

## 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).

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### 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