

A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Vol 3 Theology

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Dr. Edward Rice

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Edward G. Rice

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## Table of Contents

<u>Volume 3 Theology Proper.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Chapter 1 Introduction.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Chapter 2 Where did God come from?.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Chapter 3 A Proper Theology Proper.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Chapter 4 A Proper Naturalistic Theism .....</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Chapter 5 Theology Proper in Bible Doctrine.....</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>    Cambron's Ch 1 Theology (The Doctrine of God).....</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>    I. The Names and Titles Of God .....</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>    II. The Existence of God .....</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>    III. The Nature of God. ....</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>    IV. The Attributes of God.....</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>    V. The Fatherhood of God.....</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>Chapter 6 Critique of Other Systematic Theology Works.....</u>	<u>70</u>
<u>    Critique of Chafer's Chapter 10-13 Theology Proper (129-180)....</u>	<u>70</u>
<u>    Critique of Chafer's Chapter 14 The Attributes of God (187-224) 71</u>	<u>71</u>
<u>    Critique of Chafer's Chapter 15 Divine Decrees (pg. 225-259)....</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>    Critique of Chafer's Chapter 16 The Names of Deity (260-271)....</u>	<u>77</u>
<u>    Critique of Chafer's Chapter 17-19 Trinitarianism (272-317).....</u>	<u>77</u>
<u>Chapter 7 Theology Proper Conclusion .....</u>	<u>79</u>
<u>    Bibliography for Theology.....</u>	<u>81</u>

# Preface

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a USAF retired systems engineer turned Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and armed with a staunch belief in the preserved accuracy of the inspired Scriptures, I praise the Lord that he has provided me the unique opportunity to assemble “A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”



As a systems engineer for thirty years (since 1972), I focused on systems analysis. Systematic theology has intrigued me ever since my first Bible institute course in 1975. I have amassed multiple systematic theology books and never found one that is wholly Biblical. In 2013 my seminary work at Louisiana Baptist Theological Seminary, under Dr. Steven Pettey, assigned me to read and analyze six volumes of “Systematic Theology” by Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder and previous president of Dallas Theological Seminary. Initial critique of this neo-evangelical's voluminous, wordy, often unorganized work, answered the question, “Is there not a cause?” A Systematic Theology for the 21st Century is indeed a valid need. It cried out to be written and it was a work that I was privileged to endeavor.

God says he built man with an inner knowledge of the Creator's eternal power and Godhead. Further, God reveals from heaven, to every man, his wrath against all ungodliness. This true Light “*lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*” The Bible says the righteous God, The LORD of hosts, tries the reins and the heart of every man. The prophet Jeremiah writes of God, “*I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*” The psalmist says, “*my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.*” With his tugs on the reins of your heart, you have come far in your studies, be sure that you have come to a knowledge and submissive acceptance of God's only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The beloved Apostle John wrote, “*And many*

*other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”*

Every Bible student is encouraged to follow through a list of Bible verses called by some the Romans road to heaven. The believing Bible student is encouraged to memorize them. That quintessential list of verses is John 3:16-19, 36, 5:24, Romans 3:10, 23, 5:8, 12, 18-19, 6:23, and 10:9-13. That last reference is God's formal acceptance policy for your receiving his free gift of salvation and eternal life. Got life? The beloved Apostle John writes, “*He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*” Selah! It is Hebrew for “go-figure”, and it intends that you pause, meditate, and consider what you just read.

After due consideration of the sole source of a systematic theology an appropriate course of study would entail the study of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. That is the course of study for Volume 03 – Theology, Volume 04 – Christology and Volume 05 – Pneumatology. Such a discipline establishes a foundation for the other studies of this systematic theology.

When I began work on my Ph.D. in 2014 I set a goal to finish this Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in a five year period. When I finished my Ph.D. in 2017, I reestablished the same goal. This year, after publishing at least a draft of all twelve volumes in 2019, the goal remains. My plea for critique and correction also remains the same. I prefer friendly and constructive critique, but have found the hostile ones to be enlightening and beneficial for rounding out a stronger defense of truth. Feel free to engage in this effort, the many inputs I have received have strengthened the cause.

There is a cause. I pray that these volumes fully capture at least that.

Book I	Vol 01 Prolegomena - Vol 02 Bibliology
Book II	Vol 03 Theology - Vol 04 Christology - Vol 05 Pneumatology
Book III	Vol 06 Anthropology - Vol 07 Hamartiology - Vol 08 Soteriology
Book IV	Vol 09 Ecclesiology - Vol 10 Angelology
Book V	Vol 11 Eschatology - Vol 12 Epilogue





## Volume 3 Theology Proper

### Chapter 1 Introduction

Theology proper is the thorough study of God the Father and is distinguished from the larger study of “Theology” that might engulf the whole study of the Godhead and all things about God.

Learning about God is paramount for a Christian and fundamental for all humanity, as is borne out in scripture:

*That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else. 1Kings 8:60<sup>1</sup>*

*Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!*

Psalm 113:5-6

*O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalm 34:8*

*Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.... Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.*

Deuteronomy 4:35,39

*I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:... That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. Isaiah 45:5-6*

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1 The Holy Bible

Having knowledge of God is to be paramount, overriding, and preponderant, having superior power and influence; it is to be predominant, very common and prevalent, and is to predominate, become larger in quantity, power, status or importance.

For Israel it was paramount:

*Hosea 4:1 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.*

*Hosea 6:6 For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*

For the Christian it is paramount:

*1Corinthians 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.*

*2Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

*Colossians 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;*

*2Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

Its quest is ongoing and not easily attained:

*Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

For every human, a knowledge of God starts as a first instinct and ingrained commodity; the Bible says “*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of*

*men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.* (Romans 1:18,19) It goes on to clarify that this knowledge of God's eternal power and Godhead was visible and seen in man since God first made him, *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse”* (1:20). This sentence of scripture continues to clarify that both mankind corporately and every human individually, in their fallen depraved nature, suppress this knowledge of God, *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened”* (1:21).

Further the Bible says the righteous God, The LORD of hosts, tries the reins and the heart of every man. The prophet Jeremiah writes of God, *“I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”* (Jeremiah 17:10). The psalmist says, *“my reins also instruct me in the night seasons”* (Psalm 16:7). With his tugs on the reins of every heart, the Bible says there is also a knowledge of his Only Begotten Son, the Messiah (Christ) and Redeemer of mankind, the Word that became flesh was the True Light and it says in that tremendous introduction of the Apostle John, *“That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”* (John 1:9).

This instinctive God induced knowledge of God does not become paramount until it grows. Philosophers of society like to pretend that every human has a small spark of “goodness” inside them and if this spark is fanned before it is extinguished it will grow to produce a man that is good in heart. In Bible reality it is a spark of the knowledge of God, it is never extinguished, and God has the fan. Even so there are steps to be taken that can grow this knowledge and make it paramount.

To find and grow this knowledge of God there are eight steps given in the first sentence of Proverbs 2.

*My son, if thou wilt (1) receive my words, and (2) hide my commandments with thee; So that thou (3) incline thine ear unto wisdom, and (4) apply thine heart to*

*understanding; Yea, if thou (5) criest after knowledge, and (6) liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou (7) seekest her as silver, and (8) searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and **find the knowledge of God.***

In the next three volumes of this systematic theology the pursuit of this knowledge of the Godhead will be predominant and is meant to predominate.

Theology Proper is designated 'Proper' to distinguish this study from the larger use of the word Theology. It is thus narrowed to just the study of *Theos*. literally the study of God, but such is not by any means narrow. Again, the second part of the term, *ology* comes from the word *logos*, and means a “word, a discourse, a doctrine, a teaching, a matter under discussion, a thing spoken of or talked about, also the mental faculty of thinking, meditating, or reasoning about” Again, the English word *science*, cannot capture the depth of *ology* in *Theology*, nor can the English word *study*. Ergo, Theology Proper shall be genuine *Theology* and it shall be thorough.

A legitimate beginning of such a topic might be framed in a question. Where did God come from?

## Chapter 2 Where did God come from?

Previous systematic theologies spend undo time and effort wrestling with the ontological<sup>2</sup> and teleological<sup>3</sup> proof that there is a God. The Bible spends no effort in such vain philosophies of man. The Bible asserts, as previously presented, that man was created with an instinctive knowledge of the existence of God. This instinctive knowledge of his existence does not necessarily answer the common question, “Where did God come from?”

In a creation debate of years gone by Dr. Kent Hovind answered the question “Where did God come from?” with great finesse as follows:

The question where did God come from assumes, obviously it displays, that you are thinking of the wrong God, because the God of the Bible is not effected by time, space, or matter. If he is effected by time, space, and matter, then obviously he is not God. Time, space, and matter is what we call a continuum; all of them have to come into existence in the same instant. Because if there were matter and no space, where would you put it? If there were matter and space and no time, when would you put it?

You cannot have time, space, and matter independently, they have to come into existence simultaneously. The Bible answers that in ten words, “In the beginning...” there is time, “God. Created the heaven...” there is space, “and the earth,” there is matter. So there you have time, space, and matter, created. It is a trinity of trinities, because you know time is past, present, future, space has length, width, and height, and matter has

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2 [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com) › dictionary, s.v. ontology, “ 1 : a branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature and relations of being, Ontology deals with abstract entities. 2 : a particular theory about the nature of being.”

3 [www.vocabulary.com](http://www.vocabulary.com) › dictionary , s.v. teleological, “starting from the end and reasoning back, explaining things based on their end purpose. A teleological statement you've probably heard before is "everything happens for a reason." ”

solid, liquid and gas. You have a trinity of trinities created instantaneously, and the God who created them has to be outside of them.

If he is limited by time, he is not God. The god who created this computer is not inside the computer, he is not running around in there changing the numbers on the screen. The God who created this universe is outside of the universe. He is above it, outside it, beyond it, through it...he is unaffected by it. So in the concept that a spiritual force cannot have any effect on a material body... well then I guess you would have to explain to me things like emotions, and love, and hatred, and envy, and jealousy, and rationality.

I mean if your brain is just a random collection of chemicals that formed by chance over billions of years, how on earth can you trust your own reasoning processes and the thoughts that you think? (Applause) Your question, "Where did God come from?" is assuming a limited God, and that is your problem. The God that I worship is not limited by time, space, or matter. If I could fit the infinite God into my three pound brain, he would not be worth worshipping, that is for certain. So that is the God I worship, Thank you.<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Hovind certainly adds some sound *ology* to this topic but a more formal consideration of Theology Proper is in good order here.

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4 Kent Hovind, *Creation vs Evolution Debate*, transcribed by the author from a VHS tape, Kent Hovind has done hundreds of debates, this was in one of them, they may be viewed at <http://creationism.org/videos/index.htm> and purchased at <https://drdino.com/>. [After Dr. Kent Hovind's wrongful imprisonment he emerged with some foreign doctrines of eschatology which this author does not endorse.]

## Chapter 3 A Proper Theology Proper

A systematic theology section titled “Theology Proper” is always found a little wanting in previous works. Christianity needs one to capture all the organization of Charles Hodge and all the detail of Augustus Strong, while avoiding, yeah even exposing, all the error of Westminster decrees and the other foreign sources they cited. One which instead uses the Holy Bible as its sole source and final authority. One which sidesteps the overriding bearing of Hodge's reformed theology. One which exposes Strong's evolutionary blunder and glorifies the LORD God in detailing his wondrous work of creation. A systematic theology needs to have Holy Scripture as its sole authority and expose the vain philosophies of man and dogma's of the Romans. Such a work is want to be made, and its draft is presently before you.

Excellently organized works of theology have gone before. Charles Hodge, known as the Father of Printed Systematic Theologies, is best organized, and Augustus Strong is most detailed. Both outlines are shown below and they should, in reality, be merged into one work for completeness in a thorough and sound work. Such merging would need sound and careful attention because neither Hodge, nor Strong used the Holy Bible as their sole source. Indeed, neither did Thiessen, Chafer, or Geisler. Previous systematic theologies all attempt to compile “everything that was ever believed about God,” whether that be philosophers or Roman theologians. This work strives to document everything revealed about God, by God and that revelation comes only from the Holy inspired, inerrant, infallible, preserved words of God.

Charles Hodge organized his Theology Proper in 436 pages thus:

- 1) Origin of the idea of God, 191-203 (13 pgs 3%);
- 2) Theism, 204-240 (37 pgs 8%);
- 3) Anti-Theistic theories, 241-334 (94 pgs 22%);
- 4) knowledge of God, 335-365 (31 pgs 7%);
- 5) The Nature of God and His Attributes, 366-441 (76 pgs 17%);
- 6) the Trinity, 442-482 (41 pgs 9%);
- 7) The Divinity of Christ, 483-521 (39 pgs 9%);
- 8) The Holy Spirit, 522-534 (13 pgs 3%);
- 9) The Decrees of God, 535-549 (15 pgs 3%);

- 10) Creation, 550-574 (25 pgs 6%);
- 11) Providence, 575-616 (42 pgs 10%); and
- 12) Miracles, 617-636 (20 pgs 5%).

