

WRITINGS OF NATHAN PITHFORD

by Nathan Pithford

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Nathan Pithford, compiled for study and devotional reading.

26 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 00.00. Pitchford, Nathan - Library
2. 01.0. Catagorized Scripture-Dispensationalism
3. 01.1. The People of God
4. 01.2. The Fulfilment of Prophecy
5. 01.3. The Faith of Old Testament Believers
6. 01.4. The Kingdom of God
7. 01.5. The Millennium
8. 02.0. Catagorized Scripture-Doctrine od Grace
9. 02.1. Unconditional Election
10. 02.2. Total Depravity
11. 02.3. Limited Atonement
12. 02.4. Irresistable Grace
13. 02.5. Perseverance of the Saints
14. 03.0. Catagorized Scripture-Knowing Our God
15. 03.1. The Triunity of God
16. 03.2. Attributes of God with respect to God
17. 03.3. Attributes of God with respect to created man
18. 03.4. Attributes of God with respect to sinful man
19. 03.5. Attributes of God with respect to redeemed man
20. 03.6. Glossary of terms
21. 04.0. Catagorized Scripture-Knowing Ourselves
22. 04.1. Man Innocent
23. 04.2. Man Depraved
24. 04.3. Man Redeemed
25. 04.4. Man Glorified
26. S. Categorized Scripture - Trinity

00.00. Pitchford, Nathan - Library

Pitchford, Nathan - Library Pitchford, Nathan-Catagorized Scripure-Dispensationalism Pitchford, Nahtan-Catagorized Scripure-Doctrine od Grace Pitchford, Nathan - Catagorized Scripure-Knowing Our God Pitchford, Nathan - Catagorized Scripture-Knowing Ourselves S. Catagorized Scriptue-Treasuring Trinity

01.0. Catagorized Scripture-Dispensationalism

DISPENSATIONALISM - CATEGORIZED SCRIPTURE LIST

Dispensationalism is basically the method of interpreting the scriptures that sees two distinct peoples of God, with two distinct destinies - Israel and the Church.

Some of the tenets that all or most contemporary mainstream Dispensationalists would hold to include the following:

1. The Church is not the continuation of God's Old Testament people, but a distinct body born on the Day of Pentecost.
2. The Church is never equated with Israel in the New Testament, and Christians are not Jews, true Israel, etc.
3. The prophecies made to Israel in the Old Testament are not being fulfilled in the Church, nor will they ever be.
4. The Church does not participate in the New Covenant prophesied in the Old Testament; it is for ethnic Israel, and will be established in a future millennial kingdom.
5. The Old Testament saints were saved by faith alone, on the basis of the Calvary-work of Christ alone; however, the object of their faith was not Christ, but rather the revelation peculiar to their dispensation.
6. The Old Testament saints did not know of the coming "Church Age," of the resurrection of Christ, or basically, of what we today call the gospel.
7. When Jesus came to earth, he offered the Jews a physical kingdom, but they rejected him.
8. When Jesus proclaimed "the gospel of the Kingdom," it was the news about how ethnic Jews might enter and find rewards in this physical kingdom, and is to be distinguished from the gospel as defined in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, which the apostles later proclaimed to the church.
9. After the Jews rejected Jesus' kingdom offer, he inaugurated a parenthetical "Church Age", which will be concluded immediately before God again takes up his dealings with his national people, ethnic Israel.
10. During the "Church Age," Jesus is not reigning from the throne of David; he is engaged instead in his priestly work, and his kingly work will take place in the future millennial kingdom.
11. At some unspecified but imminent time, Jesus will return (but not all the way to earth, just to the air) and rapture his Church, also called his Bride; for the following seven years, they will feast with him at the marriage supper of the Lamb; meanwhile, on earth, he will begin to deal with his national people, ethnic Israel, again, calling them to himself and preserving them in the midst of seven years of great tribulation; at the midpoint of which, the Antichrist will set himself up as god in

the rebuilt Jewish temple, and demand worship from the world.

12. After these seven years, Christ will return, this time all the way to earth. He will defeat the forces of evil, bind Satan and cast him into a pit, and inaugurate the physical Jewish Kingdom that he had offered during his life on earth. The Jews who survived the tribulation will populate the earth during this blessed golden era, and the Christians will reign spiritually, in glorified bodies.

13. After these thousand years, Satan will be released and will gather an army from the offspring of the Jews who survived the tribulation. He will be finally defeated and cast into hell. At this time, the wicked dead will be resurrected and judged, whereas the righteous dead had already been resurrected one-thousand-seven years previously, at the rapture. Christ will then usher in the New Heavens and New Earth, and the destinies of all mankind will be finalized. Dispensationalists are divided as to whether or not there will remain a distinction between Christians and Jews in the New Earth.

01.1. The People of God

The People of God 1) From the beginning, God selected one people alone, from all the earth.

Deuteronomy 7:6 Deuteronomy 10:15 Deuteronomy 14:2

Isaiah 41:8-9 2) This people would belong to him forever.

1 Kings 6:13 1 Chronicles 17:9

Isaiah 60:19-21 3) He would cast off, or exile this people for a time, for covenant unfaithfulness.

Deuteronomy 28:63-68 2 Kings 17:20-24 2 Chronicles 36:13-21

Hosea 1:4-6

Hosea 1:9 4) However, he would then gather them together again, and restore them.

Deuteronomy 30:4-9

Isaiah 10:21-23

Hosea 1:7

Hosea 1:10-11 5) When he restored them, he would also expand them, forming them anew from every people on earth.

Isaiah 2:1-3

Isaiah 11:9-16

Isaiah 19:23-25

Isaiah 24:13-15

Isaiah 42:4-12

Isaiah 49:1-12

Isaiah 51:5

Isaiah 60:1-9

Isaiah 66:10-24

Hosea 2:23 Zechariah 2:10-13

Malachi 1:11 6) The New Testament Church is the continuation of this one people.

Acts 15:12-17

Romans 9:23-26

Romans 11:11-32

[Whether or not one sees a future for ethnic Israel in this passage is beside the point: in any case, there is only one people of God, represented by the one olive tree. Believing Gentiles have been grafted into this one tree, and unbelieving Jews broken off; but when they are grafted back in, it will be the same tree into which the Gentiles were grafted, God's people, true Israel.]

Galatians 3:7-8 Galatians 3:13-14 Ephesians 2:11-22

Ephesians 3:5-6 7) Hence, New Testament believers are called Jews, Abraham's seed, etc.

Romans 2:28-29

Romans 4:11-12

Romans 9:6-8

Galatians 3:6-7 Galatians 3:26-29 Galatians 4:21-31

Galatians 6:16

[The Greek conjunction may mean either "and" or "even"/"namely"; hence the context must determine the meaning. If it is taken in the sense of "and," so that "the Israel of God," is a different body from the Church, then Paul is contradicting himself and undermining the whole point he has been making throughout his letter! However, if it means "even," then the clear assertion that those who follow the "rule" of boasting only in the cross are in fact "the Israel of God," becomes a very fitting conclusion, and reiterates all that he has been teaching.]

Php 3:3 Hebrews 12:22-24

1 Peter 2:9-12

[Some have said that these Jewish terms are applied to the Church by way of analogy, not identification. However, when Peter goes on to speak of these ethnic "Gentiles" in contrast with the Gentiles, he makes it clear that he actually is intending to refer to them as Jews.]

Revelation 2:9

01.2. The Fulfilment of Prophecy

The Fulfilment of Prophecy The true heir of the Old Testament promises is not ethnic Israel, but only Christ, the one Seed of Abraham.

Galatians 3:16 Thus, everyone who is in Christ, which includes all believers, is an heir of the promises made to Abraham.

Galatians 3:28-29 2) The true fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies is frequently indicated in the New Testament. The prophecy of restoring Israel was fulfilled by the calling of the Gentiles to be God's people.

Acts 15:13-17 (quoting Amos 9:11-12) Romans 9:22-26 (quoting Hosea 1:10; Hosea 2:23)

[The verses that Paul is quoting from Hosea are clearly speaking of "the house of Israel," and say that she will be cast off, and no longer God's people; but then restored, and God's people again. Paul is here saying that this restoration of Israel as God's people is being fulfilled by God's calling out a people "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles".] The prophecy of the New Covenant, made "with the house of Israel" (see Jeremiah 31:31-34), is fulfilled in the New Testament Church.

Hebrews 8:6-13 Hebrews 10:14-18 Matthew 26:26-28

Mark 14:22-24

Luke 22:19-20 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 2 Corinthians 3:5-6 Some other prophecies and types interpreted in the New Testament Matthew 2:14-15 (quoting Hosea 11:1)

[The context of Hosea is clearly referring to Israel; hence, Matthew sees Jesus as the true Israel, and the antitype of Israel's history.] Matthew 17:10-13 (referring to Malachi 4:5)

John 2:19-22

[Not only does Jesus here equate the Old Testament temple imagery with his own body, by means of which the presence of God truly was brought down to man; but furthermore, John explains that believing this Christ-centered interpretation was in fact to believe the Old Testament scriptures themselves.] Acts 2:14-21 (quoting Joel 2:28-32)

[Most Dispensationalists will say that this prophecy is referring to Jesus' second coming, as their hermeneutic demands; but Peter clearly declares that it is being fulfilled in this age.] Acts 2:25-32 (quoting Psalms 16:8-11) Acts 2:33-36 (quoting Psalms 110:1) Romans 4:13-17 (quoting Genesis 17:5)

[According to Paul, the promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations was fulfilled when he became the father of all those who believed, from all the Gentile peoples.] Galatians 4:22-31 (quoting Isaiah 54:1 and Genesis 21:10) Hebrews 9:1-12 (interpreting the symbolism of the tabernacle and its worship services)

[When one allows God himself to interpret the meaning of his prophecies through later revelation, it becomes impossible to employ a naturalistic, Dispensational hermeneutic. Dispensationalists claim to have a literal hermeneutic, taking prophecies in a simple, material sense unless the immediate context demands otherwise. The problem with this approach is that it arrives at interpretations which are later contradicted by the New Testament. In opposition to this principle, Covenant Theologians recognize the validity of "the analogy of faith," that is, that the best interpreter of scriptures is other scriptures. The hermeneutic which allows the Author to foreshadow spiritual realities through physical means, and later interpret them in clear, didactic writing, is actually a more natural and literal hermeneutic than one which demands a physical/material sense unless an immediate absurdity arises thereby, even when other scriptures contradict this physical/material sense. The basic question is this: will our hermeneutic allow God to explain himself, or will it allow our own human understanding of what is more literal to negate the interpretation of God himself?] 3) Those to whom the Old Testament promises were first made understood them to mean more than the merely physical.

Hebrews 11:9-10 Hebrews 11:13-16 Hebrews 11:17-19 Hebrews 11:24-26 Hebrews 11:39-40

01.3. The Faith of Old Testament Believers

The Faith of Old Testament believers 1) The Old Testament saints believed in Christ.

Genesis 3:14-15

Genesis 3:21

Genesis 4:3-5

[In these passages, we have all the elements of the basic gospel message: God would send a Deliverer, born of a woman, who would crush the serpent's head, but be mortally wounded in the conflict. That he would be ultimately victorious demands a resurrection. This gospel message was illustrated in God's killing an innocent animal to cover man's shame; and in Abel's blood sacrifice, we see an indication of his understanding of these basic truths.]

Job 19:25

[lit., "arise upon the dust"]: [Throughout the Book of Job, probably the first canonical scriptures ever written, the expression "to be upon the dust" ("lie down upon the dust," etc.) clearly means, "to die" (see Job 17:16; Job 20:11; Job 21:26; Job 34:15). Hence, the phrase, "to arise upon the dust," means, "to rise from the dead".]

Isaiah 53:1-12 [Even in the New Testament, there is no clearer declaration of the gospel than we find here.] 2) The New Testament authors recognized that the Old Testament saints knew of Christ.

Acts 2:25-31 (quoting Psalms 16:8-11)

John 8:56

Matthew 13:17

Luke 24:25-27

Acts 26:22-23

01.4. The Kingdom of God

(Isaiah 66:19) I will perform a mighty act among them³⁶ and then send some of those who remain to the nations — to Tarshish, Pul,³⁷ Lud³⁸ (known for its archers³⁹), Tubal, Javan,⁴⁰ and to the distant coastlands⁴¹ that have not heard about me or seen my splendor. They will tell the nations of my splendor. The Kingdom of God 1) Christ announced the arrival of the Kingdom, he did not merely "offer" it.

Matthew 4:17 Matthew 11:11-12

[Here, Christ speaks of the Kingdom as of something that people have already been entering since the days of John the Baptist; hence, he could not be referring to a future, physical kingdom that he was only offering - no one would have entered that Kingdom yet. But Dispensationalists will say that even today no one has entered it.]

Matthew 12:28 [Jesus did cast out demons; therefore, according to him, the Kingdom had already come.] Matthew 16:18-19 [Here, the establishment of the Church is seen in parallel with entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.] 2) If Christ had truly been offering a physical Kingdom, the Jews would not have rejected it.

John 6:15 3) Christ and the apostles spoke of the Kingdom as one that now has only a spiritual presence, in our midst.

Luke 17:20-21

John 18:36-37

Romans 14:17 4) The Church today is the Kingdom, and Christians are Kingdom citizens.

Mark 9:1

[Since the entire generation alive when Christ was on earth has died, the Kingdom must have come already; therefore, it cannot be a future, thousand-year reign.] 1 Corinthians 4:20

[The power that Paul was speaking of was already operative in the Church, as the context makes clear; therefore, the Church was to him essentially the same as the kingdom.]

Colossians 1:13 Revelation 1:5-6

Revelation 1:9 5) Christ sent the apostles out to proclaim the same gospel of the kingdom that he had proclaimed.

Matthew 24:14 6) This the apostles did.

Acts 8:12

Acts 20:24-25

Acts 28:23

Acts 28:30-31 7) Christ is now reigning from the throne of David.

Acts 2:30-36 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 Ephesians 1:18-23

Hebrews 1:8

01.5. The Millennium

The Millennium

1) The rapture of the Church will occur after the revealing of the "Son of Perdition," whom Dispensationalists also believe to be the Antichrist.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

[Most Dispensationalists say that this sitting in the Temple will occur at the midpoint of the tribulation; hence, the rapture of the Church cannot take place at least until the second half of the tribulation (in the Dispensational scheme).] The rapture is called a "meeting" in the air, which was originally a technical term used of the procession that would come out of a city to greet a visiting dignitary, and escort him immediately back to the city, in great splendor; and later came to be used when one would go out to meet a person, and then follow him along the way in which he was already going; hence, the term likely indicates that the rapture will be a similar event, in which the saints are gathered up to meet Jesus, and follow immediately behind him as he continues on to judge the earth.

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

Acts 28:14-15

Mark 14:13

Acts 16:16-17 2) The rescue of the church and the eternal destruction of the wicked will occur at the same time.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 Matthew 24:29-31 Matthew 25:31-46 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

2 Peter 3:3-14

[Here, immediately before the dissolution of the heavens and earth in fervent heat, people are saying that all things are continuing in the same way they always have; which could not be said following all the events of Dispensational eschatology. Furthermore, the delay is intended to bring in the full measure of those who should repent and be added to the Church, and also provides a basis for Peter's exhortation to be watchful, looking for this final, catastrophic day. He does not exhort us to be watchful for the appearing of Christ as that which rescues us from the earth, but leaves one-thousand-seven years of history afterward; but for the appearing of Christ as that which brings the final destruction of the world.] 3) The resurrection of the righteous dead and the wicked dead will occur at the same time.

