

# **DOCTRINE OF GOD**

**BY**

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We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (II Cor. 10:5).

## DOCTRINE OF GOD

### COURSE INSTRUCTIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

The doctrine (teachings) of God, also known as theology proper, is a fundamental part of systematic theology (the systematic organization of theological subjects). The traditional study of the doctrine of God includes giving Biblical, rational, creedal and historical data about the being, existence, and work of God. This work book will equip the student to not only study the knowledge of God but also give the student a tool by which to teach others.

#### PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The student will be prepared to formulate a clear defense of the being and work of the true God in order to properly teach others.

#### APPROACH

The approach of this course will be based on systematically organizing the knowledge we have about God and then seeking to instruct others. In order to instruct others using these course materials, the students will be briefed on the organizational methodology used in the course.

#### GOALS

- A. The student will review the following dimensions of the doctrine of God.
  - 1. The knowledge of God
  - 2. The existence of God
  - 3. The trinity
  - 4. The names of God
  - 5. The attributes of God
  - 6. The works of God
  - 7. The heresies about God
  - 8. The defense of the true God
  
- B. Upon completion of the course the student will be able to verbally and in writing  
Accomplish the following:
  - 1. Faithfully **identify** truths about God
  - 2. Biblically **verify** truths about God
  - 3. Accurately **define** truths about God
  - 4. Spiritually **apply** the truths about God to our lives

C. The practice of identifying, verifying, defining and applying is called the **memorization model**. Here is how it works:

	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE	POINTS -a point for all facts: book, chapter, verse, part of verse and any statement
identify	Single out a truth about God	1. God is love	1
verify	Prove it from Scripture	1. Dt. 7:7-9..but it was because the Lord loved you.. 2. John 3:16..For God so loved the world....	8
define	Explain it in your own words	1. Love is to give your best for another. 2. Love is the opposite of hate	2
apply	List the spiritual applications for your relationship with God, your neighbor, yourself and the world.	1.1 The greatest love that God could show was to sacrifice His Son on our behalf. I John 4: 9 1.2. God loves us first so we can love Him (I John 4:10) 1.3. Love is a fruit of the Spirit, we are to pray for it (Gal. 5:22)  2. Love, rather than hatred, is our moral standard and guide in society (Mt. 22:37) 3. You are to love yourself too (Mt. 22:39) 4. God's love is manifest in the world (Jn 3:16)	24 points
totals			35 points

Each fact given about God is worth one point. Notice that in the brief introduction about love we have mentioned 35 facts. Many more can be mentioned,

especially in the application section. It's our goal to numerate 2000 facts about God.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE

- A. The student will attend 15 hours of class. (15 %) If the student is studying by correspondence, he will listen by cassette or view by video 15 hours of class.
1. Each class hour is worth one point. If a student wishes to recover a lost point , he is asked to listen to the class tape or read ten pages on the subject matter and write a one-page report.
  2. Students who arrive late for class lose one half point. Students who do not come to class lose two points.
- B. The student will complete the questions and answers of this study manual.
1. All questions and answers will be written by the student in his own personal notebook. (15%)
  2. The course professor or facilitator will review the questions and answers of the student but not make corrections. The student is required to make his own corrections using the answers provided in this study manual.
- C. Besides reading the student's manual the student will do extra readings as indicated in the study manual. (20%)
1. Certificate and Bachelor level students will read 300 pages on theology proper. These readings include what is in the appendix of this course. A brief outline (no more than 3 pages) of the readings will be submitted.
  2. Master level students will read 500 pages on theology proper. A five-page outline of the readings will be handed in.
  3. This course recommends the following for extra reading. With permission from the professor, other readings can be made.
    - Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1996.
    - R.C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*. Wheaton: Tyndale, 1992.
- D. A final exam (50%)
- Tract A. The student will verbally or in writing communicate 2000 facts about God.
- Tract B. The student will verbally or in writing communicate 800 facts about God and write a 5-page essay about God during the allotted exam time
- Tract C. The student will write a 10-page essay about God and complete a short multiple-choice exam.

## LESSON ONE

### THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

*The disappearance of theology (doctrine of God) from the life of the Church, and the orchestration of that disappearance by some of its leaders, is hard to miss today but, oddly enough, not easy to prove. It is hard to miss in the evangelical world – in the vacuous worship that is so prevalent, for example, in the shift from God to the self as the central focus of faith, in the psychologized preaching that follows the shift, in the erosion of its conviction, in its strident pragmatism, in its inability to think incisively about the culture, in its reveling in the irrational (David Wells, *No Place For Truth*, p. 95).*

### INTRODUCTION

If God exists, then He should be able to tell and show us that He exists. That is not the problem. Our problem is that we do not want to recognize God as God. When Billy Graham was asked if he believed in God he said: “Yes, and I spoke with Him this morning.”

*The picture of fallen man as given in Scripture is that he knows God but does not want to recognize Him as God (Cornelius Van Til).*

If God were to come down to earth today we would most likely harass and ridicule Him; and if we had the opportunity, we would kill God. And this is exactly what happened about 2000 year ago. When given the opportunity, the Jews and Gentiles agreed to kill Him. Jews and Gentiles have not agreed on many things throughout human history, but when the opportunity presented itself, together they crucified the King of the Jews and the Lord of lords.

The problem is not the absence of God but the rebellion of His subjects. A gracious God offers a “faith solution.” If His rebellious subjects believe in the promises and teachings of the Savior, they will be saved from God’s wrath and cured from their rebellion.

There are only two religions in the world: those who by faith follow Jesus as Lord to the glory of the Father and those who by faith reject Jesus as Lord. Both religions are based on faith, the one on true faith and the other on false faith.

In this course, the student will be provided with ample evidences for the knowledge of the true God. The believing student will be strengthened by such knowledge while the unbelieving student will continue to reject the knowledge of

God. For both the believer and unbeliever, our singular object will be to present the Scriptural truth about God. The Holy Spirit will do or not do the rest.

*The worship of God is evoked by the Word of God, and it is the Spirit of God who used the Word of God to evoke it (John Stott).*

In this opening lesson we will speak about God's self revelation. We will reflect on His special revelation through Scripture, His general revelation in nature and in the conscience of people.

## GOD' SELF REVELATION

*There is no sense in speaking of the knowledge of God, unless it may be assumed that God exists (Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, p. 20).*

God reveals Himself in many ways. We see the evidences of God on His creation, we marvel at the image of God in His creatures and we hear His voice in a special way through reading and listening to the Word of God, the Bible. All of the revelations of God have one thing in common: God.

The knowledge of God has to be mediated. No one can see God face to face and live. God is far too majestic in His greatness and power and unapproachable in his holiness and justice. Yet throughout Bible history we see how God reveals Himself in a guarded and special way to His people. We read about the coming of the Angel of the Lord as well as other angelic messengers. God revealed something of Himself in the theophanies and He spoke through His prophets. However, the greatest self-revelation was when God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is God with us, Immanuel. Jesus is the perfect personal revelation of God (Hebrews 1:1-2).

It is the believers task to present Jesus Christ as Lord to the whole world (Mt. 28:19-20; Phil. 2:10-11). God reveals Himself personally in Jesus (Heb. 1:1-2) and Jesus commissions us to go forth in His name, with His Word and by His power. Jesus is the clearest and most personal way God can show Himself to us. You cannot see the Spirit or the Father, but humanity has seen Jesus. What an awesome historical fact!

## GOD'S REVELATION IN SCRIPTURE

In Genesis 1:1, the supreme and living God of the universe identifies Himself. Genesis is not the word of man about God but God's Word about Himself and about us (II Tim. 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21).

In order to accept God's self revelation, one has to accept the proper doctrine of Scriptures. If Genesis 1:1 is the inspired thought of Moses about God, then we must limit ourselves to the anthropological disposition and cultural context of

Moses. Genesis 1:1 would become captive to the archeologists and experts in Near Eastern studies for its meaning. However, that is not the case. In order to understand the intended meaning of Genesis 1:1, one needs God's intervention into our lives. The song writer set forth:

*Breathe on me breath of God, Fill me with life anew, That I may love what Thou dost love, and do what Thou wouldst do* (Edwin Hatch).

A believer and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ accepts Genesis 1:1 in faith. True faith is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:3-9). The believer does not have a problem affirming that God exists, that He is the Creator, that the plural name, Elohim, is foretelling the godhead and that the Creator God is also the saving God and perfecting God. A five year old believer or a recently converted 90 year old believer will accept the same content when influenced by the same Spirit of truth. The unbeliever will and should doubt every single implication of Genesis 1:1 because he is not directed by the Spirit of truth. When the unbeliever begins to truly pray and ask for God's intervention, he will become a believer, first of all, and then, he will understand the truth. To ask an unbeliever to wholeheartedly accept the truth without the Spirit of truth is to make him a hypocrite and a liar.

#### FAITH

Since the knowledge of God is about God and comes from God, it is logical that God has to give us such a knowledge in order for us to truly know Him. In the Garden of Eden, God did not demand something impossible from Adam and Eve. Their obedience would require faith. Without faith, they could not be obedient.

Faith is identified in Scripture as part of the work of the Holy Spirit in one's life (II Peter 1:3-9). Believers are called to exercise such faith. The humanist says that faith is an act of the human will. It is reasoned that man decides to believe. The Biblical position is just the opposite. The believer believes and then decides.

*Yet to all who received him to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God* (John 1:12-13).

*For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose* (Phil. 2:13).

*The faith that saves reposes in the person of Christ; it leads at once to a committal of the total being to Christ, an act impossible to natural man. To believe rightly is as much a miracle as was the coming forth of dead Lazarus at the command of Christ* (A.W. Tozer).

#### THE GENERAL REVELATION OF GOD



The man without saving faith also has a knowledge of God.

*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse (Romans 1:20).*

The knowledge of God in the unbeliever is distorted to the point that:

*There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God...There is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:11,18).*

The distortion of the knowledge of God is clearly seen in Christian liberalism. During the 2004 election campaign, President Bush and Senator Kerry were asked about the origins of homosexuality (third debate in Phoenix, Arizona). Bush simply said that he did not know. Kerry went on to say that God had made homosexuals the way they were and they were “simply living out how God had made them.” The god of Kerry is capable of making homosexuals and approves of their actions (see Romans 1: 28-32). The God of the Bible creates human beings, who through sin become sinners and practice homosexuality but God does not make sinners nor homosexuals.

The Phoenix presidential debate demonstrated three views of God: 1) God as the author of sin (Kerry) ; 2) God as silent on some moral issues (Bush) and 3) a God who reveals Himself and defines the sinner (Bible).

## CONCLUSION

The student will be challenged to examine Scripture in order to know the true God. The diligent believer's faith in God will be strengthened. The unbeliever will either be convicted by the Spirit as the truth about God or he will become more confused and rebellious. Our hope and prayer is that this study will glorify God in the life of the student.

The student will take a survey about his own knowledge of theology proper as well as review surveys taken by others on the same subject matter.

## SURVEY

1. The name "god" is comes from
  - a. The Hebrew language
  - b. The Greek language
  - c. The Germanic and English language
  
2. One of the Hebrew names for God, Elohim, is translated into Greek as:
  - a. Lord
  - b. God
  - c. Jesus
  
3. The meaning of Yahweh, one the Hebrew names for God, is:
  - a. Lord Almighty
  - b. Supreme Creator
  - c. I am who I am
  
4. The meaning of El Shaddai, one of the Hebrew names for God, is:
  - a. Lord Almighty
  - b. Supreme Creator
  - c. I am who I am
  
5. The meaning of Elohim, one of the Hebrew names for God, is:
  - a. Lord Almighty
  - b. Supreme Creator
  - c. I am who I am
  
6. The first reference to the plurality of God's name is found in:
  - a. Genesis 1:1
  - b. Genesis 1:26
  - c. Genesis 3:22
  
7. The first reference to the plurality of divine persons is found in:
  - a. Genesis 1:1
  - b. Genesis 1:26
  - c. Gen. 3:22
  
8. The name Immanuel means:
  - a. Savior
  - b. God with us
  - c. Anointed One
  
9. The name Messiah means:
  - a. Savior
  - b. God with us
  - c. Anointed One
  
10. The name Jesus means
  - a. Savior
  - b. God with us
  - c. Anointed One

11. What does it mean that God is immutable?
  - a. God is flexible; he understands that we are human
  - b. God loves, he will forgive our sins.
  - c. God's decrees are unchangeable.
  
12. When we say that God is incomprehensible, what do we mean?
  - a. That there are hidden aspects to God's being and ways
  - b. That one can never know God
  - c. That one can always know God's will
  
13. What is the aseity of God?
  - a. God cannot change.
  - b. God is a simple being.
  - c. God is too complicated to understand.
  
14. What is the sovereignty of God?
  - a. God is in control of all good things.
  - b. God is in control of all things.
  - c. God exercises His control when he so desires.
  
15. In what sense is God absolute?
  - a. God always gets his way.
  - b. God is independent of outside influences.
  - c. God does not contradict himself.
  
16. How would you describe the triune God?
  - a. God is three gods.
  - b. God is one in three persons.
  - c. God is three in one person.
  
17. How did we receive the doctrine of the triune God?
  - a. The trinity is a human way in which to explain God.
  - b. The trinity was the churches response to polytheism.
  - c. The tri-unity of God is seen in the Great Commission given by Jesus.
  
18. Does it make a difference if Jesus is created or eternal?
  - a. Yes, only an eternal Savior can save us for eternity.
  - b. Yes, the faithful church has always held this position.
  - c. No, we cannot understand the mystery of eternity.
  
19. What is the difference between systematic theology and theology proper?
  - a. Systematic theology is much more organized.
  - b. Proper theology is the right way to do theology.
  - c. Proper theology refers to the doctrine of God.
  
20. How is God known to us?
  - a. God reveals Himself to all people in a general way and to His people in a special way.
  - b. Every person experiences God in his or her own way.
  - c. We cannot really know God.

## HOMEWORK FOR LESSON ONE

Pedagogical Pointer: The students will be introduced to the broad field of the knowledge of God. The survey will raise some relevant questions in the minds of the students. The readings will show the necessity of knowing God.

The students will formulate a one-minute oral presentation on their view of God. In speaking about God, mention will be made of His being and activities.

Reading (for Bachelor and Master students); Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 29-40 and R.C. Sproul, *Essentials*, pp.ix.-xxi, 3-28.

### QUESTIONS FROM READINGS

1. According to Berkhof, what is the relationship between the knowledge of God and the incomprehensibility of God?
2. Write a one-page paper on the 10 causes for spiritual immaturity, as given by R.C. Sproul. Ask your pastor about which of these causes he most struggles.

## LESSON TWO

### THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

*It is impossible for something to create itself. The concept of self-creation is a contradiction in terms; a non-sense statement...not even God can make Himself. For God to create Himself He would have to be before He is. Even God can't do that ( R.C. Sproul, Essential Truths, p. 37).*

The Old Testament revelation of the name *Yahweh* (Ex. 3:14) is "I am who I am." God is the God of all being and existence. We have come to know this God through faith in Jesus Christ, the perfect revelation of God (Heb. 1:1-2).

There are people who do not believe in the existence of God (a-theism: no god). There are also people who are "practical atheists" who believe in a god but who live as though God does not exist. They are "evil doers" living as if the redemptive work of Jesus does not apply to them (Mt. 7:21-23).

The Christian is confident that God exists. The Christian believes in Christ, the perfect revelation of God Himself. With such confidence and knowledge about God's existence, we see the inconsistencies of the atheist's position. In fact, we know that the question is not whether God exists but whether atheism can exist. There are many reasons why atheism is not tenable.

1. The atheist's name is a linguistically contradiction. If the atheist believes that God does not exist why does he continue to use the concept of god (theist) in his vocabulary? The true atheist needs to find a different name for himself, something that most atheists are unwilling to do.
2. Atheism has been a characteristic of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and does not have a long history. Atheist's absence is noticeable in primitive societies. Why is it that atheism does not exist in the primitive societies of our world? All of the primitive societies that still exist in our world (those who have not been influenced by modernism) have a consciousness of a god. Atheism has to be seen as a later day reaction rather than a natural condition of people (Rom. 1:20).
3. Atheistic governments have been unable to eradicate the knowledge of God. Twentieth-century societies, such as the communist Russia, China and Cuba, of which Russia and China represent more than one half of the world's population, have desperately tried to eradicate Christianity and failed (Ps. 2:1-2). The Russian Christian church has long outlasted its communist persecutors. There are close to a hundred million Christians in China. I know of Cuban pastors who spent two years in brain washing camps, but their belief was stronger when they left than when they entered.
4. Anti-religious movements in the free societies have not eradicated the acknowledgement of God from the public arena. It seemed that the so-called Liberty unions were making headway in banning the name of God, prayer and

Ten Commandments from our public institutions. Then in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorists' acts brought an outpouring of prayer to God in all of our public institutions. The President of the United States, the congress, public institutions, public schools and people throughout the United States appealed to the mercies of God in the public.

5. The universal goal of atheism to annihilate the knowledge of God from humanity has failed. Yet, the church continues to grow at alarming rates throughout the world. The church has been established in every nation of the world.

6. If God does not exist then there is no supreme absolute Being. If there are no absolutes, how can the atheist be absolutely certain that atheism exists? (Rom. 1:22)

7. The cursing and emotional outburst of atheists shows they are suppressing the knowledge of God. When the atheist curses he is known to curse God. Is the atheist cursing a non-existent entity? Is the atheist seriously cursing a mythological being or is he betraying an innate knowledge of God? (Rom. 1:19). Atheists become angry with God. If God does not exist, why get angry with Him? I read the testimony of an atheistic lady whom upon realizing that she was angry with God began to believe in Him.

8. If the devil is not an atheist, why are there atheists? The essence of atheism is the suppression of truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18). Deception is the major tool of the Devil, the father of lies (Jn. 8:44). Even though the Devil believes that God exists, tempted God and rebels against God (Mt. 4:1-11), he deceives his followers by denying the existence of God.

9. If God takes into account that there are atheists, why isn't the atheist open to the possibility that God exists? Even though the fool says in his heart that there is no God (Ps. 14:1) God does not deny that the atheist needs grace. God continually offers grace to the atheist. Do not atheists need grace, mercy, forgiveness and pardon?