Augustus Strong had a far more detailed even exhaustive organization of his theology proper. It is shown below:

PART IV. "THE NATURE, DECREES, AND WORKS OF GOD, 243-370

**Chapter I. The Attributes of God, 243-303**

I. Definition of the term Attributes, 244

II. Relation of the Divine Attributes to the Divine Essence, 244-246

III. Methods of Determining the Divine Attributes, 246-247

IV. Classification of the Attributes, 247-249

V. Absolute or Immanent Attributes, 249-275

First Division. Spirituality, and Attributes therein involved, 249-254

1. Life, 251-252

2. Personality, 252-254

Second Division. Infinity, and Attributes therein involved, 254-260

1. Self-existence, 256-257

2. Immutability, 257-259

3. Unity, 259-260

Third Division. Perfection, and Attributes therein involved, 260-275

1. Truth, 260-262

2. Love, 263-268

3. Holiness, 268-275

VI. Relative or Transitive Attributes, 275-295

First Division. Attributes having relation to Time and Space, 275-279

1. Eternity, 275-278

2. Immensity, 278-279

Second Division. Attributes having relation to Creation 279-288

1. Omnipresence, 279-282

2. Omniscience, 282-286

3. Omnipotence, 286-288

Third Division. Attributes having relation to Moral Beings, 288-295

1. Veracity and Faithfulness, or Transitive Truth, 288-289

2. Mercy and Goodness, or Transitive Love, . . . 289-290

3. Justice and Righteousness, or Transitive Holiness, 290-295

VII. Rank and Relations of the several Attributes, 295-303

1. Holiness the Fundamental Attribute in God, 296-298

2. The Holiness of God the Ground of Moral Obligation, 298-303

**Chapter II. Doctrine of the Trinity, 304-352**

I. In Scripture there are Three who are recognized as God, 305-322

1. Proofs from the New Testament, 305-317



## Vol 3 Theology

- A. The Father is recognized as God, 305
  - B. Jesus Christ is recognized as God, 305-315
  - C. The Holy Spirit is recognized as God, 315-317
  - 2. Intimations of the Old Testament, 317-322
    - A. Passages which seem to teach Plurality of some sort in the Godhead, 317-819
    - B. Passages relating to the Angel of Jehovah, . . . 319-320
    - C. Descriptions of the Divine Wisdom and Word, 320-321
    - D. Descriptions of the Messiah, 321-322
  - II. These Three are so described in Scripture, that we are compelled to conceive them as distinct Persons, 322-326
    - 1. The Father and the Son are Persons distinct from each other, 322
    - 2. The Father and the Son are Persons distinct from the Spirit, 322-323
    - 3. The Holy Spirit is a Person, 323 326
  - III. This Tri-personality of the Divine Nature is not merely economic and temporal, but is immanent and eternal, 326-330
    - 1. Scripture Proof that these distinctions of Personality are eternal, 326
    - 2. Errors refuted by the Scripture Passages, . . . 327-330
      - A. The Sabellian, 827-328
      - B. The Arian, 328-330
  - VI While there are three Persons, there is but one Essence, 330-334
  - V. These three Persons are Equal, 334-343
    - 1. These Titles belong to the Persons, 834-336
    - 2. Qualified Sense of these Titles, 335-340
    - 3. Generation and Procession consistent with Equality, 340-343
  - VI. The Doctrine of the Trinity inscrutable, yet not self contradictory, but the Key to all other Doctrines, 344-352
    - 1. The Mode of this Triune Existence is inscrutable, 344-345
    - 2. The Doctrine of the Trinity is not self-contradictory, 345-347
    - 3. The Doctrine of the Trinity has important relations to other Doctrines, 347-352
- Chapter III The Decrees of God, 353-370**
- I. Definition of Decrees, 353-355
  - II. Proof of the Doctrine of Decrees, 355-359
    - 1. From Scripture, 355-356
    - 2. From Reason, 356-359
      - A. From the Divine Foreknowledge, 356-358
      - B. From the Divine Wisdom, 358
      - C. From the Divine Immutability, 358-559
      - D. From the Divine Benevolence, 359
  - III. Objections to the Doctrine of Decrees, 359-368
    - 1. That they are inconsistent with the Free Agency of Man, , 359-362
    - 2. That they take away all Motive for Human Exertion, 363-364
    - 3. That they make God the Author of Sin, 365-368

IV. Concluding Remarks, 368-370

1. Practical Uses of the Doctrine of Decrees, 368-369
2. True Method of Preaching the Doctrine 369-370 <sup>5</sup>

Both Charles Hodge and Augustus Strong's outlines need to be stripped of their Presbyterian - "Doctrine of Decrees", but they each detail an exceptional consideration in this theology proper, Strong presenting an exhaustive coverage. A Theology Proper section in a new 21<sup>st</sup> century Systematic Theology work should be exhaustive but based solely on the revelations found in the inerrant, infallible, verbally inspired Word of God. Since Hodge and Strong tried more-so to capture "everything ever believed about God" and their "everything" included the decrees and platitudes of Roman Catholic theologians and the Westminster Confession, this work will eliminate significant portions of their considerations but remain Biblically thorough.

We will herein consider, then, a Biblical naturalistic theism, a solid doctrine of God from Dr. Cambron's thorough and Biblically accurate Bible Doctrines book and then some pointed critiques of Dr. Sperry Chafer's Systematic Theology. In the Word of God there are steps given so that one might grow in the knowledge of God (Previously referenced first sentence of Proverbs chapter 2). As we take knowledge of those steps let's proceed into the *ology* of theology proper.

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5 Augustus Strong, "*Systematic Theology*," Philadelphia, 1907, Table of Contents, iv.

## Chapter 4 A Proper Naturalistic Theism

What does man know about God with no exposure to the Scriptures wherein God reveals himself? The study and analysis of that question is called *naturalistic theism* because man by his nature knows of the existence of God. In times past otherwise genius theologians have left their Biblical mooring and ventured into rationalistic thinking and philosophical journals and made naturalistic theism some sort of traditional proof of the existence of God. A wise theologian assembling a valid systematic theology must be ever vigilant and circumspect to stay secured in his Biblical moorings and answer naturalistic theism by analyzing, “What does the Bible say about mans natural and intrinsic knowledge of God?” That analysis will always be all sufficient for a Biblical systematic theology.

In that other works of systematic theology have invested great effort in a rationalistic approach to naturalistic theism, their arguments are herein introduced, found baseless and philosophical and then a valid naturalistic theism is found more adequately answered in Scripture. It is caprice, i.e. a sudden unaccountable change of behavior, that any theologian would spend effort analyzing an *ontological* argument for the existence of God. But that they did, Hodge, pg. 204-207, Chafer, pg. 158-168, and unfortunately even Baptist theologians, Strong, pg. 85-89, and Thiessen, pg. 55-63. Ontology is the branch of philosophy, or metaphysics, which deals with the nature of being and the existence of reality. When Moses was nervous about the existence of God, God said to Moses, “I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shall thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Exod 3:14). God spends no time, effort, or word in proving the existence of His being or the existence of reality, and it is, thus, capricious for a theologian to pursue the vain philosophies of man down the vein of ontology.

It is equally vain to incorporate a *teleological* philosophy lecture in a systematic theology. Supposing that “an ultimate purpose and design” proves the existence of God is trite. God does not use their verbose volumes but presents His teleological argument in four

redundant questions: “*He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?*” (Psalm 94:9-10). This, God's profound acknowledgment of their whole teleological argument, is not given to the seeking saint or inquisitive theologian, it is given to the brutish and the fool! The verses preceding says “*Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?*” (vr. 7-8). For the systematic theologian to set aside his task of systematizing truth, and pursue a proof of the existence of God to a group of unregenerate vain philosophers is worse than vain, it is unadulterated foolishness.

The whole point of this teleological proof text (i.e. Psalm 94:7-11) is “*The LORD knoweth the thought of man, that they are vanity*” (vr. 11). Ergo the theologian has no business wandering in the corridors of vain philosophy, nor attempting the proof of God's existence. If God himself does not dabble in the proof, neither will the wise theologian. One need not spend a good chapter developing such trite philosophy when God has already expressed it in a succinct thirty six words. Just give the infidel, agnostic or atheist God's words; they are quick and powerful, while philosophy is vain and conceited.

This teleological proof text (Psalm 94:7-11) rests in this context; “*Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law; That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked*” (Psalm 94:12-13). God's law, our pure source text for theology, “*is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*” (2Tim 3:16-17), and the brutish philosophers have only the itching ear, the wanting eye, ergo they need God's chastisement and the teaching of knowledge (cf Psalm 94:9-10). The parallels are not coincidental and the theologian should stay in his own camp, using Scripture as his sole authority.

Hodge, Strong, and Chafer also appeal to an anthropological argument and a cosmological argument in their effort to provide the vain, brutish philosopher a proof of the existence of God. Indeed analyzing the constitution of man may reveal some characteristics of God, for man is, after all, made in His image; and analyzing the

constitution of the universe will reveal the glory of God and can reveal his handiwork, exactly as Psalm 19 points out; however, again, the theologian that uses these entities to make a proof for the existence of God is not wise, and is not following a Biblical systematic theology. Just as Psalm 94 points the wise theologian to the perfect law of the LORD for his source of truth, so to does Psalm 19. It opens with a profound cosmological argument, but it has for its theme:

*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.* Psalm 19:7-11

To determine what natural man knows about God naturally the theologian should set aside all his philosophy books and look only into the perfect, sure, right, and pure sole source of theology, God's plenary, verbally inspired, infallible, inerrant Word.

Naturalistic Theism, what man knows about God naturally, what man intrinsically understands about God, is spelled out in God's Word. God's Word was previously categorically declared, even by these theologians, to be the sole authority of all faith and practice, ergo it is the supreme source for our naturalistic theism. It says...

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the*

*truth in unrighteousness;*

*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Romans 1:16-20*

It says his Light lighteth every man that cometh into the world...

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

*And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. ... He (John) was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. **That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.** John 1:1-5,8,9*

It says God tries the reins of every man...

*I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.... But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause. Jeremiah 17:10, 20:12*

And again...

*And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. Revelation 2:23*

And, God continues his letter to the Romans to contend that man knows God...

*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Romans 1:21-23*

One needs no further philosophy of man to understand a naturalistic theology. God has adequately revealed mans 'natural' knowledge of God, and even that is not natural, it is supernatural.

## Chapter 5 Theology Proper in Bible Doctrine

Bible Doctrine differs from systematic theology only in its level of thoroughness. Consequently, a sound Bible Doctrine book makes for a good foundation for a Biblical systematic theology. A good systematic theology does not separate itself from practical theology nor Biblical theology, nor exegetical theology, and ergo it cannot separate from a good Bible based Bible doctrine expose. There is no truer, or more thorough, published, Baptist, and Biblical doctrine than that of Dr. Mark G. Cambron.<sup>6</sup> His teachings on Bible Doctrine at Tennessee Temple Bible School thoroughly lay the foundation for this systematic theology. His book, *Bible Doctrines*<sup>7</sup> is, with the permission of the Cambron Institute,<sup>8</sup> given in block quotes throughout this effort. The book is readily available through <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org>, and it forms the foundational basis for most of this Systematic Theology.<sup>9</sup>

Believing in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and believing that every single word is directly chosen by God, it is necessary to preserve and defend the doctrine extracted from Scripture and presented by Dr. Cambron. Below, in a block quote of his book, is his extensive analysis of Theology: [block quote of Dr. Cambron's *Bible*

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6 Dr. Mark G. Cambron, B.A., M.A., Th.B., Th.M., Th.D., D.D., L.L.D., Litt.D., was one of the foremost theologians of our times. Born in Fayetteville, Tennessee on July 31, 1911. He was born-again in 1919. It was during a Billy Sunday campaign in Chattanooga that he trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. He served for many years at Tennessee Temple College (1948-59) with Dr. Lee Roberson and served as Dean of the College. From <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org> accessed 10/16/2013

7 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 60-69

8 The Cambron Institute, 35890 Maplegrove Road, Willoughby, Oh 44094

9 It is noted here and amply reproved in the Bibliology section of this work, that it is fallacy for Dr. Cambron's *Bible Doctrines* book to recommend using the R.V., instead of the Holy Bible, 41 times for 54 Bible verses. Dr. Cambron's unfortunate preference for the Revised Standard version of the Bible stems from his shortsightedness about how far Satan would take, and how effectively Satan would use, the "Bible Critics," the "Bible Correctors," the "Textual Critics," and the "Copyright Mongers" of the modernist ecumenical ilk.



Doctrines page 4-40 (Zondervan's 11-56)]

## Cambron's Ch 1 Theology (The Doctrine of God)

### THEOLOGY (The Doctrine of God) 6

#### OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER I

<p>THEOLOGY</p> <p>I. The Names and Titles of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Elohim.</li><li>B. Adonai.</li><li>C. Jehovistic Combinations.</li><li>D. Eloistic Combinations.</li></ul> <p>II. The Existence of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. False and True Systems of Theology.</li><li>B. Evidence of the Existence of God.</li></ul> <p>III. The nature of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Definitions of God.</li><li>B. Spirituality of God.</li><li>C. Personality of God.</li><li>D. The Trinity of God.</li><li>E. The Self-existence of God.</li><li>F. The Infinity of God.</li></ul>	<p>IV. The Attributes of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Omnipotence.</li><li>B. Omniscience.</li><li>C. Omni-sapience.</li><li>D. Omnipresence.</li><li>E. Eternity</li><li>F. Immutability.</li><li>G. Love.</li><li>H. Mercy.</li><li>I. Grace.</li><li>J. Faithfulness.</li><li>K. Holiness.</li></ul> <p>V. The Fatherhood of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Old Testament Teaching.</li><li>B. New Testament Teaching.</li></ul>
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[pg7]

#### Chapter I THEOLOGY

The word “theology” comes from the Greek word *theos*, meaning God. Thus, theology is the doctrine of God. To begin the study of the many Bible doctrines we must begin with the Source of all things - God! We must begin with God — there is no one, nothing, before Him. Before anything came into being, He *was*: “in the beginning *God...*” (Gen. 1:1); “*God*, who at sundry times and in divers manners (Heb.1:1); “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with *God*, and the Word was *God*” (John 1:1).

The first things we shall study are:

## I. The Names and Titles Of God

The name of a person, place, or thing is that by which it is known. The names of God are those by which He is known. They denote His character. Yes, the names of the Lord are those by which He is known to His people; “Save me, O God, by thy *name*” (Ps. 54: 1a); “They that know thy *name* will put their trust in thee” (Ps: 9: 10).

