 13:8; Jas. 1:17
16. God is **Incomparable** (Is. 40:18-26)
17. God is **Necessary** (Everything which exists is caused by God) Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 1:8; 3:14.
18. By definition of these very attributes, these divinely unique characteristics assume that the essence of God is **PERFECT**, being absolutely unique, unconditionally complete, transcendent above all things, morally unflawed, and qualitatively excellent (lit. above all else) Ps. 18:30; Mt. 5:48; Ro. 12:2; Col. 1:28

II. God's Existence, Sufficiency (Aseity), Eternality, Omnipresence

1. God is Spirit (Jn. 4:24; 1 Tim. 6:16)
2. Self-existent (Ex. 3:14; Ps. 102:25-27 [Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:1]; Rev. 1:8)
3. Self-Sufficient (Is. 40:12-17; Ps. 50:10-12; Acts 17:24-25; Rom. 11:33-36)
4. Transcendent and Imminently Transcendent: (Isa. 6:1-3; 66:1-2)
5. Imminent: Ps. 34:18a; 73:24-25; Is. 7:14 Together: Isa. 57:15)
6. Eternal (Ps. 90:1-2; 1 Tim. 1:17)
7. Omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-12; Prov. 15:3; Isa. 66:1-2; Jer. 23:23-24)
8. Incomparable (Isa. 40:18-26)

III. Immutability, Omnisapience, Omnipotence

1. Immutability =unchanging/unlearning/unprocessing/not growing (Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Ps. 102:26; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 6:17-18; Jas. 1:17)
2. Omniscience and Omnisapience

Omniscience - God is all-knowing (in eternity past, in the present, for all the future(s))

Premise #1: God has infinite, exhaustive and perfect knowledge.

Premise #2: Everything that can be said of God's knowledge of the past and the present, can also be said of His knowledge of the future, i.e., His **foreknowledge** is perfect, vast, limitless and exhaustive

The dilemma: If God infallibly and immutably knows my future choices, those choices are certain (fixed). God cannot be wrong about what He perfectly knows. The certainty of His foreknowledge appears to undermine our ability to choose to the contrary (have a true "free will" and be able to choose other than what God wants, knows, determines, or predestines). God's foreknowledge then appears to nullify human freedom (our free will).

-Free will is defined as our human agency and capacity to willfully choose/decide what we desire without any interference, coercion, forcedness, or divine pressure which would force or manipulate the outcome. Do humans have un-limited Free will? Is free will truly free if not "unlimited?"

Resolutions: 1) **Compatibilism**

1. **Prescience** (Foreknowledge does not indicate deterministic predestination: fatalism) Every human being can live and act as they desire (free will) and what God knows (foreknowledge) will come to pass BECAUSE God sees/knows ALL the future free acts of His creation. What occurs in time and space (our reality) happens because God foresaw OUR future free decisions and enabled that reality to come to pass actually. God does not violate our free will.
2. **Middle knowledge** (the middle way); Counterfactuals -God chooses the one real possible universe in an infinite universe of possibilities where you still have complete free choice and do decide without divine coercion and yet, God actually chose that particular event in time in space where He knew you would choose X and He created the environment where you actually chose it (freely). So, God is both sovereign and man still has unlimited free will.
3. **Determinism:** Human freedom and Divine sovereignty (**soft-determinism**) are both equally true and compatible. God is so sovereign that He is able to create a universe where mankind is perfectly free to live/decide/create with free will WITHIN the good and divine boundaries (spiritual and natural laws) created for humanity's blessing and enjoyment of God. What God decides (God's will) has preeminence over human decision, but God allows for both human freedom, limited free will, and reciprocity of our unforced, non-coerced love of God as true, authentic worship toward God – for His ultimate divine purposes, will, and glory. (Deut. 4:37; 7:6–7; 10:14–15; Eph. 1:4–5; Rom. 8:28–39; 9:13–14; 11:33–36).

Which way seems most correct to you? Most Biblical?

- 2) **Open Theism** -God is capable of learning; He set the boundary of the universe where He *responds* to human action (good or evil); God processes new information, then sovereignly acts to accomplish His will within the new data learned. i.e. Human tragedy, suffering, Tsunamis, evil etc.. Key OT Text: Ps. 139:1-6, 16 and Predictive prophecy.

2. **Ominsapience** -God is ALL-wisdom. He is not just all knowing, but He is ALL-WISE. (Job 9:4; 12:13; Ps. 104:24; Prov. 3:19; Dan. 2:20 Rom. 11:33-36; 16:27; Rev. 7:12)

3. **Omnipotence** (Absolute Sovereignty)

A. God has supreme and absolute **power** over all creation and creatures Pss. 62:11; 103:19; Jer. 33:17, 26-27; Lk. 1:37; Rev. 19:6

“Power in God may be defined to be the effective energy inherent in His nature by which He is able to do all things. The exercise of that power is dependent upon His will or purpose, and is limited not by what He can do, but by what He chooses to do.” James P. Boyce

B. God has a supreme and absolute **will** – God purposes to accomplish His desire and design. Job 42:2; Ps.33:10-11; 115:3; Prov.16:9; 21:1; Isa.14:24, 27; 43:13; 45:7; 46:9-11; Dan. 4:34-35; Rom. 9:16-21

“The Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but likewise of absolute liberty of will, so that whatever He does, or permits to be done, He does and permits freely and of His own good pleasure. God’s will is nothing else than God Himself willing, consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustrable. Whatever comes to pass, comes to pass by virtue of this absolute omnipotent will of God, which is the primary and supreme cause of all things.” Jerome Zanchius

C. God has absolute **rule and reign** over every created thing, person, and purpose within the universe. God oversees and reigns over His dominion – which is EVERYTHING.

-1 Chron. 29:11-12; Ps. 47:7-8; 93:1-2; 97:1; 99:1; Is. 52:7; Rev. 19:6

-God even has power over man’s heart (free will) Cf. Pharoah Ex. 3:19-20; 4:21; 7:3
Proverbs 21:1; Ps. 78:15-16; Ezra 6:22; Dan. 4:34

-God has power over the heart in redemption (Titus 3:5; Eph. 1:19-21; Luke 18:23-27;_
OR in **not** redeeming man -REPROBATION (Rom. 9:15-16).