John 5:28-29 4) Revelation chapter twenty must be interpreted in light of its genre:

Revelation is a book full of symbolic visions and numbers.

Revelation 1:4 [Unless there are literally seven Holy Spirits, the reader has to acknowledge a symbolic use of numbers here.]

Revelation 1:20 Revelation 17:9-12 In other places in Revelation, the final consummation of all history has already been reached; therefore, chapter twenty is likely another "recapitulation," a different symbolic way of describing the New Testament era, followed by a description of the end of history.

Revelation 11:15-19 Revelation 14:14-16 Revelation 16:17-21 Revelation 19:11-21 The "first resurrection" corresponds well with other New Testament teaching on the present resurrection life of believers.

Romans 6:3-4

Galatians 2:20 Colossians 3:1-3

1 John 3:14

Ephesians 2:4-6 Colossians 2:11-12 The binding of Satan corresponds well with related New Testament teaching.

Matthew 12:26-29

Luke 10:17-18

John 12:31-33

John 16:8-11

Hebrews 2:14-15 The more obscure, apocalyptic visions of John should be interpreted in light of the clearer, didactic epistles of the New Testament, which we have already examined.

02.0. Catagorized Scripüre-Doctrine od Grace

DOCTRINES OF GRACE - CATEGORIZED SCRIPTURE LIST

Introduction

Ever since the Serpent first tempted Eve in the garden by casting doubt on God's word and his character as he had revealed himself to her, mankind has always been engaged in the idolatrous pursuit of fashioning a god after his own imagination, a god who conforms to his own preconceived ideas about what merits worship and trust. This spirit is alive and well today, and professing Christendom's conceptions of who God really is are legion. Talk of God's love as demanding that he never be so wrathful as to send people to hell, his justice as requiring that he give all rebellious sinners an equal opportunity for salvation, his sovereignty as necessarily being limited by man's free choice, his salvation as an offer which must be ratified and completed by man in his unregenerate nature is rampant. There is no cure for this, but to cast off all our prior ideas of who we think God should be, or what we think he should mean when he speaks of his love, his grace, his justice, and his salvation, and to go to his word for all our answers. God is his own interpreter: and until we are willing to submit our human reason to his voice alone, we stand on the brink of eternal ruin. I pray that the following scripture list will be a useful tool for that pursuit. Father, deliver us from our vain imagination, and reveal to us yourself and your salvation, as we humbly seek to know you from your word, the Holy Scriptures!

02.1. Unconditional Election

Unconditional Election God is Sovereign

Exodus 15:18 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 2 Chronicles 20:6

Psalms 22:28 1)He exercises that sovereignty in actively ordaining everything Deuteronomy 32:39

1 Samuel 2:6-8

Job 9:12

Job 12:6-10

Psalms 33:11

Psalms 115:3

Psalms 135:6

Isaiah 14:24

Isaiah 45:7

Acts 15:18

Ephesians 1:11 Including matters of "chance"

Proverbs 16:33

1 Kings 22:20

1 Kings 22:34

1 Kings 22:37 The wicked actions of men

Genesis 45:5

Genesis 50:20

Exodus 4:21

Judges 14:1-4

Psalms 76:10

Proverbs 16:4

Isaiah 44:28

Amos 3:6

Acts 2:22-23

Acts 4:27-28 The actions of evil spirits 1 Samuel 16:14-16 1 Kings 22:19-23 1 Chronicles 21:1 The good actions of men

John 15:16

Ephesians 2:10

Php 2:12-13 The actions of good angels

Psalms 103:20

Psalms 104:4 The actions of animals

Numbers 22:28

1 Kings 17:4

Psalms 29:9

Jeremiah 8:7

Ezekiel 32:4

Daniel 6:22 The operations of all creation

Genesis 8:22

Psalms 104:5-10 Psalms 104:13-14 Psalms 104:19-20

Mark 4:39 2)Man is not permitted to question his sovereign acts

Job 33:12-13

Isaiah 29:16

Isaiah 45:9-10

Matthew 20:1-16

Romans 9:19-24 God elects [i.e. chooses, predestines, foreordains] 1)His angels 1 Timothy 5:21
2)His peculiar people, Israel

Exodus 6:7 Deuteronomy 7:6-8 Deuteronomy 10:14-15

Psalms 33:12

Isaiah 43:20-28 Individuals to salvation

Psalms 65:4

Matthew 24:24

John 6:37

John 15:16

Acts 13:48

Romans 8:28-30

Romans 9:10-24

Romans 11:5-7

Ephesians 1:3-6 Ephesians 1:11-12 1 Thessalonians 1:4 1 Thessalonians 5:9 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 Individuals to condemnation

Exodus 4:21

Romans 9:13

Romans 9:17-18

Romans 9:21-22

1 Peter 2:8 His motivation in election 1)His own good pleasure

Ephesians 1:5

2 Timothy 1:9 2)The display of his glory

Isaiah 43:6-7

Romans 9:22-24

Ephesians 2:4-7 1 Corinthians 1:27-31

Proverbs 16:4 3)His special love Deuteronomy 7:6-8 2 Thessalonians 2:13 4)His foreknowledge

Romans 8:29

1 Peter 1:2 Which means his relational love or causative purpose

Jeremiah 1:5

Amos 3:2

Matthew 7:22-23 1 Corinthians 8:3

2 Timothy 2:19 1 Peter 1:20 [Greek, "foreknown"] But not:

Any good [nobility, wisdom, power, choice, seeking] he foresees in anyone

Deuteronomy 7:7

Romans 9:11-13

Romans 9:16

Romans 10:20 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 1 Corinthians 4:7

2 Timothy 1:9

02.2. Total Depravity

Total Depravity Man is constituted a sinner by his relationship with Adam

Psalms 51:5

Psalms 58:3

Romans 5:18-19 He is therefore unable 1) To do anything good

Genesis 6:5

Job 15:14-16

Psalms 130:3

Psalms 143:2

Proverbs 20:9 Ecclesiastes 7:20

Isaiah 64:6

Jeremiah 13:23

John 3:19

Romans 3:9-12

James 3:8

1 John 1:8 2) To believe in God (or come to him)

John 6:44

John 6:65

John 8:43-45

John 10:26

John 12:37-50 3) To understand the truth

John 14:17 1 Corinthians 2:14

4) To seek God

Romans 3:10-11 He is dead in sins

Genesis 2:16-17

John 3:5-7

Ephesians 2:1-3

Colossians 2:13 He is blinded and corrupt in his heart

Genesis 6:5

Genesis 8:21 Ecclesiastes 9:3

Jeremiah 17:9

Mark 7:21-23

John 3:19-21

Romans 8:7-8 Ephesians 4:17-19

Ephesians 5:8 He is captive to sin and Satan

John 8:34

John 8:44

Romans 6:20 2 Timothy 2:25-26

Titus 3:3

1 John 5:19 He performs actions freely according to his nature, but his nature is wholly evil

Job 14:4

Matthew 7:16-18

Matthew 12:33

Mark 7:21-23

James 1:13-14

02.3. Limited Atonement

Limited Atonement God purposed to redeem a certain people and not others 1 Chronicles 17:20-21

Matthew 22:14

1 Peter 2:8-9 [see "God elects individuals to salvation"/"God elects individuals to condemnation"]
1) It is for these in particular that Christ gave his life

Isaiah 53:10-11

Matthew 1:21

John 6:35-40

John 10:3-4

Acts 20:28

Ephesians 5:25

[we are commanded to love our wives in the same way that Christ loved the church and gave himself for it; therefore, if Christ loved and gave himself for all people in the same way, we are commanded to love all women in the same way that we love our wives]

Hebrews 2:17

Hebrews 9:15 2) It is for these in particular that Christ intercedes

John 17:1-2

John 17:6-12

John 17:20-21

John 17:24-26

Romans 8:34

3) The people for whom Christ intercedes are the same as the people for whom he offered himself up as a sacrifice

Hebrews 7:24-27

Hebrews 9:12 [note context, in which entering into the holy place is explicitly for the purpose of intercession]

Hebrews 9:24-28

[For a fuller understanding of the indissoluble connection between sacrifice and intercession, read Hebrews 7:1-28, Hebrews 8:1-13, Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-39] The atonement of Christ is effective 1)To justify

Isaiah 53:11

[the single effective cause of justification in view here is the bearing of iniquities; all whose iniquities Christ bore must be justified]

Romans 8:34

[the argument here is that the fact of Christ's death, resurrection, and intercession is in itself an incontrovertibly effective reason for non-condemnation; if this verse is true, then no one for whom Christ died and was raised to intercede may be condemned] 2)To redeem and cleanse from sins Ephesians 5:25-27

Titus 2:14 3)To propitiate the Father

1 John 2:2

["propitiation" means "the turning away or appeasement of wrath"; therefore, by definition, the Father has no more wrath against those whose sins have been propitiated]

1 John 4:10 4)To raise to new life 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

[the argument is a simple "if/then" proposition: "if" Christ died for someone, "then," with no other conditions, that person died with him and was raised again]

1 Peter 3:18

[See also, "Jesus' death purchased for his people a new heart; - faith; - repentance". Jesus died in order to establish the New Covenant (Matthew 26:26-29, etc.); the New Covenant promised faith, repentance and knowledge of God (Jeremiah 31:33-34, Ezekiel 36:26-27, etc.); therefore, Jesus died in order to provide faith, repentance, and knowledge of God, as the fulfillment of a unilateral promise. This means that his death had a definite purpose which was intended for some and not others. His death effectively purchased faith; not all have faith; and so his death had an effective intent that was limited to certain persons.] Those whom God purposed to redeem include all who believe

John 3:16 1)From every nation

Revelation 5:9 2)From every class

Galatians 3:28

1 Timothy 2:1-6

[the first "all men" is explicitly tied to all classes of men, which gives warrant for understanding the second "all men" in the same way]

3) Therefore, Christ's saving work is commonly spoken of in terms of "all," "world," etc.

John 1:29

Titus 2:11-14 [in the context of "all men" is the delimiting concept of a peculiar people, zealous of good works]

Hebrews 2:9-10 [notice that the many sons whom Christ brings to glory gives a contextual delimiter to the term "every"]

2 Peter 3:9 [note that this desire is explicitly limited to "us" (Peter was writing to fellow-believers) in the context]

1 John 2:2

[propitiation means "appeasement of wrath"; either Jesus appeases God's wrath against all, and therefore hell (which is the place where God's wrath resides) is non-existent; or the "whole world" means something different than "every individual who ever lived". See John 11:51-52, and "The word 'world' is often used in the sense of 'many,' or 'all of a set'"]

4) The word "all" is often used to indicate all of a set, or even many representatives of a set

Matthew 10:22 1 Corinthians 6:12 1 Corinthians 15:22

Matthew 2:3

John 4:29

Acts 10:39

Acts 17:21

Acts 21:28

Acts 26:4 5)Or, to indicate all "classes" or "nations," not all individuals

Matthew 5:11 ["manner of" is not in the Greek]

Acts 2:17

Acts 10:12 ["manner of" is not in the Greek]

6) The word "world" is often used in the sense of "many," or "all of a set"

Luke 2:1-2

John 6:33

John 12:19

Acts 19:27

Romans 1:8 Additional reasons that the atonement of Christ is not for all the sins of all people

1)God punishes people in hell, which would be unjust if their sins were atoned for

Mark 9:43-50

2) If one were to say, "their sins are atoned for, but that atonement is not applied because of unbelief," he fails to realize that unbelief is likewise a sin

Hebrews 3:12 ["The Father imposed His wrath due unto, and the Son underwent punishment for either:

1) All the sins of all men;

2) All the sins of some men; or 3) Some of the sins of all men. In which case it may be said:

1) If the last be true all men have some sins to answer for, and so none are saved;

2) That if the second be true, then Christ, in their stead suffered for all the sins of the elect in the whole world, and this is the truth;

3) But if the first is the case, why are not all men free from the punishment due unto their sins? You answer, Because of unbelief. I ask, Is this unbelief a sin, or is it not? If it be, then Christ suffered the punishment due unto it, or He did not. If He did, why must that hinder them more than their other sins for which He died? If He did not, He did not die for all their sins!" - John Owen, The Death of Death in the Death of Christ]

3)God bears eternal wrath against people, which by definition means that his wrath against them has not been propitiated [appeased] 1 Thessalonians 2:16 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 Intentions of Christ's death other than atonement 1)To make a public display of demons Colossians 2:13-23 2)To rule over everyone

Romans 14:9 3)To redeem creation

Isaiah 35:1-4

Romans 8:20-23 [in Greek, same word as "creation," Romans 8:22] 4)To lay the foundation for a genuine gospel call

John 6:39-40

John 7:37-53 5)To provide temporal mercies for the non-elect

Matthew 5:45

1 Timothy 4:10

02.4. Irresistable Grace

Irresistible Grace Faith and Repentance (as well as the new heart which is able to produce them) are themselves gifts of God 1)A new heart Deuteronomy 30:6

Ezekiel 11:19 Ezekiel 36:26-38 2)Faith

John 3:27

Php 1:29

2 Peter 1:1

Acts 16:14

Acts 18:27 Ephesians 2:8-22 3)Repentance

Acts 5:31

Acts 11:18 2 Timothy 2:25-26 1 Corinthians 4:7 The Father writes his own word upon (places the fear of himself in, etc.) his people's hearts

Jeremiah 31:33

Jeremiah 32:40 Matthew 16:15-17

Luke 10:21

John 6:45 2 Corinthians 4:6 The beginning of salvation is the sovereign impartation of spiritual life into a heart which had been dead, thereby causing it to exercise faith

1 John 5:1 Ezekiel 37:3-6, Ezekiel 37:11-14

John 1:11-13

John 3:3-8

John 5:21

Ephesians 2:1-5

James 1:18

1 Peter 1:3

1 John 2:29 True offers of grace in the outward gospel call may be resisted by men who do not have this new heart

Acts 17:32-33 In fact, true offers of grace will always be resisted by such men

John 10:24-26

John 12:37-40 But there are some whom God causes to come to him

Psalms 65:4

Psalms 110:3

John 6:37-40

Romans 9:15

02.5. Perseverance of the Saints

Perseverance of the Saints What God begins, he finishes

Psalms 138:8 Ecclesiastes 3:14

Isaiah 46:4

Jeremiah 32:40

Romans 11:2

Php 1:6

2 Timothy 4:18 Of all whom he has called and brought to Christ, none will be lost

John 6:39-40

John 10:27-29

Romans 8:28-31

Romans 8:35-39

Hebrews 7:25

Hebrews 10:14 God's preservation of the saints is not irrespective of their continuance in the faith

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Galatians 5:19-21

Ephesians 5:5

Hebrews 3:14

Hebrews 6:4-6 Hebrews 10:26-27

Hebrews 12:14 Revelation 21:7-8 Revelation 22:14-15 However, it is God who sanctifies us and causes us to persevere

John 15:16 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 1 Corinthians 6:11 1 Corinthians 12:3 1 Corinthians 15:10

Galatians 3:1-6

Php 2:12-13 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 Hebrews 13:20-21

1 John 2:29

Jude 1:24-25

03.0. Catagorized Scripture-Knowing Our God

Knowing Our God

Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD... Jeremiah 9:23-24

Introduction Of all the possible pursuits, activities, or studies that are practically relevant and positively beneficial which we might spend our time pursuing, there is none, however profitable or necessary, that is as needful and uplifting and valuable as the subject matter of this study. As Christians, there is nothing more practical for us than to know our God. As created beings, there is nothing we need more than to understand our Creator. As desperate and wandering souls searching for significance, longing for something that is infinitely satisfying, seeking pleasure from finite things when God "has set eternity in [our] heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11), there is nothing that can even begin to answer to the depths of our vast needs, desires, and longings, except for one thing. That one thing is knowing our God. And that one thing is what we are hoping by his grace to pursue. I hope that all of us can resonate with the truth A. W. Pink once observed, that "a spiritual and saving knowledge of God is the greatest need of every human creature," and furthermore, that "the foundation of all true knowledge of God must be a clear mental apprehension of His perfections as revealed in Holy Scripture." As we turn to the scriptures, it is with the hope and prayer that God will "shine in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). But how do we even begin to undertake a task so enormous? Our first and guiding principle is that, if we would learn about God aright, we must do so only from the pages of his word. The cause of man's first rebellion, and all the chaos and misery that ensued, was only this, that he failed to take his understanding of God's character at his own word, and instead listened to the whispered lies of the serpent. If we would regain the position from which we fell, it can only be by listening once more to God's word, and letting his own self-revelation shape our ideas of who he is.