The King James Version distinguishes the names of God by the use of printer’s type. Thus, when you read in the Bible the word “God,” you know that it is translated from the Hebrew word *Elohim*; the words “LORD,” “GOD,” “LORD GOD,” “LORD God” are from the Hebrew word *Jehovah*; and the word “lord” is from the word *Adonai*. Each of these words, *Elohim*, *Jehovah* and *Adonai*, describes the character of God and of His actions toward mankind, distinguishing between the saint and the sinner.

### A. *Elohim*.

The word *Elohim*, which is translated as “God,” is found more than twenty-three hundred times in Scripture. Yet this is not a personal name of God, but it is God’s official title — what He is, God! — *Elohim*! The word *Elohim* is not only used for God, but for men (“I have said, Ye are *gods*; and all of you are children of the most High” — Ps. 82:6 with John 10:34, 35) and for idols (“Thou shalt make thee no molten *gods*” — Ex. 34:17). It is the title of God just as the word “president” is the title of an office. The President is the official title of the chief executive of the United States. It is not his name, but his title. And likewise, there are many kinds of presidents: of companies, missionary societies, etc. God’s *official* name is *Elohim* — His office.

*Elohim* is a plural noun. At once we say plural means two or more. This is true in English, but not so in the Hebrew language. We have two numbers in English: singular, meaning one; plural, two or more. In the Hebrew, however, we have three numbers: singular, meaning one; dual, equaling two; plural, denoting three or more. Thus, *Elohim* is a plural noun — three or more. Genesis 1:1 states: “In the beginning God [three or more] created the heaven and the earth.” Another suggestion of the Trinity is found in Genesis 1:26, 27: “And God [*Elohim*] said, “Let *us* make man in *our* image.”

The literal meaning of *Elohim* is The Putter-forth of Power, The

Strong One. And in the first chapter of Genesis, *Elohim* is described as putting forth His power in these ten words: created, made (fashioned), moved, said, saw, called, divided, set, ended and blessed.

No creature has power but that which God has given him. Power belongeth unto God. Man has to work for his power in all phases of life; God only has to speak, and it is done. God not only creates, but *keeps* what He brings forth out of nothing.

*Elohim* (God) has power in government. Daniel pointed this out, and Nebuchadnezzar had to experience it “that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Dan. 4:17). With pride filling his heart, Nebuchadnezzar was struck with madness until he acknowledged that the Most High *did* rule. Then only did his reason return unto him, and he became a firm believer in this truth.

*Elohim* (God) has power in judgment, whether upon man or nation. When He smites, none can resist Him.

*El* is the singular form of *Elohim*. It is found two hundred and *fifty* times in Scripture. It is used in the proper names of men, such as Samuel (asked of God) and *Elijah* (Jehovah is my God).

#### *B. Jehovah.*

Remember, the words GOD and LORD (all capital letters) in the King James version are best<sup>10</sup> translated *Jehovah*. *Jehovah* is the *personal* name of God. It is that Name which is above every other name. The meaning of the word is Redeemer. Every time it is used in the Scriptures it is connected with deliverance by God: “And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out and the LORD [*Jehovah*] helped him; and God moved them to depart from him” (II Chron. 18:31).

While the personal name of God, *Jehovah*, was written, it was never pronounced. The Jews considered that name too sacred to be spoken by human lips. It is a possibility that this pronunciation is not

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10 When using this clause “best translated” in contrast to how the fifty-seven expert linguists translated the Authorized King James Bible from 1605 thru 1611, Dr. Cambron over steps his expertise; indeed the Authorized translators did do the best translation by using all caps for this name of God.

correct even today, for the Hebrew language is written without any vowels. The name *Jehovah*, in the Hebrew, is spelled *JHVH*. We trust that we are pronouncing it correctly: It could be pronounced *Jeheveh*, or *Jihivih*, or *Jahavah*, or many other different ways. When the scribes came to this name *Jehovah* to copy, they washed their bodies, and the pens with which they spelled this name were cleansed. Even in public, when readers of sacred Scriptures came to this word they would not pronounce it, fearing they would take it in vain, but would substitute the word *Elohim* or *Adonai* in its place. One reason why the word *Jehovah* was suppressed was to impress its sacredness upon the minds of the people. [pg10]

When the LORD [*Jehovah*] appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, and commissioned him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt into the Promised Land, Moses asked, “When I come unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?” God said unto him, “I AM THAT I AM ... I AM hath sent me unto you” (Ex. 3:13, 14). *Jehovah* is the eternal *I AM*. There is no past nor future with *Jehovah*; He is the Eternal Present, the self-existent One — One that made Himself known.

In Exodus 20:2 we read: “I am the LORD thy God...” “I am Jehovah thy Elohim.” There were many different Elohim, but there was only one *Jehovah*. You read in the Word, the “Elohim of Israel”; but never, the “*Jehovah* of Israel”; for there were no more Jehovahs. When Elijah and the prophets of Baal had a contest, it was to determine which was Elohim (God), *Jehovah* or Baal.

Yes, *Jehovah* was always related in a redemptive way with his own people, but His relationship to His creatures (this includes unregenerate men) was always as Elohim. The same today. God is God of all the unsaved, but He is *Jehovah*, the Father, of all who are saved. The Book of Jonah illustrates this. In chapters three and four the people called upon Elohim, but Jonah called upon *Jehovah*! They were lost; he was saved. They became saved, and could, after their salvation, call God *Jehovah*. See other Scriptures: Judges 7:14, 15; II Chronicles 19:6-9; Genesis 7:16; I Samuel 17:46.

We have another name for God, and that is *JAH*. It is found only once in the King James version, but it occurs forty-eight other times in

the corrected translations.<sup>11</sup> Some Bible scholars believe that *JAH* is an abbreviation of Jehovah. The meaning is the same. “Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name *JAH*, and rejoice before him” (Ps. 68:4). The name *JAH* is always connected with praise, and is first found in Exodus 15:2.

We believe that the word “God” (Elohim), being plural in Genesis 1:1, definitely suggests that the Trinity created the heavens and the earth. Yet we find that modern thought interprets this differently. Modern thought says that this portion of the Word should read, “In the beginning *Gods* created the heavens and the earth.” And the reason for this, they say, is that Israel, to begin with, believed in many gods, but that their religion evolved into monotheism. This form of reasoning has proved difficult to many college students. Is there any Scripture which will refute this? Absolutely. Turn to Deuteronomy 6:4 — “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.” Now, put the correct words of *Elohim* and *Jehovah* in this passage and you will see that the Word plainly reveals the Trinity of Genesis 1:1: “Hear, O Israel, JEHOVAH our ELOHIM [*three or more persons*] is one JEHOVAH.’ Therefore, man began with a belief in *one* God and later degenerated into the depths “and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (Rom. 1:23). [pg11]

#### *C. Adonai.*

The term *Adonai* really means master, or owner; one who owns, one who rules, one who blessed his own. It is found first in Genesis 15:1, 2: “After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?”

*Adonai* can always be known by the word “Lord,” or “lord” in the Old Testament of the King James Version. There are two different

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11 When claiming there are “corrected translations” in contrast to how the fifty-seven expert linguists translated the Authorized King James Bible from 1605 thru 1611, Dr. Cambron over steps his expertise; indeed the Authorized translators did do the best translation by judiciously using this very personal reference to the name of our God.

forms of this word: *Adon*, which is singular, and *Adonai*, which is plural.

*Adonai* is used two ways in the Scriptures when related to man and his earthly relationships: As a *master* of his slaves — “And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his *master*; and swore to him concerning that matter. And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his *master*; and departed; for all the goods of his *master*...” (Gen. 24:9, 10a); and as a *husband* to his wife — “Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him *lord* [Adonai]...” (I Peter 3:6a). See also Genesis 18:12.

A Hebrew could sell himself to another Hebrew, who became his master. But he could not sell himself forever; for at the Sabbatical Year, or the Year of Jubilee, all slaves were freed. Yet, there was a way by which a slave could become a slave forever, and that was by *choice*: “And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever” (Ex. 21:5, 6). Paul said that he was a bond slave (servant) of Jesus Christ, bought by blood and bound by Love! Every time you use the name Lord Jesus Christ, you say, “He is my Master.” “Ye call me *Master* and *Lord*: and ye say well; for so I am” (John 13:13).

#### *D. Jehovistic Combinations.*

1. *Jehovah-jireh* — “the Lord will provide.” “Abraham called the name of that place *Jehovah-jireh*: as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen” (Gen. 22:14). This was the occasion when Abraham led his son, his only begotten son, Isaac, to the mount. Isaac carried the wood; Abraham carried the knife and the fire. His son asked the whereabouts of the sacrifice. To this Father Abraham replied, “God will *provide* himself a lamb for a burnt-offering.” And God did! Before Abraham could kill his son as a sacrifice demanded by God, the angel of the LORD stayed his hand; his eyes looked upon the thicket and saw the ram which the LORD had provided. Nearly two thousand years ago the Son of God carried, Himself, a wooden burden, the Cross; and the Father held the fire (which speaks of judgment), and the knife (which speaks of death),

and God *did* provide *Himself* a Sacrifice for our sins — His Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Have you found Him to be your *Jehovah jireh*? Whatever may come, remember, He is *Jehovah-jireh* — “the LORD will provide.” [pg12]

2. *Jehovah-Rapha* — “the Lord that healeth.” [“The LORD] said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD [*Jehovah Rapha*] that healeth thee” (Ex. 15:26). He is LORD, The Physician. The way this is used is not, “I will *cure* your diseases”; but, “I won’t *put* sickness upon you.”

The world is called the “sick world”; Livingstone called Africa the “open sore”; and the reason for this is the deep wound of *sin*! The word “heal” is an interesting word and means to repair, mend, cure. And there is perfect cure in *Jehovah-Rapha*, for “by his stripes we are healed” (I Peter 2:24). See also Psalm 41:4.

3. *Jehovah-nissi* — “the Lord our Banner.” “Moses built an altar, and called the name of it *Jehovah-nissi*” (Ex. 17:15). The LORD is our Victory. Christ crucified is our Banner of Victory!

4. *Jehovah-Qadash* — “the LORD that doth sanctify.” “Ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD [*Jehovah-Qadash*] which sanctify you” (Lev. 20:8). And God is the same LORD of the Christian as of the Hebrew: “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. . . . By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:9, 10). See also Hebrews 10:14, and Exodus 31:13.

5. *Jehovah-shalom* — “the LORD our Peace.” “Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it *Jehovah-shalom*: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites” (Judg. 6:24). There is only one way to secure peace today, and that is through the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Peace: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us” (Eph. 2:14). See also Romans 5:1.

6. *Jehovah-Tsidkenu* — “the LORD our Righteousness.” “In his days Judah shall he saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR

RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jer. 23:6). Israel shall be restored to the Land of Promise once again, and during the Millennium Jehovah shall be called *Jehovah-Tsidkenu* — “the LORD our Righteousness.” The LORD did come, the only righteous one, yet they crucified Him. But one day He shall come the second time, and Israel shall claim the Lord Jesus Christ as their own Righteousness. Christ Jesus is the only Righteousness that any can claim.

7. *Jehovah-Shammah* — “the LORD is There.” “It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD [*Jehovah-Shammah*] is there” (Ezek. 48:35). When Israel is restored to the land, and the earth shall be full of knowledge of the LORD, Jerusalem shall be called *Jehovah-Shammah* — “the LORD is There.” [pg13]

8. *Jehovah-Sabaoth* — the LORD of Hosts.” “This man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts [*Jehovah-Sabaoth*] in Shiloh” (I Sam. 1: 3a). Israel is the Host; the LORD is the LORD of Hosts. See also Exodus 12:41; II Kings 6:14-23; Romans 9:29; James 5:4.

9. *Jehovah Ra-ah* — “the LORD my Shepherd.” “The LORD [*Jehovah Ra-ah*] is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Ps. 23:1). One time a little girl was quoting this verse, and this is the way she said it: “The LORD is my Shepherd, why should I worry?” Have you found that Source of Strength? Have you found perfect peace by following the Saviour wherever He leads? Fears will not annoy; darkness cannot distress; poverty is not able to destroy if Jesus is your *Jehovah Ra-ah* — your Shepherd.

#### *E. Eloistic Combinations.*

As there are the Jehovistic combinations, so are there the *Eloistic* combinations.

1. *El Elyon* — “Most High God.” “Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God [*El Elyon*]” (Gen. 14:18). Here in the King James Version the name is translated “most high God.” *Elyon* means highest; with *El* it means the most high God. See also Deuteronomy 32:8; Daniel 4:34, 35. Jesus Christ is our *El Elyon* — “All power [*authority*] is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18b).

2. *El Olam* — “Everlasting God.” “Abraham planted a grove in



Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting [El Olam] God” (Gen. 21:33). Yes, God is the “Everlasting God” — “the God of All Ages.”

3. *El Shaddai* — “Almighty God.” This is first found in Genesis 17:1: “When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God [*El Shaddai*]; walk before me, and be thou perfect.” “El” means the Strong One. *Shaddai* comes from the word *shad*, meaning a breast, a woman’s breast. This is illustrated by that portion found in Isaiah 28:9. *El Shaddai*, therefore, means the Breast of God, the Nourisher, Strength-giver, the Satisfier.

One of the most cherished names of God held by Bible students everywhere is this one — the Breast of God, the Strength-giver, the All-Sufficient God, the All-Bountiful God, the God Who is Enough! the God Who is Able. “He is *able* also to save them to the uttermost” (Heb. 7:25). Why? Because Jesus Christ our Lord is our *El Shaddai* — “The God Who is Able.” [pg14]

## II. The Existence of God

### *A. False and True Systems of Theology.*

1. *Deism*. This system acknowledges that there is a God, but denies that God sustains the creation. “God is the Maker, but not the Keeper.”

2. *Atheism*. Those who hold to this belief — so called — exclude God altogether.

3. *Skepticism and Infidelity*. Skeptics and infidels are full of doubt and disbelief with regard to God, especially the God of Revelation. 4.