-God’s power in/through weakness 1 Cor. 1:18-25

IV. God’s Communicable Attributes:

Goodness, Holiness, Righteousness, Justice and Truth

1. **Goodness** Ex. 33:19; Ps. 73:1; 119:68; 145
2. **Holiness** Is. 6:1-3; 57:15; Ex. 15:11; 1 Jn. 1:5
3. **Righteousness** Gen. 18:25; Ezra 9:15; Ps. 71:19; 145:17

-Righteousness in salvation – Ps. 65:5; 71:15; 98:2; Is. 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8; 56:1

4. **Justice** Deut. 32:4; Psa. 7:11; 9:7-8; 96:10-13;

5. **Truth** - Truth and reality Jn. 17:3; 14:6; 1 Jn. 5:20 -

- God is Ethically reliable Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18; Psa. 12:6; 119:160; Jn. 17:17
- God is Personally faithful Ex. 34:6;

V. Divine Affections

1. God has absolute capacity to **FEEL**; He has affections and emotions which are perfectly balanced & expressed to creation. Nothing “makes” God *have to* feel; He is not susceptible, nor dependent upon creation to react or respond to some evil or good. God chooses to feel within Himself and perfectly expresses His emotion (independent of humanity) but for His purposes **to** humanity in time and space; As God emotes, we learn about His character, capacity, His purposes and will for creation. As humans, reflecting the image of God in our soul, we are given by God emotions to express as we experience life in all ways (good, neutral, and bad). Emotions are part of our divine image and makeup. But, we can never allow our understanding and experience of our own emotions/emotive state of being inform how God emotes or chooses to express His affections (in love or in hate).

“God's emotivity is His supreme capacity to act responsively and sensationally; to feel pure and principled affections of love and hate, joy and grief, pleasure and anger, and peace; in accord with his supreme, spiritual, and simple Being and impeccable virtue. (Gregory G. Nichols, *Doctrine of God Part 3: The Nature of God*: section 2: Unit 8 Lecture 15, Fall 1997)

- A. God's emotional capacities are invulnerable, impermeable, and perfect. God's emotional capacity does not threaten His immutability. God does not change for Humanity. At times He expresses Himself in Scripture (in anthropomorphic terms) which appears that God “changed His mind” or that He responded to a request which He was contrary to do but was “convinced.” -Yet, because God perfectly knows all things – He cannot change, change His mind, or be convinced of anything; therefore in the biblical narrative where Scripture indicates these type of events: 1) it is due to human authorship (i.e. Moses) which is perceived from a limited human perspective and expressed in a way to encourage the reader. This is all superintended by God for His purposes. 2) God allows man to experience God this way so that man can better relate to God's design and purposes for his heart/life. This is called **Condescension**.

"The schoolmen, and often the philosophical theologians, tell us that there is no feeling in God. This, they say, would imply passivity, or susceptibility of impression from without, which it is assumed is incompatible with the nature of God. Here again we have to choose between a mere philosophical speculation and the clear teaching of the Bible, and of our own moral and religious nature. Love of necessity involves feeling, and if there be no feeling in God, there can be no love." (Hodge, I., p. 428,9)

-“God without an emotional life would be a God without all that lends its highest dignity to personal spirit, whose very being is movement; and that is as much as to say no God at all.” (B.B. Warfield, *Savior of the World*, p.117).

- B. God has and expresses perfect affections in all ways:

- He loves and delights in His Son Is. 42:1; Matt. 3:17; Jn. 17:24
- He delights in justice and mercy Ps. 33:5; Is. 61:8; Jer. 9:24;
- He rejoices in His people - Is. 62:5; 65:19; Zeph, 3:17; Jer. 32:39-31

- He is pleased/experiences pleasure – Ps. 115:3; Prov. 16:7; Phil. 4:18; 1 Thess. 4:1; Eph. 1:5, 9

- He Grieves – Gen. 6:5-6; Judges 10:16; Ps. 78:40; 95:10; Is. 63:10; Eph. 4:30

- He shows Anger, wrath, detestation – Ex. 22:22-24; Ps. 5:5-6; 7:11; Prov. 6:16-19; Mal. 2:16

Special note on Ps. 38:1-3

-He shows Compassion, pity – Ex. 33:19; Ps. 103:13; Is. 49:15-16

-He is the very definition of **LOVE** -1 John 4; Jn. 3:16; Jer. 31:3; Mic. 7:18-20

The Impassivity of God

God cannot die. There is no scenario where God (as the eternal, perfect, all-powerful Being) dies. Jesus, as God incarnate, God in the Flesh – He died. His human flesh, human capacity, and manhood was tortured and killed upon the cross. His physical body was buried. His physical body was resurrected and restored with His Spirit (the immaterial part of life = the soul). Yet, God cannot be killed. And God cannot be made to suffer. The word passion comes from *passio* – (Latin = to suffer). Thus, God is described as **Impassable**, unable to suffer at the hands of His creation. God is not subject to *have to* feel or to suffer because of man's actions. When God chooses to express regret, sadness, or pain -He do so to teach humanity (the biblical reader) the nature of God as holy, pure, righteous, just and that the actions of mankind are in direct opposition to His nature. Thus, His moral response to human rebellion, sin, and corruption toward Him and toward others is to show His displeasure as a teaching tool to show us His holy, upright moral nature and how we are to respond/act in accordance with His holy design and purpose on the earth. God does not suffer and is not made to suffer because of our actions. Because God is in no way dependent upon us for anything, He cannot be made to suffer, to regret, or to wish contrary to His own already revealed/hidden will. Dt. 3:14; Job 22:2-3; 35:6-7; Ps. 5:10; Is. 40:13-14,28