However, as we embark on the process, we quickly realize that the task is overwhelming: there are thousands of passages that speak of the nature of God, and they are not laid out like a systematic theology: they are occasional, revealing the truths of God's nature as he takes opportunity to enter the world of mankind for a specific purpose, and show himself to his people. If we would learn about who he is, we must be able to take all of those truths which he reveals on specific occasions, and organize them in such a way that we do not emphasize any set of attributes to the exclusion of any other. We must be able to frame them in simple, accurate and memorable ways. This is the task of the systematic theologian; and like it or not, all Christians, as they pursue a deeper knowledge of God, must play the role of the systematic theologian to some degree. So how might we best organize the characteristics of God as he reveals himself in his word, in order to understand who he is as intimately and accurately as possible? Theologians have come up with several organizing principles, speaking of God's communicable and incommunicable

attributes, his absolute and immanent attributes, his moral and non-moral attributes, and other such classifications. For the purposes of this study, the following categories will be employed:

1. The triunity of God In reality, this is an overarching category, that affects every category which follows. The most foundational and non-negotiable truth of the Christian religion is that God is triune. Every other attribute that can be considered - God's sovereignty, his love, his justice, etc. - is an attribute of a triune God. In this study, we will consider the ontological trinity, that is, the inter-relationship of the persons of the Godhead that has existed from all eternity; and the economical trinity, that is, the way in which the eternal inter-relationships of the persons of the Godhead show up in the work of redemption which the triune God has undertaken to accomplish.

2. The attributes of God with respect to God This is basically an overview of who God is in relation to himself alone. Such attributes as God's eternity, self-sufficiency, omnipotence, inter-triune love and fellowship, etc. may be dealt with under this classification.

3. The attributes of God with respect to man as a created being

There are certain things we can understand about God simply by realizing that he is our Creator. The bible speaks of many attributes of God in relation to this classification: he is sovereign over his creation, he is actively governing his creation, he is directing all things for his glory, he is the lawgiver and judge, the owner and ruler of all mankind, simply because he is God the Creator and man is man the created.

4. The attributes of God with respect to man as a sinner When God related to man in the garden before his fall, he did not display certain of his attributes which we see later in the bible. Such attributes as God's holy wrath against sin, his righteous judgment, his judicial hardening, his sovereignty over evil, his turning of man's wickedness to accomplish good things, all became manifest only in relation to man as a fallen creature, and not man as an innocent creature.

5. The attributes of God with respect to man as redeemed

It is only against the backdrop of understanding God's absolute ownership of and sovereignty over man because he created him, and his uncompromising justice and wrath against man because he wickedly rebelled that we can begin to understand the staggering wonder of such precious attributes of God as his redemptive love, his grace and mercy, his covenant faithfulness, and so on. This will be the final division of our study.

03.1. The Trinity of God

The Trinity of God 1. The Basis for the Ontological Trinity The dividing line between true Christianity and all other world religions is the Trinitarian conception of God. No religion that denies the doctrine of one God eternally existing in three persons can rightfully claim to be Christian. Islam believes in one eternal God, the God who revealed himself to Abraham; but because it denies that this one God exists in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, it is no more Christian than Hinduism. Jehovah's Witnesses believe in one God who, they claim, is the God of the Bible. But they reject that Jesus Christ is an eternal person of the Godhead, and therefore, they are no more Christian than the Greek pagans. The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be denied without Christianity itself being rejected. Here is a good, simple explanation of the trinity, formulated by Athanasius, a man of God who opposed the heretical Arian teaching, which denied that Jesus is truly God:

We worship one God in trinity and the trinity in unity, neither blending their persons nor dividing their essence. For the person of the Father is a distinct person, the person of the Son is another, and that of the Holy Spirit still another. But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal. What quality the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God. This is the historic, orthodox teaching on the trinity. A careful examination of it will eliminate many possible misunderstandings of its nature, such as these:

-We worship three gods -Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three different names for God -Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three different parts of God -God shows up at different times as either Father, Son, or Holy Spirit -Jesus is a lesser god than the Father or a created god -Jesus is fully God, but he was not fully man -The Holy Spirit is an impersonal force from God Following are some scripture passages which support the assertions of Athanasius' creed.

A) There is one God Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Kings 8:60; Isaiah 42:8; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5; James 2:19 B) The Father is God Romans 1:7; Romans 15:6; 1 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Peter 1:3 C) The Son is God

Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7; John 1:1-3; John 8:58-59; John 20:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; Romans 10:9-13; Php 2:9-11; Colossians 1:15-16; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20 D) The Holy Spirit is God Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:16-18 E) The Father is one with the Son John 10:30; John 17:22 F) The Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son 1 Corinthians 2:11; Romans 8:9 G) The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are viewed as equally God, yet personally distinct

Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 1:3-14; Ephesians 4:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jude 1:20-25. The Relationships within the Ontological Trinity As we have seen, God is a solitary being with three persons. Because of this, God is totally self-satisfying: any desire for love, fellowship, and interpersonal relationship he has is satisfied in himself alone, through the perfect, loving

interaction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Gospel of John, in particular John 17:1-26, provides us with our clearest understanding of how the persons of the trinity relate to each other in a glorious unity.

A) The Inter-Trinitarian Relationship of the Father and Son ·They are eternally united in a mutual indwelling John 10:38; John 14:10-11; John 17:21; John 17:22 ·They are eternally united in a mutual love John 5:20; John 17:24 ·In their eternal love and fellowship, they bring glory to one another John 13:31-32; John 17:1; John 17:4-5 ·The Son brings glory to the Father by accomplishing his will John 5:17-19; John 5:30; John 8:28-29; John 14:13; John 14:31; John 17:4 ·The Father brings glory to the Son by giving him the authority to accomplish his will John 5:21-23; John 10:17-18; John 17:1-2 B) The Inter-Trinitarian Relationship of the Father and The Holy Spirit ·The Father sends the Holy Spirit to reveal his true nature John 14:16-17; John 14:26 a ·The Holy Spirit searches and reveals the truths of God John 14:26 b; 1 Corinthians 2:10 C) The Inter-Trinitarian Relationship of the Son and the Spirit ·The Son sends the Holy Spirit to reveal his true nature John 16:7; John 15:26 a ·The Holy Spirit searches and reveals the truths of Christ John 15:26 b; John 16:13-33. The Basis for the Economical Trinity As glorious as the ontological trinity is, we would never have been able to understand it without the economical trinity. John 1:18 tells us that no one has seen God at any time, but that the only Son of God has revealed him. This is the basic story of the economical trinity: the all-glorious, triune God, undertook to reveal himself in time to a people that he had chosen. And the way he does this is through the work of redemption. If we would understand who God is, we must look to what he has done in redemptive history, an accomplishment climaxing in his ultimate self-revelation, the incarnation of the Son of God, and his subsequent life of perfect obedience to the Father, substitutionary death on the cross, and victorious resurrection from the dead. Before the world had ever come into existence, the triune God had determined to reveal himself in this way to a people of his choosing. Several passages speak of an eternal agreement (or perhaps one could say, “covenant”) between the members of the Godhead to accomplish redemption: the Son would redeem a people, and the Father would therefore glorify the Son by giving him authority to reign over this people, and to judge all mankind. This eternal covenant is the underlying basis for the work of redemption that the triune God would accomplish in human history.

A) The Father has given a specific people to the Son Isaiah 53:11-12; John 6:37-40 John 10:29; John 17:6; John 17:10 B) The Father has given the Son authority to Judge all mankind Psalms 2:7-9; John 5:22-23; Acts 17:30-31; Php 2:9-11 C) The Son reveals the Father to the people given to him, and gives them eternal life John 6:39-40 John 6:44-46; John 8:19; John 10:27-28; John 14:6-9; John 17:6 4. The Functions within the Economical Trinity

Within the economical trinity, the three persons of the Godhead have different roles. In the great work of redemption, which reveals the glory of the trinity to mankind, the Father plans, the Son accomplishes, and the Holy Spirit applies the eternal salvation to the men of his favor. The Father chooses a people, the Son redeems them, and the Spirit seals them with his own indwelling presence. One of the great chapters in the bible for illustrating these truths is Ephesians 1:1-23.

A) The Father chooses a people Ephesians 1:3-6; Romans 8:28-30; 1 Peter 1:1-2 B) The Son redeems that people Ephesians 1:7-12; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:18-19 C) The Spirit applies redemption to that people, and seals them

Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:15-17; Romans 8:23; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 4:30 5. Our Ontological Relationship with the Triune God The most glorious truth of the triune God's work of redemption is that, through it, we are brought in to experience the joy of fellowship with the blessed Trinity! This fellowship is what we were created to enjoy, and the loss of that fellowship is what constituted the sentence of death which came upon Adam and all his seed, when he rebelled in the garden. In fact, when Jesus defined the eternal life that he had come to win for his people, he spoke of it as nothing less than restoring to them a true knowledge of God. On the cross, the inter-trinitarian fellowship was broken, so that we might be brought in to experience all of its delights! What amazing love!

A) We were made to enjoy fellowship with the Triune God

John 17:3 B) In Adam, we lost our fellowship with God Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:22-24; Romans 5:12 C) In Christ, we enter into the Inter-Trinitarian fellowship John 10:14-16; John 17:11; John 17:20-21; John 17:22-23; 1 John 2:24; 1 John 3:24; 1 John 4:15-16 -In this fellowship we see the glory of God John 17:24; John 17:25-26 -In this fellowship we experience the inter-trinitarian love of God John 17:23; John 17:26

·Seeing God's glory and experiencing his inter-trinitarian love is the foundation of our joy John 16:20-22; John 17:13; 1 Peter 1:8 6. Our Economical Mission on the Basis of our Relationship to the Triune God The doctrine of the Trinity teaches us that God is, by his very nature, a covenant God. God is involved in an eternal, inter-trinitarian covenant of love. In the overflow of joy in this covenant relationship, God created a world which was also in covenant relationship with himself. He then created man, who was especially to show forth his image and enjoy his covenant of love. Man sinned, and broke the covenant of love; in this fall, even the earth was impacted, so that the covenant was marred. But in his grace, God renewed the covenant, so that, through Christ, the covenant with all of creation might be redeemed, and the covenant with man might be restored. God initially commanded man to subdue the earth in expression of his image. In the New Covenant, God commands man to conquer the corrupted earth through the preaching of the gospel, and thereby to restore the whole world to fellowship with God. This is done on the basis of Christ's absolute authority. It is accomplished according to the decree of the Father, and by the power of the Spirit as he applies the work of Christ to those who belong to Christ all over the world. This is our task as Christians while we remain on this earth (Matthew 28:18-20). And one day this task will be accomplished, and the whole world will rejoice in a blood-bought and unshakeable covenant with the triune God. And all the redeemed will glorify God as they see his glory, rejoice in it, and share the love of the persons of the Trinity, as they are one in Christ - one with God just as the Father is one with the Son. How is all this to come about?

A) Christ was sent into the world to accomplish a restored fellowship with God; we are sent into the world to proclaim a restored fellowship with God

John 17:18

B) The world will believe in Christ when they see the reality of the covenant fellowship we have with him

John 17:21

C)The world will see the reality of our covenant fellowship when they see the reality of our love
John 17:23; John 13:35

D)The reality of our covenant love is seen when we live in obedience to the covenant obligations
John 14:15; John 14:23; John 14:20-21

03.2. Attributes of God with respect to God

The Attributes of God with respect to God 1. The Solitariness of God By the term “solitariness” we intend to address several things about God which are somewhat difficult to define. God is solitary in that he is One: there is no other god beside him. He is solitary in that he is unique: there is no one like our God; no one can even begin to compare to our great God in any of his perfect attributes. He is solitary in that he is entirely self-sufficient. All other things came into existence because of God and remain in existence from moment to moment by his power. Only God is existent in himself, and dependent on none other. God has absolutely no need that he looks outside of himself to be fulfilled. Within the eternal Trinity there is a perfect and all-sufficient expression of love and fellowship that could never be added to by fellowship with any creature outside of himself. God created the world, not because of any need which he had, but out of a perfect self-sufficiency that no one else could ever experience.

A) He is One Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:6; Isaiah 43:10-11 B) He is Unique Isaiah 40:25; Psalms 113:5-6 C) He is Self-Sufficient/All-Sufficient Romans 11:36; John 5:26 2. The Eternality of God By “eternality,” we mean more than just that God had no beginning and he will have no end; rather, God is not bound or constrained by time at all. God is wholly outside of time, and all of time is in his hand, the past and the future as well as the present. God does not exist within time; instead, time itself exists only because of God. The most basic revelation that God gave man of his essential nature is that he is the I AM - the always existent, always present one.

Exodus 3:14; Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:25-27; Isaiah 57:15; 2 Peter 3:8; Revelation 1:4 b 3. The Invisibility/Spirituality of God

God, the unique and self-sufficient One, the eternally-existent I AM is not physical, and cannot be approached or seen by any finite creature. God is spirit, and no one has seen his form. With one exception: Jesus Christ alone. Therefore, if we would “see” the Father, we must look to him through the Son. He is the exact image of the invisible God, and he alone declares God to us. We can only see God through Christ.

