

Student Notes

Theology (The Doctrine of God)



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Introduction:

- **View of God**
Practically, one's view of God, consciously or otherwise, affects every thought and action he performs, since it functions as the central premise of one's worldview.
- **We _____ like what we _____**
- **What image of God do you have?**

- **Why study the Doctrine of God?**
 1. Our view of God _____ who we are.
 2. We will be better equipped to _____ our faith.
- **The Biblical view of God.**

Not a _____ (two equal opposites)
- **Unbiblical views of God:**
 1. **Pantheism** – God = Creation.
 2. **Polytheism** – Many gods.
 3. **Atheism** – No gods.
 4. **Agnosticism** – Don't really know!

Section 1: The Existence of God

A. Arguments for the Existence of God

1. **Cosmological**

2. **Teleological**

3. Anthropological

4. Ontological

5. Moral

6. Biological

7. Historical

8. Christological

9. Bibliological

10. Congruity

- **Failure of Block-House Methodology** (proofs build on each other)
- **Need for a Reformed approach** (proofs merely confirm God's Word)
- **Ultimately, we need _____**

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."
Hebrews 11:6

B. What the Bible shows us.

- 1. The Bible _____ the existence of God.**

2. The Bible _____ for the existence of God.

3. The Bible _____ the eternal God.

Biblical Definition of God:

“There is one only and true God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three coeternal and coequal Persons, the same in substance but distinct in subsistence.”

Warfield, “Trinity,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, James Orr, ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930, 5:3012.

- **One God** (Deut 4:35,39; 6:4; Isa 44:6; 45:21,24; 46:9; Jn 17:3; 1 Tim 2:5)

- **In Three Persons** (see section 4)

Section 2: God’s Attributes

A. The Nature of God

1. God is an invisible _____ (Jn 4:24; 2 Cor 3:17)

2. God is also a _____

He wills (Gen 2:8), speaks (Gen 1:3), calls (Gen 1:5,8), sees (Gen 11:5), creates (Gen 1:31), hears (Ps 94:9), loves (Ps 11:7), grieves (Gen 6:6), rules (Ps 22:28), repents (Gen 6:6), disciplines (Deut 4:36), sustains (Matt 6:26-30) and judges (Ps 9:19).

God as Spirit (Essence)	God as Person (Personality)
Transcendent Distant Creator-creature Distinction Man is image of GOD FARNNESS ONENESS	Personal Immanent Creator-creature Relationship Man is IMAGE of God CLOSENESS THREE IN ONENESS

B. The Attributes of God

1. To speak of God is to speak of his _____
2. His attributes are _____, not merely descriptive:
 - a. God is more than loving; God IS LOVE
3. God is not a _____ of Attributes, but is a “simple” being
4. The Attributes are coextensive with his being- “Substance and Attributes are _____.”

C. Categories of Attributes

<p>God in Himself</p> <p>His _____</p> <p><i>The intrinsic or indispensable, permanent, and inseparable qualities that characterize or identify the being of God.” - These are _____ (We do not share these by relationship)</i></p>	<p>God in relation to His Creation</p> <p>His _____</p> <p><i>“Person” is not the ideal word as in modern terms it connotes individuality but there seems to be no better word. God's personhood is somehow defined as “a community of persons who find their true being in relationships” - These are _____ (We share in them by relationship)</i></p>
<p>ATTRIBUTES OF ESSENCE</p> <p>Eternal & Self Existent – e.g. Ex 3:14; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17, 6:16</p> <p>Immutable (unchangeable) – e.g. Mal 3:6; James 1:17; Hebrews 1:12,13:8</p> <p>Omnipotence (all powerful) – e.g. Jeremiah 32:17,27; Job 42:2; Heb 1:1-4; Revelation 19:6</p> <p>Omniscience (all knowing) – e.g. Isaiah 29:15-16; 1 John 3:20; Romans 11:33 ; 1 Corinthians 3:20.</p> <p>Omnipresence (all present) – e.g. Psalm 139:7-12; Jeremiah 23:2 ; Matthew 18:20.</p>	<p>ATTRIBUTES OF PERSONHOOD</p> <p>Holiness - e.g. 1 Peter 1:15-16</p> <p>Righteousness – e.g. Daniel 4:37 – includes justice.</p> <p>Sovereignty - e.g. 2 Timothy 2:12</p> <p>Wisdom – e.g. Ephesians 3:9-10</p> <p>Love – e.g. 1 John 4:19-21 – includes his goodness, kindness and faithfulness (Psalm 100:5).</p>

Section 3: The Works of God

A. The Seven Main Works of God

1. Creation

- a. Reason and result of creation (Col 1:16-17)

Reason =

Result =

- b. Immediate Creation – Creation out of _____

- c. Mediate Creation – Transforming existing _____

- d. All He created was _____ (Gen 1:31)

2. Rule

- a. He rules over _____ (Psa 10:16; Psa 22:28, 89:9).