Defining the “Glory” of God – *Shekinah* Glory/ *Doxa* Glory

1. God **CREATED** everything for His own glory and pleasure; everything created was created to reflect glory, worth, praise, and worship BACK to God as images in a mirror reflecting their source. (Pss. 19:1; 104:1, 4, 24, 31; 145:3-13; Is. 43:7; Rev. 4:11)
2. God **RULES** over all and reigns supremely over all creation for His own glory and pleasure. This defines both **Sovereignty** and **Providence**. (Ps. 115:3; 135:6; Ex. 7:5, 17; 8:10, 22; **9:14, 16, 29**; 10:2; 14:4; 1 Sam. 12:22; Rom. 11:36)
3. God sovereignly **REDEEMS** people within creation for His own glory and good pleasure; God will eventually redeem the physical universe for His glory at the consummation of all time (Is. 48:9-11; 43:25; 4:23; Ezek. 36:22-23; Eph. 1:3-14; **2 Peter 3:1-11** and **Rev. 21:1**)

The Existence of God and a Defense of Christian Theism

The Existence of God is a **WORLDVIEW** question:

1. **What is a worldview?** A set of presuppositions (may be true, partially true, or false) which form the lens through which we live, perceive, and interpret life and the world around us. (Our individual “worldview” exists and **informs every decision in our life**, though it may be conscious, subconscious, inherited, developed, consistent or inconsistent, perceived or rejected).

“As a matter of fact, no man is without presuppositional commitments. As a matter of philosophical necessity, no man can be without presuppositional commitments. And as a matter of scriptural teaching, no man ought to be without presuppositional commitments” (Greg Bahnsen, *Evangelical and Inerrancy*, 211).

1. The myth of neutrality i.e. “I don’t really have beliefs about God”
2. The myth of autonomy i.e. “I can discover within myself what I need to know about “God.”
3. The traditional evidence (arguments) for the existence of God -*Cosmological, Moral, Teleological...*
4. No naked facts, = all facts must be interpreted, and every person has their own “lens” with which to interpret and make sense of all data, “facts,” and realities. This is a very human/personable endeavor and it affects everyone’s mind (intellect), heart (feelings/emotions), and will (actions/choices)
5. The rationalist or empiricist who rests solely upon evidence makes two serious mistakes: 1) There are facts and realities beyond any one person’s perception or understanding i.e. – all of us are at some limited in our capacity to understand/reason. 2) There are experiences and events which not every person experiences or has access to. **THUS**, to determine one’s worldview based solely on either Reason (Rationalist) or Experience (Empiricist) is an incomplete way/method, in the least, in which to conclude and stake one’s life, future, and eternity. All of life requires some form of **FAITH**.
6. **Conclusion** (Prov. 26:4-5) “*Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.*”

The Names of God

The Name(s) of God are part of God’s self-revelation to this world; These names are how **He** calls Himself, identifies Himself, and engages us to relate to Him (to call Him these Names). God’s self-identifying Name reflects part of His attributes and character (who He is and what He is like).

Gustav Oehler, “God names Himself, not according to what He is for Himself, but what He is for man; and therefore every self-representation of God in the world is expressed by a corresponding name of God.”

1. The Name of God is therefore vitally linked to His glory and His fame. “God’s Name represents God Himself, God in His self-revelation” (Frame). “In short, Scripture says about the name of God virtually everything it says about God” (Frame). Thus, we are to learn & know the Name(s) of God and rightly relate to Him and rightly relate Him to others for His glory and their own good.

READ Ex. 3:13-15

NOTE: Ex. 33:17-19; Ps. 79:9; 106:5; 115:1; Is. 42:8; 48:9-11

-My Name is “Jealous” Ex. 34:14 -**What does this reveal about God’s nature?** Is all jealousy bad jealousy? (Cf. Ex 20:5; Deut. 4:24; 5:9; 6:15)

2. The dwelling place of *The Name* [*Ha Shem*] (Deut. 12:5, 11, 21; 14:23, 24; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2)
3. The practical advantages of knowing God’s names

The Proper Name of God: *Yahweh* (יהוה)

-The revelation of the name *Yahweh* (Ex. 3:6, 13-17; 6:2-9; 14:4; 15:3)

-The meaning of the name *Yahweh* = “I AM” – The verb “to be” (I am / I will be). “I am that I am”

=I am the existing One; the all existing One; the ever-existing One; the One without beginning or end; the always has been One; the beginner of ALL things that exists One; the non-contingent, non-dependent One; the only truly autonomous One; the constant One; the Uncaused Cause One; the infinite One; the eternal One; the unchanging, unlearning, all-knowing One; the perfect One; the absolutely real One; the Creator One; the only necessary Being One; and the essence of all that is holy, good, righteous, beautiful, loving, gracious, merciful, all-knowing, ever-present ONE. **Thus, the most valuable Being in the known and unknown universe(s) ONE – the ONLY One worthy of ALL worship, praise, and glory One!**

*We must get this right in our theology!! Even by God’s very Name, a simple and yet infinitely profound Name – “I Am” – we are called to render our very life, future, and all praise to Him-this wonderful, terribly awe inspiring, Holy reverence-demanding God. HE is GOD...and we are NOT. We can only truly know ourselves as we know the living God. Lord, humble us and exalt us to know you and love you and order every aspects of our life around you! God help us live God-centric lives in all ways, every day, and every minute of the day. Please Lord, help us know you that we would live in AWE of you, producing worship in our hearts and JOY in our lives defined by divine meaning – *we exist because He exists*, Therefore, my purpose in my existence is to exist FOR Him!! Glory....