A) God is spirit/invisible John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:27 B) God cannot be approached or seen by any creature Exodus 33:18-20; 1 Timothy 6:15-16 C) Jesus Christ reveals God to us John 1:18; John 14:9 b; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-14. The Immutability of God

Because of who God is - perfect, righteous, holy, eternal - it is impossible that he should change. Any change in God would be a change for the worse, because God is absolutely flawless. Any change of his mind, or will, would be a change for the worse, because his wisdom is already perfect. He can learn nothing, already knowing everything. No one can instruct him, to change his mind, and no one can hinder him, to change the accomplishment of his will. There are times, however, when the bible speaks of God in human terms, and declares (from our finite perspective) that God “repented” that he had done something. These “changes of mind” are only changes from our perspective however, and were in the original plan of God from all eternity.

A)God himself does not change Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8 B)God's mind/will/plan does not change Psalms 33:11; Ecclesiastes 3:14; Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29

C) Although God is said to have "repented," or "regretted" things he has done, one must take care not to interpret those verses in a way that will make them contradict the passages that say God does not change his mind. In reality, the bible often speaks of God in human terms, to help mankind understand things about his character. These "anthropomorphisms" (speaking of God in terms of human physical features) and "anthropopathisms" (speaking of God in terms of human emotions) must be understood metaphorically.

·Examples of anthropomorphisms Deuteronomy 5:15; Isaiah 37:17 ·Examples of anthropopathisms Genesis 6:5-6; 1 Samuel 15:11 5. The Omnipotence of God

God himself does not change, neither does he change his plans. Furthermore, he cannot be frustrated in accomplishing his plans, because he has infinite power to carry them out. No creature can thwart his will: nothing even has the power to exist by itself, apart from God, who "upholds all things by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3). In fact, nothing outside of God himself can limit him or put a boundary on his power. With God, to will something is to accomplish it [See discussion under "Law-giving" (Attributes of God with respect to man as a created being, number 5) for a different use of the term "will of God".]

Genesis 17:1 b; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Psalms 33:6; Psalms 115:3; Job 42:2; Revelation 19:6 6. The Omniscience of God

We have reflected on the truths that God is immutable, his plans are unchanging, and his power to accomplish those plans is unbounded. In light of these great truths, it is highly comforting to remember that God is also omniscient God has all knowledge and all wisdom, so that the plans he unfalteringly accomplishes are perfect plans. There is nothing in all of creation, through all of time, that God does not wisely and all-knowingly use to bring about the greatest possible good. God knows all of his creation exhaustively, even the hearts and minds of men. He knows all the events of all of history, past, present, or future. He knows all things that might have been as well as all things that actually are. He is infinitely wise, and knows the best ends, as well as the best means to those ends. And with God, his knowledge is efficacious. When he knows something, he accomplishes it. His knowledge does not just recognize a reality; it produces that reality.

A)God knows all of creation exhaustively Psalms 139:1-6; Psalms 147:4-5; Matthew 10:30; Hebrews 4:13; 1 Chronicles 28:9 b; John 2:24-25 B)God knows all the events of history, past, present, and future Isaiah 42:9; Isaiah 46:9-10 C)God knows all things that might have been, as well as things that are

Luke 10:13 D)When God knows something, he accomplishes it Romans 8:29-30; Isaiah 55:8-11; Proverbs 3:19-20 E)Our response to God's omniscience should be worship Romans 11:33-36. The Holiness of God The holiness of God is the attribute which is perhaps the most difficult to define or comprehend or approach. It is also the attribute which, when even glimpsed, causes the most overwhelming awe and consternation. The account of Isaiah's seeing the thrice holy God (Isaiah 6:1-13) is perhaps the clearest sight we have of the overwhelming, unapproachable glory of God's holiness. In attempting to describe such an incomprehensible reality, words necessarily fail us. However, we may suggest at least two aspects of God's holiness that we may see in the

scriptures. First, by virtue of his holiness, God is entirely transcendent, utterly separate from all of his creation, high, lifted up, and unapproachable. And second, the holiness that is the very essence of God's nature is the source from which all ethical and moral perfection springs. All things that are right and just and good and praiseworthy are that way precisely because they accord with the holy nature of God. Ethical and moral standards are not impersonal truths outside of God, or self-existent rules by which to judge him. No, those very standards of what is right spring from within God. How foolish and unthinkable to assert or even suppose in the darkest recesses of our heart, "God is not fair," or some other such nonsense. God is God. He cannot be judged by our standards. And what is fair, is fair only because of who God is. In other words, our very perception of fairness, or any other moral virtue, must be informed by what God has revealed to us about himself. Because all true holiness and moral perfection come from who God is, it is noteworthy that throughout the bible, even created things become holy only by God's imparting holiness to them. All holiness comes from him who is Holy, Holy, Holy; therefore even things that are separated and consecrated to him are holy. It is in this way that we are to strive to be holy. Our holiness is an imparted holiness, but God's holiness is his very nature and essence.

A) God's holiness is unique and transcendent Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 15:4 B) God's holiness is the source of all ethical and moral perfection

- That which God imparted to man in the giving of the law and worship ordinances is summed up as holiness

Exodus 28:36

- The nature of creaturely holiness is being separated by God unto God, and so being made like God Leviticus 20:26; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Ephesians 5:25-33. The Love of God When we speak of the love of God, it is natural for us to think of his redemptive love. That is good and well. We can never think too much or too deeply on the wonder that, when we were sinners, God loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. But that is not specifically what we are mentioning here. There is a difference between saying that God loves and saying that God is love. That God loves sinful creatures is an amazing thing. That God is love is staggeringly beautiful. It means that God's love is not exclusively connected to us. Ages before we were created, God was love. Part of what it means to be God is to be love. Just as with holiness and moral perfection, we would not even know what love is apart from knowing who God is.

1 John 4:7-8; John 17:24

03.3. Attributes of God with respect to created man

The Attributes of God with respect to man as a created being

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. 1 Chronicles 29:11-30. The ex-nihilo Creativity of God The most basic attribute of God with respect to his creation is simply his creativity. The very existence of man and the universe in which he dwells, as well as angels and the spirit-world they inhabit, is due solely to the creativity of God. When we speak of a creature as creative, we mean that he is knowledgeable in taking unrefined substances and shaping them into something beautiful. But with God, we must add that his creativity is ex-nihilo: all of the beautifully formed works of his hands came from nothing at all. By his very word, God both created the substance of the universe and shaped it into the manifold and glorious creation we see in and around us.

Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:31 a; Nehemiah 9:6; Acts 17:24-25; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-16; Job 33:4 2. The Sustaining/Preservation of God

God's relationship to his creation did not stop when he had finished making it. God did not just create the world and then step back to let it run its course according to natural laws. Instead, he continually and actively sustains and preserves it. The worlds are in his hand; and apart from his sustaining all of his creation would fall apart and come to naught.

Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:17; Nehemiah 9:6; Acts 17:28 3. The Transcendence/Omnipresence of God

God in his being is infinite and unbounded; in relation to his creation, that means that he is omnipresent - that is, he is everywhere at all times. This does not mean that he is extended throughout the universe, as though he had a giant body, so that part of him is here and part of him is there. Rather, all of him is here and all of him is there. In every part of creation, God is there in all of his being. He is everywhere and at all times seeing, governing, and guiding. Although God is present everywhere in creation, this does not mean that he is identical with creation (pantheism).

He is still separate and exalted, or transcendent.

Jeremiah 23:23-24; Psalms 139:7-10; Ephesians 1:21-23. The Ownership of God

Because God created all things, he owns all things. We really are not our own. How many wicked and presumptuous thoughts we could avoid if we would truly meditate on this reality! We have no more right to question what God does to us, in us, with us, for us, against us, than a clay jar has to question why its potter made it the way he did.

Psalms 100:3; Psalms 50:9-12; Isaiah 45:9-12; Romans 9:20-21; Ephesians 2:10 5. The Law-giving of God

God, as our Creator, Sustainer, Owner, and Lord, has every right to tell us how we must live. We have no right other than to obey every word that he commands us. God our Creator is God our Law-giver; and we must obey him. The bible uses a variety of terms to indicate the moral obligations that God lays upon us: laws, commandments, statutes, etc. One term that is sometimes used in this way is "the will of God." Something that God commands us to do may be called his "will"; and in our rebellion, we may disobey his will. However, "will" in this sense has a different meaning from the will of God by which he plans all things according to his own counsel, and omnipotently accomplishes them. We can disobey the moral will of God, but we can never frustrate his sovereign plans. Failing to distinguish these two different senses with which the term "God's will" is used in the bible has been the cause of much unnecessary confusion.

Genesis 2:16-17; Psalms 19:7-11; Deuteronomy 30:15-18 a; James 2:10 ØThe bible sometimes refers to God's commandments as his "will"

1 Thessalonians 4:2-3; Psalms 40:8. The Sovereignty of God

There are few truths more clearly revealed in the scriptures and yet more ardently opposed by men everywhere than that of the absolute sovereignty of God. Any view of God that limits his sovereignty in any way is a distorted and insufficient view of God. The God that the Bible reveals to us is a God who not only has the right to rule over all of his creation and to direct it however he chooses; but more than that, he is a God who actually does reign over his world. God governs the natural world, and directs it to his ends; he governs holy angels, and those angels that are fallen; he governs men, raising some up, putting some down, giving some mercy and showing some justice, granting to some repentance and hardening others. This is the sovereign God we worship. God grant that we may never reject this glorious doctrine because our view of ourselves is too high!

Psalms 115:3; 1 Samuel 2:6-8; Isaiah 45:7; Proverbs 16:4 A)God is sovereign over the natural world Psalms 135:6; Genesis 8:22; Mark 4:39 B)God is sovereign over angels and demons Psalms 103:20; 1 Kings 22:19-23; 1 Samuel 16:14 C)God is sovereign over men Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:17; Acts 4:27-28; Acts 13:48; 2 Timothy 2:25; Romans 9:14-18

There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children ought more earnestly to contend than the doctrine of their Master over all creation - the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands - the Throne of God and His right to sit upon that Throne. On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldings, no truth of which they have made such a football, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow Him to be in his almonry to dispense His alms and bestow His bounties. They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures then gnash their teeth.

And we proclaim an enthroned God, and His right to do as He wills with His own, to dispose of His creatures as He thinks well, without consulting them in the matter; then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on His throne is not the God they love. But it is God upon the throne that we love to preach. It is God upon His throne whom we trust. Charles H. Spurgeon 7. The Goodness of God
The goodness of God is the reason that his sovereignty is so comforting to his children. By goodness we mean God's kindness and benevolence to all of his creation. God is just and righteous in his dealings with creation; but more than that, there is also a positive, undeserved goodness that he displays in all the world, even to the unredeemed.

Psalms 104:10-21; Psalms 100:4-5; Matthew 5:44-48. The Glorification of God
When we speak of the glory of God, we are referring to every attribute he has, everything that he is. God is infinitely glorious in his essential nature. But we mean something a little different by the glorification of God. When we say this, we are simply referring to the truth that the ultimate purpose of creation is to glorify God, or to display his glory. In glorifying God, we are not adding glory to him; he is already infinitely glorious. Rather, we are acknowledging his glory, ascribing glory to him, displaying his glory. This is the ultimate reason for the creation of the world: to display the glory that God eternally possesses within himself.

Isaiah 43:7; Psalms 19:1; Ephesians 3:20-21; Ephesians 1:11-12; 1 Corinthians 10:31

03.4. Attributes of God with respect to sinful man

The Attributes Of God With Respect To Man As A Sinner 1. The Wrath Of God The most obvious and terrible attribute of God with respect to fallen man is his holy wrath against sin. Oh how great and fearful is this consuming wrath! Because God is infinitely holy, rebellion against him is deserving of infinite wrath and punishment. How we should tremble at the prospect of an infinitely holy God with infinite power justly holding against us infinite wrath for our sins! There is no degree of punishment and no length of time at which God's wrath will be exhausted. We are finite creatures, and the only way we can atone for our own sins, the only punishment God can mete out and remain just, is eternal torment. How well has Robert Herrick expressed the terror of the wrathful God in his poem, "No Coming to God Without Christ":

Good and great God! How should I fear
To come to Thee, if Christ not there!
Could I but think, He would not be Present,
to plead my cause for me;
To Hell I'd rather run, than I Would see Thy Face,
and He not by.

Psalms 5:5-6; Psalms 7:11; Isaiah 13:9; Nahum 1:2; Matthew 3:7; John 3:36; Romans 1:18; Romans 2:5-6; Revelation 6:16-17; Mark 9:43 2. The Righteousness/Justice Of God

How often we as sinners formulate complaints against God. If we are ever tempted to do this, we would do well to remember one thing: God is righteous and we are sinful. In any conflict, in any disparity of opinion, in any complaint or grievance that we may bring before God, there is only one outcome: God is in the right. Justice is on his side. In all of his actions, in all of his responses to our actions, in all of his governing and dispensing immediate judgment or longsuffering and patience, God is always righteous in all that he does.

Job 4:17; Job 9:2-3; Job 40:1-4; Deuteronomy 32:4; Nehemiah 9:33; Proverbs 17:15; Zephaniah 3:5 3. The Judgment Of God

Because God is just and righteous, he gives a fitting recompense to every creature that he has made. God has a perfect standard - his own holy nature - by which to evaluate everything that his creation does. God judges all of our actions with righteousness, and gives a fitting recompense. If there were any sin that remained unpunished or any good that were rewarded with evil, then the righteous judgment of God would fall into reproach. But that can never be the case. As surely as God is righteous, he will bring everything to a fitting, righteous, and just conclusion. That reality must terrify us as sinners: as surely as God is just, we will not escape the reward for our guilt.

Deuteronomy 32:41; Psalms 94:1-2; Matthew 16:27; Revelation 22:12; Psalms 9:7-8; Psalms 82:8; Acts 17:30-34. The Longsuffering Of God When we consider the righteousness of God, and understand his wrath against sin, the amazing thing is not that he judges sin, but that he forbears so long to pour out his wrath in holy judgment against us. Let us stand in awe of the longsuffering of God, and be led to repentance by it. God will not be mocked: there will come a day when his longsuffering will end, and all who have despised his goodness will find that they have been treasuring up for themselves wrath.

Exodus 34:6; Romans 2:4; Ecclesiastes 8:11-13; Romans 9:22-5. The Hardening Of God A terrible and fearful judgment of God against the sinfulness of man is his judicial hardening. Because man has rebelled against God, it is a just punishment for God to turn us over to work out our own evil passions, to harden us in our sinfulness, to destine us for impenitence and reprobation, to blind our eyes to the truth of his mercy, until we awake at the last day and find that we have been treasuring up wrath. This is a just judgment of God, and if we have been spared it is nothing other than his mercy that has kept us from the same judgment.

Romans 1:28; Romans 9:17-18; Exodus 4:21; John 12:39-50. The Sovereignty Of God Over Evil

One thing that we may learn from the advent of evil into the world, is that God's sovereignty did not end when his creation rebelled. Evil did not take God by surprise; it was in his plan from the beginning. God is sovereign over evil; he ordains all the actions that evil creatures perform; and yet they remain responsible and he remains righteous. Everything that God ordains, he ordains for a good purpose; and so, even with evil, he is able to turn all things into good. Evil does not frustrate God's righteous plans; rather, it is the very means that God uses to fulfill his righteous purposes. Oh, let us tremble at this glorious mystery!