10. The testimony of former atheists. The atheist is right in rejecting the wrong concept of God. But does the rejection of the wrong concept of God mean that the true God does not exist? There are many testimonies of atheists coming to know Christ and now professing the existence of the true God. My traveling and teaching experiences in Cuba, where in speaking with police, immigration and citizens, one is impressed that even though the Cubans have been schooled in atheistic materialism, many believe in God; and others are willing to listen.

The antithesis of unbelief in God's existence cannot be sustained by a rational mind. So if God does exist, how should we think of Him? Berkhof reminds us:

*The Christian accepts the truth of the existence of God by faith. But this faith is not a blind faith, but a faith that is based on evidence, and the evidence is found primarily in Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, and secondarily in God's revelation in nature (p. 21).*

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

In the following proofs for the existence of God, 4 truths are assumed: 1) God exists. 2) If God exists, He is able to **reveal** Himself. 3) If God exists and reveals Himself, then **reality** is that which corresponds to His revelation. 4) If God exists, then reality has a way to **relate** to God.

There are those who say that one must start with God (faith presuppositions) while others seek to start with reality (evidences). In our method we start at whatever juncture since all truth is God's truth; and truth is always one and harmonious.

For example, an evidencialists will point out that the fact that justice, science and conscience appeals to absolutes are an indication that someone must exist who determines absolutes. Such an absolute being is God. A presuppositionalist would say that since an absolute Being exists, justice, science and the human conscience appeals to ultimate sources of absolute truth. Can they both be right? The answer is "yes." Both positions are speaking about the same truth from different starting points

The following exercise is to help the believing student to contemplate the existence of God. We will use a variety of approaches.

A	<p><u>Absolutes</u>: If absolutes exist, there must be a source for absoluteness. Only an absolute God could be such a source. Anything less than an Absolute Being as source, definer and guardian for absolutes would destroy the concept of absoluteness (Job 40:2; Ja. 1:17; Tit. 1:2).</p> <p><u>Atheists</u>. The atheists has to define himself ( a-no, theist-god) in terms of what he is trying to negate.</p>
B	<p><u>Beauty</u>. Handel's music, the Messiah, exists. God exists.</p> <p><u>Being</u>: If the reality of being exists (I am) and such a reality has origin, continuity and purpose, then there must be a Supreme Being from which beings derive their existence (Exodus 3:14; Jn 8:58, Acts 17:28).</p>
C	<p><u>Cause</u>: There cannot be an infinite regress of finite causes. Therefore, there must be an uncaused cause or necessary being. This being is God (Aquinas).</p> <p><u>Cause and effect</u>: If the cause cannot precede the effect, as heat does not precede fire, then where does the first cause originate (Gen. 1:1)?</p> <p><u>Creation</u>: If there is a creation and the creation exists in an orderly fashion then there must be an orderly Creator who created and sustains such a creation (Ps. 19: 1-4).</p> <p><u>Contradictions</u>: The atheist says: "Thank God I'm an atheist" (Ps. 14:1).</p>
D	<p><u>Deity</u>: If the idea of divinity exists, there must be an absolute and ultimate expression of divinity and hence a divine being (Ps 139:7).</p> <p><u>Design</u>: Reality has designs and patterns which cannot be attributed to themselves so there must be an intelligent being Who can make designs according to His will (Ps. 19:1b)</p> <p><u>Devil</u>: Even the Devil believes that God exists (Mt. 4:10).</p> <p><u>Demons</u>: Even the demons believe that God exists (Ja. 2:19).</p>
E	<p><u>Existence</u>: For existence to exist, there must be One who has existed forever, or else existence did not exist at the beginning (Ps. 90:2).</p> <p><u>Eternity</u>: For eternity to exist there must be one who has eternally existed or else eternity is not eternal (Rev. 1:8).</p>

	<p><u>Evil</u>: If evil is wrong, then there must be that which is opposite to evil, namely, the good. It is inherently right that good is better than evil. Only good can overcome evil. Only an ultimate expression of goodness will overcome the worst expression of evil (Rom. 12:9,17,21)</p> <p><u>Experience</u>: In order for our experiences to have value, there must exist Someone who evaluates such experiences (Ps. 94:11).</p>
F	<p><u>Faith</u>: Faith exists. By faith we understand that which we have not seen (Heb. 11:1).</p> <p><u>Failure</u>: Governments and people who have tried to stamp out the knowledge of God have failed.</p> <p><u>Foolishness</u>: "The fool says in his heart, there is no God" (Ps. 14:1).</p> <p><u>Forgiveness</u>: The fact that forgiveness is necessary and exists implies there is an absolute standard of right, wrong and reconciliation. If such a standard did not exist there would be no reason to forgive (2 Tim. 2:13).</p>
G	<p><u>God</u>: God doesn't go away.</p> <p><u>Goodness</u>: In order for goodness to exist and overcome evil there must be an absolute source for goodness that is able to overcome evil. The good news is that God has overcome evil through the death and resurrection of His son (Lk. 18: 19).</p> <p><u>Glory</u>: The human being is capable of experiencing moments of glory. In order for glory (the most excellent manifestation of reality) to exist, there must be One who is perfectly glorified (Jn. 17:1).</p> <p><u>Guilt</u>: If we have a secret conviction that we deserve punishment, who but God will punish our secret sins? (Rom. 2:15-16)</p>
H	<p><u>Harmony</u>: The ability of unrelated parts of the universe to cooperate necessitates a Designer and Provider.</p> <p><u>History</u> attests that Jesus, who claimed to be God, lived, died and rose again some 2000 years ago (Lk. 1:1-4)</p> <p><u>Humanity</u>: God became man in Jesus Christ in order that mankind can come to God (Phil. 2: 6-8).</p>
I	<p><u>Idea</u>: God himself must be the cause of the idea we have of him (Descartes)</p> <p><u>Intuition</u>: Each human being has an intuitive knowledge of the concept of God which is suppressed but which cannot be eradicated by man or society (Rom. 1:20)</p>
J	<p><u>Jesus Christ</u>: Jesus came to earth as the perfect revelation of God (Heb. 1:1-4). To deny God is to deny the historical existence and teachings of Jesus.</p> <p><u>Justice</u>: In order for true justice to be accomplished, there has to be an ultimate standard of justice and a judge who perfectly deals with evil (Gen. 18:25)</p>
K	<p><u>Kingship</u>: If human kingdoms are real, then there must be an absolute monarch and kingdom. Jesus is king over the kingdom of God (Mt. 6:33).</p>
L	<p><u>Law</u>: If there is law, there must be an absolute Lawgiver (Mt. 5:17).</p> <p><u>Leadership</u>: If leadership is necessary for society to exist, then there must be an ultimate leader for the universe to exist. There is no reason to separate the sociological reality from the universal reality (I Pe. 5:4).</p> <p><u>Love</u>: If enduring love is the highest expression of human personality, then there must be an absolute and ultimate expression of love ( I Jn. 4:8).</p>
M	<p><u>Mercy</u>: In order for mercy, that is not receiving the condemnation we justly deserve; to exist there has to be an ultimate moral reason as to why mercy is offered (Rom. 9:15).</p> <p><u>Miracles</u>: If miracles happen then there must be a supreme miracle worker.</p> <p><u>Movement</u>: If movement exists and movement causes movement then there must be a first mover (Heb. 3:4) (Aquinas)</p>
N	<p><u>Negation</u>: The contradiction shown in the negation of the truth affirms the truth.</p> <p><u>Neccesity</u>: The need for God can be shown.</p> <p><u>Non-contradiction</u>: In order for the law of non-contradiction to exist, that is that A is always A and that A cannot be B, then a non-contradictory Being needs to exist who is unchangeable and cannot lie ( Heb. 6:18).</p> <p><u>Non-existence</u>: Non-existence cannot exist because we exist. If non-existence cannot exist then there must be an absolute existence that exists. This absolute existence is</p>



	found in the eternal God (Acts 17:28).
O	<p><u>Omnipotence</u>: There can only be one Being who is perfectly all-powerful. Two equally all-powerful beings cannot exist (Ps. 139:14,15).</p> <p><u>Omnipresent</u>: There can only be one Being who can be in every place at one time (Ps. 139:7).</p> <p><u>Omniscience</u>: There can only be one Being who knows all things (Ps. 139:4).</p> <p><u>Omnisapience</u>: There can only be one Being who is all wise (Ps. 139: 23,24).</p>
P	<p><u>Perfection</u>: If perfection exists, then there must be all perfect being (Mt. 5:48).</p> <p><u>Pyramid of Perfection</u>: There is a pyramid of beings (e.g. animal to man) in an ever-increasing degree of perfection. There must be a being who is absolutely perfect, the source of all perfection (Aquinas).</p> <p><u>Power</u>: In order for power to exist, there has to be an all-powerful source, cause, continuity and purpose.</p> <p><u>Proof</u>: No proof can be given that God does not exist while with little effort, it can be shown that God exists.</p> <p><u>Purpose</u>: There is purpose in life that has to have an origin, cause and continuity. For a purpose to exist there has to be an absolute purpose (Job 42.2).</p>
Q	<p><u>Quantitative</u>. Who determines the limits of measurements? Who designed the day, the ton, the mile, etc?</p> <p><u>Questions</u>: If God gives us the ability to ask meaningful questions, He will also reveal His meaningful answers (I Cor. 2:10-12).</p>
R	<p><u>Religious experience</u>. There are sane people who testify to the truth of God. If God does not exist then all believers are lunatics (C.S. Lewis).</p> <p><u>Restlessness</u>: Man is restless, looking for something better. Man does not rest until he rests in God alone (Augustine).</p> <p><u>Revelation</u>: God is able and willing to reveal Himself, and He does so in a general way to all people and in a special way to His covenant people (Rom. 3:2).</p> <p><u>Rights</u>: In order for rights (including human rights) to exist, there has to be an Eternal Righteous One who has an absolute standard of right and wrong and who is always right (Jer. 23:5-6; Mt. 5:17; Rom. 9:14).</p>
S	<p><u>Salvation</u>. There are real people who claim to have been saved from real sin by a real God.</p> <p><u>Scripture</u>: Both the Old and New Testament attest to the existence of an absolute God who has revealed Himself (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 1:1-4).</p> <p><u>Simplicity of God</u>: Simplicity exists. There is only one Simple Being who is God. He is not a composite of different parts or part of a whole, but truly one (Dt. 6:4).</p> <p><u>Sin</u>. The existence of sin, the rebellion against universal moral standards, implies that the author of the moral standards has been offended.</p> <p><u>Sovereignty</u>: There can only be one Being who is totally sovereign over all things (Rom. 8:28).</p> <p><u>Spirituality</u>: If spirituality exists, then there must an all powerful and perfect Spirit who inspires that (Rom. 8:11)</p>
T	<p><u>Traditional societies</u>. There are no-atheistic traditional societies without a knowledge of God, even though this knowledge may be distorted.</p> <p><u>Tri-unity</u>: Jesus revealed the true God as one God in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the godhead there is perfect unity in diversity and diversity in unity (Mt. 28:19-20).</p> <p><u>Truth</u>: Truth is the correspondence of reality to the revelation of God. For truth to correspond to anything but an absolute standard and being would be to jeopardize truth (Jn. 17:17).</p> <p><u>Truth and truth</u>. The existence of truth implies the existence of Truth which implies the existence of God (Augustine).</p>
U	<p><u>Unity</u>: We believe that God is one in three persons, the perfect manifestation of unity in diversity (Col. 2:9)</p> <p><u>Universe</u>. The fact that the universe exists and continues implies that there is a God</p>

	who controls the universe.
V	<u>Victory</u> : In order for the ultimate victory to exist, there must be One who is totally victorious over all forms of evil and who exists eternally (Rom. 8:37; Col.2:15)
W	<u>Wager</u> . Even if you have doubts that God exists the results of believing in Him outweighs the results of not believing in Him (Pascal). <u>Worship</u> : For worship to exist there must be One who is worthy of total worship and the One whom we can worship (Jn. 4:24)

## HOMEWORK FOR LESSON TWO

Pedagogical Point: The students will be exposed to a variety of arguments for the existence of God. They will be challenged to adopt for themselves the arguments which are most convincing and useful.

Readings: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 19-40

Complete the following questions.

1. Mention the three levels of atheism referred to by the author.
2. Of the 10 observations which the author makes about the contradiction of atheism, which one is the most compelling in your opinion? Why?
3. Of the 10 observations which the author makes about the contradiction of atheism, which one is the least compelling in your opinion? Why?
4. What observation would you add about atheism which has not been mentioned by the author?
5. Of the 50 observations made by the author as to the existence of God, list the top five most compelling proofs and state why you consider them compelling.
6. Of the 50 observations made by the author as to the existence of God, list 5 of the least compelling proofs, and state why you consider them least compelling.
7. Please list 5 reasons, not mentioned by the author, which show that God exists.

Questions on the Readings in Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 19-40.

1. According to Berkhof, what is the presupposition for theology? (p.20)
2. According to Berkhof, how does the Christian accept the existence of God? (p.21)
3. What is the prerequisite of all knowledge of God? (p.34)
4. Write a one page reflection, interacting with this lesson (as well as your reading in Berkhof) about the relationship between God's self-revelation and our knowledge of His existence. What difference would this make for speaking with an atheist?

## LESSON THREE

### THE TRINITY

*Must not God who is one being exist as different personalities? Otherwise, where did the idea of our families come from? (John Gerstner, Handout Theology. 9.6).*

Shall we agree to search the Scriptures until we find a clear statement about the Trinity? We need to go no further than Genesis 1:1.

*In the beginning ELOHIM created the heavens and the earth.*

Students of Hebrew agree that Elohim is plural (im). To what does the plurality of the first name of God used in Scriptures refer?

A plausible and logical argument which the Jewish rabbis present is that the plurality of the name refers to the multiple attributes of God. Undoubtedly, it is true and cannot be contradicted that God has many attributes (see the more than 100 attributes listed in lesson 5). However, Genesis 1:1 needs to be interpreted in light of the usage of Elohim in its immediate context. Genesis 1:26 says: And Elohim said: "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness..." Elohim is speaking about His own plurality. Again the rabbis have an answer. God is speaking in the first person plural, the royal we, using the language of the divine monarchy. It is true that God is King and has the ability to speak with the royal "we." However, such an interpretation does not satisfy those seeking the intended meaning of the text. When Elohim announced "our image", image includes the multiple communicable attributes of God that He shares with us. "Our" refers to the multiple persons in the godhead.

Hermeneutics, the science of interpretation, reminds us that we need to know what the human author meant by writing what he did. We consider Moses to be the inspired author of the Pentateuch. Did Moses know he was speaking about a plurality of persons when he wrote Genesis 1:1? The answer is no. In order for Moses to know the mystery of the name of Elohim, it would have to be revealed to him and it wasn't. When Jesus came, the tri-unity of God was revealed (Mt. 28:19-20).

The nature of the literature that Moses was writing is prophetic narrative. It is prophetic because Moses was not at the scene of the creation event and yet he wrote about it. It is narrative because he is narrating historical events that happened in a certain sequence in time and space. The category of mythological creation epic applied to Genesis must be emphatically rejected. The historical nature of the creation ties its reality to human history and experience. This is not only true for the creation and unfolding of the creation events but also as it

applies to the revelation of God's name. Moses, as prophet, did not have to know the full meaning of what he was writing.

Was there a human intent for the use of Elohim in the opening verses of the Scriptures? Was Moses reacting to the existence and claim of Egyptian polytheism? (many gods). From a human author's point of view, this could not be the case. The monotheistic conscience Jews did not know the mystery of the tri-unity of the personhood of God. It would be hardly likely for Moses to seek to counteract polytheism with the plural form of God's name. Rather, there is divine intent here that goes beyond the intent of the human author. As *prophetic* narrative (writing about something in the past where the author was not present) allows for prophetic content, unfulfilled prophecy that will be revealed in the future.

For the believer in Jesus Christ, the meaning of the name Elohim ceases to be a mystery. As Christ has absolutely, imperatively and universally instructed his disciples to go forth in the name (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (plurality), we know no other God than the Triune God.

The Great Commission is imperative in nature. The Christian does not have the option of returning to a non-Trinitarian view of God. God Himself has revealed the mystery of the godhead to us. God's self-revelation is the highest authority we can appeal to in knowing God.

In the eternal council of God, the Father was speaking with the Son and the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:26. Rather than the "royal we" in Christ we come to know the "divine we."

