

## **A Primer on the Fundamental Principles of God**

### **1A** Introductory Principles:

#### **1B** Unity/Integrity.

**1C** All the actions of God have complete integrity and inclusion of all the others.

**2C** Therefore, God never exercises justice apart from due consideration of love, and never exercises love apart due consideration of reason.

**3C** Integrity means inclusion and due consideration of all other attributes.

#### **4C** Illustrations

**5C** Sovereignty and Justice: Deuteronomy 10:17, 17 “For the Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.

**6C** Life and Omnipotence: Joshua 3:10, 10 Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will assuredly dispossess from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite.

**7C** Omnipotence and Truth: Job 36:22, 22 “Behold, God is exalted in His power; Who is a teacher like Him?”

### **2B** Elementary attributes and combination attributes:

**1C** The Bible uses many descriptive terms of God. Some of these are like elements and molecules...

**2C** The elementary attributes are those that cannot be divided. The molecular attributes are those which may be divided into component elements.

### **3B** Communicable and non-communicable attributes:

**1C** Mankind is made in the image of God, Genesis 1:26-27, 26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

**2C** Satan’s arrogance, Isaiah 14:12-14, 12 “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! 13 “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’

**1D** In his arrogance, Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, had ambition to ascend to the throne of God.

**2D** His motivation was to be “like” God, and this is an expression of arrogance.

#### **3C** The call to imitate God:

**1D** 1 Corinthians 11:1, 1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

**2D** Ephesians 5:1, 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

**3D** 1 Thessalonians 1:6, 6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

- 4D 1 Peter 1:14-16, 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."
- 4C The breakdown between these passages is important. They seem to contradict each other.
- 5C Satan's arrogance was to attempt to overthrow the sovereignty of God, and to become like Him in His very essence. He wanted to be God.
- 6C Our creation and Paul's exhortations call us to rule like Him, and to live like He would.
- 7C Imitation of the character of God, His way of doing things, is how we are to imitate Him.
- 8C There are therefore two fundamental divisions of the attributes of God:
  - 1D Non-communicable;
  - 2D Communicable.
- 2A Essential Attributes
  - 1B Life/Personality: God is a living person.
    - 1C 1 Samuel 17:26, 26 Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"
  - 2B Spirit: God is not of this physical universe.
    - 1C John 4:24 makes a definitive statement about the spiritual nature of God, "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
    - 2C Spirit is the contrary nature to flesh, Isaiah 31:3, "Now the Egyptians are men and not God, And their horses are flesh and not spirit; So the LORD will stretch out His hand, And he who helps will stumble And he who is helped will fall, And all of them will come to an end together."
  - 3B Trinity: God is three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit.
    - 1C The first person of the Trinity is God the Father. The second person of the Trinity is God the Son. The third person of the Trinity is God the Holy Spirit.
    - 2C The three persons of the trinity possess identical essence in one being.
    - 3C This divine being is tripersonal, having three distinct persons which are autonomous from one another in soul function.
    - 4C This distinction in persons is more than just one God showing different facets or modes of His one person.
  - 4B Infinity
    - 1C The next part of God's essence is Infinity, which means that He has no boundaries in space or time. Principle: God is the creator of space and time, and is therefore greater than both.
      - 1D He is transcendent, meaning that He is greater than space and time.
      - 2D He is immanent, meaning that He enters space and time in order to have a relationship with His creatures.
    - 2C How the infinity of God relates to the physical and temporal universe.

- 1D Immensity means that He is infinite related to space, Romans 8:38-39, 8 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- 2D Eternity means He is infinite related to time.
- 3D Psalm 90:2, Before the mountains were born, or thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.”
- 4D Psalm 102:27, But thou art the same, and thy years will not come to an end.”
- 5B Perfection
  - 1C Distinctions between infinity and perfection:
  - 2C God is infinite, but that does not imply perfection. A being may conceivably be both infinite and evil.
  - 3C Perfection means that there are no flaws or mistakes of any kind in the nature or character of God – at any time.
  - 4C Perfect is something we cannot be. The human state implies imperfection.
  - 5C Human beings with sin natures cannot ever be considered perfect, though they may be holy.
  - 6C Anyone with flaws or sins in their past have disqualified themselves from perfection.
  - 7C Holiness is not the same as perfection: Leviticus 19:2, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.”
  - 8C Human beings are not called by God to be perfect; they are called to be holy.
  - 9C This fundamental distinction is important for all Christians. Holiness is within our reach; infinity and perfection are not.
  - 10C 1 Samuel 2:2, 2 “There is no one holy like the Lord, Indeed, there is no one besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God.
- 6B Aseity. God does not depend in any on the physical universe or its inhabitants. He is completely separate from the universe as its creator. Acts 17:25 25 Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. Aseity is a part of God’s own name: He is the I AM, the self-existing one.
- 3A Comparative Attributes:
  - 1B Majesty. Majesty is a quality of greatness by comparison, and greatness by any measure.
    - 1C Exodus 15:11, Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?”
    - 2C God’s reputation is majestic, Psalm 8:1, LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!”
  - 2B Immutability
    - 1C Definition: As defined by the Standard Dictionary, immutability is that which is, “Not capable or susceptible of change, either by increase or by decrease, by development or by self-evolution; unchangeable; invariable; permanent; as, God is *immutable*.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dallas Theological Seminary. *Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 96*, Vol. 96, Page 29, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1939; 2002.