Genesis 50:20; 1 Kings 22:19-23; Romans 8:28; Acts 2:22-23; [cf. the entire book of Habakkuk]

"Divine wisdom brought good out of evil, even as the chemist distils healing drugs from poisonous plants." - Charles H. Spurgeon 7. The Vindication Of God

If there is one word to sum up the truths that we may learn about who God is by studying his relationship to man as a sinner, it must be "vindication". If there is nothing else we can learn about who God is in relationship to man as a sinner, we may know with certainty that God is always right, even if it means the rest of the world is wrong together. The entire history of the race of mankind will someday come together to declare with unmistakable certainty that God is righteous and his way is perfect. No matter who may bring presumptuous charges against God, as his creatures have been doing from the time of Satan's fall, in the end God will be vindicated and all who oppose him will be condemned.

Psalms 51:4; Job 33:8-13; Romans 3:3-4

03.5. Attributes of God with respect to redeemed man

The Attributes Of God With Respect To Man As Redeemed 1.The Redemptive Love Of God

We are now at the point in our study where we must encounter the most amazing, glorious, unfathomable truth ever told: the righteous and holy God loves sinful man! How staggering to think that such a thing could be! God has no need in himself that would cause him to seek our reconciliation. There is nothing desirable in us that God should be attracted to. We certainly do not deserve his love. It would be just of God to pour out wrath and hatred upon each one of us forevermore. That would be justice. And yet, co-existing along with justice in God's perfect nature is his free, sovereign love, a love which is the only source and fountain of our eternal redemption. We may grow in our knowledge of the redemptive love of God in Christ Jesus for all eternity, and still never plumb its depths. How can we not bow our hearts in worship every time we consider this glorious truth?

John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10; 1 John 3:1 a; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:19; Ephesians 3:17-19; Song of Solomon 2:4 2.The Condescension Of God

Every gracious and good act of God toward us manifests his condescension. God is high and lofty, and we are lowly and miserable. Every good thing we have, we have because God stooped to give it to us. How glorious a truth this is! And this attribute of God is thoroughly and perfectly expressed to us through Christ. We can only know God because Christ deigned to reveal him to us. We can only come before him in confidence and hope upon his grace because Christ stooped to become flesh, to be humiliated, to be obedient to the point of death on a cross. This awesome condescension of God in the person of Jesus is the basis for every good thing we have. Every gift we possess now or in the future is a blood-bought gift. It is the fruit of God's mighty condescension on the cross. And the greatest of these gifts is that we who were sinners can now know God and have a favorable relationship with him.

Php 2:5-11; Isaiah 53:2-7; John 1:10-11, John 1:14, John 1:18; Hebrews 2:9-18. The Mercy Of God

It is an amazing truth that the righteous Judge would not give us the punishment that we deserve. But that is exactly what God's mercy does for us. This mercy is sourced in God's free redemptive love. It is brought about through his condescension in Christ Jesus. Without it we are lost. Oh, let us praise our wonderful Savior for his mercy in our lives! Let us sing with John Stocker, Thy mercy my God is the theme of my song The joy of my heart and the boast of my tongue Thy free grace alone from the first to the last Hath won my affection and bound my soul fast Without Thy sweet mercy I could not live here Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair But through Thy free goodness my spirits revive And He that first made me still keeps me alive Thy mercy is more than a match for my heart Which wonders to feel its own hardness depart Dissolved by Thy goodness I fall to the ground And weep for the praise of the mercy I've found Great Father of mercies Thy goodness I own In the covenant of Thy crucified Son All praise to the Spirit whose whisper divine

Seals mercy and pardon and righteousness mine!

Psalms 136:1-3; Numbers 14:18; Psalms 86:5; Luke 1:76-79; 1 Peter 1:3; Psalms 40:11 4.The Grace Of God

God's grace is the free, sovereign, unmerited favor that he shows to us. God's grace even extends beyond his mercy, which withholds from us the punishment we deserve for our sins. So great is the Father's love for us, that he did not rest with merely fixing the devastation our rebellion brought, but he went beyond that and procured for us many marvelous benefits. God's mercy may be extended in a limited sense to all of mankind; but his grace is reserved for the elect alone. If there is one thing we may learn from the nature of grace it is that, anyone who seeks grace from God must utterly abandon any thought of works or merit in procuring or maintaining a right relationship with God.

2 Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 2:4-9; Romans 3:23-24; Romans 4:4-5; Romans 5:21; Romans 11:5-36. The Faithfulness Of God So great was God's love and so greatly did he condescend to make his mercy towards the elect sure, that now the continuance of mercy and grace is demanded by the very faithfulness of God. God has freely and graciously bound himself to us so that, if his favor towards his children ever fails, then he would be shown unfaithful. But God is faithful and our mercy is sure forevermore. It was through entering into a covenant relationship with his children that God bound himself by his faithfulness to keep us forever in his love. Our confidence in remaining in God's favor, if we truly know and love him, is as sure as the very character of God!

A) God entered into a sovereign covenant with his children and bound himself to them by his own faithfulness

Genesis 3:15; Genesis 17:7; Isaiah 49:7-8, Isaiah 49:15-16; Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 6:13-18; Psalms 89:33-34; Hosea 2:20

B)God's faithfulness ensures that all of his children will be sanctified and will persevere in faith until they reach glory Php 1:6; John 6:37-39; Hebrews 13:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

C)Praise for God's faithfulness Psalms 36:5; Psalms 89:1-6; Lamentations 3:22-66. The Righteousness/Justice Of God

It must greatly increase our wonder at the redemptive love of God to consider that it was not, nor ever could have been, irrespective of his justice and righteousness. God cannot glibly overlook evil. His eyes are too pure to behold evil (Habakkuk 1:13). His mercy, then, does not ignore his righteousness. On the contrary, the flawless righteousness of God is the very thing that demands that he treat us as though we had no sin. How could this be? It is only because of the cross. Consider how glorious the cross is: there is no greater display of the wrath of God against sin than upon the cross, where because of sin he was pleased to crush his own spotless Son. There is no greater display of God's justice than on the cross, where for sins against an infinitely holy God he demanded an infinitely worthy Sacrifice. There is no greater display of God's redemptive love and mercy than on the cross, where because he loved sinful man, God was pleased to substitute his own dear Son to absorb his wrath against sin so that we could be reconciled to him, wearing the perfect righteousness of Christ as our only plea in approaching him. The cross made it righteous and just for God to do nothing other than forgive us, love us, show his favor toward us, and overwhelm us with sweet grace for all eternity. The very heart of the great transaction of the cross

is the precious doctrine of imputation. Upon the cross, God credited our sin to Christ's account, and credited his righteousness to our account, so that it was righteous and just of God to smite his Son and to heal us, his redeemed children. Marvel at the glory of the cross! Therein is the righteousness, mercy, faithfulness, and love of God displayed for all to see!

2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 1:16-17; Psalms 32:1-2; Psalms 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-12. The Initiative Of God

Man's natural wickedness and hatred toward God is so extreme that, if left on his own, he would never come to God and humbly ask for his mercy. But God did not leave him on his own. His love is so great that he actively initiates the reconciliation that he has provided through the atoning work of the cross. Hence, we can learn the wondrous truth of God's initiative in showing mercy to man when we consider his attributes with respect to man as redeemed. Included in this initiative is God's electing, calling, regenerating, and giving faith and repentance, all while man is still a hardened rebel who would never desire to seek God's love.

A)Man on his own would never seek God Romans 3:10-12; Ephesians 2:1-5; John 3:20; John 6:44
B)God elected some for salvation from eternity past Ephesians 1:3-5; John 15:16; Romans 9:11-13, Romans 9:16, Romans 9:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 8:29-30 C)God sovereignly calls all who come to Christ 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 1:26-27; 2 Timothy 1:9 D)God regenerates all whom he calls so that they can see the truth Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 1:12-13; John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 2:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17 E)God gives the faith and repentance of those who believe and repent Ephesians 2:8; Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; Philippians 1:29 8.The Fatherhood Of God The end result of the immense grace that God poured out upon us is that, now, as his redeemed, we can see an attribute of God which we could never have known before: his Fatherhood. Through the grace that he has poured out upon us, God has adopted us into his family to be his children, and brothers of Christ, the firstborn. Throughout all eternity, we will know no sweeter joy than that of being the children of God.

Ephesians 1:3-5; Romans 8:29; Hebrews 2:10-13; Matthew 6:9 9.The Joy Of God In His Redeemed The work of the cross was so perfect, and the grace of God so abundant that it did much more than make us accepted with God. We are not just endured, we are embraced! We are not just forgiven, we are rejoiced in! This is a tremendous truth. God joyfully delights in his children, and Christ truly delights in his bride.

Zephaniah 3:17; Luke 15:4-7; Song of Solomon 2:2; Song of Solomon 4:9-16. The Glorification Of God In His Redeemed When we first discussed the attributes of God with relation to man as a created being, we mentioned that the ultimate purpose of creation is the glorification of God. This is particularly true with relation to man as redeemed. The ultimate purpose of redemption, just like that of creation, is the glorification of God. This will be our pursuit throughout eternity. There is no more fitting place at which we might bring our study to an end. Let us do everything to the glory of the One who made us and redeemed us for the sake of his name!

Romans 9:22-24; Ephesians 1:4-6, Ephesians 1:11-12, Ephesians 1:14; Ephesians 2:4-7; Revelation 5:12

03.6. Glossary of terms

GLOSSARY OF TERMS Solitariness: That God is one God, self-existent, self-sufficient, and unique.

Eternality: That God is not bound by time, but is always existent, always present, and holds all of time in his hand.

Invisibility: That God has no physical form, and cannot be seen by any creature.

Spirituality: That God in his essence is spirit; that he is actual Personality who may influence the physical world, but is not bound by it.

Immutability: That God is wholly perfect, and therefore cannot change.

Omnipotence: That God has infinite power to accomplish all his will.

Omniscience: That God knows all things exhaustively, actual or potential, past or future; that he effortlessly understands all the best ends and all the best means to those ends.

Holiness: That God is utterly separate from all creation, and the only source of all moral and ethical perfection.

Love, essential: That God's essential being is love; that his love is fully and perfectly manifested within the fellowship of the Trinity, apart from any relationship to creation. See Love, redemptive.

Creativity: That attribute which God displayed when he brought the worlds into existence with a word, and ordered them in beauty and harmony.

Sustaining: Preservation. That God actively holds all creation together and keeps it in existence.

Transcendence: That God is different, separate from, and higher than his creation.

Omnipresence: That God in his being is infinite and unbounded. That he is everywhere at all times.

Ownership: That God created all things, and therefore possesses all things. That he has all rights to make, shape, and use all of his creation as he sees fit.

Law-giving: That God tells every created thing how to conduct itself. That he can and does lay moral obligations on men.

Sovereignty: That God actively reigns over all creation, unilaterally raising up and putting down, dispensing mercy and justice, hardening and granting repentance as he wills.

Goodness: The kindness and benevolence which God shows to all of his creation.

Glorification: Displaying or acknowledging the infinite glory that God by his very nature possesses; the purpose for all of creation.

Wrath: That God by his holy nature utterly abhors sin and therefore holds immense and terrible anger towards sinners.

Righteousness: Justice. That all of God's actions are without sin and consistent with his holy character, and therefore, no charge can ever be brought against him.

Judgment: That God actively brings into account every thought and action of every moral creature and rewards each one appropriately, according to the perfect standard of his holiness.

Longsuffering: That God often withholds his wrath and anger for considerable amounts of time instead of pouring out wrath and judgment immediately.

Hardening: That God sometimes judges sinners by destining them to continue in their sinfulness and treasure up greater wrath in the day of judgment.

Sovereignty over evil: See sovereignty. That God is not frustrated by the rebellious acts of his creatures, but instead uses those very deeds to accomplish his holy purposes.

Vindication: That at the conclusion of history, God will be shown to be right in all that he has done, and all who have opposed him will be justly condemned.

Love, redemptive: That God freely, sovereignly, and apart from any need in himself desires to give to the sinful men whom he has chosen all that is necessary for their greatest good and eternal joy.

Condescension: That God, through Christ, humbly descends from the unapproachable heights of his glory to reveal himself to us and procure the blessings of his grace for us.

Mercy: That God withholds from us the punishment that we so richly deserve by pouring it out upon Christ instead.

Grace: That free, sovereign, and unmerited favor which God displays toward his children because of the cross.

Faithfulness: The trustworthiness of God to fulfill what he promised and to complete what he started.

Righteousness, to the redeemed: See righteousness. That it is right and just that God should forgive us, show us favor, and give us the rewards that perfect righteousness merits, because of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.

Initiative: That God actively and sovereignly draws sinners to himself when they are naturally inclined against him. That man's response to the offer of salvation is secondary to God's initial work of electing, calling, and regenerating.

Fatherhood: That God adopts into his family all whom he redeems, bestowing upon them all the rights and privileges of being his children and Christ's brothers.

Joy, in the redeemed: That God not only accepts those whom he redeems, but genuinely rejoices in them. That Christ truly delights in those whom the Father has given to him.

Glorification, in the redeemed: See glorification. That the ultimate purpose of God's great work of redemption is to display the marvelous glory of his grace.

04.0. Catagorized Scripture-Knowing Ourselves

KNOWING OURSELVES The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? - Jeremiah 17:9 General Introduction When Plato expressed the ultimate purpose and great imperative of philosophy with this command, “know yourself,” he had struck upon a valuable insight. If we would know our purpose in life, how we should relate to the world and to others around us, what our goals and dreams and desires should consist of, how we should spend our time, then we must know who we are. We must know how we were made and for what purpose, and we must know whether or not we are fulfilling that purpose, and if not, how we might do so. If we desire to order our lives according to wise and reasonable principles, then first a thoroughgoing self-knowledge is indispensable.

However, this command is not so easy to put into practice. Who really knows what he is like, deep down inside? Who can say from what mysterious inner workings of our minds come bizarre dreams, unexpected, random thoughts that defy all reason, moments of insight and creativity, moments of foolishness and lapses of judgment? Do we really know how our minds function? Do we really know what we actually want or need? If so, then why is it that, when we have finally accomplished or acquired something that we thought we wanted, we suddenly feel so empty and let down? Who has not felt the deep and inexplicable yearning for something more, and not knowing quite what it was or how to pursue it, tried to bury the yearning in a busy pursuit of professional advancement or entertainment or any of those other things that have always let us down before? If we are ever to rise above this condition, we must know who we are, what we were made to do and enjoy, why we are not doing and enjoying what we were made for, and how to pursue a soul-deep change. But even here we must take another step back: for we cannot know ourselves until we know the One who made us. We cannot find out about our purpose or that in which lies our highest and eternal joy, unless we hear it from the very lips of our Creator. We cannot understand the miserable extent to which we have failed, unless we measure ourselves against his perfection. And neither can we encounter the only hope of a lasting solution, unless we measure our failure against his proffered grace. We have spent the last three lessons [here, here, and here] examining who the Trinitarian God is, and how he has revealed his character to mankind. Now, we are ready to take up this daunting question, “Who are we?”. But since our hearts are “desperately wicked and deceitful above all things,” we stand in dire need of grace, as we search the scriptures in pursuit of an answer to this perplexing question. Spirit of God, uncover before us the truths of your word, show us who we were meant to be, and how we can find true joy and fulfillment!