***Yahweh* Word Group**

1. *Yahweh Nissi*: *Yahweh* is my banner/standard = I exist for His praise/glory Ex. 17:8-1
2. *Yahweh Rapha*: *Yahweh* heals you Ex. 15:26
3. *Yahweh Shalom*: *Yahweh* is Peace Judges 6:23-24
4. *Yahweh Sabboth*: *Yahweh* of Hosts (all-powerful). Host = Angel armies Zech. 8:7
5. *Yahweh Sidkenu*: *Yahweh* our Righteousness Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15-16
6. *Yahweh Yireh*: *Yahweh* will see to it (He will provide) Gen. 22:14

El, Elohim Word Group

1. ***El***: God, the Mighty One, the Powerful One; = denotes authority
2. ***Elohim***: general term for 'God' (in the plural =*plural of majesty*), emphasizing His power and transcendence, as Creator and Supreme Being. Elohim =God is Sovereign.
3. ***El Olam***: God the Everlasting One, eternal God, God of eternity Gen. 21:33; Is. 40:28
4. ***El Roi***: the God who sees me Gen. 16:7-12
5. ***El Elyon; Elyon***: God Most High, absolute transcendence, majesty, incomprehensible, high and exalted Gen. 14:17-20; Isa. 14:13-14
6. ***El Shaddai***: God the Mighty One. *Shaddai* – supremacy over all others, power, strength Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; Ex. 6:3;
7. ***Adoni, Adonai*** – LORD, my Lord – signifies God as Master, master over all His realm and dominion

In summary:

Though we cannot ever fully comprehend God nor His complete nature, we are hard pressed not to be overwhelmed that such a perfect God created us for His glory and truly loves us – desiring true, intimate, and daily fellowship with Him. More so, for all Born-again Believers, this perfect and infinite God has placed a part of Himself into each of us as His Spirit both dwells (lives/inhabits) the immaterial portions of our lives (within our soul) AND fills us daily to live in His power and for His glory (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Ro. 8:9). The more we allow God to lead in us all ways in every part of our lives, the more capacity we have to learn about Him and to respond in right worship due His Name alone! Wow!!! What a God we serve!

So we engage in **Theology**, in the study of God, **for His glory** (Ps. 145:5); we do it with delight and joy, drinking deeply at the fountain of His delights (Ps. 36:8-9). In so doing, we are in part doing that which we were created and redeemed to do...give Him glory!

Romans 11:33-36

“Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? ³⁵Or who has first given to Him, that it would be paid back to him? ³⁶For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.”

END PART 1, THE NATURE OF GOD

APPENDIX 1

The Glory of God: (From the Westminster Catechism, 1647)

- I. When we speak of God's glory, the question will be moved, ***What are to understand by God's glory?***
- II. *Answer.* There is a twofold glory: 1. The glory that God has in himself, his intrinsic glory. Glory is essential to the Godhead, as light is to the sun: he is called the "God of glory." Acts 7:2. Glory is the sparkling of the Deity; it is so co-natural to the Godhead, that God cannot be God without it. The creature's honour is not essential to his being. A king is a man without his regal ornaments, when his crown and royal robes are taken away; but God's glory is such an essential part of his being, that he cannot be God without it. God's very life lies in his glory. This glory can receive no addition, because it is infinite; it is that which God is most tender of, and which he will not part with. Isa. 48:11, "My glory I will not give to another." God will give temporal blessings to his children, such as wisdom, riches, honour; he will give them spiritual blessings, he will give them grace, he will give them his love, he will give them heaven; but his essential glory he will not give to another. King Pharaoh parted with a ring off his finger to Joseph, and a gold chain, but he would not part with his throne. Gen. 41:40. "Only in the throne will I be greater than thou." So God will do much for his people; he will give them the inheritance; he will put some of Christ's glory, as mediator upon them; but his essential glory he will not part with; "in the throne he will be greater."
- III. 2. The glory which is ascribed to God, or which his creatures labour to bring to him. 1 Chron. 16:29, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name." And, 1 Cor. 6:20, "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit." The glory we give God is nothing else but our lifting up his name in the world, and magnifying him in the eyes of others. Phil. 1:20, "Christ shall be magnified in my body."
- IV. ***Q. What is it to glorify God?***
- V. A. Glorifying God consists in four things: 1. Appreciation, 2. Adoration, 3. Affection, 4. Subjection. This is the yearly rent we pay to the crown of heaven.
- VI. 1. Appreciation. To glorify God is to set God highest in our thoughts, and, to have a venerable esteem of him. Psalm 92:8. "Thou, Lord, art most high for evermore." Psalm 97:9, "Thou art exalted far above all gods." There is in God all that may draw forth both wonder and delight; there is a constellation of all beauties; he is *prima causa* [the first cause], the original and spring-head of being, who sheds a glory upon the creature. We glorify God when we are God-admirers; admire his attributes, which are the glistening beams by which the divine nature shines forth; his promises which are the charter of free grace, and the spiritual cabinet where the pearl of price is hid; the noble effects of his power and wisdom in making the world, which is called "the work of his fingers." Psalm 8:3. To glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem him most excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.
- VII. 2. Glorifying God consists in adoration, or worship. Psalm 29:2. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." There is a twofold worship: 1. A civil reverence which we give to persons of honour. Gen. 23:7, "Abraham stood up and bowed himself

to the children of Heth." Piety is no enemy to courtesy. 2. A divine worship which we give to God as his royal prerogative. Neh. 8:6, "they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces towards the ground." This divine worship God is very jealous of; it is the apple of his eye, the pearl of his crown; which he guards, as he did the tree of life, with cherubims and a flaming sword, that no man may come near it to violate it. Divine worship must be such as God himself has appointed, otherwise it is offering strange fire, Lev. 10:1. The Lord would have Moses make the tabernacle, "according to the pattern in the mount." Exod. 25:40. He must not leave out anything in the pattern, nor add to it. If God was so exact and curious about the place of worship, how exact will he be about the matter of his worship! Surely here every thing must be according to the pattern prescribed in his word.

