

Core Seminar Systematic Theology Session 05

“The Existence and Attributes of God (part two)”

Introduction: The Joy of Knowing God

1. The Unity of God (Exod 34:6-7)

2. God Is Triune

A. What Does the Doctrine of the Trinity Mean?

“God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.” (Grudem)

- There is one God (Deut 6:4, Isa 45:5, 21)
- God exists as three persons, each fully God

“The Father is the cause, origin, and source of all things, visible as well as invisible. The Son is the Word, the Wisdom, and the image of the Father. The Holy Spirit is the eternal power and might, proceeding from the Father and the Son. Nevertheless, this distinction does

not divide God into three, since Scripture teaches us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each has a distinct subsistence [personhood] distinguished by characteristics—yet in such a way that these three persons are only one God.... These persons, thus distinct, are neither divided nor fused or mixed together.” (Belgic Confession, 1561)

B. How Does Scripture Teach the Doctrine of the Trinity?

- The Father is God (Matt 6:9-13)
- The Son is God (John 1:1-4, Isa 9:6, Titus 2:13)
- The Spirit is God (Psalm 139:7, 1 Cor 2:11-12)
- Father, Son and Spirit work together in distinct, harmonious roles (Matt 3:16, 28:19; John 17:11; 21-24)

C. Why Does the Trinity Matter?

3. God's Omniscience (1 John 3:20, Matt 11:21, 6:25-34)

4. God's Truthfulness (Prov 30:5, Heb 6:8)

5. God's Wisdom (Job 9:4, 12:13; Jer 10:12-13, 1 Cor 1:18)

6. God's Holiness (Isaiah 6, Exodus 3)

- Majesty / Otherness
- Purity
- Beauty

7. God's Justice & Righteousness (Romans 12:19, 3:25-26)

8. God's Goodness & Love (James 1:17, Ps 147, Exod 34:6)

- *Various ways the Bible talks about God's love*
 1. Unique intra-Trinitarian love (John 17:23-24)
 2. God's providential love over all he has made (Gen 1, Matt 6:26)
 3. God's salvific stance toward a fallen world (John 3:16)
 4. God's particular, effective, selecting love toward his elect (Deut 7:7-8; Eph 1:3ff, 1 John 4:10)

Conclusion: God's Transcendence and Immanence

Book Recommendations: Attributes of God and

Trinity

- D. A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God* (Crossway, 2000)
- John Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (P&R, 2002)
- Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, chaps. 11-14 (Zondervan, 1994)
- J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (IVP, 1973)
- Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity* (IVP, 2012)
- Orlando Saer, *Big God* (Christian Focus, 2014)