Let us now examine the nature of mankind in four different conditions: Man Innocent, the estate into which he was first created; Man Depraved, the estate into which he was plunged in consequence of his rebellion against God; Man Regenerated, the estate into which God’s grace brings him in this life, giving him a new, spiritual nature, co-existent with his old, depraved nature; and Man Glorified, the estate into which God’s grace will bring him in eternity, causing his new, spiritual nature to triumph and destroying his old, sinful nature forevermore.

04.1. Man Innocent

MAN INNOCENT

Image-Bearing The nature of man as the image-bearer of God is what sets him apart from the rest of creation, and gives him a unique and dignified role among all God's creatures. It is a difficult task to define concisely what is meant by the "image of God" in man, but it is at least possible to observe several characteristics or predicates of that divine image. For example, man possesses moral agency, that is, his decisions and actions are directed to some end, either positively good or negatively evil, and are motivated by a heart attitude that is likewise either good or bad; hence, he is justly responsible for the reward or punishment due to all of his actions. Man is likewise characterized by perpetuity, so that, once created, he will exist in some state forevermore; by creativity, so that, just as God brought all things into existence according to the idea of his own mind, so man is able to shape existing material intelligently and artfully according to his fruitful imagination; by speech-capability, so that, just as God through his Word brought his intentions into being, so man through his word is able to express his thoughts and ideas; by rationality, so that, man's actions are not the mere product of brute instinct, but vested with the qualities of deliberation, desire for the highest good, and wisdom in how to pursue that desire; by dominion, so that, just as God rules over all his creation, man rules over all that is under him, subduing all kinds of animals and putting the earth to fruitful use; and by society, so that, just as God is in ceaseless and joyful fellowship with the members of the blessed Trinity, so man is ever in society with others of his kind, and is not complete without this fellowship.

1. The Image of God

Genesis 1:26-27

Genesis 9:6 James 3:9 2.

Moral Agency

Genesis 2:16-17

Genesis 4:7 Deuteronomy 11:26-28 Deuteronomy 30:15-16 Ezekiel 33:14-16

Matthew 23:33

Romans 3:5-8

Hebrews 2:1-3 Hebrews 10:28-39.

Perpetuity

Daniel 12:2

Matthew 25:46

Luke 20:34-38 Revelation 20:11-15.

Creativity

Genesis 4:20-22

Exodus 31:1-6 Ecclesiastes 7:29 5.

Speech-capability

Genesis 2:19-20

Job 16:5

Psalms 12:2-4

Psalms 141:3

Proverbs 10:11

Proverbs 15:26

Proverbs 15:28

Proverbs 18:4 Matthew 12:34-37

James 1:19

James 3:1-10

Genesis 1:1-3

Isaiah 40:5-8

Isaiah 55:8-11 Hebrews 1:1-14.

Rationality

Proverbs 25:2

Isaiah 1:18

Isaiah 43:25-26

Daniel 4:36 Acts 17:2-34.

Dominion

Genesis 1:26-28

Genesis 9:1-2

Psalms 8:5-8 Hebrews 2:6-18.

Society

Genesis 2:18-24

Psalms 127:3-5 Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 Song of Solomon 2:1-4

[See the rest of the Song of Solomon as well.]

Romans 8:14-17 Ephesians 5:22-32 Revelation 19:6-9

Psalms 2:7

Romans 1:1-4

Good

Genesis 1:27-31

Genesis 3:8

Genesis 5:1-2 Ecclesiastes 7:29 God made man upright

Susceptible Ecclesiastes 7:29 but they have sought out many schemes

Genesis 2:16-17

Genesis 3:1-6

Responsible 1. To his Creator

Isaiah 29:16

Isaiah 45:9-12

Isaiah 64:8

Malachi 2:10 Romans 9:20-33. To exercise dominion

Genesis 1:26

Genesis 2:19-20

Genesis 9:2-3

Psalms 8:3-9

Exodus 23:11-12 Deuteronomy 22:6-7 Deuteronomy 22:10 Deuteronomy 25:4

Proverbs 12:10

Isaiah 32:20

James 3:7

Isaiah 65:25 Hebrews 2:5-18. To multiply

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 9:1

Genesis 2:21-25

Genesis 3:20

Genesis 4:1

Genesis 5:1-3

Psalms 127:3-5 Proverbs 5:15-21

Matthew 19:3-8 Ephesians 5:22-33

Romans 4:16-18

Galatians 3:7 Hebrews 2:9-18. To obey

Genesis 2:15-17 Deuteronomy 28:15-16 Deuteronomy 28:45-48 Deuteronomy 28:58-61

Psalms 119:21

Psalms 119:155

Leviticus 18:5 Deuteronomy 28:1-14

Psalms 19:7-11

Psalms 119:1-8

Psalms 119:97 Psalms 119:46-48 Psalms 119:156-158

Psalms 119:176

Psalms 119:10

Psalms 119:12

Matthew 3:13-17

Matthew 4:1-11

Hebrews 4:14-16

Hebrews 5:8-10

Romans 4:22-25

Privileged The responsibilities that God enjoined upon innocent man were joined with the greatest of privileges. Man's responsibility to exercise dominion over the earth was characterized by the great privilege of ruling beneath and in analogy to God's own universal rule; his responsibility to multiply and fill the earth held forth the immense privilege and joy of society with others of his own kind, in the likeness of the blessed relationships within the eternal Trinity; his responsibility to obey God was attached to the unspeakable privilege of walking in fellowship with him, and enjoying the good fruits of the Garden that he had placed him in. Man, when he was first created, was the most blessed of all creatures, given great responsibility and filled with unspeakable joys and privileges, all of which derived from his unique relationship to God, as the one being formed in the image of the Divine.

04.2. Man Depraved

MAN DEPRAVED The Fall

Although God created man innocent, upright, good, and in his very image, yet man rebelled against the Word of God in the Garden of Eden, and plunged himself and all his race into a state of misery and hopelessness. The effects of this fall were catastrophic and widespread: the image of God in man was marred (but not completely obliterated); man was placed under a curse of immense proportions, changing the delightful responsibilities and privileges that he had enjoyed into a sorrowful and exhausting toil; all of creation was plunged into a curse and made to exist in vanity; mankind came under the sentence of the eternal punishment of death; and all the descendants of that first man and woman were made the heirs of the sinful nature, curse, and punishment into which their first parents had plunged themselves. Its nature 1. Misconception of God

Genesis 3:1-3

Psalms 10:2-14

Psalms 78:19-20

Psalms 94:3-11

Malachi 1:2-3

Malachi 2:17 1 Corinthians 2:6-16.

Misconception of Self

Genesis 3:4-5 2 Chronicles 26:16

Isaiah 14:12-17

Ezekiel 28:2-9 Ezekiel 28:12-19

Daniel 5:20-21 Revelation 18:7-24.

Unbelief

Genesis 3:6

2 Kings 7:1-2

Psalms 78:21-22

Psalms 78:32-33

Romans 14:22-23

Hebrews 3:7-13

Hebrews 11:6

4. Disobedience

Genesis 3:6 Deuteronomy 18:18-19

1 Samuel 15:22 Ecclesiastes 5:1 Jeremiah 7:22-24

Amos 5:21-24

John 14:23-24 Its effects

1. Curse

Genesis 3:9-24

Genesis 4:10-12

Genesis 9:24-25 Deuteronomy 27:26 Deuteronomy 30:15-20.

Distortion of all previous responsibilities The Responsibility to Obey

Genesis 4:6-10

Genesis 4:23

Genesis 6:11-13

Genesis 11:1-9 Numbers 14:21-23 The Responsibility to Exercise Dominion

Genesis 6:1-4

[According to one interpretation, this passage is speaking of mighty rulers who perverted their authority, engaged in unbridled polygamy, and bore children who ruled oppressively and unjustly in the earth.]

Exodus 5:6-18

Judges 1:7

Judges 9:1-6

Judges 17:6

Isaiah 10:1-2

Jeremiah 23:1-2

Ezekiel 34:1-10

Ezekiel 45:8-9 The Responsibility to Multiply

Genesis 4:19

Genesis 6:1-2

Genesis 19:4-9 Genesis 19:30-38

Genesis 38:7-10 Genesis 38:13-17

2 Samuel 11:1-4 2 Samuel 13:1-17 Leviticus 18:3-25

Romans 1:24-32.

Creation-wide vanity

Genesis 3:17-18

Genesis 6:6-7

Genesis 6:17 Ecclesiastes 1:2-8 Jeremiah 9:10-13

Romans 8:19-39.

Death

Genesis 2:17

Romans 5:12 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

Physical Death

Genesis 4:8

Genesis 5:3-8

Ezekiel 18:20

Hebrews 9:27 Separation from God (Spiritual Death)

Genesis 3:23-24

Psalms 15:1-5

Isaiah 6:1-5

Habakkuk 1:13

Luke 5:8

John 3:5-7

Ephesians 2:1-3

Colossians 2:13 2 Thessalonians 1:9 3. Inherited Depravity

Psalms 51:5

Psalms 58:3

Romans 5:18-21.

Distortion of God's Image

Genesis 5:1-3

Romans 5:19 1 Corinthians 15:48-49 Man's Depravity

After Adam's fall, all mankind was plunged into a state of total depravity. Adam gained a sinful nature by his rebellion, so that he was no longer able to do good; and all of his offspring inherited that same evil nature. Even man's best acts, after the catastrophe in the Garden of Eden, are as filthy rags before God, for they are shot through with many imperfect and God-dishonoring motives. Every responsibility that man had in the Garden was perverted and corrupted by fallen humanity, and every individual came under God's death sentence. And man was hopeless to find a remedy: he was the slave of sin and of the Serpent who had first deceived him, and blinded and unable to understand God, let alone come to him in faith, or follow him. In short, man's fall brought utter catastrophe, and it would take a divine and sovereign act of mercy ever to restore him to his lost estate of righteousness and fellowship with God.

1. His Corruption

Genesis 6:5

Job 15:14-16

Psalms 130:3

Psalms 143:2

Proverbs 20:9 Ecclesiastes 7:20

Isaiah 64:6

Jeremiah 13:23

John 3:19

Romans 3:9-12

James 3:8

1 John 1:8 2. His blindness

John 3:19-21 Ephesians 4:17-19

Ephesians 5:8 3. His bondage to sin and Satan

John 8:34

John 8:44

Romans 6:20 2 Timothy 2:25-26

Titus 3:3

1 John 5:19 4. His Evil Nature

Genesis 6:5

Genesis 8:21

Job 14:4 Ecclesiastes 9:3

Jeremiah 17:9

Mark 7:21-23

Matthew 7:16-18

Matthew 12:33

Mark 7:21-23

Romans 8:7-8

James 1:13-27. His Inability (to believe in God, come to him, seek him, etc.)

Isaiah 64:7

John 6:44

John 6:65

John 8:43-45

John 10:26

John 12:37-41

John 14:17 1 Corinthians 2:14

Romans 3:10-11 Man's Reward So great a fall brought equally great consequences: God is utterly holy, and the sinful state into which man had plunged himself could not be overlooked by the righteous Judge of all the earth. God had promised that if Adam disobeyed he would be punished with death: this punishment came, and all men now die physically; but more horrible yet is the fact that all die spiritually, and are no longer able to be found in the presence of the Holy God, the knowledge of whom is eternal life. If no salvation is found from this desperate plight, then Adam's seed is justly doomed to spend eternity in hell, away from the presence of the Lord of Glory. The negative side of baptism is a fitting symbol of this final judgment: when God brought Noah through the waters of judgment in the ark (a type of Christ), the world was destroyed in that baptism; when God delivered his people from Egypt through the Red Sea, Pharaoh was destroyed in that baptism; and when John came proclaiming the baptism of repentance, he told the people that the Messiah would judge the world in a baptism of fire.

1. Hardening and Reprobation

Exodus 4:21

Romans 1:18-32

Romans 9:13

Romans 9:17-18

Romans 9:21-22

1 Peter 2:8

2. Punishment Examples of God's Wrath

Genesis 7:17-24

Genesis 11:5-9 Genesis 19:14-29

Exodus 14:23-31

Jude 1:4-11 The Baptism of Judgment

Matthew 3:7-12

Luke 12:49-51

[See also the examples of the flood and the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, under "Examples of God's Wrath"] Final Punishment in Hell

Isaiah 66:24

Matthew 10:28 Matthew 11:20-24 Matthew 23:33-36

Mark 9:42-48

Luke 16:19-31

Romans 2:5-12 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 Revelation 20:10-15 Summative description: Man depraved is not able not to sin.

04.3. Man Redeemed

MAN REDEEMED

Loved When God purposed to redeem a people from the mass of fallen humanity, the sole and inexhaustible source of this surprising and undeserved grace was God's free, unconditional love. We were not lovable in any way; but God, who is love itself, chose to show his amazing love in the vessels which he had formed to showcase his mercy. God's love for his people is eternal, determined before the foundation of the earth. And it is special and individual. His redemptive love is not given to every person alike, but is prepared only for those whom he has chosen, not for any good in them, but to demonstrate the freeness of his favor.

1. Eternally

Jeremiah 31:3

Romans 1:7

Ephesians 2:4-7 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

1 John 4:7-12

1 John 4:16

1 John 4:19 2.Specially Deuteronomy 4:35-38 Deuteronomy 7:7-8 Deuteronomy 10:14-15
Deuteronomy 23:3-6 Deuteronomy 33:1-3

2 Samuel 12:24

Psalms 78:67-68

Psalms 89:20-33

Isaiah 38:17

Isaiah 43:3-4

Hosea 11:1

Malachi 1:2-3

John 16:26-27

John 17:22-26

Romans 5:7-8

Romans 9:13-15

Elected

God's eternal love for his people flows naturally into his eternal choice to redeem them. This unconditional, sovereign election is the product and proof of his eternal love. Although fallen men like to cling to the idea of some vestige of remaining good in themselves, and are ready to suppose that God saved them, and not others, because they were more willing to believe or more ready to seek, the bible is clear that election is all about God's glory: he saw nothing good in us, not even the slightest modicum of desire to return to him, but he chose us anyway, to glorify the freeness of his mercy and lovingkindness.

1. The fact of election

Exodus 6:7

Deuteronomy 7:6 Deuteronomy 10:14-15

Psalms 33:12

Isaiah 43:20-21

Psalms 65:4

Matthew 24:24

John 6:37

John 15:16

Acts 13:48

Romans 8:28-30

Romans 9:10-24

Romans 11:5-7

Ephesians 1:3-6 Ephesians 1:11-12 1 Thessalonians 1:4 1 Thessalonians 5:9 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17. The motivation of election oHis own good pleasure

Ephesians 1:5

2 Timothy 1:9 oThe display of his glory

Isaiah 43:6-7

Romans 9:22-24

Ephesians 2:4-7 1 Corinthians 1:27-31 oHis special love Deuteronomy 7:6-8 2 Thessalonians 2:13 oHis foreknowledge

Romans 8:29

1 Peter 1:1-2 oWhich means his relational love or causative purpose

Jeremiah 1:5

Amos 3:2

Matthew 7:22-23 1 Corinthians 8:3

2 Timothy 2:19

1 Peter 1:20 oBut not any good [nobility, wisdom, power, choice, seeking] he foresees in anyone

Deuteronomy 7:7

Romans 9:11-13

Romans 9:16

Romans 10:20 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 1 Corinthians 4:7

2 Timothy 1:9

Called In eternity, God loved us and chose to redeem us; and then, in time, he brought that eternal will to fruition, and called us into his kingdom. God calls sinners in two ways: outwardly, he proclaims the truth of his free grace to all alike, through his gospel messengers; free pardon is offered without exception, and all who desire to embrace it are invited to do so. However, no man in his natural, fallen condition is willing to accept so gracious a call, because his deeds are evil. Therefore, in those whom he has chosen, God joins the outward call of the gospel with an inward, effectual call of his Spirit, who overcomes native resistance, so that the one thus called will respond indeed.