- VIII. 3. Affection. This is part of the glory we give to God, who counts himself glorified when he is loved. Deut. 6:5, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." There is a twofold love: 1. *Amor concupiscentiae*, a love of concupiscence, which is self-love; as when we love another because he does us a good turn. A wicked man may be said to love God, because he has given him a good harvest, or filled his cup with wine. This is rather to love God's blessing than to love God. 2. *Amor amicitiae*, a love of delight, as a man takes delight in a friend. This is to love God indeed; the heart is set upon God, as a man's heart is set upon his treasure. This love is exuberant, not a few drops, but a stream. It is superlative; we give God the best of our love, the cream of it. Cant. 8:2, "I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate." If the spouse had a cup more juicy and spiced, Christ must drink of it. It is intense and ardent. True saints are seraphims, burning in holy love to God [from the Hebrew word *saraph*, to be burned up]. The spouse was *amore perculsa*, [an overwhelming love], in fainting fits, "sick of love," Cant. 2:5. Thus to love God is to glorify him. He who is the chief of our happiness has the chief of our affections.
- IX. 4. Subjection. This is when we dedicate ourselves to God, and stand ready dressed for his service. Thus the angels in heaven glorify him; they wait on his throne, and are ready to take a commission from him; therefore they are represented by the cherubims with wings displayed, to show how swift they are in their obedience. We glorify God when we are devoted to his service; our head studies for him, our tongue pleads for him, and our hands relieve his members. The wise men that came to Christ did not only bow the knee to him, but presented him with gold and myrrh. Matt. 2:11. So we must not only bow the knee, give God worship, but bring presents of golden obedience. We glorify God when we falter at no service, when we fight under the banner of his gospel against an enemy, and say to him as David to King Saul, "Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine," 1 Sam. 17:32.
- X. A good Christian is like the sun, which not only sends forth heat, but goes its circuit round the world. Thus, he who glorifies God has not only his affections heated with love to God, but he goes his circuit too; he moves vigorously in the sphere of obedience.
- XI. Q. **Why must we glorify God?**
- XII. A. 1. Because he gives us our being. Psalm 100:3, "It is he that made us." We think it a great kindness in a man to spare our life, but what kindness is it in God to give us our life! We draw our breath from him; and as life, so all the comforts of life are from him. He gives us health, which is the sauce to sweeten our life; and food, which is the oil that nourishes the lamp of life. If all we receive is from his bounty, is it not reasonable we should glorify him? Should we not live to him, seeing we live by him? Rom. 11:36, "For of him, and through him, are all things." All we have is of

his fulness, all we have is through his free grace; and therefore to him should be all. It follows, therefore, "To him be glory for ever." God is not our benefactor only, but our founder, as rivers that come from the sea empty their silver streams into the sea again.

- XIII. 2. Because God has made all things for his own glory. Prov. 16:4. "The Lord hath made all things for himself:" that is, "for his glory." As a king has excise out of commodities, so God will have glory out of everything. He will have glory out of the wicked. If they will not give him glory, he will get glory upon them. Exod. 14:17. "I will get me honour upon Pharaoh." But especially has he made the godly for his glory; they are the lively organs of his praise. Isa. 43:21, "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise." It is true, they cannot add to his glory, but they may exalt it; they cannot raise him in heaven, but they may raise him in the esteem of others here. God has adopted the saints into his family, and made them a royal priesthood, that they should show forth the praise of him who hath called them, I Pet. 2:9.
- XIV. 3. Because the glory of God has intrinsic value and excellence; it transcends the thoughts of men, and the tongues of angels. His glory is his treasure, all his riches lie here; as Micah said. Judges 18:24, "What have I more?" So, what has God more? God's glory is worth more than heaven, and worth more than the salvation of all men's souls. Better kingdoms be thrown down, better men and angels be annihilated, than God should lose one jewel of his crown, one beam of his glory.
- XV. 4. Creatures below us, and above us, bring glory to God; and do we think to sit rent free? Shall everything glorify God but man? It would be a pity then that man was ever made. (1.) Creatures below us glorify God, the inanimate creatures and the heavens glorify God. "The heavens declare the glory of God." Psalm 19:1. The curious workmanship of heaven sets forth the glory of its Maker; the firmament is beautified and pencilled out in blue and azure colours, where the power and wisdom of God may be clearly seen. "The heavens declare his glory:" we may see the glory of God blazing in the sun, and twinkling in the stars. Look into the air, the birds, with their chirping music, sing hymns of praise to God. Every beast in its kind glorifies God. Isa. 43:20, "The beasts of the field shall honour me." (2.) Creatures above us glorify God: "the angels are ministering spirits." Heb. 1:14. They are still waiting on God's throne, and bring some revenues of glory into the exchequer of heaven. Surely man should be much more studious of God's glory than the angels; for God has honoured him more than the angels, in that Christ took man's nature upon him, and not the angels. Though, in regard of creation, God made man "a little lower than the angels," Heb. 2:7, yet, in regard of redemption, God has set him higher than the angels. He has married mankind to himself; the angels are Christ's friends, not his spouse. He has covered us with the purple robe of righteousness, which is a better righteousness than the angels have, 2 Cor. 5:20. If then the angels bring glory to God, much more should we, being dignified with honour above angelic spirits.
- XVI. 5. We must bring glory to God, because all our hopes hang upon him. Psalm 39:7. "My hope is in thee." And Psalm 62:5. "My expectation is from him;" I expect a kingdom from him. A child that is good-natured will honour his parent, by expecting all he needs from him. Psalm 87:7. "All my springs are in thee." The silver springs of grace, and the golden springs of glory are in him.

XVII. Q. In how many ways may we glorify God?

- XVIII. *Answer.* 1. It is glorifying God when we aim purely at his glory. It is one thing to advance God's glory, another thing to aim at it. God must be the *Terminus ad quem*, the ultimate end of all actions. Thus Christ, John 8:50, "I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of him that sent me." A hypocrite has a crooked eye, for he looks more to his own glory than God's. Our Saviour

deciphers such, and gives a caveat against them in Matthew 6:2, "when thou givest alms, do not sound a trumpet." A stranger would ask, "What means the noise of this trumpet?" It was answered, "They are going to give to the poor." And so they did not give alms, but sold them for honour and applause, that they might have glory of men; the breath of men was the wind that blew the sails of their charity; "verily they have their reward." The hypocrite may make his acquittance and write, "received in full payment." Chrysostom calls vainglory one of the devil's great nets to catch men. And Cyprian says, "whom Satan cannot prevail against by intemperance, those he prevails against by pride and vainglory." Oh let us take heed of self-worshipping! Aim purely at God's glory.