- b. He rules over _____ (Psa 67:4; 2 Chron 20:6; Dan 4:25; Rom 13:1; Ex 14:8; Proverbs 21:1; Job 12:23; Psa 66:7; Psa 75:7 cf. Dan 4:28-37) and uses them to accomplish His will (Isa 7:20,10:5-15,45:1-4).

- c. He rules over _____ (Acts 17:26; Psa 75:7; 1 Sam 2:6-8; Deut 32:50, Psa 104:29), whether they want it or not.)

3. Preservation

- a. _____ preservation (preserving His creation according to His will (Ps 36:6).

- b. _____ preservation (preserving His people in a special way - Gen 12:10-20; Psa 31:23; Psa 66:9; Prov. 2:8; Psa 37:28; John 10:28).

4. Provision

- a. _____ provision (Matt 5:45; Gen 7:12; Isa 55:10; Jonah 4:6; Prov 30:4; Eze 17:5-8; Ex 16; Matt 6:25-34)

- b. _____ provision (Psa 10:17, Isa 41:10; Rom 15:5; 2 Thess 2:16)

- c. _____ provision - God gives grace and peace (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3, Eph 1:2 etc), imparts spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:28-31), blesses us with wisdom and understanding (Col 1:9), and with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph 1:3).

5. Redemption

- a. God _____ redemption through the Redeemer who was first promised in Genesis 3:15. Jesus Christ is that redeemer (Gal 4:4-5), fulfilling the promise of God to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3) and the nation of Israel. Salvation is now only through Jesus.

- b. God desires for _____ to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4) and has made provision for all to be saved (1 John 2:2).

- c. Redemption is a _____
We are saved in our _____ (John 3:6-7)
We are being saved in our _____ (Phil 2:12-13)
We will be saved in our _____ (1 Cor 15:51-52)

6. Judgement

- a. The Lord is the _____ (Jud 11:27; Job 9:15).

- b. He is the _____ judge (Psa 7:11,9:8).

- c. He is the judge of the _____ (Psa 94:2, 96:10-13, 98:9).

- d. He will judge His _____ (Deut 32:36; Psa 50:4; Heb 10:30) and the ends of the earth (1 Sam 2:10, 1 Chron 16:33; Psa 82:8).

7. Inspiration

- a. God inspired the _____ (2 Tim 3:16)
- b. To a lesser degree He also inspires (illuminates) _____ by His Spirit to do and say great things for Him (1 Pet 4:11)

B. Interpreting the Works of God

The two extremes:

CALVINISM	ARMINIANISM
<i>Election/Predestination</i>	<i>Whoever wills</i>
<i>Limited atonement (only elect saved)</i>	<i>Unlimited atonement (open to all)</i>
<i>Irresistible grace</i>	<i>Resistible grace</i>
<i>Imputed righteousness</i>	<i>Imparted righteousness</i>
<i>Perseverance of the saints</i>	<i>Perseverance of the saints</i>

C. Questions Concerning His Attributes and Works

1. If God is all powerful could He create a rock too heavy for Him to lift?
2. If God is all present is He present in hell?
3. If God is all knowing, and that He knows my needs, why do I have to pray?
4. If God is unchangeable why do some texts say God “repented” (Gen 6:6–8; 1 Sam 15:11; 2 Sam 24:16; Joel 2:13–14; John 3:10). Does that mean God changes either in His attributes or His plans?
5. What does Isaiah 45:7 mean when it says God “creates evil” or “creates disaster”?
6. If God is all powerful and good why did He allow sin and why can’t He simply remove it all now?

D. Applications of knowing God's Attributes and Works

1. Our God is _____ of worship and service.
2. I am _____ by His knowledge of all my needs, pains, sorrows and sufferings.
3. God is infinitely wise and _____ (His ways are best but higher than mine and I must trust in Him as He is good).
4. God is advancing His _____ on earth (He is in control).
5. The motivation of my ministry must be the _____ and honour of His name, not my name.