1. Outwardly

Isaiah 55:1-3

Matthew 22:2-14

John 3:14-17

John 7:37-38

Romans 10:11-18

Colossians 1:23 Revelation 22:17 2.

Effectually

Luke 8:52-55

John 6:44-45

John 10:1-5

John 10:16

John 10:25-28

John 11:43-44

Romans 1:5-7

Romans 8:28-30

Romans 9:23-26 1 Corinthians 1:1-2 1 Corinthians 1:9 1 Corinthians 1:23-24 1 Corinthians 7:20-24 2 Corinthians 4:4-6

Galatians 1:6 Galatians 1:15-16

Ephesians 1:18 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

1 Timothy 6:12

2 Timothy 1:8-9

Hebrews 9:15

James 2:7

1 Peter 2:9

1 Peter 5:10-11

2 Peter 1:3-4

Jude 1:1 Revelation 17:14

Regenerated When God first gave his commandment to man in the Garden, he warned him that disobedience would result in death. That promise in fact came true when Adam disobeyed; and since that first sin, all men have been born into a state of spiritual death. If they would regain what was lost, therefore, their first need is that they be given true life again. This is what regeneration is all about: it is a new birth, God's implantation of a spiritual life into a heart that had been dead, thereby causing it to beat again with love, obedience, faith, and repentance, realities to which it had before been insensible.

1. Its origin: divine choice

Ezekiel 37:1-14

John 1:12-13 John 3:7-36. Its result: oA new nature

1 John 2:29

1 John 3:1-3

1 John 3:9-10

1 John 5:1-4

1 John 5:18 oA new heart Deuteronomy 30:6 Ezekiel 11:19-20 Ezekiel 36:25-27 oFaith

John 3:27

Php 1:29

2 Peter 1:1

Acts 16:14

Acts 18:27 Ephesians 2:8-10 oRepentance

Acts 5:31

Acts 11:18 2 Timothy 2:25-26 1 Corinthians 4:7

Baptized

Ever since God established his gracious covenant with mankind, he was pleased to seal and signify his promise of favor with visible signs of confirmation. In the Abrahamic covenant, the sign and seal was circumcision, which looked ahead to when Christ would be cut off for the sins of the people, and signified the removal of the sinful flesh and the new life to which believers in him would be raised. But when Christ came and was actually cut off, the covenant sign changed to baptism, through which a believer symbolically passes through the waters of judgment and is sprinkled clean from all sin, and preserved safe in Christ. The reality to which this sign points is the baptism with the Spirit, by which believers receive true, spiritual life indeed, by means of the Spirit of God poured out upon them.

1.The significance of circumcision Deuteronomy 10:16 Deuteronomy 30:6

Jeremiah 4:4 Romans 4:11-25. The correlation of circumcision and baptism Colossians 2:11-23.

Old Testament examples of baptism

Genesis 7:17-24

1 Peter 3:18-21

Exodus 14:23-31 1 Corinthians 10:1-24.

Baptism with water Matthew 28:18-20

Acts 2:38

Acts 10:46-48

Acts 22:16

Romans 6:3-5

Ephesians 5:26 5.Baptism with the Spirit

Acts 1:4-5

Acts 2:1-4

Acts 11:15-17 1 Corinthians 12:13

Titus 3:4-6

Justified

There is no more precious term in the believer's vocabulary than "justification," nor is there any other single word which conveys more of the truth of the gospel than this. The heart of the gospel is that man's fundamental problem is sin, and if the sickness, death, punishment, wrath, and despair which are its fruits will ever be overcome, then his sin problem must first be taken care of.

If man would ever be happy again, ever enjoy the presence of the holy God, ever regain what he lost in the Garden, and so pass into the joy of eternal life, his sin must be traded for a spotless righteousness. Justification is the unalterable verdict of the righteous Judge that this has indeed happened: the sinner who had been stained by transgression is legally declared to be wholly righteous, by faith alone. Of course, the God who cannot lie would not pass a verdict that is not true; and so the principle by which justification thrives is that of imputation. Jesus was pleased to give (or impute) to me his flawless righteousness, and to take in its place my putrid mass of stinking iniquity. The Father then treated him, on the cross, as justice demanded that I be treated; but when he raised him from the dead, he confirmed before all that his wrath had been satisfied, and that the substitutionary sacrifice of his Son had been acceptable. In this way, God was able to be just in his verdict and still declare me just, although my past had been stained with immense sin, and his court demands impeccable righteousness.

1. Righteousness imputed

Jeremiah 23:6

Zechariah 3:3-5

Romans 9:30-32 [or, "received"]

Romans 10:3-4 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 2 Corinthians 5:21 Php 3:8-21.

Righteousness declared

Genesis 15:6

Psalms 32:1-2

Isaiah 45:21-25

Isaiah 53:11

Habakkuk 2:4

Romans 1:16-17

Romans 3:20-28

Romans 4:1-13

Romans 4:20-5

Romans 5:17-19

Romans 8:29-34 Galatians 2:15-16 Galatians 3:5-14 Galatians 3:21-24

Galatians 5:4-6

Forgiven Our basic problem consists of this, first, that by our sin we have become indebted to the one we have wronged; and second, that since the one we have wronged is our Creator, the Almighty God of the universe, our sin debt is therefore infinite, and can never adequately be repaid. We are as dishonest employees who have embezzled and wasted millions of dollars from

our employers; and now, although we have not the wherewithal to pay them back, we are still under the obligation of justice to do so. Being so helplessly burdened with a debt we could never repay, how sweet must the sound of our Savior's words fall upon our ears, "Your sins are forgiven; go in peace"?

Exodus 34:6-7 Leviticus 4:25-26

Psalms 103:12

Psalms 130:3-4

Isaiah 1:18 Jeremiah 31:33-34

Micah 7:18-19

Matthew 6:12-15

Matthew 9:2-7 Matthew 18:21-35 Matthew 26:27-28

Mark 11:25

Luke 23:33-34

Luke 24:46-47

Acts 2:37-38

Ephesians 4:32

Colossians 3:13 Hebrews 10:11-18

1 John 1:9

Redeemed

Before we could have been brought back to God, there was a price that had to be paid. The righteous law of God was hanging over our heads, with all its unfulfilled demands and broken regulations; and the payment that it required stood in the way of our pardon. So infinite was our debt and obligation, that the only redemption price that could ever have been valuable enough was the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb without spot and without blemish.

1. Types of Redemption

Exodus 13:12-13

Numbers 3:40-51 Numbers 18:15-17

Ruth 4:1-2 2.The True Redemption of Christ Psalms 49:7-8, Psalms 49:15

Psalms 130:7-8

Isaiah 35:10

Mark 10:45

Acts 20:28 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Galatians 3:13-14

Galatians 4:1-5

Ephesians 1:7-8

Titus 2:13-14

Hebrews 9:11-15

1 Peter 1:17-19 Revelation 5:9-10

Sanctified The work of Christ in overturning the effects of sin and the curse was manifold: through Adam's fall we became legally guilty, and therefore needed both acquittal and a positive righteousness; this Christ gave us in justification. But we also became impure and defiled, and hence needed washing and sanctification, which he also bestowed upon us. The wound in Christ's side thus flowed with blood, for our absolution from guilt, and water, for our purification from sin - and the purification is just as necessary as the absolution, if we are ever to come before the righteous and holy God. Our sanctification is therefore as necessary as our justification. It is not just a means to an end, but an end in itself. This sanctification may be viewed in different ways: positionally, we have been perfectly and fully sanctified already, and endowed with a perfect holiness; progressively, we are being more sanctified every day - the holiness we have been given is being worked into our lives by the agency of the Triune persons, through the means of the Word of God, by which we are being conformed to the image of Christ; and finally, our practical sanctification will be fully accomplished in glory, when we see the Son of God as he truly Isaiah 1:1-3 1.Old Testament Examples

Exodus 13:2 Hebrews 12:22-23 Hebrews 12:22-23

Exodus 19:6

1 Peter 2:9

Exodus 19:10-11 Revelation 19:7-8 Revelation 19:7-8

Exodus 40:9-11 Leviticus 10:10-11 Leviticus 21:17-24.

Positionally 1 Corinthians 1:2 1 Corinthians 1:30 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 1 Corinthians 6:11 Ephesians 5:25-7 Colossians 1:21-22

Hebrews 10:10

1 John 2:29 3.Progressively

Isaiah 52:11

Romans 6:4-18

Romans 12:1-2 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 2 Timothy 2:21-22

Titus 2:11-12

Hebrews 9:13-14

Hebrews 10:14

1 Peter 1:14-16

2 Peter 3:11-12

1 John 3:3 oBy the Father

Exodus 31:13 Leviticus 20:7-8 Ezekiel 37:27-28

Hebrews 12:10 oBy the Son

John 17:18-19

Hebrews 2:10-11

Hebrews 13:12 oBy the Holy Spirit

Romans 15:16 2 Thessalonians 2:13

1 Peter 1:2 oThrough the Word of God

John 17:17 2 Timothy 3:14-17

James 1:21-25 oToward the image of Christ

Romans 8:29 2 Corinthians 3:15-18 Ephesians 4:20-24

1 John 3:2 1 Corinthians 15:49

Spirit-indwelt Of all the promised blessings connected with the coming of the Messiah, some of the greatest involved the pouring out of the Spirit upon all God's people, who would dwell within them, teach them God's law in their inner beings, intercede for them with unspeakable groanings, and guarantee their final salvation. What greater and more astonishing privilege could be imagined than that the very God of creation would dwell in our hearts through faith, in spite of all our remaining corruption?

Ezekiel 36:25-27

Joel 2:28-32

John 14:16-17

Acts 2:14-21

Romans 8:8-9 Ephesians 3:14-21. Our Guarantee Ephesians 1:13-14

Ephesians 4:30 2. Our Teacher

John 14:25-26

John 15:26

John 16:7-14 2 Corinthians 3:15-18 1 John 2:20-29. Our Empowerer

Romans 8:2-6

Romans 8:10-14 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 Galatians 5:16-26. Our Intercessor

Romans 8:15-17

Romans 8:26-27

Reconciled The first and great consequence of man's sin was that he was separated from his God; the last and great accomplishment of Jesus' work was to bring us back to God. The final goal of the mighty work of redemption, therefore, is reconciliation, the calling out of a people who would dwell in the very presence of God, with a restored and blessed relationship with him.

Genesis 17:1-8

Isaiah 2:1-3

Isaiah 7:14 Jeremiah 31:33-34

Matthew 1:22-23

Romans 5:10-11 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 Ephesians 2:13-18 Colossians 1:19-23

1 Peter 2:24-25

1 Peter 3:18 Revelation 21:1-4

Adopted The great goal of Christ's work of redemption is our reconciliation to the God from whom our sins had separated us; but we can only glimpse to what unspeakable degree of intimate love and fellowship with him we have now been brought in the doctrine of adoption. God is not just our God in a distant or unemotional way; he is our Father, and loves us as he loves his own eternal Son, Jesus Christ. The fullness of every blessing we have received flows from this personal relationship into which we have been brought. Oh, what unspeakable love this is, that we, who were alienated sinners, should be called the sons of God! But so we are indeed, thanks to the unfathomable depths of Christ's work of love.

Exodus 4:22-23

Isaiah 43:5-7

Isaiah 63:16

Hosea 1:10

Matthew 5:44-45

Matthew 6:8-9

John 1:11-13

John 17:20-23

John 20:17

Romans 8:14-17

Romans 8:22-23

Romans 8:29-30 Galatians 3:25-26

Galatians 4:4-7

Ephesians 1:2-6 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Hebrews 2:9-14

Hebrews 12:5-11

1 John 3:1-2 Revelation 21:6-7

Saved The fact that Christ came to save us implies that we were in some desperate plight, and needed deliverance. Of course this is true: we were in a manifold and inescapable sin-caused calamity, and helpless to rescue ourselves. We needed to be saved first of all from our sins, and from the wrath of God which those sins were about to bring down upon our heads; but even after that, we remain hard-pressed by many ferocious enemies, such as the world system, the devil and his angels, and our own sinful nature; and we need a constant salvation from their snares, as we press on to our eternal reward. Ultimately, our salvation will come when Christ our Lord returns in glory to judge the world and bring us into his eternal kingdom.

John 3:16-17

Acts 2:16-21

Acts 4:11-12

Acts 16:30-31

Romans 10:9-13 1 Corinthians 1:18

Ephesians 2:4-9 Titus 3:4-15. From sin

Matthew 1:20-21

Matthew 9:2-7

Luke 7:44-50 1 Corinthians 15:1-42. From God's wrath

Psalms 85:1-7

Isaiah 12:1-2 Romans 5:9-21. From our enemies

Exodus 15:1-19

Psalms 27:1-9

Psalms 35:1-10

Isaiah 63:1-9

Luke 1:68-75 2 Corinthians 2:14-16

1 Peter 4:16-19 Revelation 12:10-17.

Unto the eternal kingdom Matthew 10:21-22 Matthew 19:21-26

Romans 8:22-24 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

2 Timothy 4:18

[The work of redemption is spoken of in other terms as well, which have not been included because of space. For example, the sins of redeemed man are atoned for, that is, covered by the blood of Christ; and they are propitiated, that is, God's wrath against them has been appeased.]
Summative description: man redeemed is able to sin and able not to sin, but with the guarantee of final victory.

04.4. Man Glorified

MAN GLORIFIED A Glorious Victory The future that the hard-pressed and struggling saints have to look forward to is one characterized in every way by victory. On this earth, redeemed man is assaulted on every side: by persecution from without the Church, heresies springing up from within, the temptations and lies of the devil whispered in his ear, the remaining corruption in his own soul ever dragging him down; but at the end of the race, he will be vindicated against all his enemies; his triumph, through Christ, over sin, the world, the devil, and even death itself will be secured; he will be brought into a final and glorious rest from all his struggles, and will enjoy eternal rewards and unswayed dominion over the earth. Just as Christ suffered in his life on earth, but then ascended in victory to reign over all the universe, so Christians are following in his victory train, partaking of his sufferings now, so that they might be assured a share in his glory later.

1. Vindication from his Enemies

Psalms 17:1-15

Psalms 35:1-9

Psalms 35:19-28

Isaiah 54:15-17 Jeremiah 51:7-10

Romans 12:19

2 Timothy 4:14 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 Revelation 6:9-17 Revelation 18:2-6 Revelation 19:1-21.

