

Theology Proper - God's revelation about Himself in His Word

I. Introduction to the Doctrine of God - Theology Proper

A. Revelation from Scripture

1. Systematic Theology
2. Biblical Theology
3. Biblically-based Theology

B. Him, They, It?

1. Him -
2. They -
3. Never it -
4. "God" and "the God" -

C. The terminology of Theology Proper

1. Terms used in Scripture
 - a) Nature
 - b)
2. Inconsistent terms - e.g.'s
 - a) Mystery -
 - b)
3. Terms not used in Scripture -
 - a) Attributes -
 - b) Essence -
 - c) Trinity -

II. God's Essence

A. Essence -

B. Spirit -

1. Not the Holy Spirit -
2. Of what God consists.
3. Definition -
 - a) John 4:24
 - b) Luke 24:39
 - c) What about Psalm 34:15; 118:15-16?
 - d) 1 Corinthians 2:11
4. Benefit of spirit -
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:44
 - (1) soul -
 - (2) spirit -
 - b) 1 Samuel 16:5-7 -

C. Qualities of the spirit essence

1. Invisible - Romans 1:20
2. Self-existent and uncreated -
 - a) Hebrews 9:14
 - b) John 1:3
 - c) Exodus 3:4-10 - I AM
3. One - singular -
 - a) Deuteronomy 6:4 -
 - b) John 10:28-30 -
4. Simple -
 - a) James 1:17
 - b) 1 Timothy 1:17
5. Immense

- a) 1 Kings 8:27
- b) Psalm 139:7
- c) Omnipresence requires -

III. God's Attributes

A. Definition

- 1. Absolute ?
- 2. Relative ?
- 3. Resultant qualities -

B. Goodness

- 1. The vocabulary with illustrations
 - a) *tov* [טוב] -
 - (1) Genesis 2:9; 24:16; 30:20; 41:35
 - b) *agathos* [αγαθος] -
 - (1) Matthew 7:11; Luke 16:25; Romans 5:7
 - c) *kalos* [καλος] -
 - (1) Matthew 7:17-19; 13:27 -
- 2. God's goodness
 - a) Psalm 25:8; 34:8
 - b) Exodus 33:12-19; 34:6 -
 - c) The problem of "bad things" -
 - d) Mark 10:17-18 -
 - (1) Jesus is asking
- 3. Resultant qualities from God's goodness
 - a) Happiness - 1 Timothy 1:11
 - b) Faithfully-Kind -

- (1) Exodus 15:1, 13
- (2) Psalm 51:1 -
- (3) Romans 2:4; Titus 3:4-5 -
- (4) 1 Peter 2:2 -

c) Mercy

- (1) Man's way involves misery - Isaiah 59:7; Romans 3:16
- (2) Titus 3:5
- (3) Psalm 51:1

C. Holiness

1. The vocabulary

- a) *qodesh* [קֹדֶשׁ]
- b) *hagios* [ἅγιος]

2. The definition -

- a)
- b) Genesis 2:3 -
- c) Numbers 16:36-38 -
- d) Exodus 13:2; Leviticus 27:26 -
- e) Exodus 15:11 -

(1) God is not the only spirit being, for He created many spirits, but He is distinct.

f) Joshua 24:14-15, 19 -

(1) cf - Psalm 77:13

g) Leviticus 20:26, 6-7; 21:5-6 - cf Titus 1:15 -

h) 2 Corinthians 5:21; Psalm 22:3 -

3. God's holiness and His work with His peoples.

- a) Psalm 89:35 -
- b) John 17:11 -
- c) Hebrews 12:6-10 -

D. Love

1. The vocabulary

- a) *ahav* [אהב]
 - (1) Good examples - Genesis 25:28; 37:3 -
 - (2) Bad example - Amnon - 2 Samuel 13:1, 2-18
- b) *chesed* [חסד]
- c) *agapao* [αγαπαω]
- d) *phileo* [φιλεω]