### MORE THAN 100 BIBLICAL TRUTHS FOR THE TRINITY

<p><b>ADORATION AND WORSHIP OF JESUS.</b> Jesus accepted the worship of others. Worship is reserved for God alone.</p>	<p>By: Wisemen Children Disciples  Everyone  Angels</p>	<p>Mt. 2.11. Mt. 21.15,16. Mt. 28:17. Lk. 24:52. Phil. 2.9-11.  Rev. 4 and 5.  Rev. 5:12. Rev. 19.10.</p>	<p>The <u>wise men</u> worshipped him The <u>children</u> worshipped Him The <u>disciples</u> worshipped the risen Jesus The disciples worshipped the risen Jesus <u>Every tongue</u> shall confess Him and all will bow before him The Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be worshipped. The <u>angels</u> worshipped Jesus Only God is to be worshipped.</p>
<p><b>ANGEL OF THE LORD.</b> The Malak Adonai appearances in the Old Testament are christophany of the pre-incarnate Son of God</p>	<p>Hagar's hunger Isaac's sacrifice  Jacob's fight  Moses and bush  Pursuing Egyptians Promised land</p>	<p>Gn. 16:7-10. Gn. 22:11-13.  Gn. 32:24-30.  Ex. 3:1-8.  Ex. 14:19, 20.  Ex. 23:20-23.</p>	<p>The angel of the Lord and <u>Hagar</u> The Angel of the Lord stops Abraham from sacrificing <u>Isaac</u>. The Angel of the Lord fights with <u>Jacob</u>. The Angel of the Lord speaks to <u>Moses</u> from the burning bush The Angel of the Lord protects Israel from the <u>Egyptians</u> The Angel of the Lord prepares Israel to enter <u>promised land</u></p>

	<p>Balaam's followers Joshua at Jericho Judgment of Israel Gideon's call Eli's food</p> <p>David's count</p> <p>185,000 Assyrians Youth in furnace</p> <p>Messenger of the covenant</p>	<p>Nm.22: 22-35. Jos. 5:13-15. Jud. 2:1-3. Jud. 6:11-14. 1 K. 19:4-8. 1 Co. 21:16-22. Is. 37:36. Dn. 3:25. Mal. 3:1.</p>	<p>The Angel of the Lord blocks the passage of followers of <u>Balaam</u> The Angel of the Lord speaks with <u>Joshua</u> The Angel of the Lord announces <u>judgment over Israel</u> The Angel of the Lord speaks with <u>Gideon</u> The Angel of the Lord provides food for <u>Eli</u> in the desert The Angel of the Lord appears to <u>David</u></p> <p>The Angel of the Lord kills 185,000 <u>Assyrian</u> enemies. The Angel of the Lord protects <u>youths</u> in the fire The Angel of the Lord is identified as <u>messenger of the covenant</u></p>
<p><b>ATTRIBUTES OF JESUS ARE THAT OF GOD.</b> The incommunicable attributes of God are attributed to Jesus.</p>	<p>3 O's</p> <p>God Word Eternal Creator Life Victorious Power</p>	<p>Mt. 18:20. Mt. 28:18. Jn. 2:24-25. Jn. 1:1. Jn. 1.1,14. Jn. 1:2. Jn . 1:3. Jn. 1:4. Jn 1:5. Rom. 15:17-19.</p>	<p><u>Omnipresent</u> <u>Omnipotence</u> <u>Omniscience</u> He is <u>God</u> Jesus is the <u>Word</u> and He is God Jesus is <u>eternal</u> as only God can be Jesus is the <u>Creator</u>. Jesus is the <u>source of life</u> Jesus is <u>victorious</u> over evil <u>Power of God</u></p>
<p><b>BIBLE: OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES.</b> The godhead is foreshadowed by the use of a plural name, plural pronouns and the mention of multiple names.</p>	<p>Plural name Plural persons</p> <p>Multiple names</p>	<p>Gn. 1:1. Gn. 1:26. Gn. 3:22. Gn. 11:7. Is. 6:8. Ps. 2:2. Is. 6:3. Is. 9:6. Is. 63:16. Zech. 3:1-2. Mal. 2:10.</p>	<p>Plural name for God: Elohim Plurality of persons: "And God said, let us.." Plurality of persons: "The man has become as one of us." Plurality of persons: "Let us go down," Plurality of persons: "Who will go for us?" The battle against God is against the Lord and Messiah Triple identification of holy God Names of the triune God are used in prophecy. The Father, Lord, Redeemer are mentioned together The Angel of the Lord associated with the Lord. Father is mentioned.</p>
<p><b>BIBLE: NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES.</b> The godhead is revealed in personal names and actions and reference to being</p>	<p>Divine Persons in action</p> <p>Divine Persons names associated</p>	<p>Mt 3:13-17. Mt. 17:1-13. Lk 1:31. Mt. 28:18-19. Mk. 3:9. Lk. 4:16-21. Jn. 1:1,14. Jn. 14:16.</p>	<p>Participation of three persons at baptism of Jesus Three persons referred to in Transfiguration. Jesus, the Son of the Father, is conceived by the Holy Spirit. Three persons mentioned in Great Commission. Marks refers to the Holy Spirit as God The Spirit, Jesus and Lord are mentioned. Jesus, the Word, is God. All three persons are mentioned.</p>

	<p>Three persons are referred to</p> <p>Christ is associated with God</p>	<p>Jn. 20:28.          Acts 2:32,3.3.          Heb. 9:14.          I Pe 1:2.          Heb. 1:8.          Rom. 9:5.          I Cor. 1:30-31.          I Cor. 6:19b.          II Cor. 5:18.          Gal. 4:6.          Eph. 3:19.          Phil. 2:5-6.</p> <p>Col. 2:9.          Tim. 2:3.          Tit. 2:13.          I Jn. 5:7</p>	<p>Thomas confesses Jesus is Lord and God.          Three persons are mentioned.          Three persons are referred to.          Apostolic salutation refers to triune God          Jesus is God.          Jesus is referred to as God.          Jesus is associated with God.          Holy Spirit is referred to as God.          God and Jesus are identified as "himself."          Three persons are mentioned.          Christ is associated with God.          Jesus became human but maintained divinity.</p> <p>Jesus dwells in the Godhead.          God is identified as the Savior.          God is identified as the Savior.          John mentions the three persons of godhead.</p>
<p><b>BEGINNING SALUTATIONS AND CLOSING BENEDICTIONS ARE ATTRIBUTED TO PERSONS OF THE TRINITY.</b> The Old Testament as well as the apostolic writers use the triune names in part or in full.</p>	<p>Old Testament</p> <p>Pauline epistles</p>	<p>Nu. 6:24-26.          Is. 6:3.          Rom. 1:7</p> <p>Rom16:25-27.</p> <p>I Cor. 1:2-3</p> <p>II Cor. 1:3</p> <p>II Cor. 13:14.          Gal. 1:3.</p> <p>Eph. 1:2-3.          Eph. 6:23-24.</p> <p>Phil. 1:2.</p> <p>Phil. 2:11.          (I Cor. 12:3)          Phil. 4:19-20.</p> <p>Col 1:2-3.</p> <p>I Thes. 1:1-6.</p> <p>II Thes. 1:2.</p> <p>II Thes. 2:16-17.</p>	<p>Triple salutation          Triple holiness          God is identified as Father and Lord Jesus Christ.          In doxology: power of Spirit, Jesus and Father mentioned          In greeting: Father, Jesus and sanctifying work of Spirit          In greeting: Father, Lord Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in comforting (the Comforter)          Trinity is referred to in doxology          In greeting, Father, Lord Jesus Christ and work of Holy through Holy Spirit inspired confession of Jesus as Lord Spirit in giving grace and peace          In greeting, Father, Lord Jesus Christ and spiritual blessings of the Holy Spirit.          Father, Lord Jesus Christ and work of Holy Spirit in working faith, love and peace          In greeting, the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and work of Holy Spirit in bringing grace and peace.          In praise, the glory of God the Father (I Cor. 12:3).          Glory to the Father, by the Son and in power of Holy Spirit.          Grace and peace from God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ.          Three persons of the Trinity are mentioned by name.          Grace and peace from God the Father and Lord Jesus Christ.          Father and Jesus are mentioned by name and the comforting work of the Holy Spirit</p>

	Peter	I Tim. 1:2. II Tim 1:2. Tit. 1:4. I Pe. 1:2. II Pet. 1:1-2.	Father and Lord Jesus Christ and work of the Holy Spirit Father and Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit Father and Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit Persons and work of persons of godhead are mentioned Persons and work of persons of godhead are mentioned.
	John	II Pet. 3:18. I Jn. 1:1-3. I Jn. 5:20 II Jn. 1:3.	Glory to Jesus Christ. Father and Jesus are mentioned and work of the Holy Spirit. In salutation, Jesus is mentioned as God Father, Son and work of Holy Spirit are mentioned.
	Jude	Rev. 1:4-6. Jude 1-2. Jude 25.	Persons of the triune God are mentioned. Father, Son and work of Holy Spirit are mentioned. Savior referred to as God.
<b>CLAIMS OF THE FATHER TO BE GOD</b>		Gen. 1:1 Ex. 20:1 Is. 9:6 Mt. 5:48. Mt. 6:1-9. Mt. 6:14,15. Mt. 6:18. Mt. 6: 26. Mt. 10:32.  Etc.	God's Word identifies God as Creator. God identifies Himself as law giver. Father is identifies with the Son. Perfection is attributed to the Father The Father answers prayers. The Father forgives. The Father sees all things. The Father is the universal provider. Together with the Son to be professed by men. See concordance about the Father.
<b>CLAIMS OF JESUS TO BE GOD. The four gospels agree that Jesus claims to be God.</b>	Matthew	Mt. 4.7  Mt. 4.10  Mt. 5:17.  Mt. 5.22.  Mt. 7.21.  Mt. 9.2.  Mt. 26:63-64.	."You shall no tempt the Lord your God." Jesus was telling the Devil that Jesus is Lord and God. "You shall worship the Lord your God." Jesus is talking about himself. "I have come to fulfill the law" Only God can perfectly fulfill the Law of God. "But I say to you." Jesus speaks authoratively about interpreting the Bible, something that only God can do. "Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord." Jesus identifies himself as the Lord. "Your sins are forgiven." Only God can forgive sins as Jesus did. "The high priest said to him," I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied."
	Mark Luke	Mk. 2.1-12. Lk. 24:44.	Jesus has the authority to forgive sins "Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."
	John	Jn. 6:35 Jn. 8:12.	"I am the bread of life." "I am the light of the world."

		<p>Jn. 8:58.  Jn. 10:11  Jn. 10:30.  Jn. 11:25.  Jn. 14: 6.  Jn. 15:1  Jn. 14.1.  Jn. 14.11.</p> <p>Jn. 14.13.</p> <p>Jn. 14.23.</p>	<p>“Before Abraham was, I am.”  “I am the good shepherd.”  “I and the Father are one.”  “I am the resurrection and the life.”  “I am the way, the truth and the life.”  “I am the true vine.”  “Believe in God, believe also in me.”  “Believe me for the sake of my works.”  Jesus did the work of God.  “Whatever you ask in my name, that will I do.” We are only to pray to God.  “He that has me has the Father.”</p>
<p><b>CLAIMS THAT HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD.</b> The Holy Spirit is associated with God’s name, attributes and actions.</p>	<p>Name</p> <p>Attribute</p> <p>Action</p>	<p>Gn. 1:2.  Is. 48: 16.</p> <p>Is. 51:12.  Jn. 15:26.</p> <p>Neh. 9:20.  Ps. 139:7.  Pr. 8.  I Cor. 2:11  Heb. 9:14  Gen. 1:2  Job 33:4  Is. 61:1  Is. 63:10</p>	<p>Ruah Elohim hovered over the creation. Spirit is mentioned with other persons of the Trinity.  God is the parakletos (Spirit).  The Spirit and the Father are mentioned together.  “You also gave your good Spirit.”  “Where shall I go from your Spirit?”  The Spirit as Wisdom  The Spirit is omniscient  The Spirit is eternal  Partakes in creation  The Spirit gives life  “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”  “And they rebelled and grieved His holy Spirit.”</p>



## HOME WORK FOR LESSION THREE

Pedagogical Point: The students will be able to present orally or in writing 100 Biblical facts about the existence of the triune God. Notice how the major categories are divided. You will notice the categories start with 3-A, 3-B and 3-C. Memorize the Biblical proofs according to major headings and their subdivisions. Use the method of: identify, verify, define and spiritually apply.

Readings: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 82-99 and R. C. Sproul, *Essentials*, pp. 35-36

### Questions

1. What is the author's argument as to ELOHIM referring to the plurality in the Godhead?
2. How does the adoration of Jesus show that He is God?
3. According to the New Testament records, who worshipped Jesus?
4. What relationship does the "Angel of the Lord" have with Jesus?
5. In what three ways does the OT foreshadow the Godhead? Organize the OT references according to the given categories.
6. In your opinion, which NT reference is the clearest revelation of the Godhead?
7. How does Jesus response to Satan show that He is God?
8. What is the difference between the Holy Spirit as a force of God and the Holy Spirit as a divine person?
9. What purpose does a triune greeting and conclusion have for the epistles?
10. Do you have any questions about the triune God? (It will be helpful to identify your difficulty and questions and then seek a Biblical response.)
11. How did the pre-Reformation church assert its view of the Trinity? (Berkhof 82-83)
12. According to Sproul, wherein lies the unity and diversity within the Trinity? (Sproul, pp. 35-36)
13. Write a one page report as to your view on the best way to speak about the Deity of Christ with a Jehovah Witness.

## LESSON FOUR

### THE NAMES OF GOD

*Some people's patron saint is the penitent thief because he was saved knowing so little theology (Anonymous).*

#### INTRODUCTION

One of the ways in which God reveals Himself is through the revelation of His names. Such revelations are closely connected to the Biblical, historical and grammatical context. As we review some of the many names given to God in the Scriptures, by faith our knowledge and appreciation of Him will grow.

All of the names of God in the Old Testament are implicitly related to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Greek translation of the Old Testament translated the names *Adonai* and *Yahweh* as *Kurios* (Lord). The names *Elohim*, *El Shaddai*, *Elyon*, *Sabaoth* were translated as *Theos* (God). The New Testament gives ample evidence that Jesus is our Lord and God. Thomas confessed this, when upon seeing the resurrected Christ he said: "My Lord and my God." (Jn. 20:28). Just previous to making this perfect confession, Thomas had been sarcastically saying that he wanted to touch the wounds of Jesus. God is able to turn our religious sarcasm into a perfect profession of faith.

*Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit ( I Cor. 12:3).*

The simple oral formulation of Jesus name is not what the apostle is speaking about. Not everyone who speaks the name of Jesus will be saved even though someday all persons will have to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus.

*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11).*

Not all who profess the name of the Lord will automatically be saved. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus earnestly warns his listeners that not all who call him "Lord" or even work in his name will be saved (Mt. 7:21-23). Only those who do the will of the Father by repenting from sin and believing in Jesus will enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 4:17).

The following chart we look specifically at the Old Testament names of God.

NAME, MEANING and CONTEXT	THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS
<p><i>Elohim</i> Supreme, universal, creator God. (Genesis 1:1) Given in the context of the description on how the world was created by God.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Elohim</i> is the Eternal God. "In the beginning." He existed before the creation of space and time. He has no beginning or end. Only an eternal God can offer eternal life. A created God or a created Son of God cannot offer eternity because such a god is offering something that he does not possess. For this reason, the Christian rejects the claims of the Jehovah witnesses that Jesus is a created being. If Jesus is not eternal, he can do nothing for eternity.</li> <li>2. <i>Elohim</i> is a self-existing God. He is able to exist independent of the material world or anything else. God does not need us to exist, yet He brought us into existence. The self-existent God chose to include us in His eternal plans. This shows He is not selfish but purposeful and gracious.</li> <li>3. <i>Elohim's</i> name is plural. This refers to the mystery of the plurality of the godhead (Mt. 28:19-20). <i>Elohim</i> is not a combination of gods, as in polytheism, but rather one God in three persons (Mt. 28:19-20).</li> <li>4. <i>Elohim</i> is the Creator God: "created" is <i>bara</i> in Hebrew. Only an eternal God can create something new. He is the Creator of material, plant, animal, human and angelic life. As the Creator He is also sovereign over all. As Creator He is the only one who can save us.</li> <li>5. <i>Elohim</i> is the sovereign universal God. He who is the architecture of all things also inhabits His creation by His Spirit. God is not pantheistic in that the Creator and creation are co-equal, but rather as a sovereign God, He creates and controls all things according to His purpose.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Ruah Elohim.</i> The Spirit of God. (Genesis 1:2) The context is the creation of the world.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Ruah Elohim</i> points to the work creation. The Spirit generates creation into existence. Only He who generates is also He who regenerates the spirit of man for salvation (Jn. 3:5).</li> <li>2. <i>Rauh Elohim</i> works order. The Spirit of God brings order out of chaos. He is the author of natural law and providence. Providence is God's government over all things. The Spirit of God also brings order into our spiritual life (Rom. 8:2). We are given new life, convicted of sin and in Christ we walk a new life. The process of sanctification is a continual dying to sin and living in Christ to God's glory.</li> <li>3. <i>Ruah Elohim</i> is a divine person. He is not simply a force or only an extension of the Father. In other parts of Scripture, <i>Ruah Elohim</i> is described with personal pronouns and exhibits personal characteristics (Gen. 3:22).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh Elohim.</i> LORD God. (Genesis 2:4) Chapter 2 gives more details as to how commandments were given and how the marriage institution was established.</p>	<p>Composite names are used in the context of Bible revelation in order to reveal who God is. The name <i>Yahweh</i> comes from Ex. 3:14, where God reveals Himself as the "I AM WHO I AM."</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Yahweh Elohim</i> (LORD God) is a composite name, pointing toward the plurality in the godhead.</li> <li>2. <i>Yahweh Elohim</i> is the combination of the name of the Supreme Creator of all things with the personal name revealed to Moses, the leader of God's people.</li> <li>3. <i>Yahweh Elohim</i>, throughout chapter 2 of Genesis, gives the religious commandment and establishes the institution of marriage. God relates to mankind through commandments. God is the author of the major institutions of humanity.</li> </ol>