XIX. Q. How shall we know when we aim at God's glory?

- XX. A. (1.) When we prefer God's glory above all other things; above credit, estate, relations; when the glory of God coming in competition with them, we prefer his glory before them. If relations lie in our way to heaven, we must either leap over them, or tread upon them. A child must unchild himself, and forget he is a child; he must know neither father nor mother in God's cause. Deut. 33:9, "Who said unto his father and mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren." This is to aim at God's glory.
- XXI. (2.) We aim at God's glory, when we are content that God's will should take place, though it may cross ours. Lord, I am content to be a loser, if thou be a gainer; to have less health, if I have more grace, and thou more glory. Let it be food or bitter medicine if thou gives it me. Lord, I desire that which may be most for thy glory. Our blessed Saviour said, "not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matt. 26:39. If God might have more glory by his sufferings, he was content to suffer. John 12:28, "Father, glorify thy name."
- XXII. (3.) We aim at God's glory when we are content to be outshined by others in gifts and esteem, so that his glory may be increased. A man that has God in his heart, and God's glory in his eye, desires that God should be exalted. If this be effected, no matter whom the instrument, he rejoices. Phil. 1:15, "Some preach Christ of envy: notwithstanding Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice;" they preached Christ of envy, they envied Paul that concourse of people, and they preached that they might outshine him in gifts, and get away some of his hearers: well, says Paul, Christ is preached, and God is like to have the glory, therefore I rejoice; let my candle go out, if the Sun of Righteousness may but shine.
- XXIII. 2. We glorify God by a frank confession of sin. The thief on the cross had dishonored God in his life, but at his death he brought glory to God by confession of sin. Luke 23:41, "We indeed suffer justly." He acknowledged he deserved not only crucifixion, but damnation. Josh. 7:19, "My son, give, I, pray thee, glory to God, and make confession unto him." A humble confession exalts God. How is God's free grace magnified in crowning those who deserve to be condemned! The excusing and mincing of sin casts a reproach upon God. Adam denied not that he tasted the forbidden fruit, but, instead of a full confession, he taxed God. Gen. 3:12. "The woman whom thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat;" if thou had not given me the woman to be a tempter, I would not have sinned. Confession glorifies God, because it clears him; it acknowledges that he is holy and righteous, whatever he does. Nehemiah vindicates God's righteousness; chap. 9:33. "Thou art just in all that is brought upon us." A confession is frank when it is free, not forced. Luke 15:18. "I have sinned against heaven and before thee." The prodigal charged himself with sin before his Father charged him with it.
- XXIV. 3. We glorify God by believing. Rom. 4:20. "Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God."

Unbelief affronts God, it gives him the lie; "he that believeth not, maketh God a liar." I John 5:10. But faith brings glory to God; it sets to its seal that God is true. John 3:33. He that believes flies to God's mercy and truth, as to an altar of refuge, he engarrisons himself in the promises, and trusts all he has with God. Psalm 31:5, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit." This is a great way of bringing glory to God, and God honours faith because faith honours him. It is a great honour we do to a man when we trust him with all we have, when we put our lives and estates into his hand; it is a sign we have a good opinion of him. The three children glorified God by believing. "The God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and will deliver us," Dan. 3:17. Faith knows there are no impossibilities with God, and will trust him where it cannot see him.

XXV. 4. We glorify God, by being tender of his glory. God's glory is dear to him as the apple of his eye. An innocent child weeps to see a disgrace done to his father. Psalm 69:9, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." When we hear God reproached, it is as if we were reproached; when God's glory suffers, it is as if we suffered. This is to be tender of God's glory.

XXVI. 5. We glorify God by fruitfulness. John 15:8. "Hereby is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." As it is dishonoring God to be barren, so fruitfulness honours him. Phil. 1:11. "Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are to the praise of his glory." We must not be like the fig tree in the gospel, which had nothing but leaves, but like the pomecitron, that is continually either mellowing or blossoming, and is never without fruit. It is not profession, but fruit that glorifies God. God expects to have his glory from us in this way. 1 Cor. 9:7, "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit of it?" Trees in the forest may be barren, but trees in the garden are fruitful. We must bring forth the fruits of love and good works. Matt. 5:16. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Faith sanctifies our works, and works testify our faith; to be doing good to others, to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, much glorifies God. Thus Christ glorified his Father; "he went about doing good." Acts 10:38. By being fruitful, we are fair in God's eyes. Jer. 11:16. "The Lord called thy name a green olive-tree, fair and of goodly fruit." And we must bear much fruit; it is muchness of fruit that glorifies God: "if ye bear much fruit." The spouse's breasts are compared to clusters of grapes, to show how fertile she was, Cant. 7:7. Though the lowest degree of grace may bring salvation to you, yet it will not bring much glory to God. It was not a spark of love Christ commended in Mary, but much love; "she loved much," Luke 7:47.

XXVII. 6. We glorify God by being contented in that state in which Providence has placed us. We give God the glory of his wisdom, when we rest satisfied with what he carves out to us. Thus Paul glorified God. The Lord cast him into as great variety of conditions as any man, "in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft," 2 Cor. 11:23, yet he had learned to be content. Paul could sail either in a storm or a calm; he could be anything that God would have him; he could either want or abound, Phil. 4:13. A good Christian argues thus: It is God that has put me in this condition; he could have raised me higher, if he pleased, but that might have been a snare to me: he has done it in wisdom and love; therefore I will sit down satisfied with my condition. Surely this glorifies God much; God counts himself much honoured by such a Christian. Here says God, is one after mine own heart; let me do what I will with him, I hear no murmuring, he is content. This shows abundance of grace. When grace is crowning, it is not so much to be content; but when grace is conflicting with inconveniences, then to be content is a glorious thing indeed. For one to be content when he is in heaven is no wonder; but to be content under the cross is like a Christian. This man must needs bring glory to God; for he shows to all the world, that though he has little meal in his barrel, yet he has enough in God to make him content: he says, as David, Psalm 16:5, "The Lord is the portion

of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places."