Section 4: The Trinity

A. Knowing God

Monarchial notion =

Biblical notion =

1. We cannot fully know God in His _____ but we can know Him through His personhood (Trinity)
2. It is in understanding and _____ to the three persons of the Godhead that we experience God in a personal way.
3. It is in relating to His personhood that we _____ in His communicable attributes.

B. What is the Trinity?

1. God exists as a _____ of three distinct persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit – Matt 28:19)
2. Each of the persons is _____ from the other, yet they have the same divine essence.

C. The Triune God in Scripture

1. The doctrine of the Trinity is not “_____” (i.e. no definite “proof texts”) as are other doctrines such as Justification.
2. Its _____ support does not lie in “Trinitarian Passages”, though they do exist and are important.
3. It is necessary to account for the Biblical language of _____ in diversity.
 - I. In The Old Testament
 - a. The term used for God (*Elohim*) is in the plural (Gen 1:1 and innumerable references in Genesis)
 - b. The verbs and pronouns used for God’s actions are in the plural (Gen 1:26,3:22,11:7).
 - c. The term “*One God*” is a “*compound unity*” (like one bunch of grapes) (Deut 6:4)
 - II. In the New Testament
 - a. Matthew 28:19 best states both the oneness and threeness by associating equally the three Persons and uniting them in one singular name.
 - b. Other references – Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 5:7.

4. The doctrine is the _____ of considering how Scripture as a whole speaks of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I. The Father is seen to be God in the Bible

II. The Son is seen to be God in the Bible

III. The Holy Spirit is seen to be God in the Bible

The Trinity Chart (All have God's essence & personality)

<i>Attribute of God</i>	FATHER	SON	HOLY SPIRIT
Called God	<i>Phil. 1:2</i>	<i>John 1:1,14;</i>	<i>Acts 5:3-4</i>
Creator	<i>Isaiah 64:8</i>	<i>John 1:3</i>	<i>Job 33:4, 26:13</i>
Everywhere	<i>1 Kings 8:27</i>	<i>Matt. 28:20</i>	<i>Psalms 139:7-10</i>
All knowing	<i>1 John 3:20</i>	<i>John 16:30; 21:17</i>	<i>1 Cor. 2:10-11</i>
Eternal	<i>Psalms 90:2</i>	<i>Micah 5:1-2</i>	<i>Rom. 8:11; Heb. 9:14</i>
A Will	<i>Luke 22:42</i>	<i>Luke 22:42</i>	<i>1 Cor. 12:11</i>
Speaks	<i>Matt. 3:17</i>	<i>All through the GOSPELS</i>	<i>Acts 8:29; 11:12; 13:2</i>
Loves	<i>John 3:16</i>	<i>Eph. 5:25</i>	<i>Rom. 15:30</i>