<p><i>El, Elyon.</i>  <b>High God.</b>  (Genesis 14:18)  <i>Elyon</i> is revealed in the context of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek, King of Salem.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God is a universal God. He is not a god of a particular family or tribe. Melchizedek represents a universal priesthood that God had established. Jesus also belonged to the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110; Heb. 7:17).</li> <li>2. God relates to us through the priesthood. The purpose of the priest was to represent God to His people and the people to God. Melchizedek shared bread and wine with Abraham and Abraham gave his tithes (10%) to God through the priest. Here we see the development of the mediatorial office that God uses to relate to His people.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Adonai Yahweh.</i>  <b>Lord GOD.</b>  (Genesis 15:2)  God is making a covenant with Abraham.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Lord is a covenant Lord. In Genesis 15, where first the name Adonai (Lord) is used, God is making a covenant promises to Abraham, and Abraham responds by faith.</li> <li>2. The covenant is responded to by faith (Gen. 15:6). In order to live in the presence of the Lord, we are called to respond in faith. We have to trust God's word. "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17).</li> <li>3. The Lord is faithful to His covenant promises. The child of promise, Isaac, was born. The promises of God continued with the covenant people until the covenant was renewed with Jesus Christ. For us, Jesus is the new child of promise, who was born in order to live a perfect life, offers Himself as a perfect payment for our sins to be raised from the dead in order to reign forever. All who believe in Jesus Christ are part of the new covenant.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Malak Adonai.</i>  Angel of the Lord.  (Genesis 16:2)  The Angel of the Lord intervenes in the troubles of Hagar.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God is a God of mercy. The Angel of the Lord came to Hagar in the time of her troubles.</li> <li>2. God has messengers. The angel is a messenger who represents God's will and word. In Revelations 2 and 3, Jesus speaks to the messengers of the churches, those who communicate the will and Word of God to God's people.</li> <li>3. God is not distant but involved in our lives. This special messenger, always identified as Malak Adonai, we believe to be the pre-incarnate Son of God (see previous lesson's mention of Angel of the Lord)</li> </ol>
<p><i>El Shaddai.</i>  Almighty God.  (Genesis 17:1)  God is explaining the conditions of the covenant to Abraham.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God has many attributes. Genesis 17:1 speaks of the might of God. We believe that God is all mighty (omnipotent), all knowing (omniscience) and all present (omnipresent).</li> <li>2. God commands us to walk before Him. God does not ask us to walk beside Him, as if we are equal; He does not ask us to walk behind Him, as if we could on our own power, but He commands us to walk before Him. If God commands us to do something, then by faith we are able to do that.</li> <li>3. God commands us to walk in attributes. He commands us to be perfect (or righteous: NIV). When we by faith obey God's Word then we can walk in the perfections of God's attributes.</li> <li>4. God promises his power through the covenant with believers and their children. These covenant promises are repeated at Pentecost (Acts 2:37-39).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh El Olam.</i>  (The Everlasting God)  Genesis 21:33.  Name given by Abraham after a covenant was made between him and Abimelech.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Abraham celebrated the existence of an everlasting God. Although human covenant keepers are faulty, the LORD, as the everlasting covenant keeper, never fails. When Jesus came, he became the everlasting covenant keeper for us. If we believe in Him as our covenant keeper and mediator, we will have everlasting rest.</li> <li>2. Amid all the conflicts of this life, we have to prioritize eternal life.</li> </ol>

<p><i>Yahweh Jireh.</i> God Provider. (Genesis 22:8) Abraham was commanded by God to sacrifice his son Isaac.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD demanded sacrifice from Abraham, the sacrifice of his son, Isaac.</li> <li>2. The LORD provided an acceptable substitute for Isaac. The ram was provided. The Father gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to be the substitute for us on the cross. Jesus is the Lamb of God, the sacrifice that the Father gives for our sins (Jn. 1:29).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh Israel</i> God of Israel (Genesis 33:20) After Peniel, Israel had made peace with Esau.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jacob's name had been changed to Israel at Peniel as he strove with the Angel of the Lord (Gn. 32). God's people are to struggle spiritually with their God, especially in prayer.</li> <li>2. Israel reconciles. In Chapter 33, he makes peace with Esau, after many years of enmity.</li> <li>3. The children of Israel betray him. Dina went out to see the daughters of the non-covenant people. She was raped. The sons of Israel avenge the rape with deceit and murder. The outnumbered Israelites don't stand a chance of survival. Yet, the God of Israel will cause a remnant to survive.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh.</i> I AM WHO I AM (Exodus 3:14) God appeared to Moses in a burning bush in the desert.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD reveals Himself personally. He is the LORD of life and existence. All of life and existence find their meaning in Him. Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes unto the Father but by Me" (Jn. 14:6).</li> <li>2. The LORD reveals Himself as holy. Moses was to remove his sandals, as he was standing in the presence of holy God. God's holiness is perfectly separated from sin and always dedicated to God's glory.</li> <li>3. The LORD tells Moses that He knows about the suffering of His people and that He has heard their prayers.</li> <li>4. When the LORD heard the prayers of His people, He remembers His covenant (Ex.2:24).</li> <li>5. The LORD reveals Himself to liberate His people. The liberation would come through God's means and not by human means of violence and war. The people of Israel were freed by means of miracles and fulfilled prophecy as mediated through Moses and Aaron.</li> <li>6. The LORD called His people to come out of Egypt in order to worship Him in the desert (Ex. 3:18; Jn. 4:24).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh rapha</i> The Lord who heals you. (Exodus 15:26) The LORD healed the waters at Marah.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD is Creator and Provider in the creation.</li> <li>2. The LORD turned bitter water into good water when Moses prayed.</li> <li>3. The LORD is able to change the course of nature according to His will</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh nissi.</i> God is my banner (Exodus 17:15) Moses prayed with his hands stretched out over the battlefield in the conflict with the Amalekites.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moses prayed continually for victory over the Amalekites. By prayer we live by faith in God's workings. Jesus exhorted us to: "Watch and pray." The apostle says: "Pray without ceasing."</li> <li>2. Victory was given by the LORD. God's people cannot win one little battle without God. We will continually lose to the struggle of sin, worldliness and Satan unless we turn to God in repentance, prayer and thanksgiving.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh Maccaddeshem</i> LORD sanctifier. (Exodus 31:13)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD calls us to holiness, to be set apart from our normal activities and to be a witness to the nations that we belong to God.</li> <li>2. The Lord sets apart His people for His service as symbolized by the Sabbath rest.</li> <li>3. The LORD gave the Law in this context.</li> <li>4. The people responded by making the golden calf (Ex. 32).</li> </ol>

<p><i>Yahweh Sabaoth.</i> The LORD of hosts. (I Samuel 1:3) Name first used at the beginning of life and ministry of Samuel the prophet.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD of hosts rulers over Israel (I Sam. 1:3). The rulers of Israel, be they prophets, priests or rulers, were to live by the anointing of the Holy Spirit (I Sam. 16:13)</li> <li>2. The LORD of hosts rules over angels (I Sam. 16:14). The LORD sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul. We notice that the Spirit of the LORD had departed. The LORD is sovereign; even the evil spirits have to obey Him when he sends them out to punish the wicked.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh Raah</i> The Lord my shepherd. (Ps. 23:1) God is the shepherd of His people.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD has the qualities of a shepherd.</li> <li>2. The LORD shepherds His sheep, the people of God.</li> <li>3. Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Qdos Israel.</i> The Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 1:4) Name used at the beginning of the prophecy of Isaiah.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD is always holy and His holiness covers the whole world (Is. 6:3).</li> <li>2. The holy LORD is angered by the sinful rebellion of His people, (Is. 1:3) and in his anger He will punish according to His standard of justice.</li> <li>3. The judgment of the LORD begins with God's people (Is. 1:9)</li> <li>4. The LORD calls His people to return to Him and promised to totally forgive them (Is. 1:18).</li> <li>5. The sacrifice that the LORD will prepare to forgive His people is His own Son (Is. 53).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh tsidkenu.</i> The LORD our Righteousness. (Jeremiah 23:6) Name given during the prophecy of Jeremiah.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The people of God have been abandoned by unrighteous shepherds (Jer. 23:1)</li> <li>2. God will supply a Righteous Shepherd, who will be perfectly righteous. That righteousness will be given to those who believe in Him (Rom. 3: 25; I Jn. 2:1).</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh EL Gemolah</i> The Lord God of retribution. (Jeremiah 51:56) Babilonia's sins against Israel will be paid for.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD is just and must punish His people.</li> <li>2. The LORD used the enemies of Judah to punish them.</li> <li>3. The LORD will punish Babylonia for abusing Judah.</li> <li>4. The LORD takes upon our recompense in Jesus dying for us.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh Nakeh</i> The LORD who strikes. (Ezek. 7:9) The "day of the Lord," the day of judgment is coming.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LORD is offended (Ps. 51:4)</li> <li>2. The LORD is the one who declares war (Gen. 3:15)</li> <li>3. The LORD carries out judgment through his enemies.</li> <li>4. The LORD Jesus Christ takes on the wrath of an offended Father for us.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Yahweh shammah</i> The LORD is there (Ezek. 48:35) Name given at the end of the book of prophecy of Ezekiel.</p>	<p>The presence of the LORD is not only in the heart, but it will be in a special city. Ultimately, it is the city not made by man but build by God (Heb. 11:10), the city of God in glory.</p>

<p><i>Attig Yomim</i> Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:9) Name given during the prophecies of Daniel.</p>	<p>1. The Ancient of Days will be victorious overall all the kingdoms of the world. We receive that in prophecy, (Dan. 7:9; Ps. 2) but we have seen it in history. Kingdoms come and go, but the Body of Christ continues to grow (Mt. 24:14).</p>
<p><i>Pater</i> Father (Matthew 6:9) Name used by Jesus.</p>	<p>1. The Father is the Father of Jesus (Mt. 3:17, Jn. 3:16). There is a unique relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19-20). 2. The Father is the Father of the believers (Jn. 8:42-44). Only believers in Jesus Christ can call God, Abba Father (Rom. 8: 15). 3. Only through Jesus can we come to the heavenly Father (Mt. 6:9, Jn. 14:6).</p>
<p><i>huios</i> the Son</p>	<p>See 100 names for Jesus in CHRISTOLOGY</p>
<p><i>Kurios</i> Lord (Matthew 1:20)</p>	<p>Translation of LORD and Lord of Old Testament (Yahweh and Adonai)</p>
<p><i>Theos</i> God (Matthew 1:23)</p>	<p>Translation of God of Old Testament (Elohim, Elyon, El, El Shaddai, Sabaoth.</p>
<p><i>Agio pneuemos</i> Holy Spirit (Mt. 1:18)</p>	<p>Translation of Ruah of Old Testament</p>

## HOME WORK FOR LESSON FOUR

PEDAGOGICAL POINT: The students will grow in their knowledge of the names of God. They will see that the names in their *original languages* and as they are *chronologically* revealed according to great events in history of the Bible.

### QUESTIONS

1. Write out each of the Hebrew and Greek names for God you encountered in the above mentioned list.
2. Besides the original name of God, write down where it is first used in the Scriptures.
3. Choose five of the names of God and write down their meaning.
4. Choose five other names (not used in questions 1-3), and write a brief description of the history surrounding the first usage of the name.
5. Choose five other names (not used in questions 1-4), and give a theological explanation for the name. That is, what theological importance does the name have for us?
6. Choose five other names (not used in questions 1-5) and show how the name of Jesus is related to the OT names.
7. List five new facts you have learned in this lesson which you did not know previously.

### QUESTIONS FROM: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 47-51

1. In what way are the names of God a self-revelation of God (p. 47).
2. According to Berkhof, did man name God or does God reveal His name to man? Explain (p. 47).
3. According to Berkhof, how is Yahweh translated into Greek? (p. 48).
4. Write a one page report on your interpretation of Acts. 4:12.



## LESSON FIVE

### THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

*God is everywhere. However, He does not want you to reach out for Him everywhere but only in the Word. Reach out for it and you will grasp Him aright. Otherwise you are tempting God and setting up idolatry. That is why He has established a certain method for us. This teaches us how and where we are to look for Him and find Him, namely, in the Word (Martin Luther).*

#### INTRODUCTION

The attributes of God are His qualities. They define who He is. The incommunicable attributes are those that God cannot share with others while the communicable attributes are those that He chooses to share with us through His Spirit.

When the incommunicable attributes are ascribed to human beings or angels, we are committing idolatry. For example, when worship is given to angels, deceased saints, or living human beings, then we are transferring something that belongs only to God to other entities (Romans 1: 21-23). Idolatry is the sinner's number one sin. The sinful heart is a factory of idols.

On the other hand, the communicable attributes of God are meant to be lived out by human beings. For this reason we were made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). To manifest the communicable attributes is our moral responsibility before God and others. Our participation in the communicable attributes of God do not save us, rather they are manifestations that God is working through us. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-25; 2 Pe. 1:3-11) are God's communicable attributes operative in our lives. Each and every one of the fruits of the Spirit belongs to God and is shared with us. It is not the other way around.

Fallen mankind refuses to recognize that he is made to be an image bearer of God. The sinner attributes that which is good to himself (Lk. 18:18) rather than to God (Lk. 18:19). However, the original sin consisted of disobeying the command of God concerning good and evil. The sinner has lost his capability to do good outside of faithful obedience to God. Yet, the moral standards remain. God holds us responsible to them, even though we cannot fulfill them without His power. Thanks be to God the Father for His Son and the Holy Spirit by whom we can live His communicable attributes.

The following is an analysis of the attribute of goodness.

## NO ONE IS GOOD-EXCEPT GOD ALONE

We will learn from the Lord that only God is good. Now, what is goodness? We often define goodness in relationship to its opposite, evil. Evil is the rejection of God's goodness as expressed in His being, His Word and His workings. However, it is not sufficient to define something in the negative alone or simply to point out what it is not. Positively speaking, goodness is a conformity to the will of God that brings well being and life. When Adam and Eve obeyed the mandate of God not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they were being good. When they disobeyed God, they were evil. And this brought forth death.

There are two basic ways of looking at goodness. The one view is from God's perspective and the other view is from our perspective. Please let me illustrate.

The story is told that after the 1959 Cuban Revolution when Fidel Castro took power, he would go a class room and instruct the children to pray for candy. When they were finished praying he would ask them if they received anything. When they answered "no" he would say the communist party had heard their need for candy and he would give them some. That is an example of looking at life from a man-centered perspective, albeit it a materialistic communistic one.

Allow me to illustrate the other point of view about goodness.

At the end of May (2001) I was in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Pastor Jose Arias told us a story about a very poor elderly lady. She had absolutely no food in her house for breakfast. She went to her window and prayed. "Lord, please send me bread, eggs, coffee and sugar for breakfast, because I have nothing in my house." Just below her window a couple of juvenile delinquents were hiding and they heard the prayer. They thought they would pull a fast one on the elderly lady. So they went to the corner store and bought what she had prayed for and they brought it to her. When the elderly lady saw it she said: "Lord, thank you for bringing me breakfast this morning and for using these brats to do it!"

The two basic views are: those who consider that God alone is good, and thank Him for it and those who, in one way or another, believe they and their systems are the source of goodness.

Our mission is not to promote human goodness but the goodness of God and then through the transformation of the gospel, the goodness of God through us. No one is good-except God alone, the Lord Jesus tells us.

We read about the encounter of the rich young ruler and Jesus in Luke 18:18-30. We will learn about Jesus' view of goodness. We shall see that the Lord exposes the false presuppositions of the rich young ruler. Basically, Jesus stated his own position that only God is good and that only God can make it possible for us to be saved and to be good and to enjoy His goodness now and forever.

## THE LORD EXPOSES THE FALSE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

The rich young ruler addresses Jesus as a good teacher and then goes on to imply his own goodness. He asked; “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” We will see that the rich young ruler speaks from a mindset that is opposite to the mind of Christ.

In the encounter between Jesus and the rich young ruler Jesus replies to question of the young ruler by saying: “No one is good – except God alone.” (vs. 19). *Jesus identifies the source of all goodness as being God and God alone.* He also implies that we are not so good, in fact that no good exists in us according to our own will and disposition.

The rich young ruler approached Jesus on false premises: he had a *presumptuous view of goodness*. One, he wanted the affirmation of a known teacher, who he identified as good. Second, he thought he was good enough to do something do earn eternal life. Third, he was speaking about an inheritance, as if this was coming to him.

The first false presumption of the young man was to use name association rather than personal obedience. The young ruler called Jesus a good teacher but he did not follow what the good teacher taught. By his actions He showed that his identification of Jesus as a good teacher was merely a cover up. The young man did not realize his own arrogance. Plus, he was ignorant. The man did not realize whom he was speaking. He did not know that Jesus is God.

The world recognizes Jesus as a good teacher. Even Mohammed considered Jesus a good prophet. But they will not believe a word He says. They do not believe He is God. All of the sectarian groups stumble over their identification of Jesus. They do not consider Him God, nor do they obey Him. If they do call Jesus a god, like the Hindus and Mormons, it is because they consider themselves able to become gods. They drag God down to their own level in order to define and identify with him.

The traditional Roman Catholic approaches the goodness of God through the intercession of the saints, Mary and the clergy. They avoid relating directly with Jesus through Holy Spirit inspired prayer. Certain branches of evangelicalism have gone a step further than the Roman traditionalists. The Romans follow the saints and angels. Extreme evangelicals are into demon chasing, consulting with demons and chasing territorial spirits around with oil and other consecrated objects. Two of my students in Toronto, under the influence of a local pastor’s council became involved with anointing the city of Toronto and Lake Ontario with oil and Bible verses written on pieces of paper. They are lucky not to be in prison because it’s against Ontario law to throw objects out of flying planes or into Lake Ontario.

The second false presupposition shown by the rich young ruler is that humans are able to please God rather than depending on God to please Him. Jesus says that only God is good, and that means the rich young ruler was not good. The lack of goodness on the part of the young man was re-affirmed by his inability to obey and follow Jesus.

Jesus did not identify any intrinsic goodness in the rich young ruler. He gave the young man something to do, which he would not do. He watched the disappointed legalist walk away.

The young man was a “good boy”, not because he was born or learned to be good, but he had experienced God’s blessing by obeying a good law. Do you see the difference? It makes all the difference in the world. It is the difference between human works religions and the gospel of God’s sovereign grace.

Our goodness in Christ is a borrowed goodness; it is the goodness of Christ worked out by grace through us. Our good is an alien goodness, it comes outside of us. Our good works are in God. We are the workmanship of Christ (Eph. 2:10).

Our mission is not to show forth our goodness but be carriers of the borrowed goodness of God. This is the kingdom bank of which all may borrow freely. The more you need for the kingdom, the more you may ask. Do you know the good news about this goodness?

- It is free
- You can ask as much as you want according to God’s will and kingdom demands
- You’re account is under the name of Jesus and you cannot exhaust it
- The rich young ruler quickly depleted his little account and would not switch over to the Lord’s account. He left in spiritual poverty while Jesus offers spiritual riches.

The third false presupposition as shown by the rich young ruler’s question is that we can choose our inheritance rather than participating in Christ’s inheritance. The rich young ruler spoke about an inheritance. Was it his inheritance? Did it belong to the Israelites or to all believers?

Psalm 2 speaks to us about the inheritance of Christ. The Father says to the son: “Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.” Yet, the ruler could not give up his own inheritance for that of the Lord’s.

Our mission is to walk in the inheritance of Christ, his inheritance of the nations. You and I have the right to represent Christ among the nations. Next week I hope to go to Cuba to teach. Last week, I tried to get my teaching materials into the

country; but it was returned. OK. We will find another way. We will use digital disks, CDs, internet, you name it...because even Cuba belongs to the King. Cuba does not belong to Fidel, although he thinks so, Cuba also belongs to Christ, and there are hundreds of thousands of Christians, foot soldiers of the cross who will be there when communism falls like the wall of Berlin (PS. We sent the materials with visitors going into Cuba).

