

Renewed Unity The Nature of God

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”
-AW Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, p.1

Topic: Getting the concept of God right is absolutely vital.

- What is the first thing that comes into your mind when you think about God?
- What is God's name? How do you know this?
- What is God like apart from creation—if He never created what would He be like?
- Read the following:

The word “God” is not God's name. Yahweh is God's personal name as revealed in Exodus 3:15. “God” is a title or an office that someone holds. The only one who can rightly hold that title/office is the Greatest Conceivable Being (GCB). God/the GCB has to be perfect. After all, if there was a possible being better than the being we thought was God, then that being would not really be God. The being we thought was God would really be less-than-God since there is a greater possible being and that greater being would be the actual GCB, and thus the real God. “God” is the title given to the top, perfect, best possible being—the GCB.

The GCB has a number of properties, or qualities that make Him perfect. God/GCB must possess those qualities to a maximal level, otherwise another being with a higher level would be better than the being we thought was God/GCB in regards to that quality. To be perfect, God must be All-powerful, All-knowing, and All-loving/good.

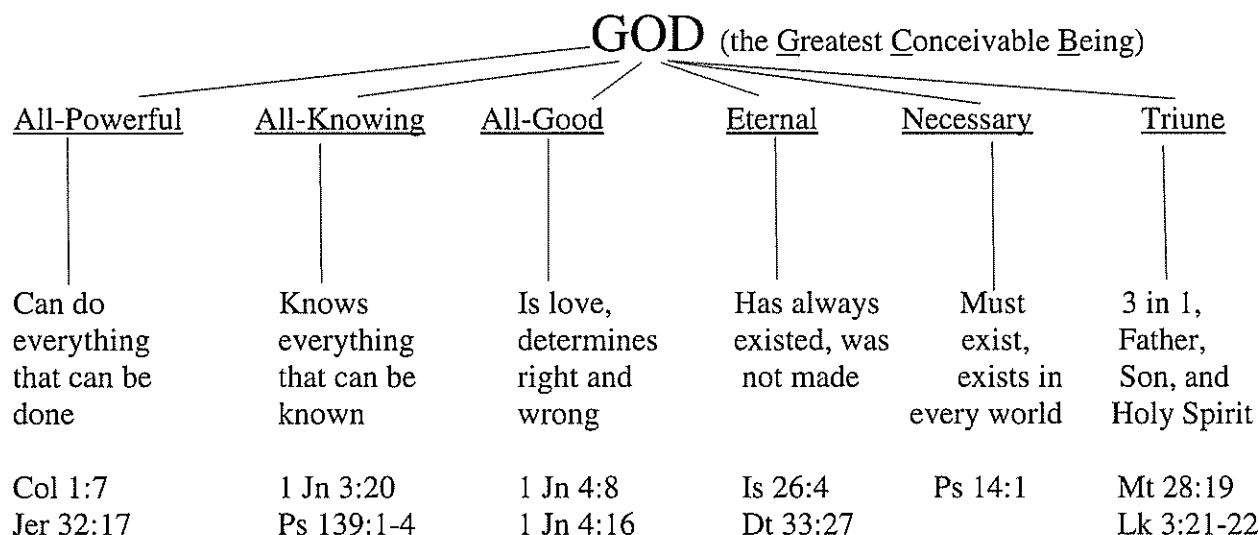
What else makes a being perfect? If a being is created, then that being is dependent upon something else for its existence. This means that God must also be Eternal, and Necessary. Eternal means that God has always existed. No one made God and no one is older than God. God is, in fact, the creator of everything else. Necessary means that God must exist. That is to say, God cannot fail to exist and no circumstance needs to obtain for God to exist. A human being, on the other hand, is dependent upon certain circumstances to exist. We must be created, and we are dependent upon air, food, and water for our existence. God is not dependent on anything.

Lastly, God must be triune (three-in-one). Recall that God is All-Loving/good. In order to be maximally loving, a being must experience the four qualitatively unique aspects of love: self-love, love-given, love-received, and love-shared. A being that is merely singularly personal can experience self-love, but cannot experience the other qualitatively unique aspects of love unless that person creates other persons. A person cannot give love if there is no one else to whom it may be given. Likewise, a person cannot receive love if there is no one else from whom that person may receive it. Not even two persons can jointly share love for another if there is no one else for them cooperatively to love together. This means that for God/GCB to be All-loving, He must be tri-personal in nature. A singularly personal divine being cannot experience the other qualitatively unique aspects of love unless that person created another person to love and from whom to receive love, and then also created a third person for the first two jointly to love. The GCB would not be any better off if it had four or more persons inherent to His being as no qualitatively unique aspect of love require more than three persons. In fact, any fourth, fifth, sixth, millionth, etc. person would be both unnecessary and reduplicative, rendering this being less great than a being who is exactly tri-personal and therefore has no unnecessary parts.

There is only one God, but that one God must be three-in-one so that He can experience perfect relationships within Himself and without creating anything. If a single divine person had to create something to love, then he could not be the GCB. He would not be as great as a being who is fully loving in Himself. God is the Trinity. This means that to be maximally loving (which is required to be perfect), God must be three persons in one being. God is one being, but the one perfect being is comprised of three divine persons, each of whom is All-powerful, All-knowing, Eternal, Necessary, and who together are the All-loving/good being known as God.

Yahweh is God. God is the Trinity. Yahweh is the Trinity. The Trinity is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The title "God" is not merely a title for the Father, but for the entire Trinity, since God is by nature triune, the word "God" should always be understood as "the Trinity," unless context requires specific attribution of the title "God" to one of the divine persons. In John 3:16 "God" refers to the Father. In Titus 2:13 "God" refers to the Son/Jesus. In Acts 5:3-4 "God" refers to the Holy Spirit. Unless clearly specified, allow "God" to refer to the Trinity.

"Monotheism" is the belief that there is only one perfect being. The Christian faith holds that there is only one perfect being, but that the one perfect being is three persons.



-Do you understand the basic idea of the material just presented? Do you agree with it?

-How confident are you to share this material with someone else?

Association: We each have had times of great spiritual awakening or growth.

-When did you first realize that God was real?

-When did you come to realize that God is the Greatest Conceivable Being?

-Which of His six primary attributes is the easiest to apprehend?

-Which of His six primary attributes is the most difficult to apprehend?

-Have you ever expressed your belief in God as described (or similarly described) to someone?

-Try it now. Present the concept of God to your partner.

Guidance: Growing in our knowledge of God is critical to our Christlikeness.

-What books have you read or series have you watched about God, His nature, or His attributes?

-Practice praying the six primary attributes of God to God when you pray.

-Pray with and for one another, about growing in this knowledge, and about sharing this with others.