4. *Agnosticism*. This school of thought does not deny God, but denies that God can be *known*.

5. *Pantheism*. Everything is God, and God is everything. Everything you see is God.

God is *in* everything. God and creation are synonymous.

6. *Polytheism*. This is belief in many Gods. There are various gods over us; these in turn have gods over them; and these have gods over them, and so on.

7. *Tritheism*. This is the doctrine of *three* Gods.

8. *Dualism*. This is the belief in *two* Gods; a God that is Good, and a God that is Bad. They are both equal in power and persuasion.

9. *Theism*. The belief in the existence of a personal God is known as theism. Should one boast in this, his boasting is vain, for one must know *who* God is, *what* His name is, in order to trust Him.

10. *Monotheism*. This is the doctrine of one God. We are monotheists. Jews and Mohammedans are monotheists. If that is true, are they saved? No! “Thou believest that there is *one* God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble” (Jas. 2:19) Believing in one God is not sufficient, but “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt he saved” (Rom. 10:9).

*B. Evidence of the Existence of God.*

May the student realize that the Bible never tries to prove there is a God. It assumes that man knows that there is a God, and states, “The *fool* hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Ps. 14:1). [pg15]

There are many evidences of the existence of God, the first being:

1. *From Reason*. (The Intellectual).

a. *The Intuitional Argument*: That which is in man, sometimes called the “firsttruths”; that belief that knows that there is a God without anyone revealing that fact. A child knows there is a God. Who has told him? All races of the world know there is a God, though they are not worshiping the One and Only and True God. There is no such thing as a true atheist. The evidence of the existence of God is in man — born in him.

b. *The Cosmological Argument*: This is the argument from cause and effect. Here is the world — how did it come to be? There is a Cause or Power behind everything. There must be a Maker or Creator. It is easy to think that back of the Creation is God, but it is impossible to think back of God.

c. *The Teleological Argument*: By this we mean design. There is perfect design and order in the universe. The snowflake is a beautiful pattern that man could never duplicate. Why does ice rise to the top of the water and not to the bottom when it freezes? Should this not be so, then all water would eventually freeze, and the fish would perish. How is it possible that spring, summer, fall and winter all come in order, and

have been doing so for millenniums? Why is it that the sun comes no closer to the earth (*melting it*) nor goes further away from it (freezing it)? There *must* be a Designer behind all creation — and that Designer is God!

d. *The Anthropological Argument*: This argument is based upon the moral and intellectual qualities of man. Man is a direct result of the creation of God, as other creatures are, yet these creatures do not possess the moral and intellectual qualities of man. Why? If man could create them, so could animals. But man has the capacity to know, to reason. If man did not get these qualities from some One, where did he get them?

2. *From History*. Truly, history is His story! History verifies the fact that there is a God. History has proved the fact of God against those who have repudiated His law. Thus, Christians should never worry over world conditions. God is on His throne. Nothing can happen, but by His will. Someone has said, “Prophecy is the mould of history.” God speaks, and years later what He spoke is fulfilled to the letter, History only fulfills what God has said would happen. History *proves* there is a God!

3. *From Experience*. This is one of the greatest proofs yet for the existence of God. Men have been transformed by the power of God. There is no explanation other than God! Prayers which have been answered attest to the existence of God.

4. *From Scripture*.

a. *Biblical Assumption*. The Bible is the only Book that is God-inspired. The Bible is the standard for all right conduct in the world. If the Bible is not the Word of God, then we have no God; we can never know God.

b. *Christological Revelation*. In Jesus Christ, God came down to man to tell us what God is like. If Jesus is not God, then there is no God. God can never be known. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he [pg16] hath declared him” (John 1:18). But Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and He and His life prove the existence of God!

c. *Prophetical Declaration*. God forecast the future. Anyone who can do this is more than man. Man cannot always tell the past, much less the future. It is said that when Christ was crucified there

were twenty-five distinct prophecies fulfilled — prophecies written centuries before.

### III. The Nature of God.

#### A. Definitions of God.

##### 1. Scriptural Definitions.

a. *God is Spirit* — “God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

b. *God is Light* — “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (I John 1:5).

c. *God is Love* — “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (I John 4:8).

d. *God is a Consuming Fire* — “For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29).

##### 2. Theological Definitions.

a. *Westminster Catechism*: — “God is a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable in His Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness and Truth.”

b. *Dr. Strong*: — “God is the Infinite and Perfect Spirit. The Source of all things, the Support of all things, the End of all things.”

c. *Andrew Fuller*: — “God is the First Cause and Last End of all things.”

d. *Ebrards*: — “God is the Eternal Source of all that is temporal.”

#### B. Spirituality of God.

1. *His Essence*. He is a Spiritual Being (“God is a Spirit” — John 4:24), invisible (“Who is the image of the invisible God” — Col. 1:15a). What is a spirit? A spirit is a being without flesh and bones. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Luke 24:39). A spirit has a body, a spirit-body; but it has no natural body, no material body. God cannot be seen by human eye; God, in His pure essence, has never been seen. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18).

2. *His Manifestations*. While God, in His true essence, has never

been seen, yet He hath shown Himself, revealed His Person to man in different forms. The Scriptures ask, “To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One” (Is. 40:25). Man cannot know God but in the way He has revealed Himself. Are we not glad that God has revealed Himself in His Son? Where Christ is the image of God, the Anti-christ shall be an imitation. [pg17]

There *seems* to be some contradictions in the Word; in some places it says that people saw God: “The LORD spake unto Moses face to face” (Ex. 33:11); “Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel...” (Ex. 24:9, 10). In other places the Word says that it is impossible to see God: “He said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live” (Ex. 33:20). The truth is, man has never looked upon the face of God in His true essence, but has looked upon His face and spoken mouth to mouth with God when God manifested Himself in some form other than his true essence. “With him will I speak mouth to mouth...” (Num. 12:8a).

We do know this, that the Spirit (Holy Spirit) can manifest Himself in a visible form. “John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him” (John 1:32). It was at the Lord Jesus’ baptism that John saw the form, but not the Spirit; yet the Spirit was manifested.

God has manifested Himself in many forms; among them are the following:

a. *In Creature Forms*. By this we do not mean that the LORD appeared in the form of animals, but rather in the form of human beings. Genesis 3:8 and 12:7 illustrate this fully: “They heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the *presence* of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden” (Gen. 3:8); “The LORD *appeared* unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who *appeared* unto him” (Gen. 12:7). See also Genesis 16:7, 10, 13; Exodus 24:9-11; Genesis 18:1-16; Judges 13:22, 23; Genesis 32:24-30.

God also manifested Himself as the Angel of the LORD — “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” (Ps. 34:7); “The angel of the LORD said unto

her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction” (Gen. 16:11). It is agreed among most Bible scholars that the Angel of the LORD is no other than the Lord Jesus Himself.

b. *In Material Forms.* Man could not see God; therefore, God manifested Himself in forms from which He spoke to and led him. One such form was the Burning Bush: “When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I” (Ex. 3:4); Another form was the Pillar of a Cloud and a Pillar of Fire: “The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night” (Ex. 13:21). [pg18]

c. *In The Person of Christ Jesus.* Again we state that we are rejoicing that God does not choose today to reveal Himself other than in His Son, Jesus Christ! God does not choose to manifest Himself in a vapor, but rather in *human* form: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14). See also I Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:3.

### *C. Personality of God.*

God is a Person, One possessing Self-consciousness, Self-determination, and Power.

People have many vague ideas of God as a force, a power, an influence. But it is impossible to have fellowship with a force or an influence. The Words of our Lord as He was in the Garden suggest fellowship with God: “Now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (John 17:13). See also Exodus 3:14; I Corinthians 2:11.

Never confuse personality with visibility. Substance has nothing to do with personality. The personality of God can be seen:

1. *In Names.* “God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Ex. 3:14). The words “I AM THAT I AM” suggest personality.

2. *In Contrasts.* By this we mean that the Scriptures contrast the

only wise God with the gods of the pagans: “Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (I Thess. 1:9). See also Jeremiah 10:16; Acts 14:15.

3. *In Attributes.* That which is characteristic of God is called an attribute. That which He *does*, denotes personality, such as:

a. *God Grieves.* Only a person can grieve: “It repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it *grieved* him at his heart” (Gen. 6:6).

b. *God Repents.* In the above Scripture (Gen. 6:6) we note that God repents. I Samuel 15:29 says: “The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.” Here one portion of the Scriptures states that God repents, another declares that He does not repent. What is the answer? When man repents, he repents of some moral deed; when God repents, He repents of some judicial act. God’s attitude toward sin never changes. Take the case of Jonah and Nineveh. Nineveh repented; it changed its mind; it changed its character. God, however, did not change His mind; He did not change His attitude toward sin. But inasmuch as Nineveh had repented, there was no need of judgment against sin. Its sin had been confessed and forgiven.

c. *God Loves.* “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Rev. 3:19). Only a personality can love.

d. *God Hates.* “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him” (Prov. 6:16). [pg19]

e. *God Hears.* “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know” (Ps. 94:9, 10)?

4. *In Acts.*

a. *God Creates.* “In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). See also Isaiah 45:18.

b. *God Provides.* “These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy

face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth” (Ps. 104:27-30). The material needs of this entire world are met and supplied by God.

c. *God Promotes*. Some people seemingly are pushed ahead of others. The world has a name for this — luck. But the correct answer is the LORD! Kings receive their power from Him; pastors receive their charges from Him; husbands receive their wives from Him. All promotions are from the Lord. “*Promotion* cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another” (Ps. 75:6, 7).

d. *God Cares*. God has a heart; only a person has a heart. God has concern: “Humble yourselves . . . casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (I Peter 5:6, 7).

#### D. *The Trinity of God*.

1. *Trinity in Personality*. By this, of course, we mean that God is Three in One. There are some errors concerning the Trinity; some have been proposed ignorantly, and others deliberately.

We know that the Bible is the Word of God, if for no other reason than that we have the Trinity in it. If man had written the Bible, he would have left the Trinity out of it; for the Trinity is too hard to understand — the mind of man cannot comprehend it. The only thing that the Child of God can do is to accept it by faith and stand upon what God says about it. Just because we cannot seem to understand all about it is no sign that it is not true.

There is one error which proposes that there are three Individuals in the Godhead. But remember, God is not a Triad.

Another error is that the Trinity is just one Person, manifesting Himself in three. That is, there are three essences in one Person, Jesus Christ. The Father and the Holy Spirit are only manifestations.

Still another, and damnable, denies the Trinity altogether, and consequently makes the Son and Holy Spirit creatures of God, those who came into existence after God. In other words, they who hold to this erroneous theory declare that there was a time when the Son was not; that there was a time when the Son of God never existed. They use this sort of reasoning: “A son cannot be as old as his father — a father always has to exist before his [pg20] son in order to beget him;



God is the Father of the Son of God; therefore, the Father had to exist before the Son in order to beget Him.” To this we reply: “If a person should declare that he is a father, and has been one for ten years, then we know that he has had a child for ten years. A man cannot be a father without having a child. Yes, a man who has been a father for ten years has had a child for ten years. Even so in the Godhead — if God is the *Eternal* Father, then He must have had an *Eternal* Son!”

The doctrine of the Trinity is a doctrine of pure revelation from God. And remember, we worship not three Gods, but One — God: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

It is practically impossible to give examples of the Trinity. Some have offered the threeleaved clover as an example; others have suggested water: in its natural state, liquid; when heated, vapor; when frozen, solid. Still, this is not clear. For God is Three in One! Therefore, we propose that the best illustration is man himself: body, soul and spirit. He is not three persons, but a three-in-one person. And there are three things which pertain to each separately: food to the body, music to the soul, and worship to the spirit — yet all three of these things appeal to the one man.

Rays from the sun may be used as a further type. When the sunshine breaks upon the earth it is composed of three elements: heat rays, which can be felt but not seen; light rays, which can be seen, but not felt; chemical rays, which cannot be seen, nor felt, but do have effects. All together make sunshine. We cannot understand light — three rays and yet one light. Without one of these elements there would be no light; without one part of man, man would cease to be; and without one Person of the Godhead, God would not be God!

a. *Old Testament Names*

(1) *Plural Nouns* “In the beginning [*Elohim*] created the heaven and earth” (Gen. 1:1). *Elohim* is the plural noun, meaning three or more. This, of course, suggests the Trinity in creation. See also Genesis 3:5; Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 13:2, 3. Many times *Elohim* is translated (in English) in the singular and the plural.

(2) *Plural Pronouns*. “The LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of *us*, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever...” (Gen. 3:22). See also Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 6:8. This is God speaking to

God — thus the Trinity.

(3) *Scriptural Statements*. The Scriptures state that God anointed God, and how could this be if God be not a Trinity? “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Ps. 45:6,7). See also Hebrews 1:8-12; Psalm 110:1.

(4) *Scriptural Designations*. That is, in Genesis 1:1 God declares that He created the heavens and the earth, and in verse 2, the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, is singled out: “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” (See also Job 24:13). [pg21] And elements of personality are accounted for by reference to the Holy Spirit: “There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD (Is. 11:1, 2).

The Son, the Second Person of the Trinity is singled out also: “I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. . . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way...” (Ps. 2:7, 12a). The Angel of the LORD of the Old Testament is no other than Jesus Christ Himself, and in the following portion of Scriptures He is declared as being separate from God the Father and Holy Spirit: “The angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water . . . in the way to Shur” (Gen. 16:7).

The following Scriptures plainly reveal the Trinity of the Godhead: Genesis 18:1,2,33; Isaiah 48:16; 63:8-10.

(5) *Triple Expressions*. Whenever the Scriptures express praise or benediction of the Godhead, a triple exclamation is declared which points to the fact that as God is the Three-In-One God these expressions must also be three: “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace” (Num. 6:24-26). “And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy*, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is

to come” (Rev. 4:8).

b. *New Testament Disclosures.*

(1) *Baptism of Christ.* The baptism of Christ is one of the best illustrations which prove the Trinity: “Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:16, 17). Here there is presented the Father in heaven, the Son in the water, and the Holy Spirit descending as a dove.

