



SURVEY OF THEOLOGY PROPER

What is God Like?

Grace Institute - Pastor Jim C. Davis

Lecture Two: The Incomprehensible God

Knowledge about God should deepen our relationship with Him which in turn should increase our desire to know more about Him.-- Charles Ryrie, p 26

Introduction:

1A. The Meaning of Theology Proper

Theology Proper does not investigate what God does but who He is and what may be known of the existence, Persons, nature and characteristics of the triune God. Chapter Systematic Theology , 1:5

[Theology Proper] By this term is designated a limited science which contemplates only the Person of God - Father, Son & Holy Spirit, and without reference to the works of each. Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology 1:32

Theology Proper includes all the Bible teaches of the being & attributes of God; of the threefold personality of the Godhead, or, that the Father, Son, & Spirit are distinct persons, the same in substance & equal in power & glory; the relation of God to the world, or, His decrees & His works of creation & providence.

2A. Incomprehensibility vs. Knowability – both are true, neither in an absolute sense

3A. The Incomprehensible God --Finite cannot grasp or understand the infinite

1B. Human Limitation

- We do not learn about the trinity of Christ from the human mind.
- We must believe our source is accurate and truthful.

2B. Divine Revelation- process of what we can understand about God

- Belief in the Truth of the Bible
- Accurate theology rests on sound exegesis
- Exegesis precedes systemic theology

Theology and exegesis should always interact. Exegesis does not provide all the answers so that when there can legitimately be more than one exegetical option, theology will decide which to prefer. Some passages, for example, could seem to teach eternal security or not, one's theological system will decide. On the other hand, no

theological system should be so hardened that it is not open to change or refinement from the insights of exegesis. -- Ryrie, p18

3B. Scripture: What does the Scripture say about the incomprehensibility of God?

1C. He dwells in unapproachable light -- I Timothy 6:15-16

which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen I Timothy 6:15-16

2C. His knowledge is unattainable -- Psalm 139:6

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it. Psa. 139:6

3C. His greatness is unsearchable --Psalm 145:3, 5

Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised, And His greatness is unsearchable Psa. 145:3

On the glorious splendor of Your majesty. And on Your wonderful works, I will meditate. Psa. 145:5

4C. His ways are unfathomable – Rom. 11:33-34; Isa. 40:13-14; 18

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Rom. 11:33-34

Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, Or as His counselor has informed Him?

With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding? Isaiah 40:13-14

To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him? Isaiah 40:18

5C. His perfections are unlimited --Job 11:7

“Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty? Job 11:7



SURVEY OF THEOLOGY PROPER

What is God Like?

Grace Institute - Pastor Jim C. Davis

4A. Incomprehensibility of God – Basic Presumptions

1B. Two Basic Presuppositions about God

- God is there
- He is not silent

2B. Three basic Presuppositions about man

1C. Our identity – origins = who am I? from where did I come?

1D. God is our Creator: Source of Origin (Biblical Creation vs. paganism)

2D. God exists outside His Creation

Transcendent - above and independent of the material universe.

But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who [am] I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him? 2Ch 2:6

3D. God interacts with His Creation

Immanent - God is present everywhere at all times.

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2Pe 1:3-4

2C. Our understanding – epistemology = what is truth? how can I know?

1D. God has spoken to us – we are accountable to Him.

2D. Evil is not eternal: it is bounded with a beginning and an end.

3D. The source of evil is from angelic and mankind's rebellion.

3C. Our purpose – ethics = what do I do? what is my purpose?

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. [Mat 5:16 NKJV]

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 1. *What is the chief end of man?*

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

5A. Definition of God: God is Spirit

He is a living and active divine person who is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.