- XXVIII. 7. We glorify God by working out our own salvation. God has bound together his glory and our good. We glorify him by promoting our own salvation. It is a glory to God to have multitudes of converts; now, his design of free grace takes, and God has the glory of his mercy; so that, while we are endeavouring our salvation, we are honouring God. What an encouragement is this to the service of God to think, while I am hearing and praying, I am glorifying God; while I am furthering my own glory in heaven, I am increasing God's glory. Would it not be an encouragement to a subject, to hear his prince say to him, You will honour and please me very much, if you will go to yonder mine of gold, and dig as much gold for yourself as you can carry away? So, for God to say, Go to the ordinances, get as much grace as you can, dig out as much salvation as you can; and the more happiness you have, the more I shall count myself glorified.
- XXIX. 8. We glorify God by living to God 2 Cor. 5:15, "That they which live should not live to themselves, but unto him who died for them." Rom. 14:8, "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord." The Mammonist lives to his money, the Epicure lives to his belly; the design of a sinner's life is to gratify lust, but we glorify God when we live to God.
- XXX.
- XXXI. **Q. What is it to live to God?**
- XXXII. A. When we live to his service, and lay ourselves out wholly for God. The Lord has sent us into the world, as a merchant sends his agent beyond the seas to trade for him. We live to God when we trade for his interest, and propagate his gospel. God has given every man a talent; and when a man does not hide it in a napkin, but improves it for God, he lives to God. When a master in a family, by counsel and good example, labours to bring his servants to Christ; when a minister spends himself, and is spent, that he may win souls to Christ, and make the crown flourish upon Christ's head; when the magistrate does not wear the sword in vain, but labours to cut down sin, and to suppress vice; this is to live to God, and this is glorifying God. Phil. 1:20. "That Christ might be magnified, whether by life or by death." Three wishes Paul had, and they were all about Christ; that he might be found in Christ, be with Christ, and magnify Christ.
- XXXIII. 9. We glorify God by walking cheerfully. It brings glory to God, when the world sees a Christian has that within him that which can make him cheerful in the worst times; that can enable him, with the nightingale, to sing with a thorn at his breast. The people of God have ground for cheerfulness. They are justified and adopted, and this creates inward peace; it makes music within, whatever storms are without, 2 Cor. 1:4. 1 Thess. 1:6. If we consider what Christ has wrought for us by his blood, and wrought in us by his Spirit, it is a ground of great cheerfulness, and this cheerfulness glorifies God. It reflects upon a master when the servant is always drooping and sad; sure he is kept to hard commons, his master does not give him what is fitting; so, when God's people hang their heads, it looks as if they did not serve a good master, or repented of their choice, which reflects dishonour on God. As the gross sins of the wicked bring a scandal on the gospel, so do the uncheerful lives of the godly. Psalm 100:2, "Serve the Lord with gladness." Your serving him does not glorify him, unless it be with gladness. A Christian's cheerful looks glorify God; religion does not take away our joy, but refines it; it does not break our viol, but tunes it, and makes the music sweeter.
- XXXIV. 10. We glorify God by standing up for his truths. Much of God's glory lies in his truth. God has entrusted us with his truth, as a master entrusts his servant with his purse to keep. We have not a richer jewel to trust God with than our souls, nor has God a richer jewel to trust us with than his truth. Truth is a beam that shines from God. Much of his glory lies in his truth. When we are

advocates for truth we glorify God. Jude 3, "That ye should contend earnestly for the truth." The Greek word to contend signifies great contending, as one would contend for his land, and not suffer his right to be taken from him, so we should contend for the truth. Were there more of this holy contention God would have more glory. Some contend earnestly for trifles and ceremonies, but not for the truth. We should Count him indiscreet that would contend more for a picture than for his inheritance; for a box of toys than for his box of title deeds.

- XXXV. 11. We glorify God by praising him. Doxology, or praise, is a God-exalting work. Psalm 50:23, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." The Hebrew word *Bara*, to create, and *Barak*, to praise, are little different, because the end of creation is to praise God. David was called the sweet singer of Israel, and his praising God was called glorifying God. Psalm 96:12. "I will praise thee, O Lord my God, and I will glorify thy name." Though nothing can add to God's essential glory, yet praise exalts him in the eyes of others. When we praise God, we spread his fame and renown, we display the trophies of his excellency. In this manner the angels glorify him; they are the choristers of heaven, and do trumpet forth his praise. Praising God is one of the highest and purest acts of religion. In prayer we act like men; in praise we act like angels. Believers are called "temples of God." I Cor. 3:16. When our tongues praise, then the organs in God's spiritual temple are sounding. How sad it is that God has no more glory from us in this way! Many are full of murmuring and discontent, but seldom bring glory to God, by giving him the praise due to his name. We read of the saints having harps in their hands, the emblems of praise. Many have tears in their eyes, and complaints in their mouths, but few have harps in their hands, blessing and glorifying God. Let us honour God this way. Praise is the quit-rent we pay to God: as long as God renews our lease, we must renew our rent.
- XXXVI. 12. We glorify God, by being zealous for his name. Num. 25:11, "Phineas hath turned my wrath away, while he was zealous for my sake." Zeal is a mixed affection, a compound of love and anger; it carries forth our love to God, and our anger against sin in an intense degree. Zeal is impatient of God's dishonour; a Christian fired with zeal takes a dishonour done to God worse than an injury done to himself. Rev. 2:2, "Thou canst not bear them that are evil." Our Saviour Christ thus glorified his Father; he, being baptized with a spirit of zeal, drove the money-changers out of the temple, John 2:14-17. "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."
- XXXVII. 13. We glorify God, when we have an eye to God in our natural and in our civil actions. In our natural actions; in eating and drinking. 1 Cor. 10:31 "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." A gracious person holds the golden bridle of temperance; he takes his meat as a medicine to heal the decays of nature, that he may be the fitter, by the strength he receives, for the service of God; he makes his food, not fuel for lust, but help to duty. In buying and selling, we do all to the glory of God. The wicked live upon unjust gain, by falsifying the balances, as in Hosea 12:7, "The balances of deceit are in his hands;" and thus while men make their weights lighter, they make their sins heavier, when by exacting more than the commodity is worth, they do not for eighty write down fifty, but for fifty eighty; when they exact double the price that a thing is worth. We buy and sell to the glory of God, when we observe that golden maxim, "To do to others as we would have them do to us;" so that when we sell our commodities, we do not sell our consciences also. Acts 24:16. "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men." We glorify God, when we have an eye to God in all our civil and natural actions, and do nothing that may reflect any blemish on religion.