**THE LORD DECLARES THAT ONLY GOD MAKES GOODNESS AND SALVATION POSSIBLE.**

Having challenged the question (and presuppositions) of the rich young ruler, Jesus establishes his own position.

The rich (nor the poor or any person) cannot save themselves. The reason is that only an absolutely good God can save us. This is witnessed to in creation by God's handling of evil and in the coming of Jesus.

In creation, God established the standard for good and evil (Gen. 2:15-17). Only God can do that for He is the only absolute Good. God does not only possess goodness, He is goodness, He defines goodness, He reveals goodness, He works out goodness, He judges goodness and He will be glorified in goodness.

What are we saved from? That which is opposite to good, namely, evil. Only a God who is absolutely good can absolutely overcome what is opposite to good, namely evil! God is so good, only He can overcome evil. He has done that through limiting evil through His creation and laws and interventions. However, ultimately, Christ overcomes evil on the cross.

How was evil manifest in the rich young ruler? By rejecting the Savior. Even though the young ruler had participated in the goodness of God by obeying the law of God, yet he does not respond to Jesus. Imagine, he was given the opportunity to go to heaven, all he had to do was sell all that he had and follow Jesus. Yet, he did not do it.

The apostle Paul manifested the same struggle in Romans 7. What he wanted to do he could not do and what he did not want to do, that he did. What would you have done? Outside of true faith, you and I would have also walked away sad, we too reject the Savior.

Martin Luther reminded us that evil shows itself in three ways: through sinful flesh, the world and the devil. On the cross Jesus dealt a deathblow to all of them. **ONLY THROUGH THE GOOD NEWS, THE GOSPEL, IS EVIL TRULY DEALT WITH!** The flesh was crucified so that now, by faith and the power of the Spirit we can crucify the desires of the flesh. The world, represented by apostate religion, unjust government, bloodthirsty masses and the desertion of the disciples, was overcome. The devil was defeated as all the accusations against

God's people were nailed to the tree and the accusations of the accuser were stopped.

Jesus did not go after the young ruler, pleading with him to reconsider. Rather, Jesus went to the cross to accept the full rejection, not only of humanity but also of the Father. In the GREAT EXCHANGE, he was rejected so that we may be acceptable to the Father through Jesus. Now God the Father looks at us through the finished work of His Son.

This has practical implications. Rev. Blakely, minister of the Central Baptist Church in downtown Miami, was murdered during the Christmas break of 2000 by a homeless person he and his family had been helping. His daughter, who went to the same school as our daughters, as well as the widow, testified that if Rev. Blakely were alive today, he would continue to minister to the homeless. That testimony served as my call to minister to the homeless, something that I have been doing Sunday evenings (when I am not traveling) since that time. My response is not to be a good person but show the goodness of God to a generation that actively rejects the Lord. The goodness and salvation of Christ will not be stopped by the evil and wickedness of people, the world and even Satan. IN CHRIST, GOODNESS TRIUMPHS OVER EVIL.

**THE LORD PROMISES THE MULTIPLICATION OF GOD'S GOODNESS. THE CHURCH IS A PROOF OF GOD'S GOODNESS**

The rich young ruler went away sad: he was wealthy and as a ruler he was used to others following him. He could not give up his earthly inheritance and relationships.

To others Jesus had simply said: "Come follow me." The disciples had left fortune and family and followed Jesus. The key here is following Jesus. Transformation comes through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Peter said: "We have left all: we had to follow you!"

Jesus teaches Peter and all of us that such sacrifice will be rewarded many times over. In speaking about the rewards, Jesus gives a picture of the Christian church.

Being part of a church family is such a reward. God gives us many more fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers and family members. I am closer to church family than my own family, that lives far away.

I have church brothers and sisters all over the place. In the Dominican Republic, where our family worked for 12 years, there is brother Julio, now more than 30 years old, who took over the church we planted and as well as the Christian school. Sandy, my wife, will remember Milagros-the school director who came to

her first Bible study and is now one of nation-wide director of Christian schools. We could go on and on about spiritual family we know about in the countries where we have been.

In Miami, where we have lived since 1998, God has given us a wonderful spiritual family. On Sunday mornings we usually worship at Old Cutler Presbyterian Church. Even though it is a large congregation our circle of friends is small. Fritz and Annie Kalmey have become like grandparents for our children and an aunt and uncle for Sandy and I. Dick and Marg Phillips have unofficially adopted our girls as their own! Roy Berube, the semi-retired aviation pilot instructor, has become like a father to me. Roy is helping us to establish our educational headquarters here in Miami. He makes sure the practical as well as the technical details are looked after. Greg Hauenstein, with whom I work with, is closer than a brother. Angelica Ramsay, the registrar in our study program, is a wonderful sister in the Lord. Her husband, Richard, is a brother; fellow missionary and friend. When we minister among the homeless on Sunday evenings, seeing Sammy Longingo and Trinity is like being with brothers. Dotti, Dausey, Ingrid, Ursula, the mothers for the homeless are family, not only to me but also to the homeless. The Jimenez family, Alex, Mike, Mani, John, who visit the homeless, are like family. Matthew and Ana Dubocq and their children, Kent Hinkson, David Moran, Roger and Dianne Smalling, Jaime Rodriguez and the Hispanic students, are closer than biological family!

All of this is fruit of leaving all and following Jesus. Are you a member of God's family? Have you obeyed the call to follow Jesus and become incorporated into His Body and for His service? Or do you consider yourself to good for that?

## CONCLUSION

Where are you in relation to the goodness of God?

1. We have shown that we, like the rich young ruler, come to Jesus with false presuppositions about goodness.
2. We have seen that Jesus does not accept our goodness for he teaches us that only God is good and only God can make salvation and goodness possible.
3. Our wickedness and God's goodness meet in Christ on the cross. On the cross we see the natural and negative result of human goodness. When we ignore Christ, reject him, we show our wickedness.
4. On through the GOSPEL, the good news of salvation provided by the Father through the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit, is there hope for us to overcome evil (the opposite of good). By the gospel the flesh is crucified, the world systems are rejected and Satan is foiled.
5. Thanks be to God, the goodness of God is multiplied to us through the Church. We see transformed persons, relationships and the use of our possessions being used for the glory of God.

Any good that we experience comes from God, for only God is good. All goodness, then, comes from God, is worked in us through the good news by God and is for God. All glory be to God and God alone.

### INCOMPLETE LIST OF ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

ATTRIBUTES OF BEING	<p><u>Absolute</u>: not dependent or conditioned by others  <u>Active</u>: the ability to do according to His will  <u>Adorable</u>: worthy to be worshiped</p> <p><u>Aseity</u>: one simple being  <u>Authoritative</u>: power to act  <u>Consistent</u>: does not change His course of action  <u>Divine Person</u>: each person of the godhead is a person  <u>Excellent</u>: the best  <u>Glory</u>: the manifestation of the perfections of His purpose  <u>Incomparable</u>: there is nothing to which He can be compared  <u>Indestructible</u>: cannot be destroyed  <u>Inexhaustible</u>: His strength does not cease  <u>Unexplainable</u>: not all of His actions have a human explanation  <u>Invisible</u>: not seen  <u>Immaterial</u>: no made of materials  <u>Immortal</u>: cannot die  <u>Incomprehensible</u>: God is not like anything that is.</p> <p><u>Incorporeal</u>: The Father and the Spirit do not have a body  <u>Immutable</u>: none changing  <u>Life</u>: ability to exist  <u>Majestic</u>: a royal presence  <u>Marvelous</u>: awe inspiring  <u>Omnipresent</u>: everywhere  <u>Omnipotent</u>: all-powerful</p> <p><u>Omniscient</u>: all-knowing  <u>Persistent</u>: ability to keep going  <u>Perfect</u>: without error  <u>Power</u>: strength to act according to His will  <u>Simplicity</u>: not composed  <u>Self-existent</u>: Aside from God nothing is self-caused.  <u>Self-sufficient</u>: He is what He is in Himself.  <u>Sovereign</u>: supreme rule, not dependent on others  <u>Spirit</u>: force of life  <u>Wonderful</u>: worthy to be admired  <u>Unity</u>: God is one</p>	<p>Ex. 3:14; Jn. 14:6  Ps. 145:12; Jn. 1:1-3  Ps. 96:9; Jn. 4:23-24; Rev. 19:10</p> <p>Dt. 6:4-13; Mr. 12:30  Mt. 28:16-20  Ps. 145:17  Mt. 28:19-20</p> <p>Ps. 8:1  Ex. 33:22; Is. 6:3; I Tim. 1:17</p> <p>Is. 40:25</p> <p>Ps. 29:10  Is. 40:28;  Ps. 92:5; I Cor. 2:9</p> <p>I Jn. 4:12, I Tim. 1:17  Jn. 4:24  I Tim. 6:16  Jud. 13:18  Ps. 102:27; Mal. 3:6; Jm. 1:7</p> <p>Jn. 4:24</p> <p>Ex. 3:14; Jer, 10:10; Jn. 5:26  Ps. 104:1  Rev. 15:3  Ps. 86:15; Rom. 2:4; 9:22  Gen. 1:1; Ps. 139:14  Jn 1:18; 4:24; I Tim. 1:17; 6:15-16  Ps. 139: 1-6  Ps. 27:10; Is 46:4; Jude 24  Job 40:2  Is. 40:26; Gen. 1:1, Ex. 3:14  Job 38:4  Acts 17:28</p> <p>Ex. 3:14  Jude 4  Gen. 1:2; Jn. 4:24  Is. 9:6  Dt. 6:4; I Cor. 8:6</p>
ATTRIBUTES OF	<u>Revelation</u> : ability to disclose.	Dt. 29:29



COMMUNICATION	<u>Speak</u> . Verbal communication <u>Write</u> . Communication through symbols of language	Gen. 1:3 Ex. 24:12
ATTRIBUTES OF MORALITY	<u>Moral purity</u> - <u>anger</u> against sin - <u>holiness</u> : separated from sin to God's glory - <u>righteousness</u> : live according to a just standard - <u>justice</u> : moral equity - <u>zeal</u> : passion to accomplish what is right <u>Integrity</u> - <u>admirable</u> : worthy of praise - <u>blameless</u> : no guilt can be attributed to Him - <u>faithfulness</u> : keeps promises - <u>genuineness</u> : authentic to Himself - <u>goodness</u> : absence of evil; ability to benefit - <u>honest</u> : accurate; without falsehood - <u>honorable</u> : acting in way which is worthy - <u>innocence</u> : no guilt can be attributed to Him - <u>just</u> : acts according to a righteous standard - <u>peace</u> : harmony of relationships - <u>purity</u> : not contaminated by sin - <u>responsible</u> : take ownership of your duties - <u>serious</u> : conscious of the moral implications - <u>sincere</u> : without deceit - <u>veracity</u> : true  <u>Intellect</u> : mental capability - <u>incomprehensible</u> : cannot fully understand - <u>knowledge</u> : information - <u>rational</u> : consistent in thought - <u>revelation</u> : disclose - <u>truth</u> : consistent with God's revelation - <u>wisdom</u> : consistent application of knowledge <u>Love</u> : seeks highest good at own sacrificial cost  - <u>benevolence</u> : unselfish concern for welfare of others - <u>compassion</u> : show concern for unworthy subjects - <u>forgiving</u> : pardon a sin committed against you - <u>generous</u> : ability to help others - <u>goodness</u> : act to benefit others - <u>grace</u> : unmerited favor - <u>mercy</u> : not punish when it is deserved - <u>patient</u> : tolerate inconveniences - <u>reconciler</u> : mediate between two conflicting parties - <u>redeems</u> : buy back - <u>tolerant</u> : ability to put up with the offensive <u>Will</u> :	Jer. 10:10 I Pe. 1:16 Ps. 19:7-9; Jer. 9:24 Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:11 Is. 9:7  I Pe. 2:9 Heb. 7:26 2Tim. 2:13 Jer. 10:5-10; Jn. 17:3 Ex. 33:17; Ps. 145:9 Lk. 18:19 Mt. 5:37  Rev. 5:12 Heb. 7:26 Jn. 5:30; 2 Thes. 1:6 Is. 9:6 Heb. 7:26 Jn. 19:26 Lk. 13:5 Rom. 12:9 Nu. 23:19; Ps. 89:2; I Thes. 5:24  Dt. 29:29; Rom. 11:33 Ps. 139:23 Lk. 13:2 II Pe. 1:20-21 Jn. 14:6; 17:3, 17. Prov. 1:7; James 3:17 Ps. 103:17; Jn. 3:16; Ef. 2:4-5; I Jn. 4:8,10; Dt. 7:7-8; Jn. 3:16 Is. 61:1-2; Lk. 4:18-19  Lam. 3:22 Jn. 8:11; I Jn. 1:9 Mt. 20:15 Lk. 18:19; Eph. 2:8 Ex. 3:7,17; Ps. 103:13; Mt. 9:36 Jn. 8:11 II Cor. 5:18 Job 19:25 Mk. 2:16  Ps. 115:1; Rev. 19:11 Ps. 115:3, Jn. 8:32

	- <u>faithfulness</u> : keep one's word or promise - <u>freedom</u> : unrestricted	
ATTRIBUTES OF TIME AND SPACE	<u>Create</u> : ability to generate material without using other materials <u>Eternity</u> : without beginning or end <u>Everlasting</u> : does not fail <u>Immeasurable</u> : cannot be categorized <u>Immensity</u> : great  <u>Infinity</u> : unlimited <u>Presence</u> : ability to be there <u>Preserve</u> : ability to maintain the universe in general and in particular <u>Universal</u> : everywhere	Gen. 1:1  Gen. 21:32; Ps. 90:2 Is. 40:28 Ps. 89:6 I Kings 8:27; Ps. 145:3; Acts 17:24 Ps. 104:24, Ex. 33:14 Mt. 6:32  Rom. 11:36
ATTRIBUTES OF EMOTION	<u>Anger</u> : indignation against wrong doing <u>Disturbed</u> : emotionally upset <u>Humor</u> : laughter, ridiculing <u>Joy</u> : atmosphere of contentment <u>Weeping</u> : crying	Ps. 2:12, Mt. 23:13 Jn. 12:27 Ps. 2:2 Ps. 16:11 Jn. 11:35

### HOMWORK FOR LESSON FIVE

Pedagogical Pointer: The student will use a four step method of developing truth statements. The four steps are to identify, verify, define and spiritual apply the truth statements. First, a truth will be identified. For example, it is true that one of the attributes of God is that He is love. Second, in order to verify that we cite Dt. 7:7-8 and Jn. 3:16. A definition of love is that it seeks highest good at own sacrificial cost. Finally, to spiritually apply this truth to our lives we can say that God requires us to love Him above all else and our neighbor as ourselves.

Readings; Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 52-81 and R. C. Sproul, *Essentials*, 31-34, 38-56

### QUESTIONS

1. Define attribute.
2. Define communicable attribute
3. Define incommunicable attribute
4. What is an attribute of being? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for five attributes of being
5. What is an attribute of morality? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for five attributes of morality.
6. What is an attribute of space and time? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for five attributes of space and time.
7. What is an attribute of emotion? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for two attributes of emotion.
8. Describe the two dimensions of holiness as explained by Sproul (p. 47-48).
9. How does Sproul answer the charge that God is not fair in not being merciful to everyone? (p.53-54)
10. Read Berkhof's treatment on classifying the attributes of God (pp. 55-56). Write a one page reflection paper on your point of view about classifying the attributes of God. How would you explain this to a five year old child?

## LESSON SIX

### THE WORKINGS OF GOD

*Some are much troubled because they proceed by a false method and order in judging their estates. They will begin with election, which is the highest step of the ladder; whereas they should begin with the work of grace wrought within their hearts, for God's calling by His Spirit, and their answer to His call, and so raise themselves upwards to know their election by their answer to God's calling. "Give all diligence," says Peter, "to make your calling and election sure," your election by your calling. God descends unto us from election to calling, and so to sanctification; we must ascend to Him beginning where he ends (Richard Sibbs).*

### INTRODUCTION

Genesis 1 says: "In the beginning, ELOHIM created the heavens and the earth." In lesson three we observed that the name ELOHIM is plural and foreshadows the name of the only true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In today's lesson we turn to the workings of God and again we start with Genesis 1:1.

God existed in the beginning. This is not simply a logical observation that someone had to exist in the beginning and that this being is God. More than a logical observation that God existed in the beginning God is the God of all beginnings. The fact that God is the God of all beginnings is known as the decrees of God. The decrees of God have had a lot of bad press from the humanists and others who refuse to accept the truth that God is the God of all beginnings.

One of the accusations against God for being the God of all beginnings is that this apparently makes God the author of evil. Not so. One has to understand that evil does not stand on its own. Evil is antithetical to what is good. Evil is the wrong response to good. Evil is not sovereign and does not stand on the same ontological level as God. Only God is sovereignly good and has power over evil. This is the good news of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Even though the rulers and the masses sought to do evil in killing Jesus, God the Father had planned to use the death of Jesus as the sacrifice for the payment of the sins of His people. Jesus died, the sacrifice was complete, he rose again and now reigns from heaven. In his reign he applies the merits of his perfect life, the payment for sin and the triumph over evil to his followers (Col. 2:13-15). Not only do the accusers of a sovereign God fail to know God, they do not understand the nature and solution to evil.

In order to understand the relationship between God and evil, the analogy of light and darkness is very helpful. One small ray of light expels darkness. The brighter the light the less amount of darkness. God is perfect light, and in Him there is no

darkness at all. We attribute such a truth to the Being of God but we may also say that about the attributes and workings of God.

Romans 8:30 describes the work of God from one side of eternity to the other. God foreknows, predestines, calls, justifies and glorifies. We can chronologically fill in some gaps and expand the list to include:

BEGINNING WORKS: Foreknowledge, Predestination, Election, Creation  
CONTINUATION WORKS: Providence, Renewal,  
REDEEMING WORKS: Calls, Justifies, Sanctifies, Glorifies

### BEGINNING WORKS

God's foreknowledge of absolutely all things flows out of His omniscience. God is all-knowing. There is nothing that He cannot know. He knows where you are going to spend eternity. This fact may surprise you but this does not surprise God. God is never surprised. According to his omniscience, he knows all possibilities and impossibilities. He knows absolutely everything from the past, present and future. He is never taken by surprise.