(2) *Baptismal Formula.* The Church of God in Christ Jesus has always used that formula laid down by its Founder Himself, Jesus Christ: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...” (Matt. 28:19, 20). Note that the Scriptures do not say, “in the names of”; but, “in the name of.” One in Three; one *name*, but three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(3) *Apostolic Benediction.* The Church has used this benediction (which was first used by the Apostle Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit) for the last nineteen hundred years: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen” (II Cor. 13:14). [pg22]

(4) *Other Scripture.* The following verse plainly reveals the fact of the Trinity: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

2. *Unity of Being: Undivided and Invisible.* There is *one* God; He is the one and only God: “Thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears” (II Sam. 7:22); “Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he” (Is. 41:4). See also Isaiah 43:10, 11; 44:6; Deuteronomy 6:4.

God — Elohim — is a compound unity; that is, the noun, God (which is plural), is used always with a singular verb: “In the beginning God [plural] created [singular] the heaven and the earth”

(Gen. 1:1); “The LORD [singular] God [plural] of gods, the LORD [singular] God [plural] of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD [*singular*], (save us not this day),...” (Josh. 22:22). See also Genesis 1:5, 8, 13; 33:20.

3. *A Scriptural Summary.*

a. *Three Are Recognized as God.*

(1) *The Father is Recognized as God.* “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:7). See also John 6:27; I Peter 1:2.

(2) *The Son is Recognized as God.* “Unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom” (Heb. 1:8); “We should live soberly, righteously, and godly . . . looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:12, 13).

(3) *The Holy Spirit is Recognized as God.* “Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:3, 4).

b. *Three Are Described as Distinct Persons.*

(1) *Father and Son Are Persons Distinct From Each Other.*

(a) *Christ Distinguishes the Father From Himself.* “As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man” (John 5:26, 27). See also John 5:32.

(b) *Father and Son are Distinguished as the Begetter and the Begotten.* See John 3:16.

(c) *Father and Son are Distinguished as the Sender and the Sent.* “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4). See also John 10:36. [pg23]

(2) *Father and Son Are Persons Distinguished from the Holy Spirit.*

(a) *The Son Distinguishes the Holy Spirit From Himself and the Father.* “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:16, 17).

(b) *The Spirit Proceeds From the Father.* “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me” (John 15:26).

(c) *The Spirit Is Sent by the Father and the Son.* “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto von” (John 14:26); “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me” (John 15:26).

*c. These Three Persons Are Equal.*

(1) The Father is not God as such, for God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit).

(2) The Son is not God as such, for God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit).

(3) The Holy Spirit is not God as such, for God is Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit).

*E. The Self-existence of God.*

Existence of God is within Himself. We are dependent upon Him; He is not dependent upon anything. Something caused us to be; nothing caused Him to be; He always was; God does not exist because He brought Himself into existence. God exists because it is his nature to be.

Our lives come from an external source; there was a time when we began. “I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me” (John 5:36). We cannot say this.

*F. The Infinity of God.*

Divine nature has no limit or bound. “Great is our Lord, and of

great power: his understanding is infinite” (Ps. 147:5); “Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea” (Job 11:7-9); “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? (I Kings 8:27); “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11:33). See also Isaiah 66:1; Psalm 113:5, 6. [pg24]

The world is a bud from His bower of beauty —  
The sun is a spark from the light of His wisdom —  
The sky is a bubble on the sea of His power.

#### IV. The Attributes of God.

The attributes of God are the essential qualities of a perfect Being — the property of God.

##### *A. The Omnipotence of God.*

This means that God is all-powerful, all-mighty: “I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth” (Rev. 19:6); “Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26); “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” (Gen. 18:14a).

There is only *one* thing which can limit God, and that is His own holy will. Some foolish person may propose II Timothy 2:13: “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.” This person says, “Here is something God cannot do.” But this is not a question of what God *can* do, but what God *will* do.

1. *God Has Power Over Nature.* “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:6-9); “Thus

saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land” (Hag. 2:6). See also Genesis 1:1-3; Nahum 1:3-6. Man has to have tools to make things — God only has to speak, and it is done.

2. *God Has Power Over Men.* “There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For what ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that” (Jas. 4:12-15). See also Exodus 4:11.

3. *God Has Power Over Angels.* “All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the *army of heaven*, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” (Dan. 4:35). [pg25]

4. *God Has Power Over Satan.* In Job 1:12; 2:6 we notice that Satan is subjected to God; “The LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD. . . . And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.” And we know of the end of Satan from the following Scriptures: “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly...” (Rom. 16:20a); “He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years...And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Rev. 20:2, 10). See also Luke 22:31, 32.

5. *God Has Power Over Death.* Paul prays that the Ephesians may know “what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Eph. 1:19-21). Ultimately, death shall be destroyed: “Death and hell [hades] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death” (Rev. 20:14).

*B. The Omniscience of God.*

Omniscience means “all knowing.” God is the “All-Knowing God” — He knows everything! “For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things” (I John 3:20).

1. *Includes All Nature.* God, the Creator, knows everything concerning His creatures.

a. *Of His Inanimate Creatures.* “He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names” (Ps. 147:4); “Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding” (Is. 40:28).

b. *Of His Brute Creatures.* “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father” (Matt. 10:29).

c. *Of His Human Creatures.* God has full knowledge of man: “Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him” (Matt. 6:8). He knows man’s need; he has knowledge of the need of man. He knows the very *thoughts* of man: “Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off” (Ps. 139:2). “The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity” (Ps. 94:11). See also I Chronicles 28:9 and Hebrews 4:13. God knows the *heart* of man: “Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)” (I Kings 8:39). See also Psalm 44:21 and Acts 1:24. God knows the *experiences* we have gone through: “The LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows” (Ex. 3:7). How absurd for man to try to deceive God! [pg26]

2. *Covers All Time.* “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:18). And this covers the *past*, the *present* and the *future*. The past can God see, for He has given to us those things which have happened millenniums ago (Book of Genesis); the Present is an open book to Him: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Heb. 4:13);



and the future is known as the past and present is known. He knows the end from the beginning: “Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (I Peter 1:20). I Kings 13:2 is also a marvelous illustration of God knowing the future: a baby was named three hundred years before it was born, its name given, from what family it was to come and the things it was to do in later life: “And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burnt upon thee.” See also Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15. 16; Exodus 3:19; Daniel 2:8.

With God knowing the future, we must put ourselves in His hands.

3. *Includes All Possibilities.* Only God knows what would have happened if something had happened which did not happen. “Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day” (Matt. 11:23). See also I Samuel 23:12; Isaiah 48:18.

*C. The Omni-sapience of God.*

By this we mean the “All-Wisdom of God”; that is, God has all wisdom. There is a vast difference in wisdom and knowledge. Knowledge is what one knows; wisdom is the perfect display of that knowledge. Wisdom includes discernment and judgment.

1. *Choice of The Highest End.* All things are chosen which will bring about the highest end for God’s glory.

2. *Best Way of Securing That End.* Here wisdom asserts itself, not only choosing that which will bring about the highest end, but devising the best ways of securing that end. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out” (Rom. 11:33). See also Romans 16:27; I Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:8; 3:10; I Timothy 1:17.

*D. The Omnipresence of God.*

There are many vague ideas concerning the omnipresence of God. “Omnipresent” simply means everywhere present. God is

everywhere present. God is everywhere, but He is not *in* everything. The belief that He is in everything is Pantheism. If God were in everything, then all man would have to do would be to bow down to a stone, a tree, a desk, a table, or any object, and he would be worshiping God. God is not *in* everything, but He is <sup>[pg27]</sup> everywhere! He is everywhere present. The best illustration of this is of a teacher before his class. The teacher is omnipresent to every student in that classroom; but he is not omnipresent to those on the outside, nor to those in the basement, nor even to those who are in the next room. Why? Because the walls, floors and space are barriers between him and those in other parts of the building. But God transcends *all* barriers — space, materials, all things.

We believe, however, that there is a certain place where He manifests Himself, where He is located — and from that locality He is present to everything of the universe. “Hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou *in heaven* thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive” (I Kings 8:30). See also Jeremiah 23:24; Ephesians 1:20; Revelation 21:2.

While God’s dwelling place is in heaven, yet we do know that He has manifested Himself in other places: on *earth*, as when He dwelt in the burning bush (Ex. 3:4): “When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I”; and in the *flesh*, in the incarnation of Jesus Christ: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5-8).

The Holy Spirit is everywhere. He is *in* believers: “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be *in* you” (John 14:16, 17). He is *with* the unbelievers: “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter

will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:7, 8).

God is with us no matter where we are; He is omnipresent; He is everywhere present!

*E. The Eternity of God.*

This is one thing which has never been grasped by the human mind: God is without beginning and without ending. He is the Eternal Now. He is the only One who *is*. There is no past, and there is no future in eternity. God is eternal; therefore, there is no past nor future with God. “I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end” (Ps. 102:24-27). See also Psalm 90:4. [pg28]

Some one may ask, “What is the difference between Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1?” Genesis 1:1 says: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” John 1:1 says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Are both “beginnings” the same? If so, then the Word, Jesus Christ, had a beginning! Both passages start at the same point — the beginning; Genesis 1:1 begins with the beginning and looks *forward* into eternity; while John 1:1 begins with the beginning and looks *backward* into eternity. Therefore, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, had no beginning.

*F. The Immutability of God.*

In other words, this means the “unchangeableness of God.” His Being, attitude and acts are without change; “I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Mal. 3:6); “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (Jas. 1:17); “God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath” (Heb. 6:17).

For a discussion of the repentance of God see Chapter I, III, C, 3, b,.

*G. The Love of God.*

1. *Its Citation.* “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. . . . And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” (I John 4:8-16).

This is the *one* definition of God. There are many adjectives defining God, but a noun needs a noun. The love of God comes from revelation. It does not come by one’s own knowledge. It cannot be seen in nature. Only from God’s Word comes that knowledge that God is love. There are those who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, but who still say that God is love. If the Scriptures are not the Word of God, how do we know that God is love? You can search the world over and never find a “God is love” among the heathen. They have their gods and idols, but a God that is “God is love” is unknown to them. The Bible *is* the Word of God — it, and it only, tells us that “God is love.”

2. *Its Objects.* If God is love, then that love must be directed to someone. And it is, for we learn from the Scriptures that the objects of His love are:

a. *His Son.* God loves His Son more than man could ever love his own offspring. “Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:17). See also Matthew 17:5. God’s love is a perfect love and transcends all bounds: “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24).

b. *Believers.* All who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are the objects of God’s divine love. He manifests that love day by day. “The Father himself loveth *you*, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God” (John 16:27). “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that [pg29] thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me” (John 17:23).

c. *Israel.* Be careful how you speak of the “lowly” Jew. He is the object of God’s love, the same as we Christians: “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee”

(Jer. 31:3).

d. *Sinners*. God never changes concerning His attitude toward sin. God hates sin, but *loves* the sinner! “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved; )” (Eph. 2:4, 5). “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:6-8).

### 3. *Its Manifestations*.

a. *In the Gift of His Son for Sinful Man*. “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him” (I John 4:9). See also John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8.

Man cannot look upon Calvary and say, “God doesn’t love me.” One dear man told of the time when his own son was in the pangs of death. The hardest thing he ever had to do was to say, “Thy will be done. If thou wantest my son, thou canst have him.” Oh, to give up an only son! But mankind gives up its sons to *God*, who takes care of them better than man ever could. But God gave His Only Son to sin — to pay for sin, to pay for the sins of sinners! Yes, we may see our children in the throes of death, but God saw His Son suffer as no man ever did. The dearest child on earth is only a stranger compared with the love of God toward His Son. God points toward Calvary and says, “See my Son! See Him mocked, smitten and bruised?” God saw Him. God saw sinners as they crucified His Son. God could have wiped them off the face of the earth, but He did not. The nails that pierced His Son pierced the heart of the Father. We can *never* understand it. “For God so loved the world, that He *gave*...” The Father gave him up to the hands of justice, to pay for our sins.

Many a murderer has had to pay with his life for his crime. Jesus was delivered up to pay for our crimes of sin.

b. *In Giving Life and Position In Christ*. To believers only is given that sacred position — in Christ; there is where we are — saved, and uncondemned. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall

appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (I John 3:2): “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit *together* in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*” (Eph. 2:5,6).

c. *In Granting That We Should Be Called the Children of God.* “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not” (I John 3:1, R.V.<sup>12</sup>). [pg30]

d. *In Chastening of His Loved Ones.* “Whom the Lord *loveth* he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. 12: 6-11). Remember, the chastening of the Lord is for *our* benefit — for *our* profit. We need chastisement; it is a must in the life of the Christian; and we receive it from our Father in Heaven.

e. *In Remembering His Children in All Circumstances of Life.* The question is asked and answered in the Word concerning the care of parents. Is there a love greater than mother love? Listen to what God says: “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?” Is it possible that a mother could ever leave her child? The answer is, “Yea, they may forget.” In our own lifetime we have witnessed the desertion of children by their

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12 Dr. Cambron's unfortunate preference for the Revised Standard version of the Bible in this instance stems from his shortsightedness about how far Satan would take, and how effectively Satan would use, the “Bible Critics,” the “Bible Correctors,” the “Textual Critics,” and the “Copyright Mongers” of the modernist ecumenical ilk.

parents. It is a shame that the United States and the separate States have to have laws which compel parents to take care of their children. However, this is the nature of the flesh; this is the Adamic nature, the sinful nature, that parents desert their offspring. You may know someone who has. You, yourself, may have been deserted by some one. But listen to the rest of God's Word: "Yet will I not forget thee" (Is. 49:15). There is One who will never desert *His* children!

f. *In Rejoicing Over the Return of the Prodigal Son.* This great story is found in Luke 15:11-24. It is the story of a *Son*, not a sinner. A sinner is not a son. Only a son is a son, and you cannot un-son a son. A son is born a son forever. But here was a son who sank so low that the testimony he might have had was lost. Remember, he was still a son, and as much so while feeding swine as he was in his Father's house. Relationship was still there, but fellowship was broken. You can lose fellowship, but you cannot lose sonship. He made up his mind what he would say to his father upon his return, but he did not get the chance. He did say, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son"; but before he could add, "Make me as one of thy hired servants," the Father, holding his son in his arms, cried to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke 15:21-24).