2. Definition

- a) 1 John 4:8
- b) Deuteronomy 7:7-8
- c) Romans 5:7-9
- d) John 3:35; 5:20 -
- e) John 3:16 -
 - (1) God always loves by -
 - (2) Deuteronomy 7:7 -
 - (3) 1 John 4:10 -
 - (4) Galatians 2:20 -
 - (5) 2 Thessalonians 2:16 -
 - (6) 2 Corinthians 9:7; John 14, 21, 23 -
 - (7) Hebrews 12:6-11 -

3. God's love is dependable

- a) Romans 8:35 -
- b) Romans 8:38-39 -
- 4. Mercy - an extension of love
 - a) Ephesians 2:4
- 5. Grace - an extension of love
 - a) Romans 10:6 -
- E. Omnipotence - All Powerful
 - 1. The vocabulary with illustrations
 - a) *koach* [כח]
 - (1) Exodus 9:16 -
 - (2) Jeremiah 10:12 -
 - b) *geburah/gabvar* [גבורה]
 - (1) 1 Chronicles 29:11, 12 -
 - (2) Psalm 106:7-9 -
 - c) *el* [אל]
 - d) *oz* [עז]
 - (1) Ezra 8:22 -
 - e) *chavil* [חיל]
 - f) Other images
 - (1) Hand -
 - (2) Outstretched arm -
 - g) *dunamis* [δυναμις]
 - (1) Luke 4:36 -
 - (2) Romans 1:20 -
 - (3) Ephesians 1:19-20 -

- h) *ischus* [ισχυς]
 - (1) 1 Peter 4:11 -
 - (2) Philippians 4:13 -
- i) *kratos* [κρατος]
 - (1) Luke 1:51-53 -
 - (2) Revelation 2:1 -
- j) *pantokrator* [παντοκρατωρ]
 - (1) Revelation 1:8 -
 - (2) Revelation 4:8 -

2. Definition

- a)
- b) What about the really big rock?
 - (1) Habakkuk 1:13 -
 - (2) Hebrews 6:18 -
- c) Jeremiah 32:17 -

3. God's power in believers

- a) Ephesians 1:19 -
- b) Ephesians 3:16 -

F. Omniscience - All Knowing

1. The vocabulary with illustrations

- a) *yadah* [יָדָה]
 - (1) Genesis 4:1 -
 - (2) Exodus 31:3
- b) *ginosko* [γινωσκω]
- c) *oida* [οἶδα]

- d) His “eyes” see all.
 - (1) Job 4:10
 - (2) Zechariah 4:10
- 2. Definition
 - a)
 - b) Psalm 139:2-4 -
 - c) 1 Samuel 16:7 -
 - d) John 2:24-25 -
 - e) Psalm 139:15-16 -
 - f) Matthew 11:21-23 -
- 3. Understanding and wisdom
 - a) Jeremiah 51:5 -
 - b) cf. Job 38:4-6
- 4. Not Foreknowledge -
 - a) *proginosko* -
 - b) 1 Peter 1:20 -
 - c) Romans 11:2 -
- 5. What about...
 - a) Psalm 103:12 -
 - b) Deuteronomy 8:2 -
 - c) Matthew 7:23 -
- 6. God knows the believer.
 - a) Galatians 4:8 -
 - b) 1 Corinthians 2:9-13 -

G. Righteousness

1. The vocabulary
 - a) *tzedeq* [צִדִּיק]
 - (1) Germanic translation - Right, righteous, righteousness
 - (2) Latin translation - Just, justice
 - (3) Deuteronomy 32:4 -
 - (4) Judges 4-5:1 -
 - b) *dikaios/diskaiosune* [δικαιος/δικαιοσυνη]
2. Definition
 - a)
 - b) Psalm 50:6; 97:6
 - c) Jeremiah 23:5; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:1
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21
3. God alone is righteous.
 - a) Isaiah 45:21 -
 - b) Romans 3:10 -
4. Do we get a “fair” deal?
 - a) Job 34:5, 7; 38:1-2; 40:1-2
5. God’s righteousness can be seen in His actions.
 - a) Romans 3:25 -
 - b) Hebrews 6:10 -
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:8 -
 - d) 2 Thessalonians 1:5 -