At the beginning God determined the end. Look at the word pre-destination. God knew before we were born what our destination or ending will be. Not only does He know that, but He acts according to that knowledge. To pre-destine something is to guarantee that it will get there.

Election refers to God's actual choosing. It is not a vague term where he elects a certain category of people. Some say that God elects all people who believe in Jesus. That puts the cart before the horse. Such a position holds that people first choose to believe in Jesus and that God puts his stamp of approval on that process. It is opposite to what God's sovereign election is all about. It's taking the vote out of God's hand and giving him a rubber stamp. Some people like such a controllable god.

So a real God predestines real people to a real destiny. That sounds simpler than what people are willing to believe.

Many humanists may find it incredulous that God is willing to predestine people to eternity. From such point of view, it is perceived that God is not fair in choosing some and not choosing others. Why, since He has chosen to create people is He not obliged to provide a way in which they can be saved? Some say that God wants to save all, but that not all people want to be saved. Here the decision is left with the unbeliever and his going to hell is his own doing. Biblical realists are not happy with such an observation. They say that since none are righteous, none will want to please God and so none of us would be saved if it were left up to us, and we would all land up in hell. We are dead in our trespasses and sins, and dead men don't respond very well.

According to God's omnipotence, He only, who is the author of life, can do something about the lost condition of spiritually dead sinners. Why do we object to joining God's omniscience (foreknowledge) to God's predestination (omnipotence)? Does the humanist want to take some credit for saving himself? The realist does not look for human cooperation, ability or credit. He just wants a salvation that is guaranteed. The realist gives 100% of the glory to God for salvation and attributes 0 % himself.

The Biblical realists point of view is that God who has created us is the only one who can save us. We did not create ourselves, and we cannot recreate ourselves. As much as we needed God to be created, we need Him to be saved. Just as much as God's omnipotence is seen in creation so His omniscience is necessary for our regeneration, our new birth for salvation. There is no contradiction between the omniscience and omnipotence of God. There is no conflict between foreknowledge, predestination and election. God is the God of our created beginning and recreated beginning.

Only a God who is fully omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent is able to create. According to His omniscience God knew exactly what to create. He does not have to experiment or try His luck. God knows exactly what he wants. By the omnipotence of God, all things are made exactly as God foresees and wants. In His omnipresence, God personally creates.

Genesis 1:1 says that, "In the beginning God *bara* the heavens and the earth. *Bara* has a variety of meanings among which is the creation without the use of previous materials (Strong's, 301, NT Dictionary, #1254). Such a creation is miraculous. The Genesis account uses *bara* for the creation of the universe (1:1), the creation of animals (1:21) and the creation of people (1:27). The author of Genesis also uses *yatsar* which means to form (Strong's, 487, Dictionary, # 3335). This is used for people (2:7) and animals (2:19). It is noteworthy that both *barah* and *yatsar* are used, indicating a multiple creational activity of both starting and continuing.

Since God is the creator, He is the only one who can continue his creation and redeem His creation. God allows others to participate in his workings, but He always remains the author and sovereign Lord.

## CONTINUATION WORKS

The Biblical realist holds that if God is absolutely the God of all beginnings, then he must be able to perfectly continue His plan of operation. It would be silly to have a god who started something and could not finish it. Such a god would be the ultimate incompetent goofball (oops, I goofed again, says a disappointed god, I better figure a way to fix this!). Such a god is made after the image of ourselves and does not do justice to God.

That which God creates He must sustain. The word **providence** refers to both the provision as well as ruling over the creation which God made (Berkhof, ST., p. 165). Jesus put it so distinctly: "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them." (Mt. 6:26) (So who feeds the birds? Your heavenly Father or Mother nature?) Providence is not only provision but it also refers to His government. "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt. 6:33). The kingdom of God refers to God's people's final destination but the kingdom is also operative in hostile territory. Since God is sovereign, He is able to use the instruments of His enemies to win His own battles. Don't underestimate God's providential ways. Just ask Joseph's brothers.

**Miracles**, in relationship to God's creation, are God's supernatural acts of intervention that supercede natural law, historical development and personal experiences. When Jesus turned the water into wine, the laws of nature (i.e. fermentation of grapes) were superceded by the purpose, will and power of the Lord.

When Satan or wicked men manipulate supernatural powers, they are not performing true miracles. Rather, they are manipulating existing powers (natural and supernatural) to produce a miraculous like event. For example, the magicians of Egypt were able to imitate the miracles of Moses and Aaron, but they could not miraculously stop the advancement of God. The supernatural world exists: however, not all supernatural powers are godly or spiritual.

Like with creation, so with miracles, only the true God can create, do miracles and save. He is the God of beginnings. Human beings can clone, do supernatural tricks and pretend to save, but it is not the real thing.

The creation is a fallen and cursed creation (Genesis 3). However, God is in the process of **renewing** and restoring His creation (Romans 8: 18-27). God's plan is to renew His people first of all. "The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed" (8:19). The creation is waiting for, yet moving towards the new creation, which will come in full glory with the second coming of Jesus Christ. But several things have to happen. One, since the fall (Genesis 3:1-7) God is renewing his relationship with His people (Genesis 3:15 contains the original promise). The signs of God's renewal plan are marked with blessings. Blessings are pronouncements of God's favor. Curses are pronouncements of God's displeasure. That renewing relationship with His people will be through a special "seed." The seed consists of all those whose hope is in the Messiah (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 3:16). The highlight of God's renewal program is seen in the birth, life, death, resurrection and reign of Jesus Christ. He is the center piece of God's plan of renewal. In Christ, all things are made and will be made new. In Christ, the Father establishes a new covenant with His people. The covenant is not just with persons but with God's people. The gathering of the "seed" is called the Body of Christ, the church. God's people are

gathered into the church through believing in the gospel of Jesus Christ and repenting of their sins (Mt. 4:17; Rom. 10:17). In the context of the Body, God's people live out the kingdom rule of Christ. All relationships are renewed even to the extent that Christians are to love their enemies (Mt. 5:44,45). God commissioned mission is for His people to go to every person (Mk. 16:15-16); every nation (Mt. 28:19-20), with every Christ fulfilled promise (Luke 24:44-49); with the power of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 20:21-23) until Jesus comes again (Acts 1:8). Then will come the new heavens and the new earth (Rev. 21:1).

## REDEEMING WORKS

To redeem means to purchase at a price. The term was used to describe the transaction of buying back a slave or releasing someone through offering a payment (Strong's, *gaal* in Hebrew and *agorazo* in Greek).

The **covenant of grace** is God's definition of how His redemptive relationship is going to be with us. R.C. Sproul summarizes it as follows:

*"The new covenant, the covenant of grace, was ratified by the shed blood of Christ upon the cross. At the heart of this covenant is God's promise of redemption. God has not only promised to redeem all who put their trust in Christ, but has sealed and confirmed that promise with a most holy vow. We serve and worship a God who has pledged Himself to our full redemption" (Essentials, p. 72).*

In order for the covenant of grace to operate, God has to initiate the relationship. The **call** of God has at least three dimensions: eternal, external and internal. The calling of God for us to come to Christ originates with God. He is the one who calls. In that sense it's an eternal call. The call also comes to us in an external way. The Word of God is proclaimed to both the elect and non-elect (Rom. 10:13-18). The mechanics of preaching and receiving the Word is still an external call until such a time when the Holy Spirit uses the word to bring spiritual life into the heart of a person. The Holy Spirit's application of the Word to the heart of the believer is the internal call. "It is the secret work of quickening or regeneration accomplished in the souls of the elect by the immediate supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit (Sproul, *Essential*, p. 169). Where does the call lead to? It leads to regeneration. Regeneration is the quickening of the human heart from spiritual death to spiritual life (Sproul, *Essential*, p. 171). Regeneration leads to faith and conversion. One cannot believe nor turn away from their sins unless quickened by the new life which the Holy Spirit brings. All of this is made possible through Jesus Christ.

**Justification** is the gracious act of God the Father whereby He declares His people without guilt due to the righteous merits and sacrificial death of His Son. Believers are declared just before God, a standing that no one can remove.

Justification is given by grace and received through faith. “The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17).

In order for the just to continue to live by faith they need the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit. This is known as **sanctification**. In sanctification the believer continually dies to sin and lives according to the will of the Father, the ways of the Son through the workings of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s work in the believer’s personality is known as the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s work in building the community of believers is recognized as the gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s restriction of sin in society at large and in a person’s heart is called **eleatics**.

**Glorification** will be the final work of God in which all the plans and works of God are consummated in the new heavens and new earth and the believer will enjoy God forever. The believer has been given the hope of glory (the blessed hope) that all things will be made perfectly complete in God.



## THE WORKINGS OF GOD

BEGINNING WORKS	Foreknowledge Predestination Election	Ps. 139:1-6; Rom. 8:29 Eph. 1:5 Rom. 9:11
CONTINUATION WORKS	Creation Providence Renewal	Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:2-4 Mt. 6:25-34 Rom. 8
REDEEMING WORKS	Covenant Call Regeneration Faith Justification Sanctification Fruit of the Spirit Gifts of the Spirit  Eleatics Glorification	Acts 2:37-39 Rom 8:29 Jn. 3:3,5 Rom. 1:16-17 Rom. 3:23-26 Eph. 4:24; Gal. 2:20 Gal. 5:22-25 Rom. 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:1-11; Eph. 4:7-12. Jn. 16:8-11 Rom. 8:30; 11:33-36

### INTRODUCTION TO THE “ORDER OF SALVATION” (*Ordo Salutis*)

1. WE BELIEVE IN GOD’S ORDER OF SALVATION BECAUSE BIBLE SAYS SO (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:5)

a. Romans 8:29 gives the order

<b>He</b> foreknew (knows before hand)	<b>He</b> predestined (chooses before hand)	<b>He</b> called (reach out to)	<b>He</b> justified (make righteous)	<b>He</b> glorified (make perfect)
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b. What does this say about God? (We will probably agree!)

Omniscient	Omnipotent	Reveals	Righteous	Perfect
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c. What does this say about us? (We will probably disagree!) See Romans 3:10-23

Ignorance (“none who understands”)	Incapable (none who seeks after God)	Lost (they have all turned aside)	Unrighteous (none is righteous)	Unprofitable (They have together become unprofitable)
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d. What do we need? (Only obtainable through faith in Jesus Christ and power of the Holy Spirit) Romans 8:1-27

Knowledge of God Rom 8:6	Power to choose Rom 8:26	Respond to the call Rom 8:11	Righteousness (without blame) Rom 8:4	Eternal glory Rom 8:17
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## HOMEWORK FOR LESSON SIX

Pedagogical Pointers. The student will seek to understand the workings of God from an eternal, a historical and a redemptive perspective.

Readings: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 100-180 and R.C. Sproul, *Essentials*, pp. 57-74

### QUESTIONS

1. What does the author mean when he says that God is a God of beginnings?
2. If God is the God of all beginnings, how do you explain His relationship to evil?
3. What is the relationship between God's foreknowledge and predestination?
4. According to the author, what is the relationship between creation and providence?
5. What are the two dimensions of God's providence?
6. According to the author, what is a miracle?
7. Explain the three dimensions of God's call.
8. What is justification?
9. What is the relationship between justification and sanctification?
10. What is glorification?
11. In reading R.C. Sproul, (pp. 57-74) how does his treatment of the works of God differ from that of the author of this chapter?
12. In reading R.C. Sproul, (p.65-66) and Berkhof, (176-178) do you believe they believe that miracles happen today? Write a one page reflection and share your view in class.

## LESSON SEVEN

### HERESIES ABOUT GOD

*Even the greatest theologians are only 80% correct in their theology (R.C. Sproul).*

#### INTRODUCTION

The first heresy or misrepresentation about God you will encounter in people's response to Genesis 1:1. What God affirms in Genesis 1:1 is denied by the unbeliever. In order to understand the whole council of God, one has to first of all cross the threshold of Genesis 1:1.

Genesis 1:1 affirms:

Denial of Genesis 1:1

<p><u>The existence of God</u>: God's existence is not questioned in verse 1. It is not just that a god exists but the true God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit exist.</p> <p><u>The unity of God</u>: God is one.</p> <p><u>The plurality of name of God</u>: "im" of Elohim is plural.</p> <p><u>The personhood of God</u>: All three divine persons are involved in the creation.</p> <p><u>The self existence of God</u>: Prior to creation of the universe God existed.</p> <p><u>God as the original cause</u>: God is the first cause of all things. He is the God of all true beginnings.</p> <p><u>God as the only creator</u>: God announces His role in creation of materials, animals, people and history.</p> <p><u>God as the revealer</u>: God reveals what He wants us to know about the creation by giving us the Scripture, His Word.</p> <p><u>God as provider</u>: He who creates must also provide.</p> <p><u>God as transcendent</u>: God is above and beyond the creation and His creatures.</p> <p><u>God is sovereign</u>: God is the supreme ruler over all.</p>	<p><u>Atheism</u>: God does not exist.</p> <p><u>Polytheism</u>: belief in many gods.</p> <p><u>False monotheism</u>: denies the godhead.</p> <p><u>Judaism</u>: Elohim does not include the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</p> <p><u>Existentialism</u>: God needs man to exist.</p> <p><u>Materialism</u>: materials are eternal.</p> <p><u>Evolutionism</u>: creation involved out of matter.</p> <p><u>Liberalism</u>. Bible is not God's Word but man's word about God.</p> <p><u>Deism</u>: God started the creation and let it develop.</p> <p><u>Monism</u>: God and creation are one.</p> <p><u>Humanism</u>. Man decides how God created the universe.</p>
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For a comprehensive overview of the heresies about God one can review a lists of "isms." The "isms" refer to existing ideologies. The alphabet serves as a tool for organizing the isms.

	<b>HERESIES</b>	<b>BRIEF DEFINITION IN HOW IT RELATES TO GOD</b>	<b>THE TRUTH WHICH IS BEING DISTORTED</b>
A	HERESIES ABOUT GOD'S AUTHORITY. All heresies which reject the authority of God seek to replace it with another authority.		
	Absolutism	Belief in absolutes outside of God	Only God is absolute. Mt. 28:18
	Agnostic	Denial of the knowledge of God.	God reveals knowledge about Himself. Rom. 1: 18
	Animism	Primitive religion which believes that the divine spirit inhabits animals and objects	God cannot be demoted to the animal and object level. Rom. 1:23
	Apostasy	The rejection of the truth about God once you know about it.	Truth is revealed to be obeyed. Dt. 29:29
	Authoritarianism	Belief in authority outside of the authority of God.	God reveals His authority through the Word of God. II Tim. 3:16. The Word of God is the maximum authority for man and religion.
	Biblicism	Exaltation of a certain Bible belief over God.	The Bible is a means, not the end. God is the end all. Jn. 5:39,40.
	Cabalism	Interpretation of number as source of truth.	The Bible interprets the Bible. II Pe. 1:20-21.
	Confessionalism	Over exaltation of one's creed over God's revealed will.	Mt. 23:1-4. The traditions of men become more important than the Word of God.
	Determinism	Forces outside of God play a role in shaping one's destiny.	Romans 8:28. All things work together for God's purpose.
	Emotionalism	Define God according to one's emotional condition.	Mk. 4:16-17. God's Word is to be received by faith and in following Jesus.
	Evolution	Denial of God's involvement in creational and providential work	Gen. 1:21. God created within boundaries. There is no evolution between species. God is able to do miracles.
	Experientialism	Defining of God according to one's experiences	I Jn. 4:1. Every experience has to be tested by God's Word.
	False prophecy	Speak falsehood about God	The prophet of God speaks the truth about God. Dt. 18:14-20.
	Fetishism	Belief that God works through sacred objects	Is. 40: 18-19. God cannot be reduced to a man made object.
	Gnosticism	Belief that God can be known through special or elitist knowledge	I John 2:20-21. God gives knowledge to His people
	Hierarchicalism	The practice of mediating the knowledge of God through special leaders	Mt. 23:11. Leadership is seen in servant hood who submit to the truth.
	Higher Criticism	The knowledge of God is held captive to critical questions of scholars.	All Scriptures is inspired by God. II Tim. 3:16 and trustworthy when properly interpreted.