Let the prodigal know that if he has been once born from above he is still God's child. Only let him resolve to "arise and go" to his Father. The Father stands with open arms ready to plant His kiss upon the penitent lips of His wayward child. "Arise and go!"

4. *The Forms of God's Love.*

a. *In the Goodness of God.*

(1) *As Manifested in Creation.* "God saw . . . that it was good." This is characteristic of the first chapter of Genesis. God is good, and all things that He creates and makes are for the good of man.

(2) *As Manifested In His Care of Brute Creation.* "The eyes of all wait upon thee; [pg31] and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Ps. 145:15, 16).

(3) *As Manifested In the Variety of Pleasure for His Creatures.*

Why all the beauty of nature, if not to be enjoyed by the eye of man?

(4) *As Manifested in the Gift of His Son*. This proves the goodness of God — that God is good.

(5) *As Manifested In Allowing Sinners to Repent*. “Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).

b. *In the Loving-kindness of God*. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not *with him* also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32). Since God has given us the Greatest Gift — His Son — we can be assured that we shall be given “the wrappings” with it. The Son is the Gift, and the wrappings are “things” of His supply which make our souls happy.

c. *In the Long-suffering of God*. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9). “The LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Ex. 34:6). See also Numbers 14:18.

How many of us praise the Lord that the Saviour gave us “time” in trusting Him for our salvation? Oh, the long-suffering of God which is manifested toward us, in that we were able to hear the Gospel twice, when there are millions who have never heard it once!

d. *In the Patience of God*. “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus” (Rom. 15:5). Here we note that the patience of God is a divine title, for He is the God of patience! This is clearly manifested in:

(1) *His Dealings With Sinners: Those Before the Flood*. “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God *waited* in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (I Peter 3:20). The Lord demonstrated His patience for at least a hundred years. As long as the ark was a preparing, the Gospel was preached — the people warned. His patience was exhausted, finally, and the flood carried the unbelievers away. It will be the same with the coming of the Son of



Man at His revelation, at the end of the Tribulation. All those who are found not to be in the Ark, Jesus Christ, shall be destroyed.

(2) *His Dealings With Israel*. “And yet for all that [Israel’s sin], when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD” (Lev. 26:44, 45).

Israel today is Godless, and by this we do not mean that Israel is worse than any other nation, but simply that it is without God. Jehovah has sent prophets unto her, but she has stoned them. He sent even His Son, and Him they crucified. They have been driven unto the uttermost parts of the earth because of it. Yet, for all of this, God has shown His [pg32] patience, and that patience shall be rewarded, for that nation shall be born anew in a day, and all Israel (those alive at the time of the Revelation of Jesus Christ) shall be saved!

(3) *His Dealings With the World Today*. Why does not God strike today? Why are men allowed to blaspheme the God of heaven and His Son Jesus Christ? The answer is found in the patience of God.

#### *H. The Mercy of God.*

1. *As To Its Citation*. “(For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them” (Deut. 4:31). “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. . . . But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children” (Ps. 103:8, 17). “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us . . . hath quickened us together with Christ” (Eph. 2: 4-5). See also Psalms 130:7; 145:8; 136:1.

2. *As To Its Explanation*. There is very little difference in the meaning of mercy and grace. *Mercy*, generally speaking, is used in the Old Testament, and *grace* in the New Testament. Old Testament *mercy* and *loving-kindness* go together. Someone has said that mercy is negative, and loving-kindness is positive. Mercy is shown to the disobedient, and loving-kindness is showered upon the obedient — both together mean grace.

3. *As To Its Manifestation.*

a. *In Pardoning the Sinner.* “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” (I Tim. 1:13).

b. *In Removing the Guilt and Penalty.* “He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us” (Ps. 103:10-12).

c. *In Delivering the Periled.* “Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies’ sake” (Ps. 6:4).

d. *In Saving Its Object.* Luke 10:33-37 records the parable of the Good Samaritan. After He has told the parable Jesus asks, “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?” And the answer comes: “He that shewed mercy on him.” There can be no doubt but that Jesus Christ is typified by the good Samaritan, and it is He who saves, through His mercy, the objects of His concern.

I. *The Grace of God.*

1. *As To Its Citation.* “According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:5-7). “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7). “The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (I Peter 5:10). See also I Corinthians 6:1. [pg33]

2. *As To Its Explanation.* Grace is said to be undefinable. Grace always flows down. We might be able to love our equal, or one above our equal, or sometimes one below our equal, but look at the vast difference between God and us; there can be no comparison. The grace of God toward us is unmerited favor.

3. *As to Its Manifestation.*

a. *In That Grace Justifies.* Rather, grace *declares* the saint to be righteous: “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being

justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23, 24).

b. *In That Grace Imputes Righteousness.* This means, that by the act of God’s grace, the righteousness of God is put to the account of the believing sinner, “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4: 4, 5).

c. *In That Grace Imparts a New Nature.* “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For *we are his workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10).

d. *In That Grace Saves.* Why should God save us? The only answer is *grace!* “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).

e. *In That Grace Instructs.* “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2: 11, 12).

#### *J. The Faithfulness of God.*

Unfaithfulness is the greatest sin of today. This is true in every walk of life, whether in business, church, or state. But we have a God who is *faithful* at all times, under every circumstance. The Word bears out the faithfulness of God by the following:

1. *Citation.* Many Scriptures point out the faithfulness of God: “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations” (Deut. 7:9); “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Cor. 1:9); “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Cor. 10:13). See also Deuteronomy 32:4 (R.V.<sup>13</sup>); I Thessalonians 5:24; II

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13 Dr. Cambron's unfortunate preference for the Revised Standard version of the Bible in this instance stems from his shortsightedness about how far Satan would

Thessalonians 3:3; I John 1:9.

2. *Explanation.* The meaning of “faithfulness” is stay, lean, prop, support. God is our *support*; He it is upon whom we can lean; when we are faltering, He is our *Prop* — at *all* times! [pg34]

3. *Manifestation.* How does God prove faithful?

a. *In Keeping His Promise.* “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)... For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb. 10: 23, 36, 37). The promise of the virgin-born son in Isaiah 7:9 is fulfilled in Luke 1:26-38; 2:7; the promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 15:13, that his seed would go to Egypt and stay there for four hundred years, is fulfilled in Exodus 12:41. See also these other Scriptures: Deuteronomy 7:9; I Kings 8:23, 24, 56.

b. *In Preserving his People.* Take Lamentations 3:22, 23 with Jeremiah 51:5 and you can see that once a people becomes God’s people, they are His forever. That is because God is faithful: “It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22, 23); “Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel” (Jer. 51:5). Other Scripture bears out the faithfulness of God in preserving His people: “Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator” (I Peter 4:19). See also Psalm 89:20-26; II Timothy 2:13 (R.V.<sup>14</sup>).

c. *In Chastening His Children.* God is faithful in carrying out the “spankings” He has promised to His wayward children: “I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me” (Ps. 119:75). Correction is needed when we disobey our Lord, and verily we can always count on the *faithfulness* of God to render the expression in this respect. “Whom the Lord loveth he

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take, and how effectively Satan would use, the “Bible Critics,” the “Bible Correctors,” the “Textual Critics,” and the “Copyright Mongers” of the modernist ecumenical ilk.

14 Ibid.

chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth” (Heb. 12:6).

d. *In Forgiving Our Sins*. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9).

e. *In Answering Our Prayers*. How do we know that our prayers will be answered? God commands us to pray to Him without ceasing. How do we know that it will do any good? We know that God answers our prayers, because the faithfulness of God guarantees that His ears will always be opened to the cries of His children: “Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness” (Ps. 143:1).

#### 4. *Applications*.

a. *It will preserve us from worry.*

b. *It will check our murmuring.*

c. *It will increase confidence in God.*

#### K. *The Holiness of God*.

While we mention the holiness of God as the last of God’s attributes, let us never forget that it is not the least at all. Consider first:

1. *Natural holiness*. This is called the *fundamental* attribute, and is one attribute by which God wants His people to remember Him. Some Bible scholars declare that this is <sup>[[pg35]</sup> the most important of all of God’s attributes. We know why they make such a statement. It is because holiness is named most often in the Scriptures. God is called holy more times in the Scriptures, and His holiness is mentioned more, than His might. Holiness is indeed the “attribute of attributes.” When we think not of God’s holiness, we think light of sin. We are living in the day of compromise, when people hold “light views.” It is hard to get people to consider their lost condition and the peril of hell ahead. They think lightly of salvation, because they have a light view of God’s holiness: “Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Ex. 15:11); “I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11: 44, 45); “Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings;

with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Is. 6:2, 3); “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Is. 57:15); “I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are” (John 17:11); “Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30). See also Leviticus 19:1, 2; Joshua 24:19; Psalms 22:1-3; 99:5,9; I Peter 1:15, 16.

2. *Aspects of holiness.* By this we mean the mien of holiness that of which holiness is composed.

a. *Purity.*

(1) *Its Citation.* “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (I John 1:5).

(2) *Its Explanation.* In Him is light. In Him is no darkness ever. Light is always pure. There is no such thing as dirty light, nor can anyone make dirty light. God is Light — *pure*, free from defilement. There are two phases of purity: *negative*, free from all that defiles; *positive*, pure. God in His holiness is pure: free from all that defiles, and pure in essence.

b. *Righteousness.* This is another element of holiness.

(1) *Its Citation.* “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deut. 32:4). “Righteous art thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?” (Jer. 12:1); “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou has sent me” (John 17:25).

(2) *Its Explanation.* The formula for righteousness is found in Ezekiel 18:5, 9: “If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right...” that is, do things right, in a right way, “he is just, he shall

surely live, saith the Lord God.” God is always right. He possesses character that makes Him do everything right. Righteousness always requires that which is right in character. God never asks anything that is not right. God never [pg36] commands that which will make us do wrong.

c. *Justice.*

(1) *Its Citation.* “The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame” (Zeph. 3:5). See also Deuteronomy 32:4.

(2) *Its Explanation.* The Greek and Hebrew words for justice mean the same. Righteousness is the legislative demand of God — the demand for holiness. *Justice* is judicial holiness — that judicial act of God which demands the penalty for those who have not measured up to the righteous commands of God. Justice, judicial holiness, governs those who are judged, and that brings about the execution of those who carry not out God’s laws. Justice is the Executor of those who wrong God’s holy commands. Man’s justice is sometimes wrong, but God’s justice is always right — thus holiness!

d. *Truth of God.*

(1) *Its Citation.* “Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. . . . All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies” (Ps. 25:5, 10); “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Num. 23:19); “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2). See also the following Scriptures: Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 31:5; 86:15.

(2) *Its Explanation.* That which God has revealed to man in His Word is Eternal Truth. God never contradicts Himself. One portion of His Word never contradicts another. Are we not glad that the Word of God has not agreed with all the dead theories of the past? Certainly! Be not dismayed should the Bible not agree with any modern day theory concerning creation, man, etc. Man does not *know* apart from the Word of God. Anything apart from the revelation of God is mere supposition.

3. *Manifestation of God's holiness.*

a. *By His Works.* Everything that God has created and made is perfect, holy. God did not create sin. God did not create a sinful nature which is in the unsaved man. God created man, who, has sinned. Man, by sinning, has passed on to man that perverted nature, that Adamic nature, or as we have called it, that “sinful” nature. Yes, God created man who was capable of sinning. If God had created man so that man could not have sinned, then He would have made a machine rather than a being with a free will. And if God had created man so that man could not sin and yet was not a machine, man would not only have been like God, but he would have been God Himself. God does not make God. Man is inferior to God. God cannot sin; that is His nature. Man would be God if he could not have sinned.

b. *By His Laws.* All the laws are right — they are truth. There is not a single untruth in the whole of God's laws. Thus God's laws manifest God's holiness.

c. *By His Hatred of Sin.* Do you know one reason why fellow Christians are tolerant toward the sins of another, or toward the sins of the unbelievers? It is because they do not hate sin as God hates it. Often we say that God hates sin, but He doesn't hate the sinner. That is not true. God *does* hate the sinner; “The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou <sup>[pg37]</sup> hatest all workers of iniquity” (Ps. 5:5). This may be a revelation to some of us. God hates the sinner because of his sin, and not because of himself. God hates the sinner, but He loves him, too, because He knows that man is capable of holiness, although ruined by sin. Why does God punish the sinner? Because of the sinner's sins! God thus hates sin, no matter where it may be found, whether in the life of an unregenerated sinner, or in the life of His own believer! God's attitude and conduct toward sin reveal the holiness of God.

d. *By His Love of Righteousness.* God loves righteousness as much as He hates sin: “Hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness” (I Kings 8:32); “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows... For God is not unrighteous to forget your



work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Heb. 1:9; 6:10).

e. *By His Justification of the Believing Sinner.* If man had his “rights,” he would be in hell; but it is the mercy and grace of God which offers him the plan of salvation, which if he receives declares the believing sinner to be righteous: “God hath set [Christ Jesus] forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25, 26).

f. *By His Care of His Saints,* “The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed” (Ps. 103:6). “Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me. The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows. The LORD is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked” (Ps. 129:1- 4). See also the following Scriptures: Psalm 98:1-3; 145:15-19; II Timothy 1:6-9.

g. *By His Cross.* “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Ps. 22:1). We can catch a glimpse of the Cross by reading the quoted verse and the remaining verses of Psalm 22. This Psalm is, of course, prophetic, spoken or written some nine hundred years before Christ actually died upon the Cross of Calvary. And Christ’s death is a perfect manifestation of God’s holiness. Some, no doubt, will ask how this could be. We know that God hates sin; therefore, when His Son was made “sin for us, who knew no sin,” yea, when even God’s Son became sin, God’s attitude toward sin did not vary. God hated sin as much as ever, even when He made His Son sin. His Son did not change His view at all. Jesus, therefore, became hated of the Father because of sin. Jesus never became a sinner, but He became sin. And as God hated sin (“It pleased the LORD to bruise him” — Is. 53: 10a), God forsook His Son, for God will always forsake sin. God’s holiness did not change.

