

Doctrine of God

I. Introduction

- A. Theology comes from *theos* and *logos* meaning discourse about God.
- B. Theology is a general term that covers the entire field of Christian belief.
- C. Theology Proper deals specifically with the nature and attributes of God.

II. The Metaphysical Attributes of God

- A. *Living*. God is a living Being, not a force or idea (Ps 84:2, Mt 16:16).
- B. *Spiritual*. God is immaterial, an infinite spiritual Being (John 4:24).
 - 1. Humans beings have a material body; a spirit does not (Luke 24:39).
 - 2. God is invisible to human eyes (Col 1:15, 1Tim 1:17).
 - 3. Theophanies are visible representations of deity (Gen 15:17, Ex 3:2).
 - 4. No man has seen God (the Father) at any time (cf. Dan 7:13, John 1:18).
- C. *Personal*. God exhibits personal attributes and forms relationships.
 - 1. God has intellect (Isa 40:28, Isa 55:9).
 - 2. God has emotions (Gen 6:6, John 3:16).
 - 3. God has a will (Ps 115:3, John 6:38).
- D. *Eternal*. God is without beginning or end, infinite with respect to time.
 - 1. God always has and always will exist (Gen 21:33, Ps 90:2).
 - 2. God is not subject to the passing of time (Ps 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8).
- E. *Omnipresent*. God is incorporeal, infinite with respect to space.
 - 1. No one can hide from God; He is everywhere (Ps 139:7-8, Jer 23:24).
 - 2. Divine body parts are figures of speech (cf. Ps 17:8, 18:8, Isa 40:12).
- F. *Omniscient*. God knows all things, including the future.
 - 1. God is perfect in understanding (Isa 40:28 NKJV).
 - 2. God sees and knows all things (Heb 4:13, Matt 10:30).
 - 3. God knows our thoughts (1Chr 28:9, Ps 139:4).
 - 4. God knows all events to come (Isa 42:9; 46:9-10).
- G. *Omnipotent*. God can do all things (consistent with morality and logic).
 - 1. His name is *El Shaddai*, God Almighty (Gen 17:1).
 - 2. He created the heavens and the earth (Jer 32:17).
 - 3. With God, all things possible (Matt 19:26).
- H. *Transcendent*. God is distinct from His creation and above it (excludes Pantheism).
 - 1. God is contrasted with His creation (Gen 1:1, Acts 17:24).
 - 2. God is above the universe He created (Isa 40:22, 57:15).
- I. *Immanent*. God is present and active in the world (excludes Deism).
 - 1. God is close to us, so He can be known (Deut 4:7; Acts 17:27).
 - 2. He is involved in the affairs of this world (Dan 4:24-25, Matt 5:45).
- J. *Immutable*. God's nature, attributes, purpose and promises do not change.
 - 1. God does not evolve, decay or perish (Ps 102:25-27, Rom 1:23).
 - 2. God's character does not change (Isa 51:6, 1Kgs 8:56).
 - 3. God's decisions do not change (Mal 3:6, Rom 11:29, James 1:17).
 - 4. God responds to changes in our behavior (Ps 18:25-27 NIV).
- K. *Incomprehensible*. God can't be fully known by finite beings.
 - 1. God is unique; there is no one like Him (Isa 46:9, Jer 10:6).
 - 2. His wisdom and understanding are beyond understanding (Isa 55:8, Rom 11:33).
 - 3. No one can know God unless the Son reveals Him (Matt 11:27; John 1:18).

III. The Moral Attributes of God

- A. *Holy*. God is separate from all sin and evil.
 - 1. God has nothing to do with evil or wickedness (Ps 5:4, James 1:13).
 - 2. God is holy, and His people must be holy (Lev 19:2, 1Pet 1:15-16).
- B. *Righteous*. God always does what is right and just.
 - 1. God is inherently righteous and upright (Deut 32:4, Dan 9:14).
 - 2. God is just and fair in all His judgments (Zeph 3:5, Rev 16:7).
- C. *Loving*. God's character is pure love, sacrificial giving for the benefit of others.
 - 1. God is love, and He engenders love in His people (1John 4:16).
 - 2. He is gracious and merciful, patient and kind (Ps 145:8).
 - 3. He is benevolent and generous (Ps 145:14-15, James 1:5).
 - 4. He even sent His Son to die for our sins (John 3:16).
 - 5. God exercises tough love when necessary (Prv 3:12, Rev 3:19).
- D. *Faithful*. God is dependable and trustworthy; He keeps His word.
 - 1. He keeps His promises to His people (Deut 7:9, Josh 21:45).
 - 2. God is faithful; He will watch over His people (1Cor 10:13, 2Th 3:3).
 - 3. God is faithful; He will forgive His people (Matt 6:14, 1John 1:9).
- E. *True*. God is always truthful and cannot lie (John 17:17, Titus 1:2, Heb 6:18).