	Humanism Idolatry Materialism Numeriology  Occultism  Post Modernism  Positive Thinking  Practical atheism  Quietism  Rationalism  Reductionism  Relativism Ritualism Satanism  Secularism Subjectivism	The human point of view is the maximum authority. Practice of making false gods. The material is eternal. God's will can be discovered in Biblical numerical codes.  Belief that secret practices are needed to discover the will of the divine. Ideological movement after modernism that denies the existence of absolutes including an absolute being. Belief in determining life through constructive thoughts. Believe in God but live as though He does not exist  The search for God's will through silence  Belief that God's will exclusively obeys the laws of logic  The narrowing down of beliefs about God  Two opposites can both be true Belief that God can be reached through the observance of human rituals Following of Satan.  Rejection of the sacred.  Defining God according to non-objective criterions.	Human authority is derived, not original . Gen. 1:26 Ex. 20:4. You shall not make graven images. Only God is eternal. Rev. 1:8 God does not have to reveal truth through secret codes. He has clearly revealed what He wants us to know. Dt. 29:29; II Tim. 3:16. What we need to know about the divine will is revealed in Scripture. Dt. 29:29; II Peter 1:20-21 Prov. 1:7. True knowledge begins with God.  The Christian life is to be determined by obeying God's Word. Jer. 23:16-18. Ps. 119:105 Mt. 22:37. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your souls and with all your mind." Silence has its place (Ps. 46:10) but silence without meditating on God's revelation is empty. God is rational and the creation is ruled by rational principles. God also is able to supercede natural law through His divine. We are to preach and teach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27) Truth is one and not contradictory. I Jn. 2:21 Rom. 1:17. The just shall live by faith. Ordinances need to be prescribed by the Lord.  Gen. 3:1-5; Jn. 8:44. One can not follow God and Satan at the same time. God is sovereign over all of life. Rom. 11:36 God reveals Himself according to His Word. Is. 66:2
B	HERESIES ABOUT GOD'S BEING. All heresies about God's being seek to take away from His personal, word or work.		
	Atheism Buddhism	The denial of the existence of God Buddhist belief that divinity or	God exists. Gen. 1:1  Jesus suffered and died for our

	<p>Confucianism</p> <p>Deism</p> <p>Dualism</p> <p>Existentialism</p> <p>Hinduism</p> <p>Islam</p> <p>Judaism</p> <p>Monism</p> <p>Mormonism</p> <p>Nihilism</p> <p>Pantheism</p> <p>Polytheism Shintoism</p> <p>Unitarianism</p> <p>World Religions</p> <p>Zoroastrianism</p>	<p>enlightenment is gained through suffering. Ethical system based on the teachings of Confucius that including the worship of ancestral spirits</p> <p>The belief in a remote God</p> <p>The exaltation of evil on par with God as an equal force.</p> <p>The definition of God according to the existence of man.</p> <p>The belief in Hindu polytheism.</p> <p>Belief that Allah is the true God.</p> <p>The Jewish religious rejection of Jesus as the Messiah.</p> <p>All reality is one and divine.</p> <p>God is a perfected man.</p> <p>Belief that nothing exists</p> <p>Belief that God is in all.</p> <p>Believe in many gods. Worship of ancestral spirits</p> <p>All concepts of god lead to the same God. Each world religion has their concept of god.</p> <p>The worship of Ormazd in context of a universal struggle between light and darkness</p>	<p>sins so that we can be reconciled to a personal God By faith in Jesus we can fulfill the law of God. (Mt. 5:17)</p> <p>God is not just distant, He is near. Acts 17:22-33. Is. 40:25, nothing is equal to God.</p> <p>Job 38:2-3. Is. 45:9–10. God questions man rather than man always trying to question God. God is one in three persons. Mt. 28:19 Jn. 14:6. Islam does not accept Jesus as the only way to the Father. Jesus is King of the Jews (Mt. 27:37) Gen. 1:2. God the Creator is distinct from the creation. God became man in Jesus, Mt. 1:23. Gen. 1:1. We affirm that God and all reality exists. Gen. 1:2. God is not to be found in the creation but in Himself. There is only one God. Ex. 20:3 Only God is to be worshipped. Rev. 19:10 Jesus says he is the only way. Jn. 14:6; Act 4:12. There no other name than the name of Jesus in order to be saved. Jesus is the light of the world.</p>
C	<p><b>HERESIES ABOUT CHRIST.</b> The heresies have to do with the natures, person, deity and work of Jesus.</p> <p>Adoptionism</p> <p>Arianism Docetism</p> <p>Jesus Only</p> <p>Modalism</p>	<p>Jesus was adopted as Son of God.</p> <p>Denial of the deity of Christ. The denial of the humanity of Christ.</p> <p>A modalistic belief that Jesus is the final manifestation of God.</p> <p>Belief that the triune God existed in three different</p>	<p>Jesus was always the Son of God. Jn. 8:58 Jesus is God. Jn. 1:1. I John 4:2-3. Those led by the Spirit will affirm that Jesus was born as a human being. Mt. 3:16-17. The Father and Son and Spirit are mentioned together.</p> <p>There are three distinct persons, as mentioned by Jesus. Mt. 28:19-</p>

	<p>Monophysism</p> <p>Nestorianism</p> <p>Subordinationism</p>	<p>model. Jesus has one nature.</p> <p>Belief that Jesus was two persons: one divine and the other human.</p> <p>Belief that some of the persons of the trinity are inferior to others.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Is. 7:14. Jesus has two natures: one divine and one human. Jesus is one person, with a divine and a human nature ( Luke 24:37-39)</p> <p>The submission of Jesus to the Father is voluntary. Phil. 2:6-7</p>
D	<p>HERESIES ABOUT THE <b>DIVINE OPERATIONS.</b> The workings of the Holy Spirit are imitated.</p> <p>Cast spells</p> <p>Consult with the dead</p> <p>Divination</p> <p>Magic</p> <p>Mariology</p> <p>New Age</p> <p>Para-psychology</p> <p>Sorcery</p> <p>Spiritism</p> <p>Voodoo</p> <p>Witchcraft</p>	<p>Seek to bring harm on others through supernatural means.</p> <p>Make contact with people or spirits who have deceased.</p> <p>Seek to foretell future events. Ez. 21:21.</p> <p>The belief in the external existence of materials things. Communication with Mary, the mother of Jesus, for her to intercede.</p> <p>Contemporary religion that uses channeling to communicate with the departed people and other worldly powers.</p> <p>The practice of manipulating psychological powers.</p> <p>Speak as a voice of the dead.</p> <p>Practice of being in contact with the spirit world.</p> <p>Belief in possession of spirits in order to have supernatural power and knowledge. Practice of seeking to</p>	<p>God is the judge and supernatural means are not to be manipulated. Dt. 18:11; Rev. 22:15</p> <p>Is. 8:19-21. Rev. 22:15. We may only speak about the dead according to the Word. Only an omniscient God knows the future and by faith we trust Him. Dt. 18:10; Acts 16:16-18; Rev. 22:15.</p> <p>Ex. 8:6,18. Magicians can develop their arts but only God can do true. Dt. 18:11; Mt. 6:6-9; Lk 1:46-47</p> <p>Mary is the Mother of Jesus; she and the saints are praying to God, and we are not to have communications with her since Jesus taught us to pray to the Father.</p> <p>Channeling, the communication with the dead is forbidden. Dt. 18:11. Rather, we are to pray to God. Mt. 6:9-13.</p> <p>The Christian lives by the Spirit of God and not by manipulating one's psychological powers. Gal. 5:16-17</p> <p>Both the Old and New Testament prohibit the speaking with the dead. (Dt. 18:11; Luke 16:27-31)</p> <p>The Christian is called to be exclusively in contact with God through the Holy Spirit. Dt. 18:11, Lev. 19:11; Rev. 22:15.</p> <p>Dt. 18:11; Rev. 22:15. We are to live by the spiritual power of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>God does not use mediums but</p>

		manipulate the supernatural through certain mediums	uses His proclaimed Word to speak to us. Lev. 19:31; Dt. 18:11; Acts 16:16-18
E	<p><b>HERESIES ABOUT EARTHLY CONTEXTS.</b> An earthly power seeks power over the gospel.</p> <p>Capitalism</p> <p>Civil Religion</p> <p>Contextualization</p> <p>Feminism</p> <p>Hedonism</p> <p>Liberationism</p> <p>Militarism</p> <p>Modernism</p> <p>Totalitarianism</p> <p>Social Gospel</p> <p>Tribalism</p>	<p>Religion is used to make money.</p> <p>The use of religion for national purposes. Define God according to the context of his followers</p> <p>God's will is determined by the feminist liberation agenda</p> <p>Belief that pleasure is god.</p> <p>Religion is used to politically liberate a people.</p> <p>The practice of using physical force to seek to convince other of God.</p> <p>The mindset that any change is better than traditional beliefs.</p> <p>Exaltation of the authority of the state over the authority of God.</p> <p>Identification of the kingdom of God with social concerns. Believe in tribal gods.</p>	<p>The love of money is the root of all evil. Mt. 6:24, Acts 8:19; 19:25-27. Rom. 9:6-7. The purpose of Israel was to be light to the nations. God is trans-cultural and universal, he cannot be tied to one specific culture. Rev. 5:9</p> <p>Gen. 1:26; Eph. 5:22-33. God's agenda includes both male and female. I Tim. 4:4-5. All things may be used with thanksgiving. Jn. 18:36. The church is not a political party. Zech. 4:6. Human hearts are changed through the Spirit of God.</p> <p>Prov. 1:24-33. Roman. 12:1-2. God does not ask us to change for change sake but be transformed according to His will. Rev. 13. Anti-christ governments will arise.</p> <p>Mt. 4:4. Obeying God's will is more important than any concern. God is universal. Rev. 5:9</p>
H	<p><b>HERESIES ABOUT THE HUMAN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.</b> A substitute for salvation by faith in Jesus alone is offered.</p> <p>Fanaticism</p> <p>Legalism</p>	<p>Extreme response in order to win the approval of God.</p> <p>Practice of adding human commandments to the gospel</p>	<p>Mt. 16:22-23. All of our responses are to be measured by God's will, not our own. I Cor. 13:3 Gal. 2:16. Nothing is to be added to faith as what is necessary for</p>



	Liberalism	in order to be saved. Practice of taking away demands of the gospel.	salvation. Rom. 6:1-2. Repentance is not to be ignored in serving God.
	Libertinism	Association of religion with unrestricted immoral practices	I Cor. 10:23-33. Christian liberty does have restrictions.
	Machismo	Belief in a god with a male dominance agenda	Gal. 3:26-29. God's order in creation is to glorify God and His salvation.
	Monasticism	The pursuit of God through ascetic and pietistic exercises.	We should not forbid what the Bible does not forbid. I Tim. 4:3.
	Moralism	Belief in the supremacy of human moral capabilities.	Rom. 3:10-17; Eph. 2:1-4
	Pharisaism	The definition of God's will according to a hypocritical ruling elite.	Only in obeying God can we be moral.
	Sacramentalism	Belief that communion with God is established through the sacraments of the church.	Godliness is to live by God's Word and Spirit and human tradition must submit to God.
	Stoicism	Belief that the resignation of human feeling is divine.	The Lord has instituted two ordinances: baptism (Mt. 28:19-20) and the Lord Supper (Mt 26:26-29). Participation does not guarantee salvation but shows gratitude and obedience.
	Syncretism	Mixing of two religious systems.	The act of resignation is not the same as repentance of sin. Mt. 4:17
	Traditionalism	The exaltation of religious or human tradition over the claims of Scripture.	Tenets of early Christianity were mixed in with a false Judaism.
	Universalism	All human beings will be saved.	Jesus fulfilled tradition but stressed the essence. Mt. 23:23,24
	World Religions	All religions have their way to God.	Jesus speaks graphically about people going to heaven and people going to hell. Mt. 25:46
			Acts 4:12. God has only given one name by which men can be saved.

## HOMEWORK FOR LESSON SEVEN

PEDAGOGICAL POINT. The student will identify teachings and practices that are contrary to the teachings of Scripture. The heresies and the teachings of Scripture are opposites.

### QUESTIONS

1. According to Genesis 1:1, name two affirmations and two denials of truth.
2. From the list of heresies find 5 heresies having to do with spiritism and magic. What do they have in common?
3. From the list of heresies, find 5 that challenge the nature of God. What truth is being challenged?
4. From the list of heresies, find 5 that challenge the nature of Jesus. What truth is being challenged?
5. From the list of heresies, find 5 that challenge the saving work of God. What truth is being challenged?
6. From the list of heresies, find 5 that are social and/or political in nature. What truth is being challenged?
7. From the list of heresies, find 5 that are moral in nature. What truth is being challenged?

## LESSON EIGHT

### SUMMARY

*If God is small enough to be understood He would not be big enough to be worshipped (Elizabeth Elliot).*

### A SYSTEMATIC OVERVIEW

In systematic theology, we seek to organize the information we have about the knowledge of God in such a way as to be consistent with Scripture and considerate to the student.

	<i>Knowledge of God</i>	<i>Existence of God</i>	<i>Trinity</i>	<i>Names of God</i>	<i>Attributes of God</i>	<i>Works of God</i>	<i>Heresies about God</i>
LEVEL 1. Being	God's self-revelation	God exists	Claims about God	Names as revelation of God	His being	Self-revelation	About God's being, Christ
LEVEL 2. Communication	Scripture	God reveals	Biblical evidence	Old and New Testament	Communication	Revelation work	God's authority
LEVEL 3. Creation	General revelation	Reality exists	Evidence of God in creation	Historical context	Time and space	Creation, History, consummation	About earthly contexts
LEVEL 4. Relationship	Through faith in true God	Relationships exist	Adoration	Profession of the name of God	His morality and emotion	Covenant with People of God	About divine operations and human relationships with God

We have looked at God in a variety of ways. There are definite patterns that can be identified.

In the following chart, fill in the empty spaces so as to familiarize yourself with the overall system of theology proper.

	<i>Knowledge of God</i>	<i>Existence of God</i>	<i>Trinity</i>	<i>Names of God</i>	<i>Attributes of God</i>	<i>Works of God</i>	<i>Heresies about God</i>
LEVEL 1. Being		God exists		Names as revelation of God		Self-revelation	
LEVEL 2. Communication	Scripture		Biblical evidence		Communication		God's authority
LEVEL 3. Creation		Reality exists		Historical context		Creation, History, consumption	
LEVEL 4. Relationship	Through faith in true God		Adoration		His morality and emotion		About divine operations and human relationships with God

### A DEFENSE OF THE TRUE GOD

The student has already studied the heresies about the true God. In this closing lesson, we will briefly introduce a method which can be used to defend the truth. The method consists of identifying the truth, defining that which is opposite to the truth as the lie and then responding to the lie with the claims of the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In logic, this method is called the dialectic.

The dialectic has a bad name among the believers. It has been misused by unbelievers in order to exalt human knowledge (philosophy), deny reality (nihilism) and in order to promote evolutionism (material dialectic). However, the misuse is not normal or normative but it is abnormal. It is our intent to use the dialectic for the purpose of the gospel.

*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete ( II Cor. 10:5-6).*

<b>TRUTH</b>	<b>LIE</b>	<b>GOSPEL</b>	<b>IDOLATRY</b>
thesis	antithesis	synthesis	syncretism
Example: God exists	Atheism: God does not exist	The God reveals Himself in undeniable historical way in Jesus.	Atheist co-exist with believers as members and leaders of the Church
Example: God exists and we exist	God exists but we do not really exist but live in an allusion	God became one of us: so in Jesus we have both the existence of God and the existence of mankind. God's divinity and our humanity is revealed in Jesus. To deny the reality of divinity or humanity is to deny Christ.	The person and deity of Jesus is not affirmed in the Church while Jesus is recognized as an important person.

One can enter into the dialectic logic at any point. When one is confronted with a lie, then it's necessary to identify the truth that is being denied or distorted. The gospel response needs to address the truth that is being denied. The practical outworking of the implications are to be examined to see whether we are being syncretistic rather than coming to the synthesis of the gospel.

In the following chart, fill in your own information as to the use of the dialectic.

<b>TRUTH</b>	<b>LIE</b>	<b>GOSPEL</b>	<b>IDOLATRY</b>
thesis	antithesis	synthesis	syncretism
Example: God is love			
Example: God is sovereign			

## A REVIEW OF THE METHOD TO MEMORIZE

In the introduction to the course, it was noted that upon completion of the course the student will be able to verbally and in writing accomplish the following:

1. Faithfully **identify** truths about God
2. Biblically **verify** truths about God
3. Accurately **define** truths about God
4. Spiritually **apply** the truths about God to our lives

C. The practice of identifying, verifying, defining and applying we call the **memorization model**. It is time for you to use it.

	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLE
identify	Single out a truth about God	1.
verify	Prove it from Scripture	1. 2.
define	Explain it in your own words	1.
apply	List the spiritual applications for your life, church and society	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Each fact given about God is worth one point. Notice that in brief introduction (page 2) about love we have mentioned 10 facts. Many more can be mentioned, especially in the application section. It's our goal to numerate 2000 facts about God.

## HOMWORK FOR LESSON EIGHT

PEDAGOGICAL POINT. The student will seek to put together his/her knowledge of God in an overall system. The student will apply a simple dialectic to the knowledge of God and practice the memorization method.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Complete the review chart on the knowledge of God.
2. Complete the chart on the dialectical method
3. Complete the chart on the memorization method

PRACTICE FOR TAKING THE EXAM: The final exam is worth 50% of final grade. Students can choose one of three tracts. Have the student prepare a one page, both sides, outline of the 8 lessons. This outline can be taken into the exam.

Tract A. The student will verbally or in writing communicate 2000 facts about God.

Tract B. The student will verbally or in writing communicate 800 facts about God and write a 5-page essay about God during the allotted exam time

Tract C. The student will write a 10-page essay about God and complete a short multiple-choice exam.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COURSE PROFESSOR AND FACILITATOR

### TEACHER'S MANUAL FOR LESSON ONE

- A. The professor or facilitator will take attendance. Late-comers lose one half point. Students who do not come to class miss a whole point.
- B. Read aloud the introduction to the course, and ask if there are any questions (30 minutes)
- C. Give the survey. Explain that the survey is not an exam but a tool to measure one's knowledge of theology proper (doctrine of God). The survey is to be done individually, without the help of anyone. Upon completing the survey, the surveys are collected and redistributed to other students for correction. Spend some time discussing the questions (30 minutes for completing survey and 30 minutes for review).
- C. Have the students orally express (in one minute) what their view of God is.

### ANSWERS TO THE SURVEY

- 1. c. Gott in German and God in Old English
- 2. b. Elohim, El Sahddai, Elyon, Sabaoth are translated as Theos (God). Adonai and Yahweh are translated as Kurios (Lord).
- 3. c. Exodus 3:14
- 4. a. Genesis 17:1
- 5. b. Genesis 1:1
- 6. a. Genesis 1:1, Elohim is plural (im).
- 7. b. Genesis 1:26. "Let us make man in our image."
- 8. b. Mt. 1:23
- 9. c. Mt. 3:16
- 10. a. Mt 1:21
- 11. c. God can not change his decrees. Within the decrees of God, there is room for variation which do not change the decrees.
- 12. a. Dt. 29:29. What is revealed is our responsibility to know and obey but that which is not revealed is not for us to know.
- 13. b. God is a non-composed being.
- 14. b. God is in control of all things. He is supreme over the good and evil, although He is not the author of evil. He is able to take the evil deeds of men and angels and use them for the good. This we see in the cross of Christ.
- 15. b. God is independent of influences that would change Him or his will.
- 16. b. Mt. 28:19-20
- 17. c. Mt. 28:19-20
- 18. a. John 14:6, Rev. 1:8
- 19. c. Theology proper is a sub-category in systematic theology.
- 20. a. God reveals Himself to us.