## **V. The Fatherhood of God.**

God is called the Father because of the association with Him.

Popularity of the term “Father” is due to Christianity. There is no such thing as God being a Father in heathenism — this can be found only in Christianity. Today there are many fancies concerning the Fatherhood of God. The teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the <sup>[pg38]</sup> Brotherhood of Man is nothing but Universalism: that which teaches that no one will ever be sent to hell. The Universalists reason that God will never send any of His children to hell — and that is true: He will not send any of His *children* to hell — but not all men are the children of God. The Scripture which the Universalists use to preach that God is the Father of all mankind is Ephesians 4:6: “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” But this means all Christians, all believers, *not* the unbelievers nor the unregenerated.

*A. Old Testament Teaching.*

“Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting... Now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.” (Is. 63:16; 64:8).

God is mentioned in the Old Testament as a Father, but not the Father of the individual. Rather He is considered to be the Father of the nation Israel. You cannot find in the Old Testament where God is spoken of as a Father of a born-again sinner.

*B. New Testament Teaching.*

The Lord Jesus is the One who introduced God as the Father of the individual. He is the first to recognize that God is the Father of each separate Christian. The following Scriptures bear this out: “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14); “Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God” (John 5:17, 18); “My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my *Father* are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone

thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (John 10:29-33); “They took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me” (John 11:41).

1. *In That God is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ.* The expression, as we use it, “the Fatherhood of God,” does not mean that God lived for a long time and then begat His Son. God, remember, is the eternal Father — and to be an eternal Father, He must have an eternal Son. The term “son” in Scripture does not always mean a son by generation; it may also mean a son by *relationship*. Take the Old Testament Scriptures: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Is. 7:14); and: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The [pg39] Prince of Peace” (Is. 9:6). Notice the *child* and the *son*. The child is *born*; the Son is not born, but *given*. Yes, that Babe in Bethlehem was born, but that Life was the Son who has been forever. The Babe had a beginning; the Son had no beginning. He has existed always, from eternity, *with* the Father. Thus, Christ is the Son, not by generation (by birth), but by relation. He is related to the Father and the Holy Spirit; all together are related to each other, and thus compose the Godhead, God could never be God without all members of the Godhead being present from eternity throughout eternity.

In order for God to become flesh, He had to be born as any other man; thus, He manifested Himself in His Son, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit: “The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35); “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4).

a. *And the Father Recognizes Jesus as His Own Son.* “Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:17); There came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him” (Luke 9:35).

b. *And the Son Recognizes God as His Own Father.* “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him” (Matt. 11:27); “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me” (Luke 22:29); “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee” (John 17:1).

c. *And Men Recognize Jesus as God’s Own Son.* “Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16); “I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God ....Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel” (John 1:34, 49).

d. *And Demons Recognize Jesus as God’s Own Son.* “Behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (Matt. 8:29).

2. *In That God is the Father of Believers On the Lord Jesus Christ.* “There is . . . one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:6).

We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that God is not the Father of all mankind. He is only the Father of born-again children of God. All men are the creatures of God, but not all are children of God. Man is a creature of God by creation; he *becomes* a child by *re-creation*: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord . . . whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the *divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Peter 1:2, 4).

There can be no sonship apart from the spiritual re-birth. A child has, always, the nature of his father. Man, who is born of Adam, has Adam’s nature, which is corrupt, which is perverted, which is sinful. And the *father* of Adam’s sinful nature is Satan. Thus, the nature of our father (Adam) is the same nature as Adam’s father’s (Satan); therefore, our <sup>[pg40]</sup> nature is the same as Satan’s. All unregenerated sinners have Satan as their father: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the

beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44). Summing it all up, if Satan is the father of the unsaved by the natural birth, we must have a supernatural birth in order for God to be our Father!

God does not have any fellowship with anything which is of Adam, for Adam is all that is of a sinful condition and nature. God only has to do with His Son. The world is divided into two divisions; in fact, there are only two men whom God recognizes: Adam and Christ; thus, sinners are divided as to their identity with these two men. The unsaved are identified with Adam; the saved are identified with Christ. All men are identified by the natural birth in Adam; born-again men are identified by the supernatural birth in Christ.

The unsaved man can only call God “God.” The unsaved man cannot call God “Father.” Only the child of God can call God “Father.” When the Lord Jesus was hanging on the tree, He called out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Notice that Christ did not cry, “My Father, my Father.” but “My God, my God.” Why? Why did He not call God “Father”? Because He was taking the sinner’s place there in death, dying — the Just for the unjust. And as He was taking the sinner’s place (a sinner can not call God “Father,” but only “God”), He could only call God “God.”

Where are we? In Adam or in Christ? “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Cor. 15:22). [pg41]

[This ends the block quote of Dr. Cambron's book, *Bible Doctrines*.<sup>15</sup> The book is readily available through <http://www.thecambroninstitute.org>, and it forms the foundational basis for much of this Systematic Theology.]

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15 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 60-69

## Chapter 6 Critique of Other Systematic Theology Works

### Critique of Chafer's Chapter 10-13 Theology Proper (129-180)

Dr. Chafer's eight volumes of Systematic Theology were required reading for my theology studies at LBTS ([www.LBU.edu](http://www.LBU.edu)) This critique of his first volume is not meant to attack or insult Dr. Chafer's intelligence or his integrity. Overall his theology documentation was found lacking and this critique is straight forward and hard hitting.

A common failure of our documented systematic theologies is their propensity to systematically explore orthodox and/or traditional doctrines which have no scriptural bases whatsoever. Naturalistic Theism encompasses exactly such a feckless exercise.<sup>16</sup>

For one whole chapter of twenty five pages Dr. Chafer waxes very philosophical and very, very verbose in trying to decipher what mankind could know about the existence of God, without the presence of God's revelation to man. This theologian's immediate response; "Who cares?" Our more pressing reaction should be "What does God's written Word tell us of man's intrinsic knowledge about God, and man's standing before Him?" A discussion of ontological arguments logically assembled by philosophers of yesteryear has no place whatsoever in a systematic theology. Arguing for or against the existence of reality, categorizing universal characteristics of existence and explaining "I think therefore I am," is a sophomoric exercise for a philosophy student, or cultist's ground for Mary Baker Glover Eddy's Christian-Science reading room, but it is not the sacred ground for the theologian with a Holy Bible in his lap.

Likewise twenty two wordy paragraphs defining a teleological

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16 This section is extracted from a "TH802 report ADVANCED SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY II TH802 WRITTEN REPORT" Presented to the Faculty of Louisiana Baptist University In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Doctorate of Philosophy in Theological Studies, 2013

*aposterior* argument which proves the existence of God is nothing more than philosophical fodder with no founded place in a systematic theology. Supposing a power which produces intelligence and rational thought itself might somehow lack intelligence and rational thought is such a profound tom-foolery that it should not even be named *theological*, let alone find seven whole pages in a systematic theology book. In his own conclusion Dr. Chafer admits that such “abstract speculations” are completely unnecessary.<sup>17</sup>

Dr. Chafer does include two necessary arguments about man's intrinsic knowledge of God; the cosmological argument and the anthropological argument. But even in these his development is wholly philosophical and completely lacking for the theologian, even categorically incompetent for a systematic theologian. A competent cosmological argument and a competent anthropological argument must start where the Word of God starts, and not where the vain logical philosophies of mere men starts. The theologian must, as heretofore stated by all parties, begin with an infallible, inerrant source and from there unravel what has been revealed about Naturalistic Theism. Such a volume must first cast off all of Hodge, Strong, Thiessen and Chafer's Ontological-Teleological arguments as vain philosophy. There are two and only two pertinent books that fill their pages with philosophy; Job and Ecclesiastes. Neither of them contain ontological or teleological considerations. Why? Both of these philosophy dissertations begin and revolve around what Scripture reveals as man's intrinsic knowledge about God. Ergo a systematic theology presenting Naturalistic Theism must begin with nothing more and should venture through none of the rationalistic mud of unregenerate philosophers. Chafer's whole chapter needs to be reorganized and rewritten. Just such a venture began in this report, and is presently in draft before you.

### **Critique of Chafer's Chapter 14 The Attributes of God (187-224)**

Chapter 14 of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Systematic Theology disqualifies him as a candidate for writing a theology book, and it thoroughly and completely disqualifies him for writing a systematic

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<sup>17</sup> Chafer, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1*, 161.

theology. In this chapter, titled “The Attributes of God”, a crescendo of improper, unsystematic organization crosses a line of incompetence where his scattered ramblings cannot be rationally comprehended. In this chapter, needing concise conclusions about our God and Father. Passive communication methods cross a threshold in Chafer's ability to comprehend his subject, his verb and the possible existence of indirect objects. In this Chapter, where the heart of theology resides, one cannot find sound Biblical Doctrine, Biblical research methods, or Biblical hermeneutics. These observations make Chafer's six volume set uncomfortable in an independent Baptist theologians library.<sup>18</sup>

There are three glaring failures in Chafer's systematic theology; his failure to organize a presentation of doctrine, his failure to communicate anything in an active voice and a concise English sentence, and his failure to comprehend and capture a purely Biblical theology. These necessitate the review of more competent systematic works, and makes obvious the dire need of a purely Biblical systematic theology work captured in something less than his wordy volumes.

Three more competent systematic works capture a profound insight to the attributes of God and surely capture a more thoroughly organized systematic theology. First, Dr. Chafer's lack genders a new respect of Augustus H. Strong. A strong attraction is in Strong's Baptist heritage; Baptist historically being people of the Book, i.e. people with the Holy Bible as a final authority and that being a sole authority of all faith and practice, ergo, people who defy creeds, traditions, and human founders, to rest solely on this one authority. Augustus Strong exhibits genius in organizing and communicating Bible doctrine and systematic theology. His prominent systematic errors being his acceptance of evolution as his creator, and his acceptance of the Presbyterian and Reformed-Theology and their unchangeable “decrees” of God. His organization captures well the attributes of God, however, he falls apart trying to force fit ideas about decrees in Part IV entitled “The nature, decrees, and works of God.”<sup>19</sup>

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18 Extracted from TH802 report, 2013. [This passionate dismissal of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's systematic theology is not meant to dismiss his genius and integrity. As the founder and president of Dallas Theological Seminary, and the author of eight volumes of systematic theology, his high regard should not be significantly diminished by this critique, but his *Systematic Theology* should be.]

19 Strong's Volume is organized in four parts; 1) Prolegomena, 2) The Existence of



All systematic theologies in print seem to hold to John Calvin's fatalistic rant about decrees.

Chafer's whole section titled Bibliology, needed to be re-written to incorporate a Biblical view of inspiration; his whole chapter of "Naturalistic Theism," needed to be re-written to capture any Biblical view at all; and now, his chapter on the attributes, personality and works of God is found to be in such unorganized, excessively passive and verbose conglomeration that it needs to be re-written. Such a re-write, following Augustus Strong's superb example, began in connection with this report.

Henry Clarence Thiessen is the other Baptist author of a Systematic Theology. His organization and writing is far superior to Chafer's. His one volume called "Introductory Lectures In Systematic Theology" incorporates a very concise and careful wording of doctrine, where Chafer exhibits six volumes of verbose imprecise wording of the same. Both seem to equally capture evangelical error, with an un-Biblical doctrine of inspiration, naturalistic theology, and of the decrees of God, but Thiessen is greatly preferred to the excessively passive and verbose mannerisms of Dr. Chafer.

Dr. Thiessen divided his Theism from his Theology, as did Strong, and he organized the latter as: 1) The Nature of God- Essence and Attributes, 2) The Nature of God- The Unity and Trinity, 3) The Decrees of God, 4) The Works of God in Sovereignty. Such a work mimics the organization structure and content of Strong and makes a worthy outline for a re-write of Chafer's vain attempt.

Charles Hodge,(1797-1878) in a perfectly thorough systematic theology, by a perfectly thorough, albeit Presbyterian, theologian, organized his Theology Proper as:

Charles Hodge organized his Theology Proper in 436 pages thus:

- 1) Origin of the idea of God,191-203 (13pgs 3%);
- 2) Theism,204-240 (37 pgs 8%);
- 3) Anti-Theistic theories, 241-334 (94pgs 22%);
- 4) knowledge of God, 335-365 (31pgs 7%);
- 5) The Nature of God and His Attributes, 366-441 (76pgs 17%);
- 6) the Trinity, 442-482 (41pgs 9%);

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God, 3) The Scriptures A Revelation From God, 4) The Nature, Decrees and Works of God.

- 7) The Divinity of Christ, 483-521 (39pgs 9%);
- 8) The Holy Spirit, 522-534 (13pgs 3%);
- 9) The Decrees of God, 535-549 (15pgs 3%);
- 10) Creation, 550-574 (25pgs 6%);
- 11) Providence, 575-616 (42pgs 10%);
- and
- 12) Miracles, 617-636 (20pgs 5%).