- XXXVIII. 14. We glorify God by labouring to draw others to God; by seeking to convert others, and so make them instruments of glorifying God. We should be both diamonds and loadstones (magnetic rocks); diamonds for the lustre of grace and loadstones for attractive virtue in drawing others to Christ. Gal. 4:19, "My little children, of whom I travail," etc. It is a great way of glorifying God, when we break open the devil's prison, and turn men from the power of Satan to God.
- XXXIX. 15. We glorify God in a high degree when we suffer for God, and seal the gospel with our blood. John 21:18,19, "When thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee, whither thou wouldest not: this spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God." God's glory shines in the ashes of his martyrs. Isa. 24:15, "wherefore glorify the Lord in the fires." Micah was in the prison, Isaiah was sawn asunder, Paul beheaded, Luke hanged on an olive tree; thus did they, by their death, glorify God. The sufferings of the primitive saints did honour to God, and made the gospel famous in the world. What would others say? See what a good master they serve, and how they love him, that they will venture the loss of all in his service. The glory of Christ's kingdom does not stand in worldly pomp and grandeur, as other kings; but it is seen in the cheerful sufferings of his people. The saints of old "loved not their lives to the death." Rev. 12:11. They embraced torments as so many crowns. God grant we may thus glorify him, if he calls us to it. Many pray, "Let this cup pass away," but few, "Thy will be done."
- XL. 16. We glorify God, when we give God the glory of all that we do. When Herod had made an oration, and the people gave a shout, saying, "It is the voice of a God, and not of a man," he took the glory to himself; the text says, immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms." Acts 12:23. We glorify God, when we sacrifice the praise and glory of all to God. 1 Cor. 15:10, "I laboured more abundantly than they all," a speech, one would think, savoured of pride; but the apostle pulls the crown from his own head, and sets it upon the head of free grace: "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." As Joab, when he fought against Rabbah, sent for King David, that he might carry away the crown of the victory, 2 Sam. 12:28, so a Christian, when he has gotten power over any corruption or temptation sends for Christ, that he may carry away the crown of the victory. As the silkworm, when she weaves her curious work, hides herself under the silk, and is not seen; so when we have done anything praiseworthy, we must hide ourselves under the veil of humility, and transfer the glory of all we have done to God. As Constantine used to write the name of Christ over his door, so should we write the name of Christ over our duties. Let him wear the garland of praise.
- XLI. 17. We glorify God by a holy life. A bad life dishonours God. 1 Pet. 2:8, "Ye are an holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him that hath called you." Rom. 2:24, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." Epiphanius says, "That the looseness of some Christians in his time made many of the heathens shun their company, and would not be drawn to hear their sermons." By our exact Bible-conversation we glorify God. Though the main work of religion lies in the heart, yet our light must so shine that others may behold it. The safety of a building is the foundation, but the glory of it is in the frontispiece; so the beauty of faith is in the conversation. When the saints, who are called jewels, cast a sparkling lustre of holiness in the eyes of the world, then they "walk as Christ walked." 1 John 2:6. When they live as if they had seen the Lord with bodily eyes, and been with him upon the mount, they adorn religion, and bring revenues of glory to the crown of heaven.
- XLII. Use 1.-This subject shows us that our chief end should not be to get great estates, not to lay up treasures upon earth; which is the degeneracy of mankind since the fall. Sometimes they never arrive at an estate, they do not get the venison they hunt for; or if they do, what have they? That

which will not fill the heart any more than the mariner's breath will fill the sails of the ship. They spend their time, as Israel, in gathering straw, but remember not that the end of living is to glorify God. Eccles. 5:16, "What profit hath he that laboureth for the wind?" These things are soon gone.

XLIII. Use 2.-It reproves such, (1) As bring no glory to God; who do not answer the end of their creation; whose time is not time lived, but time lost; who are like the wood of the vine, Ezek. 15:2; whose lives are, as St. Bernard speaks "Either sinfulness or barrenness. A useless burden on the earth." God will one day ask such a question as King Ahasuerus did, Esth. 6:3, "What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai?" What honour has been done to me? What revenues of glory have you brought into my exchequer?

XLIV. There is no one here present but God has put in some capacity of glorifying him; the health he has given you, the parts, estate, seasons of grace, all are opportunities put into your hand to glorify him; and, be assured, he will call you to account, to know what you have done with the mercies he has entrusted you with, what glory you have brought to him. The parable of the talents, where the men with the five talents and the two talents are brought to a reckoning, evidently shows that God will call you to a strict account, to know how you have traded with your talents, and what glory you have brought to him. Now, how sad will it be with them who hide their talents in a napkin, that bring God no glory at all! "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." It is not enough for you to say that you have not dishonoured God, you have not lived in gross sin; but what good have you done? What glory have you brought to God? It is not enough for the servant of the vineyard that he does no hurt in the vineyard, that he does not break the trees, or destroy the hedges; if he does not do service in the vineyard, he loses his pay; so, if you do not good in your place, do not glorify God, you will lose your pay, you will miss of salvation. Oh, think of this, all you that live unserviceably! Christ cursed the barren fig tree.

XLV. (2.) It reproves such as are so far from bringing glory to God, that they rob God of his glory. Mal. 3:8, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me." They rob God, who take the glory due to God to themselves. 1. If they have gotten an estate, they ascribe all to their own wit and industry, they set the crown upon their own head, not considering that, Deut. 8:18, "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." 2. If they do any duty of religion, they look to their own glory. Matt. 6:5, "that they may be seen of men;" that they may be set upon a theatre for others to admire and canonize them. The oil of vainglory feeds their lamp. How many by the wind of popular breath have been blown to hell! Whom the devil cannot destroy by intemperance, he does by vainglory.