### ANSWERS FROM THE READINGS

- 1. According to Berkhof, what is the relationship between the knowledge of God and the incomprehensibility of God?  
*It is impossible for man to have a knowledge of God that is exhaustive and perfect in every way.*
- 2. Write a one page paper on the 10 causes for spiritual immaturity as given by R.C. Sproul. Which would you place as the number one cause in your life?  
*The student will summarize the ten causes and reflect on the existence of such causes. He will explain this to his pastor and ask the pastor which cause is most prevalent in his life. This exercise helps the student to summarize, explain it to others and use his knowledge beyond himself.*
- E. In preparation for lesson two, the students will write out the questions and answers to lesson two in their personal notebooks. When they come to the next class, this home work needs to be finished.



## TEACHER'S MANUAL FOR LESSON TWO

- A. The professor or class facilitator will take attendance and review the students notebooks with the questions and answers for lesson two. Do not permit the students to finish their homework during class time.
- B. The class will review the questions and answers for lesson 2. Compare the answers with the ones given below.
- Mention the three levels of atheism referred to by the author.  
*1) atheists: do not believe in God; 2) practical atheists: who say they believe in God and act as if he does not exist; 3) "evil doers" nominal believers who act as God exists but do so in an unrepentant way.*
  - Of the 10 observations which the author makes about the contradiction of atheism which one is the most compelling in your opinion? Why?  
*Each student writes down the most compelling reason from the list of 10 and gives his reasons why.*
  - Of the 10 observations which the author makes about the contradiction of atheism which one is the least compelling in your opinion? Why?  
*Each student writes down the most compelling reason from the list of 10 and gives his reasons why.*
  - What observation would you add about atheism, which has not been mentioned by the author?  
*The student adds an other argument which shows the contradiction of atheism.*
  - Of the 50 observations made by the author as to the existence of God, list the top five most compelling proofs and state why you consider them compelling.  
*The student writes out the five most completing reasons for the existence of God. He states why he thinks so.*
  - Of the 50 observations made by the author as to the existence of God, list 5 of the least compelling proofs and state why you consider them less compelling.  
*The students writes out the five least compelling reasons given by the author as to the existence of God. The student is encouraged to be critical and explain why.*
  - Please list 5 reasons (not mentioned by the author) that show that God exists.  
*The student will use his own ideas to show that God exists.*

### QUESTIONS ON THE READINGS

- According to Berkhof, what is the presupposition for theology? (p.20)  
*The existence of God.*
  - According to Berkhof, how does the Christian accept the existence of God? (p.21)  
*Faith*
  - What is the prerequisite of all knowledge of God? (p.34)  
*God's self-revelation*
  - Write a one page reflection, interacting with this lesson as well as your reading in Berkhof about the relationship between God's self-revelation and our knowledge of His existence. What difference would this make for speaking with an atheist?  
*The student will take the theoretical knowledge and apply it to real life issues.*
- C. For next week, the students will prepare the questions and answers for lesson 3. They will come prepared to class and the professor or facilitator will review the questions.

## TEACHER'S MANUEL FOR LESSON THREE

- A. The professor will take attendance and check the student's personal notebooks.
- B. The questions and answers for lesson 3 will be reviewed.

Pedagogical Goals: To be able to present orally or in writing 100 Biblical proofs for the existence of the triune God.

Method: Notice how the major categories are divided. Memorize the biblical proofs according to major headings and their subdivisions

Readings: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 82-99 and R. C. Sproul, *Essentials*, pp. 35-36

### Questions

1. What is the author's argument as to ELOHIM referring to the plurality in the Godhead?  
*Elohim is grammatically given in the plural. Also, plural pronouns are associated with the name Elohim (Gen. 1;26).*
  2. How does the adoration of Jesus show that he is God?  
*Only God is to be worshipped (Ex. 20:3; Rev. 19:10)*
  3. According to the New Testament records, who worshipped Jesus?  
*Among the ones mentioned in the author's list, the wisemen, the disciples, the children, angels.*
  4. What relationship does the "Angel of the Lord" have with Jesus?  
*The angel of the Lord is very active in the Old Testament. With the coming of Jesus He is not mentioned in the New Testament. Due to his name, function and authority He is believed to be the pre-incarnate Christ.*
  5. In what three ways does the OT foreshadow the Godhead? Organize the OT references according to the given categories.  
*The student will arrange according to the categories of: plural names, plural pronouns and multiple names.*
  6. In your opinion, which NT reference is the clearest revelation of the Godhead?  
*The student will choose a reference from the NT which refers to the Godhead and explain why it is clear to him.*
  7. How does Jesus response to Satan show that He is God?  
*He ordered Satan to worship Him as God.*
  8. What is the difference between the Holy Spirit as a force of God or the Holy Spirit as a divine person?  
*A force does not have its own personality, name, emotions and functions. Yet the Holy Spirit as a person has all of these characteristics. To deny that the Holy Spirit is a divine person is to deny the tri-unity of God and disobey the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20).*
  9. What purpose does a triune greeting and conclusion have for the epistles?  
*Both the salutations (openings) and benedictions (closings) of the espistles identify the name of the true God under whose authority the letters were written.*
  10. Do you have any questions about the triune God? (It will be helpful to identify your difficulty and questions and then seek a Biblical response.)  
*The student will write or express his own question in writing.*
  11. How did the pre-Reformation church assert its view of the Trinity? (Berkhof 82-83)  
*The church leaders and theologians drew up confessional statements which presented their beliefs (credo).*
  12. According to Sproul, wherein lies the unity and diversity within the Trinity? (Sproul, pp. 35-36).  
*The unity lies in the essence whereas the diversity lies in the persons and their particular works.*
  13. Write a one page report as to your view as to the best way to speak about the deity of Christ with a Jehovah Witness.
- C. For next week, the students will prepare the questions and answers for lesson four. They will come prepared to class and the professor or facilitator will review the questions.

## TEACHER'S MANUEL FOR LESSON FOUR

- A. Please take attendance.
- B. Check the questions and answers for this lesson, prepared by the student before hand.
- C. The questions and answers for lesson four will be reviewed

PEDAGOGICAL POINT: The students will grow in their knowledge of the names of God. They will see that the names in their *original languages* and as they are *chronologically* revealed according to great events in history of the Bible.

### QUESTIONS

1. Write out each of the Hebrew and Greek names for God you encountered in the above mentioned list.  
*Have each student write out the names underneath each other, leaving room for other columns.*
2. Besides the original name of God, write down where it is first used in the Scriptures.  
*Here we want the student to associate the name with a specific historical event.*
3. Chose five of the names of God and write down their meaning.  
*Of all of the names for God, the student will define five of them.*
4. Chose five other names (not used in questions 1-3) and write a brief description of the history surrounding the first usage of the name.  
*Now the student will narrate the history associated with five names of God.*
5. Chose five other names (not used in questions 1-4) and give a theological explanation for the name. That is, what theological importance does the name have for us?  
*The names are important as shown in the original historical contexts as well as how the names are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.*
6. Chose five other names (not used in questions 1-5) and show how the name of Jesus is related to the OT names.  
*Jesus is the revelation of God to us. All of the names of God, in one way or another, are related to Jesus.*
7. List five new facts you have learned in this lesson which you did not know previously.  
*Student's own answer.*

Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 47-51 (For Certificate, Bachelor and Master students)

1. In what way are the names of God a self-revelation of God? (p. 47)  
*God reveals Himself in relationship to man.*
2. According to Berkhof, did man name God or does God reveal His name to man? Explain (p. 47).  
*God reveals His name to man.*
3. According to Berkhof, how is Yahweh translated into Greek? (p. 48)  
*Kurios*
4. Write a one page report on your interpretation of Acts. 4:12.
  - B. For next week, the students will prepare the questions and answers for lesson five. They will come prepared to class and the professor or facilitator will review the questions.

## TEACHER'S MANUEL FOR LESSON FIVE

- A. The professor or class facilitator will take attendance and review the students notebooks with the questions and answers for lesson five. Do not permit the students to finish their homework during class time.
- B. The class will review the questions and answers for lesson five.

Pedagogical Pointer for questions 4-7. The student will use a four step method of developing truth statements. The four steps are to identify, verify, define and spiritual apply the truth statements. First a truth will be identified. For example, it is true that one of the attributes of God is that He is love. Secondly, in order to verify that we cite Dt. 7:7-8 and Jn. 3:16. A definition of love is that it seeks highest good at own sacrificial cost. Finally, to spiritual apply this truth to our lives we can say that God requires us to love Him above all else and our neighbor as ourselves.

### QUESTIONS

1. Define attribute.  
*An attribute describe a quality of God. It is who He is.*
  2. Define communicable attribute  
*A communicable attribute is a quality of God which He can share with us.*
  3. Define incommunicable attribute  
*An incommunicable attributre is a quality of God which He cannot share with us, it belongs only to God.*
  4. What is an attribute of being? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for five attributes of being.  
*See the pedagogical pointers above and use the chart given in the lesson.*
  5. What is an attribute of morality? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for five attributes of morality.  
*See the pedagogical pointers above and use the chart given in the lesson*
  6. What is an attribute of space and time? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for five attributes of space and time.  
*See the pedagogical pointers above and use the chart given in the lesson*
  7. What is an attribute of emotion? Identify, verify with Scripture, define and give its personal application for two attributes of emotion.  
*See the pedagogical pointers above and use the chart given in the lesson*
  8. Describe the two dimensions of holiness as explained by Sproul. (p. 47-48)  
*Sproul explains that God's holiness has two dimensions: His otherness (majesty) and His purity (righteousness).*
  9. How does Sproul answer the charge that God is not fair in not being merciful to everyone. (p. 53-54)  
*God's mercy is voluntary (Rom. 9:15) and outside of the boundaries of justice. They are non justice but not injustice. Mercy is outside of the category of justice, but it is not a violation of justice.*
  10. Read Berkhof's treatment on classifying the attributes of God (pp. 55-56). Write a one page reflection paper on your point of view about classifying the attributes of God. How would you explain this to a five year old child?
- C. . For next week, the students will prepare the questions and answers for lesson six. They will come prepared to class and the professor or facilitator will review the questions.

## TEACHER'S MANUEL FOR LESSON SIX

- A. The professor or class facilitator will take attendance and review the students notebooks with the questions and answers for lesson six. Do not permit the students to finish their homework during class time.
- B. The class will review the questions and answers for lesson six.

Pedogogical Pointers. The student will seek to understand the workings of God from an eternal, a historical and a redemptive perspective.

Readings: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 100-180; R.C. Sproul, *Essentials*, pp. 57-74

### QUESTIONS

1. What does the author mean when he says that God is a God of beginnings?  
*All things begin with God. There is nothing that exists that can begin without God.*
  2. If God is the God of all beginnings, how do you explain His relationship to evil?  
*God is not the author of evil. Evil is a distortion, its antithetical to who God is. However, God is sovereign and He is able and willing to overcome evil. The clearest example of that is God's using the crucifixion of Christ in order to bring salvation and overcome evil.*
  3. What is the relationship between God's foreknowledge and predestination?  
*In foreknowledge, God exercises His omniscience. In predestination, God exercises His omnipotence.*
  4. According to the author what is the relationship between creation and providence?  
*Creation is the beginning of the universe while providence is the government and ongoing preservation of the universe.*
  5. What are the two dimensions of God's providence?  
*Perseverance and government*
  6. According to the author, what is a miracle?  
*Miracles, in relationship to God's creation, are God's supernatural acts of intervention which supercede natural law, historical development and personal experiences*
  7. Explain the three dimensions of God's call.  
*The eternal God originates with God. The external call comes to us through the preaching of the Word. The internal call is working of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a person as He draws Him to the Father through believe in the Son.*
  8. What is justification?  
*To be declared righteous before God through faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.*
  9. What is the relationship between justification and sanctification?  
*Justification is to be declared righteous and sanctification is the process whereby through faith in Jesus Christ, the leading of the Holy Spirit the believer lives a righteous life to the glory of God the Father.*
  10. What is glorification?  
*Glorification is the final step of God's redemption whereby the believers are consummated in the new heavens and new earth and will enjoy God forever.*
  11. In reading R.C. Sproul (pp. 57-74) how does his treatment of the works of God differ from that of the author of this chapter? Write a one page review.
  12. In reading R.C. Sproul (p.65-66) and Berkhof (176-178) do you believe they believe that miracles happen today? Write a one page paper on your reflections and share them in class.  
*The students will give their own answer in response to Sproul's three views (p. 66) and Berkhof's association of miracles with special revelation.*
- C. For next week, the students will prepare the questions and answers for lesson seven. They will come prepared to class and the professor or facilitator will review the questions.

## TEACHER MANUAL FOR LESSON SEVEN

1. According to Genesis 1:1, name two affirmations and two denials of truth.  
*From the list of ten chose two truths which are affirmed and identify two heresies which reject the truth.*
2. From the list of heresies, find 5 heresies having to do with spiritism and magic. What do they have in common?  
*For example, divination ,casting spells, consulting with the dead, spiritism, witchcraft. In each case attribute of God is being challenged.For example, divination and consulting the dead challenges the omniscience of God. Casting spells, spiritism and witchcraft seek to manipulate the power of God.*
3. From the list of heresies, find 5 that challenge the nature of God. What truth is being challenged?  
*For example, Atheism, deism, dualism, idolatry, pantheism. All of these challenge the existence of God. Atheist say he does not exist; deist think he exists far removed from his creation; dualists have him existing on par with evil or other forces; idolatry has God existing in objects and pantheist think God exists in all things.*
4. From the list of heresies, find 5 that challenge the nature of Jesus. What truth is being challenged?  
*For example, Adoptionism, docetism, Jehovah Witnesses,, Judaism, Nestorianism. All deny the true identity of Jesus. Adoptionist claim Jesus became God; docetism deny his humanity, the Jehovah Witnesses deny that Jesus is God, the Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah and the Nestorians held that he was two persons.*
5. From the list of heresies, find 5 that challenge the saving work of God. What truth is being challenged?  
*For example, legalism, liberalism, positive thinking, traditionalism and universalism. All of these offer an alternative to faith alone as the only way of salvation. The legalist seeks to add a human act to faith; liberalism subtracts repentance from the gospel; positive thinking thinks it can overcome sin without the gospel; traditionalism adds religious tradition to faith and universalism says that faith is not necessary for salvation, all will be saved.*
6. From the list of heresies, find 5 that are social and/or political in nature. What truth is being challenged?  
*For example, nationalism, secularism, social gospel, totalitarianism and tribalism. What all of these have in common is that they seek to limit God to the human context. The nationalist defines God according to national interests; the secularist want to keep the knowledge of God out of the context; with the social gospel the social needs are alivated about the spiritual needs; in totalitarianism the authority of ruling people is placed over the authority of the Word of God and in tribalism God is defined according to a local groups concept of him.*
7. From the list of heresies, find 5 that are moral in nature. What truth is being challenged?

## TEACHER'S MANUEL FOR LESSON EIGHT

- A. The professor or facilitator will take attendance.
- B. The professor will check the homework for this week.

PEDAGOGICAL POINT. The student will seek to put together his/her knowledge of God in an overall system. The student will apply a simple dialectic to the knowledge of God and practice the memorization method.

### ACTIVITIES

- 1. Complete the review chart on the knowledge of God.
- 2. Complete the chart on the dialectical method
- 3. Complete the chart on the memorization method

### PRACTICE FOR THE EXAM

PRACTICE FOR TAKING THE EXAM: The final exam is worth 50% of final grade. Students can choose one of three tracts. Have the student prepare a one page, both sides, outline of the 8 lessons. This outline can be taken into the exam. The purpose of writing the outline is to help the student put together the information they have received in outline form in order to help them quickly recall the information.

- Tract A. The student will verbally or in writing communicate 2000 facts about God.
- Tract B. The student will verbally or in writing communicate 800 facts about God and write a 5-page essay about God during the allotted exam time.
- Tract C. The student will write a 10-page essay about God and complete a short multiple-choice exam.

## APPENDIX

- A. Readings from R.C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith* (1992)
  - ix –xii
  - 31-74
- B. Readings from Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (1996)
  - 19-41
  - 47-99
  - 176-178

EXAM: DOCTRINE OF GOD

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

(The purpose of this mini-exam is to see if you have done your questions and answers)

1. According to Berkhof, what is the relationship between the knowledge of God and the incomprehensibility of God.
  - a. Since God reveals Himself to us, we can know everything about Him.
  - b. It is impossible for man to have knowledge of God that is exhaustive and perfect in every way.
  - c. It is impossible to know God at all.
  
2. What is the author of lesson three's argument as to ELOHIM referring to the plurality of the Godhead?
  - a. Elohim is grammatically given in the plural and implies that there are three persons in the godhead.
  - b. Elohim is grammatically given in the plural and refers to God's multiple attributes.
  - c. Elohim is not plural for there is only one God.
  
3. According to the author, does the adoration of Jesus by the wise men show that Jesus is God?
  - a. It doesn't; only the Father is God.
  - b. It doesn't; you may worship anyone.
  - c. Yes, for only God may receive adoration and Jesus is God.
  
4. In the orthodox Christian view of the doctrine of the triune God the following is true:
  - a. God is one in three persons.
  - b. God is three in one person.
  - c. God is three gods.
  
5. In the orthodox Christian view of Jesus Christ the following is true:
  - a. Jesus is human.
  - b. Jesus is human and divine.
  - c. Jesus is a spirit.
  
6. How is Yahweh of the Old Testament translated in the New Testament?
  - a. God: Theos
  - b. Jehovah
  - c. LORD: Kurios
  
7. What does El Shaddai mean?
  - a. Lord of hosts
  - b. I am who I am
  - c. God Almighty
  
8. What are the communicable attributes of God?
  - a. The qualities of God that he can share with us
  - b. The qualities of God that belong only to Him
  - c. All the qualities of God
  
9. What does the author mean when he says that God is a God of beginnings?
  - a. God existed in the beginning.
  - b. God existed in the beginning and initiated all beginnings.
  - c. God has a beginning.
  
10. According to R.C. Sproul the greatest theologians are \_\_\_\_% correct."
  - a. 100%
  - b. 80%
  - c. 50%



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