IV. The Trinity of God

- A. Basic Statement: God is one Being existing as three coequal, coeternal Persons.
 - 1. The term "God" here refers to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinct personas not separate beings.
 - 3. The term "coequal" refers to their divine nature, not their functional roles.
 - 4. The term "coeternal" means Yahweh always exists as three personas.
- B. The doctrine of the Trinity is consistent with Scripture.
 - 1. There is only one true God, Yahweh (Isa 44:6, 45:5, 1Cor 8:4).
 - 2. The Father is Yahweh (Heb 1:13, Ps 110:1, Heb 5:5, Ps 2:7).
 - 3. The Son is Yahweh (John 8:58, Ex 3:14, Col 2:9).
 - 4. The Holy Spirit is Yahweh (Act 28:25-26, Isa 6:8-9, Acts 5:3-4).
 - 5. The Father, Son & Holy Spirit are distinct persons (John 14:16, 26, 15:26).
- C. The doctrine of the Trinity is consistent with modern science.
 - 1. God exists outside the space-time continuum of this universe and is not bound by the limitations of His finite creation.
 - 2. Evidently, God can move through time as easily as humans move through space.
 - 3. If God repeatedly traversed eternity using a different persona each time, the paradox of the Trinity is easily resolved.
 - 4. Analogy: If an actor could travel back in time, he could play two different roles at the same time. From his point of view, there is just one actor; from the audience's point of view, there are two distinct characters.

Sources

Outlines on Systematic Theology, Robert M. Bowman, Jr.
Lectures in Systematic Theology, Henry C. Thiessen

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Living

Ps 84:2 My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Mt 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Spirituality

John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Luke 24:39 "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

Col 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

1Tim 1:17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gen 15:17 It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, *there appeared* a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces

Ex 3:2 The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed.

Dan 7:13 I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

Personal

Isa 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.

Isa 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Gen 6:6 The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Ps 115:3 But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Eternal

Gen 21:33 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.

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Ps 90:2 Before the mountains were born, Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Ps 90:4 For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or *as* a watch in the night.

2 Peter 3:8 But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

Omnipresent

Ps. 139:7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

Jer. 23:24 Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?" declares the LORD. "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" declares the LORD

Ps 17:8 Keep me as the apple of the eye; Hide me in the shadow of Your wings

Ps 18:8 Smoke went up out of His nostrils, And fire from His mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it.

Isa 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, And marked off the heavens by the span, And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, And weighed the mountains in a balance And the hills in a pair of scales?

Omniscient

Isa 40:28 (NKJV) Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

Heb 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Matt 10:30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

1Chr 28:9 "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

Ps 139:4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.

Isa 42:9 "Behold, the former things have come to pass, Now I declare new things; Before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."

Isa 46:9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure'

Omnipotent

Gen 17:1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless."

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Jer. 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You.

Matt. 19:26 And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Transcendent

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands

Isa 40:22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

Isa 57:15 For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite."

Immanent

Deut 4:7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him?

Acts 17:27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us

Dan 4:24 this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: 25 that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.

Matt 5:45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Immutable

Ps 102:25 Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 26 Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. 27 But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end.

Rom 1:23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Isa 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the sky, Then look to the earth beneath; For the sky will vanish like smoke, And the earth will wear out like a garment And its inhabitants will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not wane.

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1Ki 8:56 Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.

Mal 3:6 For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

Ro 11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

Ps 18:25 (NIV) To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, 26 to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. 27 You save the humble but bring low those whose eyes are haughty.

Incomprehensible

Isa 46:9 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

Jer 10:6 There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might.

Isa 55:8 For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Rom 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Matt. 11:27 All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

Holy

Ps 5:4 For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You.

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

Lev 19:2 Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.'

1Pet 1:15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

Righteous

Deut 32:4 The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

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Dan 9:14 Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.

Zeph 3:5 The LORD is righteous within her; He will do no injustice. Every morning He brings His justice to light; He does not fail. But the unjust knows no shame.

Rev 16:7 And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

Loving

1John 4:16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Psa 145:8 The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.

Psa 145:14 The LORD sustains all who fall And raises up all who are bowed down. 15 The eyes of all look to You, And You give them their food in due time.

James 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Prov 3:12 For whom the LORD loves He reprove, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.

Rev 3:19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

Faithful

Deut 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments

Josh 21:45 Not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.

1Cor 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

2Th 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

Matt 6:14 For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

1John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

True

John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

Tit 1:2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

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Heb 6:18 so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

Trinity

Isa 44:6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

Isa 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me

1Cor 8:4 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.

Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"?

Ps 110:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

Heb 5:5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU";

Ps 2:7 "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'"

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

Ex 3:14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Col 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form

Act 28:25 And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, 26 saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE"'"

Isa 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" 9 He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.'"

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? 4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26 When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me