H. Truth

1. God is the ONE TRUE GOD (Jh. 17:3; 1 Jh. 5:20).
 - a) John 14:6 -

- b) 1 Thessalonians 1:9 -
 - c) Psalm 31:5 -
 - d) Isaiah 65:16 -
2. What is truth?
- a) “What is truth” (Jh. 18:38).
 - b) Millard Erickson under “Integrity” breaks this into three dimensions:
 - (1) (1) genuineness-being true
 - (2) (2) veracity-telling the truth
 - (3) (3) faithfulness-proving true.”¹
 - c) The Hebrew word family for truth is *amen* [אמן].
 - (1) *Amen* means, “TO PROP, TO STAY, TO SUSTAIN, TO SUPPORT.”² In its passive stem this verb meant, “(2) *to be founded, firm, stable...*(3) *to be of long continuance, perennial...*(4) *metaph. to be faithful, trustworthy, sure.*”³ In its causative stem the verb was “(1) *to lean upon, to build upon...*(2) *figuratively to trust, to confide in...*(3) *to believe.*”⁴
 - (2) Truth first supports, then remains constant, and finally one can have trust or faith in it. Truth is what lasts or is constant and therefore, trustworthy.
 - d) The Greek word family for truth is *alēthēs* [αληθης].
 - (1) Greek root meaning
 - (2) The Greek idea of truth
 - (3) Truth is
 - (4) Truth is more than the fact that God does not lie.

¹ *Christian Theology*, op cit. 289.

² Gesenius, op cit, 58. This is the Qal stem.

³ *ibid* 59. This is the Niphal.

⁴ *ibid* 59. This is the Hiphil

- (a) “To say that God knows all things and that his knowledge is perfect is to say that he is never mistaken in his perception or understanding of the world: all that he knows and thinks is true and is a correct understanding of the nature of reality.”⁵
 - (b) Truth is the attribute by which God both knows and responds accurately to all He knows. In the absolute sense, God knows Himself accurately and fully answers to or lives up to what He knows of Himself.⁶
 - i) God has never over or underestimated Himself.
 - ii) God has never committed Himself to anything which He is not fully capable of completing.
 - iii) God has not promised anything He has no intention of completing.
 - iv) God acts in this way, because He is truth.
 - v) Everything He says is true (2 Sam. 7:28; Rev. 19:9; 21:5; 22:6).
 - vi) When men disagree with God’s assessment, it is they who are liars. God remains true (Rom. 3:4).
 - vii) When God promises, we know it will happen for God can not lie (Heb. 6:18). Balaam said, “God is not a man, the He should lie” (Numbers 23:19).
3. God is truth by contrast to false gods (Gen. 35:4; Ex. 15:11; 18:11; Ps. 135:5).
- a) 2 Kings 19:14-19 -
 - b) Isaiah 46:6-7; Jeremiah 10:4-5 -
 - c) Some false gods are strong created spirit-beings, popularly known as angels.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 32:17 -
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 10:19-20 -
 - (3) Romans 1:23; Exodus 20:4 -
 - (4) Idols cannot

⁵ Grudem, op cit. 195.

⁶ Schafer, op cit, 21.

- (5) They are false 2 Chronicles 13:9; Jeremiah 2:11; 5:7
 - (6) The Hebrew word translated idol is *elil* [אליל], and means
4. The idea of the true God versus that which is false is a prevalent idea in John's writings.
- a) John 7:28; 8:26 -
 - b) John 3:33 -
 - c) John 1:19 -
 - (1) Light is John 1:4
 - d) John 6:32, 35 -
 - e) John 15:1 -
 - f) 1 John 5:20 -
 - g) Revelation 3:17, 14 -
 - h) 1 John 2:27 -
5. The Truth (truth identified with the definite article) is a specific doctrine.
- a) Jesus promised those who believed in Him that they would know the truth and the truth would free them (Jh. 8:32).
 - b) Jesus specified that the freedom would be from the sin (i.e. the sin nature) (Jh. 8:34). It reveals how the believer may have victory over his own sin nature.
 - c) Those who practice the Truth approach the light, so it can be seen that their works are worked by God (Jh. 3:21).
 - (1) One can only do works like this, when his sin nature is not being manifested.
 - (2) The sin nature of man does not want to acknowledge that God alone is God or that God alone can produce these works.
 - d) The truth is the opposite of the lie (Rom. 1:18, 25).
 - (1) People replaced God with these false gods.
 - (2) The lie is that the creature can be or is god.