Triumph

Isaiah 25:8-9 1 Corinthians 15:55-58 2 Corinthians 2:14 3. Rest

Genesis 2:1-3

Exodus 20:8-11 Leviticus 25:2-13

Isaiah 66:22-23 Matthew 11:28-30

Hebrews 3:7-4 Revelation 14:13 4. Reward

Isaiah 40:9-11

Matthew 5:3-12

Matthew 6:1-6

Matthew 6:17-21 Matthew 25:14-46 1 Corinthians 3:8-15 1 Corinthians 15:58 2 Corinthians 5:10

2 Timothy 4:7-8

Hebrews 11:6

Hebrews 11:26 Revelation 22:12-21.

Reign

Isaiah 32:1 Matthew 19:27-30

Luke 19:12-27

2 Timothy 2:12

1 Peter 2:9 Revelation 1:5-6 Revelation 5:9-10 A Glorious Spirit The final goal of redemption is nothing short of a recreation into the very image of Christ, the perfect man. When our redemption is complete, we will partake of Christ's glory, share in his righteousness, partake of his sinlessness, and reflect him perfectly.

1. Recreated in the Image of Christ

Romans 8:28-32 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 1 Corinthians 15:49 2 Corinthians 4:4-11 2 Corinthians 5:17 Ephesians 4:20-24 Colossians 3:9-10 1 John 3:22.

Robed in the Righteousness of Christ

Psalms 132:8-9

Isaiah 61:10

Zechariah 3:3-5

Romans 13:13-14

Galatians 3:27 Colossians 3:12-14

Revelation 3:5

Revelation 6:11 Revelation 7:9-10 Revelation 19:7-21.

Free from All Sin Ephesians 5:25-27 Hebrews 12:22-23

2 Peter 1:2-4

Jude 1:24-25 Revelation 14:1-5 Revelation 21:7-8 Revelation 21:27 Revelation 22:14-15 A Glorious Body The effects of redemption do not stop with the immaterial aspect of man. Man was created as a physical being, and the consequences of sin had a devastating effect on his body; but the glorious result of Christ's work will be a new, resurrection body that can never decay or grow old. The firstfruits and guarantee of this glorified body that we will one day possess is Jesus' own resurrection body. Just as God raised Jesus from the dead, so he will one day raise the bodies of all his saints, and clothe them with incorruptible flesh, that can never be oppressed by sickness or pain. In their glorified state, the saints will be like the angels in this respect, that they will no longer be marrying or reproducing, but will have all their deepest emotional and social needs satisfied by their marriage union with Christ.

Isaiah 26:19

John 5:25-29

John 11:23-27

Romans 8:23 1.Like Christ's Resurrection Body

Job 19:25-26

Psalms 16:9-10

Acts 4:1-2

Romans 8:11 1 Corinthians 6:13-14 1 Corinthians 15:12-26 2 Corinthians 4:13-14

Php 3:10-12

Colossians 1:18 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Eternal

Daniel 12:2-3 2 Corinthians 5:1-21.

Incarnate 1 Corinthians 15:35-58.

Unmarrying Matthew 22:23-30 A Glorious Environment When man first sinned, the consequences of his rebellion extended to his environment, and creation itself was put under a terrible curse; but Christ's work of redemption likewise extends to all of creation. Just as man himself will be recreated perfectly, in his spirit and his body, so all of creation will be created anew, and become a fitting environment for glorified mankind to dwell with Immanuel, God in the flesh, our Redeemer Jesus Christ. For all eternity, the saints will dwell in peace and unity, joyfully working in their perfect environment, feasting together with gladness, never again to experience pain, sickness, sorrow, or the toilsome travail that characterizes this life. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

1. A New Earth

Isaiah 35:1-10

Isaiah 65:17

Romans 8:18-25

2 Peter 3:5-14 Revelation 21:1-2 Revelation 21:10-27.

Dwelling in the Presence of God 2 Corinthians 5:6-8

Revelation 21:3 Revelation 21:22-23 Revelation 22:1-21.

Living in Peace and Unity

Isaiah 2:2-5

Isaiah 65:25 4.With no Tears or Sorrow

Isaiah 25:7-9

Isaiah 65:18-20 Revelation 21:4-27.

Joyfully Feasting

Isaiah 25:6

Joel 3:17-18

Matthew 8:11

Matthew 26:29 Revelation 19:6-21.

Joyfully Working

Isaiah 65:21-22 Revelation 21:24-26 Summative Description:

Man Glorified is not able to sin.

S. Categorized Scripture - Trinity

TREASURING TRINITY

Introduction The dividing line between true Christianity and all other world religions is the Trinitarian conception of God. No religion that denies the doctrine of one God eternally existing in three persons can rightfully claim to be Christian. Islam believes in one eternal God, the God who revealed himself to Abraham; but because it denies that this one God exists in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, it is no more Christian than Hinduism. Jehovah's Witnesses believe in one God who, they claim, is the God of the Bible. But they reject that Jesus Christ is an eternal person of the Godhead, and therefore, they are no more Christian than the Greek pagans. The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be denied without Christianity itself being rejected.

If this is truly the nature of the case, then why is it that the word "Trinity" does not even appear in the Bible? Are we wrong to make this the foundational issue of Christianity, when the term was not even around at the beginning of Christianity? When did this terminology come about? If the terminology did not come until later in church history, does that mean that the doctrine did not develop until later in church history? These are the questions with which we must deal in our introduction to the topic at hand.

1. The History of the Doctrine of the Trinity In Revelation 12:1-17, we have a symbolical representation of the history of the church, and the conflict between Christ and Satan. In this picture, we see the Old Testament Church symbolized by a woman clothed with the sun (representing the righteousness of Christ given to her) with a crown of twelve stars on her head (representing the twelve tribes) laboring to give birth (even as the church in the Old Testament was laboring under intense persecution until she had brought forth the promised Seed through the line of Abraham and David). Just as the woman gave birth, the dragon with ten horns and seven heads (representing Satan as he employs the world religious and political systems who are opposed to Christ) attempted to devour the child (as Satan did with Christ at his birth). But the Father triumphantly brought Christ up to heaven, at his ascension, leaving the dragon full of great fury against the woman (now the early New Testament church). When God gives a place of safety to the church, as she is being persecuted by the dragon, Satan is forced to change his strategy of how to overcome her. Now, instead of trying to devour her through persecution, he attempts to overwhelm her through a flood of heresies. This is the prophetic picture of what was transpiring in the days of the early church. When God preserved her through the great Roman persecutions, Satan attempted to defeat her through the rise of heresies that threatened to swallow her up. One of the earliest and most devastating of these heresies was Arianism (which finds its modern expression in today's Jehovah's Witnesses). But God continued to preserve his church, raising up men of faith who would turn to the scriptures to formulate biblical responses to the heresies which were attacking the church. One of these men that God raised up to combat Arianism was Athanasius, who labored to give us our first clear doctrinal expression of the Trinity, in opposition to the heresy that said that Christ was not truly God. Athanasius formulated a statement about the

Trinity which became the standard orthodox expression. The following excerpts are from the Athanasian creed:

We worship one God in trinity and the trinity in unity, neither blending their persons nor dividing their essence. For the person of the Father is a distinct person, the person of the Son is another, and that of the Holy Spirit still another. But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal. What quality the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God.

Although Athanasius is formulating a new expression of the doctrine of the Trinity, he is not stating a new doctrine. All of the elements of his formula are biblical elements. The harmonizing of scriptural truths into a doctrinal statement was not necessary until heresies arose that denied some fundamental doctrinal truth. When these heresies arose, men of God were forced to find answers from the scriptures. That is what the early Christian creeds, and the adoption of Trinitarian terminology, was all about.

2. The Biblical basis for the Doctrine of the Trinity

Although there are no scriptural passages which employ the term "Trinity," the doctrine itself is thoroughly scriptural. We find numerous clear and undeniable statements throughout the scriptures of every element of the trinitarian view of God. Consider the following: oThere is one God Hear, O, Israel. Jehovah our God is one Jehovah (Deuteronomy 6:4) [There is] one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all. (Ephesians 4:6) oThe Father is God

Now there is to us only one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we by Him. (1 Corinthians 8:6) oThe Son is God And we know that the Son of God has come, and He has given us an understanding so that we may know Him who is true. And we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and the everlasting life. (1 John 5:20) [cf. Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; John 1:14; John 8:58-59; John 20:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; Romans 10:9-13; Php 2:9-11; Colossians 1:15-16; Colossians 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1] oThe Holy Spirit is God But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart for you to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own authority? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God. (Acts 5:3-4) [cf. 2 Corinthians 3:17] oThe Father is one with the Son I and the Father are one. (John 10:30) oThe Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son For who among men knows the things of a man except the spirit of man within him? So also no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 2:11) But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. (Romans 8:9) oThe Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are viewed as equally God, yet personally distinct And Jesus, when He had been baptized, went up immediately out of the water. And lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God 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. (Matthew 3:16-17)

Therefore go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)[cf. as well Ephesians 1:3-14; Ephesians 4:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jude 1:20-21, etc.]

3.Possible Misunderstandings of the Doctrine of the Trinity

- oWe worship three gods
- oFather, Son, and Holy Spirit are three different names for God
- oFather, Son, and Holy Spirit are three different parts of God
- oGod shows up at different times as either Father, Son, or Holy Spirit
- oJesus is a lesser God than the Father or a created God
- oJesus is fully God, but he was not fully man
- oThe Holy Spirit is an impersonal force from God

4.The Practical Relevance of the Doctrine of the Trinity

The predominant purpose of this block class is not merely to establish that the Trinity is; much more than that, we hope to show that the Trinity is to be treasured. In other words, the doctrine of the Trinity is not some old, musty theological truth that has nothing to do with my day-to-day life. On the contrary, understanding the inter-trinitarian relationship of God is the very foundation of how to live my life in order to accomplish my created purpose. The better I understand the Trinity, the better I will be able to live a life filled with the joy of seeing and displaying the manifold glory of God. So how is this study practically relevant? Let me list three ways.

- oUnderstanding the Trinity allows me to understand more fully who God is. And to know God is the purpose for which we were created, and our only eternal delight.
- oUnderstanding the Trinity allows me to understand more fully my own relationship to God, which is the foundation of all true joy.
- oUnderstanding the Trinity allows me to understand more fully my mission in this life: spreading the gospel of God, which is about his Son, as empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Using John 17:1-26 as our primary text, let's turn our discussion to these points. Who is the Triune God?

1.The Inter-Trinitarian Relationship of the Father and Son

- oThey are eternally united in a mutual indwelling You, Father, are in Me, and I in You (John 17:21)
- We are one (John 17:22)
- oThey are eternally united in a mutual love You have loved Me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24)
- oIn their eternal love and fellowship, they bring glory to one another Glorify Your Son so that Your Son also may glorify You (John 17:1)

I have glorified You upon the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now Father, glorify Me with Yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was (John 17:4-5)

- oThe Son brings glory to the Father by obeying his will I have glorified You upon the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. (John 17:4)
- I have revealed Your name to the men whom You gave to Me out of the world. (John 17:6)
- oThe Father brings glory to the Son by giving him a people [cf.. Php 2:5-11]

Glorify Your Son so that Your Son also may glorify You, even as You have given Him authority over all flesh so that He should give eternal life to all You have given Him (John 17:1-2)

And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them (John 17:10)

2.The Inter-Trinitarian Relationship of the Father and The Holy Spirit

- oThe Father sends the Holy Spirit to reveal his true nature And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, so that He may be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive because it does not see Him nor know Him. But you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you (John 14:16-17)
- oThe Holy Spirit searches and reveals the truths of God But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:10)

3.The Inter-Trinitarian Relationship of the Son and the Spirit

- oThe Son sends the Holy Spirit to reveal his

true nature And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father... oThe Holy Spirit searches and reveals the truths of Christ ...He shall testify of Me (John 15:26) What is Our Relationship to the Triune God?

1.We were made to enjoy fellowship with the Triune God And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent (John 17:3) 2.In Adam, we lost our fellowship with God

...through one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed on all men inasmuch as all sinned. (Romans 5:12) 3.In Christ, we enter into the Inter-Trinitarian fellowship Keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one as We are. (John 17:11) And I do not pray for these alone, but for those also who shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us (John 17:20-21) And I have given them the glory which You have given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one, I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one (John 17:22-23) oIn this fellowship we see the glory of God

Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me, that they may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me, for You have loved Me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24)

O righteous Father, indeed the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent me. And I made known to them Your name, and will make it known (John 17:25-26) oIn this fellowship we experience the inter-trinitarian love of God

I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me. (John 17:23) And I made known to them Your name, and will make it known, so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:26) oSeeing God's glory and experiencing his inter-trinitarian love is the foundation of our joy And now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world that they might have My joy fulfilled in them. (John 17:13) On the cross, the inter-trinitarian fellowship was broken, so that we might be brought in to experience all of its privileges!

How Does Our Relationship to the Triune God Shape Our Mission to the World? The doctrine of the Trinity teaches us that God is, by his very nature, a covenant God. God is involved in an eternal, inter-trinitarian covenant of love. In the overflow of joy in this covenant relationship, God created a world which was also in covenant relationship with himself. He then created man, who was especially to show forth his image and enjoy his covenant of love. Man sinned, and broke the covenant of love; in this fall, even the earth was impacted, so that the covenant was marred. But in his grace, God renewed the covenant, so that, through Christ, the covenant with all of creation might be redeemed, and the covenant with man might be restored. God initially commanded man to subdue the earth in expression of his image. In the New Covenant, God commands man to conquer the corrupted earth through the preaching of the gospel, and thereby to restore the whole world to fellowship with God. This is done on the basis of Christ's absolute authority. It is accomplished according to the decree of the Father, and by the power of the Spirit as he applies the work of Christ to those who belong to Christ all over the world. This is our task as Christians while we remain on this earth (Matthew 28:18-20). And one day this task will be accomplished,

and the whole world will rejoice in a blood-bought and unshakeable covenant with the triune God. And all the redeemed will glorify God as they see his glory, rejoice in it, and share the love of the persons of the Trinity, as they are one in Christ - one with God as fully as the Father is one with the Son. How is all this to come about?

1. Christ was sent into the world to accomplish a restored fellowship with God; we are sent into the world to proclaim a restored fellowship with God As You have sent Me into the world, even so I have sent them into the world (John 17:18)

2. The world will believe in Christ when they see the reality of the covenant fellowship we have with him that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. (John 17:21)

3. The world will see the reality of our covenant fellowship when they see the reality of our love I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me. (John 17:23) By this all shall know that you are My disciples, if you have love toward one another. (John 13:35) At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him. (John 14:20-21)

4. The reality of our covenant love is seen when we live in obedience to the covenant obligations Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My Word. And My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. (John 14:23) Questions for Discussion

- How does an understanding of a divine covenant relationship in the Trinity affect our understanding of our own covenant relationship with God?
- How does an understanding of a divine covenant relationship in the Trinity affect our expectations for the future (i.e. our view of eschatology)?
- How does an understanding of a divine covenant relationship in the Trinity affect our idea of what constitutes true worship?
- How may we experience covenant fellowship with the Father?
- How may we experience covenant fellowship with the Son?
- How may we experience covenant fellowship with the Holy Spirit?

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
 - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net