For the area of Theology Proper it would be hard to improve on Hodge's Systematic approach. Strong seems to be the first to separate Theism from Theology and that separation is artificial and unnecessary. Where each theologian should have expounded the Bible's dispensationalism, under the works of God, alas none have. A special disappointment is heaped on Chafer, who started with a burning desire to word dispensationalism but had no depth to include it under the works of God. Instead all these theologians spent exorbitant time defending the Westminster confession and its fatalistic heresy that God decrees everything that happens, and knew who would marry who before the foundation of the earth!<sup>20</sup> Further they suppose that God knows every soul that shall be saved and decreed it before the foundation of the earth!<sup>21</sup> Even further they suppose that God knows every soul headed to hell and predestined them to go there before the foundation of the earth!<sup>22</sup>

Hodge the Presbyterian, worshiper of John Calvin, made his Systematic Theology systematically Westminster, and loyal to Roman diabolical philosophies. Strong, bolstered the deity of Christ in his, but retained the Westminster confession without correction, and would not

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20 Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) Chap III, Article 1. God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass ...

21 Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) Chap III, Article 3-4, III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death. IV. These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

22 Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) Chap III, Article 3-4, Previously quoted from <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/wcf.htm> accessed 09/05/2013.

depart from vain philosophy. Thiessen departed from inspiration of Scripture, but not from the Westminster Confession or philosophical viewpoints. And Chafer added unmitigated wordiness to Thiessen, bolstered the denial of plenary verbal inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy, while bowing the more loyally to the Westminster Confession as he spinelessly regurgitated the philosophical perspectives; perspectives incorporated by Roman Catholics and carried on by Protestants who did not protest enough. It is high time that someone with a systems background and a solid grasp on an infallible, inerrant sole authority, defy the Westminster Confession of 1646, defy the philosopher and define a Biblical Systematic Theology. Alas Chafer is not that man.

### **Critique of Chafer's Chapter 15 Divine Decrees (pg. 225-259)**

A supposition about Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's competence in writing a systematic theology is worded previously but a comment on his thirty five pages defending the Westminster Confession's divine decrees is in order here. He starts by asserting that anyone who would disagree with the Westminster's interpretation is "dishonoring and misleading."<sup>23</sup> He contends that since both the Westminster Confession of 1646 and the Bible assert the *decree*, the *purpose*, the *determinate counsel*, the *foreknowledge*, the *fore ordination*, and the *election* by which God is said to act, therefore the Westminster Confession of 1646 is the truth. Incidentally, it reports as truth that God decrees everything that happens and knew who would marry who before the foundation of the earth!<sup>24</sup> Further they suppose that God knows every soul that shall be saved and decreed it before the foundation of the earth!<sup>25</sup> And even further that God knows every soul headed to hell and predestined them to go there before the foundation of the earth!<sup>26</sup>

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23 Chafer, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1*, 225.

24 Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) Chap III, Article 1, Previously quoted from <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/wcf.htm> accessed 09/05/2013.

25 Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) Chap III, Article 3-4, III, Previously quoted from <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/wcf.htm> accessed 09/05/2013.

26 Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) Chap III, Article 3-4, Previously quoted from <http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/wcf.htm> accessed 09/05/2013.

Dr. Chafer then rambles on and on for thirty three pages before he allows a Rev. Alex Brown to write his misguided conclusion.<sup>27</sup> Dr. Chafer is provided a perfect convenience for writing out his dispensational theology in a section about the works of God, instead of writing about the actual works of God he expands and justifies the Roman Catholic myth, worded by John Calvin, codified in the Westminster Confession of 1646, perpetuated by Presbyterians, certified by Reformed Theologians, and presently creeping in to non-Protestant (i.e. Baptists) theology, the myth of divine decrees. Someone needs to accentuate the old relevant story and declare in no uncertain terms, “The Emperor has NO clothes.”<sup>28</sup>

I hold in my hands a Bible that declares, Prayer changes things, and they hold in their systematic theologies that, All is foreknown, nothing can change. One is wrong. I hold in my hands a Bible that says, “It repented God that He had made man”, that God repented of what he was going to do to Nineveh, and that God and I can change the eternal destiny of my neighbor, and they write a systematic theology that says “nay, nay.” I hold in my lap a book that says Sarah gave Hagar to Abram and mucked up a situation with obtuse consequences; they say God planned it that way from the foundation of the world. I hold a book that says Abraham intervened for Lot and caused his salvation, they say God would have done it that way anyhow. My Bible says Moses intervened to prevent God from destroying the Sons of Israel, they say God was just pulling Moses' leg with false threats. My Bible says Joash only had three victories because he only struck his arrows three times, their decrees say God didn't rearrange his plan he just deceived old Elisha and Joash. My book says God changed his mind, God changed his Word, and God changed his message just to give Hezekiah thirteen more years of life; they say he was just messing with Elisha and Hezekiah's head. It is high time somebody stood up to these dishonoring deceivers and plainly declared that the Westminster Confession is WRONG! One is responsible for their own actions, decisions, and rejections, and God does pay attention to the whosoever of the Bible. Again, Dr. Chafer

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27 Chafer, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1*, 257-259.

28 Reference to short story *Emperor's New Clothes*, 1837, by Hans Christian Anderson.

proved not to be the man that would stand up to deceivers.

### **Critique of Chafer's Chapter 16 The Names of Deity (260-271)**

Chafer worded an excellent chapter on The Names of Deity. There is a distinct break from his very wordy, excessively philosophical style previously displayed. He emphasized in this chapter that the Scriptures were his main source. This had not been mentioned or practiced previous. It made all the difference in the world. The concise wording seems to be accomplished by citing other works heavily, but it was a joy to read a concise well worded chapter. Evidently he wrote his own conclusion, that is the only portion that regressed to his disturbing style.

### **Critique of Chafer's Chapter 17-19 Trinitarianism (272-317)**

Chafer's Trinitarianism was reviewed. It was disturbing that Chafer worded this thirty nine word sentence, "The fact that men of equal sincerity disagree relative to the possibility of reason serving in the field of this doctrine is evidence that unaided human minds fail in their attempts to search the deep things of God." That sentence highlights his insufficiency to word a concise definitive section on the trinitarian doctrine. Again Strong is far more capable as a theologian in this area. Chafer outlines his section as follows:

- Chapter 17 Introduction to Trinitarianism
- Chapter 18 Proof of the Trinitarian Doctrine
- Chapter 19 God the Father
- Chapter 20-26 God the Son
  - I. His Preexistencetic Union
  - II. His Names
  - III. His Deity
  - IV. His Incarnation
  - V. His Humanity
  - VI. The Kenosis
  - VII. The Hyposta
- Chapter 27 God the Holy Spirit

While Strong has this detailed and clarified presentation of the

doctrine:

Chapter II. Doctrine of the Trinity, 304-352

I. In Scripture there are Three who are recognized as God, 305-322

1. Proofs from the New Testament, 305-317

A. The Father is recognized as God, 305

B. Jesus Christ is recognized as God, 305-315

C. The Holy Spirit is recognized as God, 315-317

2. Intimations of the Old Testament, 317-322

Godhead,  
A. Passages which seem to teach Plurality of some sort in the  
317-819

B. Passages relating to the Angel of Jehovah, . . . 319-320

C. Descriptions of the Divine Wisdom and Word, 320-321

D. Descriptions of the Messiah, 321-322

II. These Three are so described in Scripture, that we are compelled to conceive them as distinct Persons, 322-326

1. The Father and the Son are Persons distinct from each other, 322

2. The Father and the Son are Persons distinct from the Spirit, 322-323

3. The Holy Spirit is a Person, 323-326

III. This Tri-personality of the Divine Nature is not merely economic and temporal, but is immanent and eternal, 326-330

1. Scripture Proof that these distinctions of Personality are eternal, 326

2. Errors refuted by the Scripture Passages, . . . 327-330

A. The Sabellian, 327-328

B. The Arian, 328-330

VI. While there are three Persons, there is but one Essence, 330-334

V. These three Persons are Equal, 334-343

1. These Titles belong to the Persons, 334-336

2. Qualified Sense of these Titles, 335-340

3. Generation and Procession consistent with Equality, 340-343

VI. The Doctrine of the Trinity inscrutable, yet not self-contradictory, but the Key to all other Doctrines, 344-352

1. The Mode of this Triune Existence is inscrutable, 344-345 p

2. The Doctrine of the Trinity is not self-contradictory, 345-347

3. The Doctrine of the Trinity has important relations to other Doctrines,  
347-352

Dr. Chafer's extremely wordy, improperly organized section on the trinity is dwarfed by existing systematic theology works. It is to be unstaged by "A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Praise the Lord.

## Chapter 7 Theology Proper Conclusion

Theology proper is the thorough study of God. It has been designated *proper* to delineate it as a study of the Godhead rather than the larger study of God, the revealed works that he has done, is doing, and shall do, i.e. the whole study of *Theism* that we are systematically engaged in. In theology proper one is engaged in a study of everything one needs to know about God the Father himself, and everything one therein needs to know, has been revealed in God's completed revelation to man, the Holy Bible. Realizing that God is infinite, and man is finite is to realize that knowing God will always be finite and limited, and thus limited here to what man "needs to know."

*Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

*Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

Such a study first considers the sixty six books, written by forty men, over a period of 1,592 years, to be the inerrant, infallible, verbally inspired Word of God, and to be the sole source of all theology, particularly here for theology proper. Thus, what man naturally knows about God is not discovered by examination of the philosopher's *ontological* or *teleological* argument, nor by man's *anthropological* or *cosmological* reasoning, but by examining what God's word says that man naturally knows about God. It declares that God himself has placed inside of man a natural knowledge of God and his wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, that our Lord Jesus Christ is a light that lightheth every man that cometh into the world, and that "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his

doings” (Jeremiah 17:10). These three revelations mark all of the *naturalistic theology* one needs to systematically delve into.

Likewise what God knew, what God planned, and what God programmed before the foundation of the world is not discovered by examining a logical, philosophical creed declaring what he must have known, or detailing the decrees of God compiled by some genius theologian of the past. It is discovered by looking into the perfect law of liberty. Therein one sees a Sovereign God who has given some measure of sovereignty to man; therein one sees a God who repents of some of his own decrees thus responding to that delegated sovereignty in man, and therein one sees, “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

In these two venues alone one can see the importance of using the Bible as a sole authority for our theology, and one can see the failures of previous theology works that did not. Know God. Study God. Study not on the basis of visions, or feelings, or logical reasoning, or ideas of men, or even ideas of genius theologians of bygone days, but on the basis of what he has revealed about himself in the sixty-six books called the Holy Bible. That study alone causes that he must increase, and I must decrease. This chapter of that study has only outlined some of the important things that one can know about God from that revelation, and it constitutes the opening of a door, that you may know God. Important in this doorway are the names of God, the existence of God, the nature of God, the attributes of God, and the Fatherhood of God, and each of these was found well documented in Dr. Cambron's “Bible Doctrines” book. Again keep in mind:

*The secret things belong unto the LORD our God:  
but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to  
our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this  
law.*

Deuteronomy 29:29



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my Doctorate of Philosophy in Theological Studies through LBTS, I was tasked to analyze all six volumes of his Systematic Theology]

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## About the Author

Pastor Ed Rice is a retired USAF Systems Engineer surrendered to be a Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Saved in 1960 at the age of eight he grew up tutored in the Scriptures through Tuscorora Baptist Church in Addison NY, where he married his high-school sweetheart Beverly Cook Rice. Drafted into the military off of the dairy farm in 1972, Ed and Bev Rice raised 3 boys while serving as a Missile Technician in the USAF. After completing a USAF AECF bootstrap program he graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in electrical engineering and was commissioned in the USAF where he served until 1995 as a systems engineer and weapons integration specialist at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and Rome Laboratories, Rome NY. He finished his Masters degree in Electrical Engineering through The Air Force Institute of Technology in 1990.

After being commissioned as a USAF officer in 1982 he pursued his systems engineering work in several classified research and development programs. While moving around the USA in his twenty three year military career he was a youth pastor and associate pastor in Independent Baptist Churches near his station. In 1995 he became Captain Rice, USAF retired, and surrendered to be a Baptist Pastor.

In 1998 he took the senior pastorate at Good Samaritan Baptist Church, in Dresden, New York where he pursued his theological studies at Louisiana Baptist Theological Seminary. At LBU Pastor Rice received his second masters degree in 2013, and his PhD in 2017. His son Michael is US Army retired living near Fort Hood Texas, Shane is an Independent Baptist Missionary pastoring Chiesa Biblica Battista, Mazara Del Vallo, Italy, and Matthew is serving our Lord Jesus Christ near Hamilton NY. Capt Rice has spent seven years teaching math and science with the ABeka Christian High School Curriculum, and seven years teaching college mathematics, a love of his life, at community colleges near his church.

Dr. Rice's staunch belief in the preserved accuracy of the inspired Scriptures and his extensive background in systems engineering make him uniquely qualified to assemble "A Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."

### **Personal Testimony of Pastor Edward Rice.**

I was saved in 1960 at the age of eight. My father and mother were saved and founding members of Fellowship Baptist Church in Gang Mills New York. In 1958 my dad, Levi O. Rice, an agnostic, was invited by Cecil Palm to be a founding member of that church; both of my parents were born-again-saved two weeks later. My mother, Doris was converted from Roman Catholicism, and became a Christian. She stopped her Roman penance and practiced Bible repentance, stopped praying to Mary and called upon the Lord Jesus Christ to save her. She was thus converted from Roman Catholicism to the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone needs converted from something. Mom and Dad were now born again, and two years later I was saved in revival services with Evangelist Dale and Opel Linbaugh. Opel cut the flannel graph burden of sin off little Christian's back in her Pilgrim's Progress presentation, and I was born-again-saved before it hit the basement floor. In 1995 I retired from the USAF as a systems engineer and became an ordained Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 18:3). Being converted is quite like a new birth, Jesus said so. If you have not been converted you should trust Christ today, and you must tell him that that is your intent. (see Romans 10:9-13).