- (3) It began with Satan who is the father of the lie [lit. “it”] (Jh. 8:44).
 - (a) Isaiah 14:14b - Satan lied to himself
 - (b) Genesis 3:5 - Satan lied to Eve
 - (c) The lie is the opposite of the truth. It denies there is one true God.
6. The Old Testament word *amen* represents both truth and dependableness.
 - a) God is
 - b) Greek represents these with two distinct words.
 - (1) *pistos* [πιστος] from *pistis* [πιστις]
 - (a) *pistos*
 - (b) *pistis*
 - (2) God is truth, so
 - (3) This is called faithfulness.
 - (a) Genesis 24:27 -
 - (b) Psalm 40:10-11 -
 - (c) Many Old Testament passages tie *ameth* to *chesed* [חסד] a word referring to
 - i) Psalm 57:3; 61:7; 89:14; 117: 2
 - ii) Psalm 85:10 -
 - iii) Deuteronomy 7:9 -
7. New Testament saints should appreciate God’s faithfulness.
 - a) Psalm 36:5 -
 - b) 1 Corinthians 1:8 -
 - c) 1 Corinthians 10:13 -

- d) 2 Corinthians 1:18 -
- e) 1 Thessalonians 5:24 -
- f) 2 Thessalonians 3:3 -
- g) 2 Timothy 2:13 -
- h) Hebrews 10:23 -
- i) 1 John 1:9 -

IV. GOD: His Nature

A. Nature -

- 1. Essence -
- 2. Attributes -
- 3. God is eternal, free, immutable, infinite, and sovereign.

B. God is Eternal

1. Definition

- a)
- b) John Feinberg “It never comes into being or goes out of being.”⁷
- c) H.L. Schafer “Eternity is one of the most difficult concepts for creatures who have a beginning, who exist in time, and who are limited by space.”⁸

2. Vocabulary

- a) The Hebrew *ōlam* [עולם]
 - (1) Deuteronomy 32:7 –
- b) The Greek *aiōnios* [αἰώνιος]
 - (1) This derives from “age”, *aiōn* [αἰών].

⁷ Feinberg, 375f.

⁸ Schafer, *op cit*, 26.

(2) This adjective was used in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT) to translate *olam*.

3. Eternity is best understood by contrast to time.

a) When God created this universe, He adjusted the earth's relationship to the sun, moon, and stars so as to mark day and night, seasons, days and years (Genesis 1:14).

b) Psalm 90:2 -

c) Isaiah 57:15 - "lives forever" is "dwells forever (unto..., eternally)

d) God as sits...

(1) 2 Corinthians 12:2; Ephesians 1:21; 4:10

e) God is more than just living outside of time. God is infinite with respect to time.

f) Exodus 3:14 -

g) Revelation 1:4 -

h) John 8:58 -

i) Psalm 102:23-27 -

j) Isaiah 43:10 -

k) Isaiah 44:6 -

l) John 1:3 -

m) Genesis 21:33; Isaiah 40:28 -

C. God is Immutable/Unchangeable

1. Definition

a) Contrast to Process theology

b) Malachi 3:6 -

c) Psalm 102:27 -

d) Psalm 77:10

2. God's unchangeableness and the believer

a) Hebrews 6:17 -

b) James 1:17 -

3. A misunderstanding about God's immutability

a) Hebrews 13:8 -

b) Psalm 110:4 -

c) 1 Samuel 15:29 - .

d) So what do we say about texts such as Genesis 6:6, 7; Exodus 32:14; Judges 2:18; Isaiah 7:24; Jeremiah 26:3, 13?

(1) Anthropomorphism

(2) Anthropopathism

e) Romans 9:22 -

D. God is Free and Sovereign

1. Definition of Free

a) Job 42:2 -

b) Isaiah 40:12-13 -

c) Question on Psalm 51:11-12 -

d) Romans 9:13, 15, 18, 19 -

2. Definition of sovereign

3. Hebrew term *shaddai* [שׁדַּי]

4. Greek term *dunastes* [δυναστης]

5. A common objection to God's sovereignty