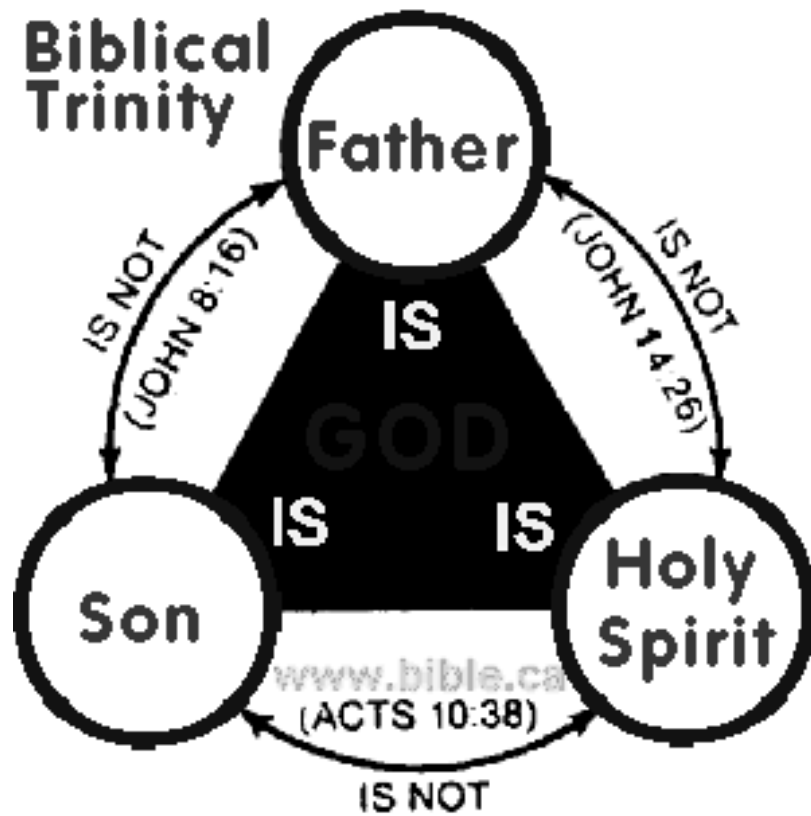
D. Wrong views of the Trinity

1. Arianism
2. Modalism
3. Gnosticism
4. Tri-Theism

E. Limitations of Illustrations

The best physical illustration of the Trinity is probably _____

F. Correct view diagram of the Trinity



G. Equality and Functions of the Trinity

1. The equality of the Trinity

- a. _____ to and give _____ to one another –
 (Matthew 28:18; John 13:31-32, 15:26, 16:14, 17:1, 4, 5, 22, 24; 1 Corinthians 15:24).

2. The functions of the Trinity

- a. Equal in _____ and glory but submit in an order of _____
 (Father > Son > Spirit) – e.g. John 14:28.
- b. The Father _____, the Son _____ and the Spirit
 produces the desired effect.



FRUIT	PRODUCES	SPIRIT
	(POWER)	
SHOOT	ARRANGES	SON
	(PATTERN)	
ROOT	BEGINS	FATHER
	(PLAN)	



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H. Father, Son and Holy Spirit always work together.

They always work together in unity and order.

Exercise: Choose one of the following events and present how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were present and active in it

Creation: *Genesis 1:1, 2, 26; John 1:1-3.*

The Exodus: *Ex 14:19,24 – Cloud = Spirit, Angel of Lord = Jesus, Lord = Father (see 1 Cor 10:1-2)*

The birth of Jesus: *Luke 1:35.*

The baptism and anointing of Jesus: *Luke 3:21, 22.*

The life of Jesus: *Luke 4:18; John 8:29.*

The ministry of Jesus: *Matthew 12:28; John 14:10; Matt 28:19; Acts 10:38.*

The Transfiguration: *Matthew 17:5 (Cloud = Holy Spirit)*

The death of Jesus: *2 Corinthians 5:19; Hebrews 9:14.*

The resurrection of Jesus: *John 10:17, 18; Acts 13:30; 1 Peter 3:18.*

The giving of the Holy Spirit: *John 14:16, 15:26*

The Founding of the Church - *Acts 2:32-33.*

Salvation: *Titus 3:5-7.*

Believer's experience of grace, love and fellowship: *2 Corinthians 13:14.*

The life of the Christian: *Ephesians 3:16-19.*

The giving of gifts: *1 Corinthians 12:4-6.*

Bringing the church to maturity: *Ephesians 4:4-16.*

Evangelism: *Romans 15:15-19.*

Prayer – *Romans 15:30.*

The breaking down of racial barriers: *Ephesians 2:18.*

The blessing of believers in the new heaven and new earth: *Revelation 21, 22.*

I. Applications of the Trinity

1. It teaches us that God can be known relationally in His three persons
- Read 2 Corinthians 13:14 and state below the key benefits we receive by relating to each person of the Trinity:

_____ of the Father

_____ of the Son

_____ of the Holy Spirit

- Read Ephesians 1:3-14 and note further benefits of relating to:

The Father (vv3-6):

The Son (vv7-12):

The Spirit (vv13-14):

2. We must not emphasize one person above the other but relate to all equally.

3. It means that the Trinity is the basis of all true fellowship.

- There is unity of purpose in the Godhead. No one person in the Godhead will do things contrary to the mind of the Godhead. The community of faith needs to model such unity.

- There is intimacy within the Godhead. The team is intimate and together. What a model for us today!

ASSIGNMENT

- Which person of the Trinity do you know the least? Write about why you know them the least and what you can do to know them more. What would be the benefits of knowing that person of the Trinity?

OR

- Choose one of the names of God and write what that name means to you, how you have practically experienced the truth of that name and how you can experience it more.
- One Page (Microsoft .doc) - send to: timshen@pacific.net.sg