- 2C Divine immutability cannot be imitated by man. We are both finite in intellect and sinful in character. By necessity we have to change and be in a constant state of change for good.
- 3C God, as we will discover, is both infinite in intellect and perfect in character. He never has need for change, and He will not.
- 4C Numbers 23:19, 19 “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”
- 5C Malachi 3:6, 6 “For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.
- 3B Sovereignty
  - 1C The sovereignty of God is His rightful authority over all creation; and His right to exercise that authority.
  - 2C God exercises His sovereignty through His infinite capabilities and His perfect character: Ephesians 1:11, 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,
  - 3C If God wants something, He will receive it. 1 Chronicles 29:11-12, 11 “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. 12 “Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone.
  - 4C As to the length of God’s rule, it extends from eternity past and into eternity future, and encompasses all eras of human history:
  - 5C Psalm 10:16, 16 The Lord is King forever and ever; Nations have perished from His land.
  - 6C Psalm 29:10, 10 The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever.
  - 7C As to the scope of God’s rule: No matter where things exist, everything is within the sovereign will and control of God.<sup>2</sup>
  - 8C Psalm 103:19, 19 The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all.
  - 9C God allows humanity a limited freedom to act as volitional agents.
  - 10C God may express His perfect desire and not receive it due to His willingness to permit human free will.
  - 11C No act of evil is ever out of divine control in His ability to abolish, moderate, transmute, or compensate.
  - 12C That is to say, though God allows evil:
  - 13C He may at any time abolish it, and ultimately He will;
  - 14C He may at any time curtail or moderate evil, diminishing its power;
  - 15C He may at any time, work good out of evil toward those who love Him;

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<sup>2</sup>Chafer Theological Seminary. *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal Volume 5*, Vol. 5, Page 33-34, Chafer Theological Seminary, 1999; 2002.

16C He may at any time compensate the perpetrators of evil and their victims, and ultimately and finally He will.

17C But when God decides, His will is supreme.

18C Numbers 24:23, 23 Then he took up his discourse and said, "Alas, who can live except God

#### 4A Capabilities (more detailed expressions of infinity):

##### 1B Introduction:

1C The capabilities of God are the expression of His infinite essence in what God knows, understands, and does.

2C These capabilities are restricted by the range of His holy character.

3C God's abilities to perceive, to apply, and to exercise power all remain under the restriction of His holy character.

4C God capabilities do not transgress man's free will except when His integrity demands action.

5C A capability implies the ability to do good or evil, but God only does good.

6C God only uses His capabilities for good. Otherwise, they remain in restriction.

7C Therefore, the divine capabilities are expressions of infinity, but are by choice restricted from doing evil.

8C All three members of the Godhead have these capabilities.

9C Although God is Spirit, His capabilities extend into the material universe without diminishing their perfection or infinity whatsoever.

##### 2B Omnipresence

1C That is, He is able to be in every place at all times, Psalm 139:7-10, "7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me."

2C There is not even one obscure fact that God does not know, Psalm 33:13-15, "The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; From His dwelling place He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth." Think of this as unlimited sensory perception.

3C He perceives all concerning His faithful, 2 Chronicles 16:9, "For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."

4C He perceives all concerning both good and evil, Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good."

5C He perceives all concerning all creatures, even in the animal kingdom, Psalm 50:11, "I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine."

6C He knows all of creation, even to the outer reaches of the universe, Psalm 147:4-5, "He counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them. 5 Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite."

7C He knows our hearts. 1 Samuel 16:7, "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God

sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

### 3B Omniscience

- 1C God understands all things in their macro- and micro-complexities.
- 2C He understands the great vastness of the universe.
- 3C He understands the micro-complexities of atomic physics.
- 4C He understands the inner workings of biological complexities.
- 5C God understands all things, past, present, and future, as well as “iffy” history.
- 6C God has the ability to know the future.
- 7C He is wise in His omniscience. This means that He analyzes all things that He perceives, and always knows the *right* course of action.
- 8C Verses:
- 9C Romans 11:33, “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!”
- 10C Romans 16:27, “...to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.”
- 11C This turns us again toward the subject of divine character. It is not only that God has infinitely analytical ability, but that it tends toward what is right.

### 4B Omnipotence

- 1C That is, He is able to do all things which are the objects of His power, and within the range of His holy character.
- 2C Omnipotence and creation: Psalm 19:1-2, “1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. 2 Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge.”
- 3C Omnipotence and resurrection: Ephesians 1:19-21, “...19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

## 5A Character Attributes: (more detailed expressions of perfection).

### 1B Righteousness

- 1C The innate quality of righteousness.
- 2C Righteousness is the innate quality of rightness, an inherent goodness. In God, it is His unchangeable and perfect nature.
- 3C Righteousness is an absolute; that is, it does not change according to a viewpoint or standard. Right is always right, without regard to the opinions or desires or powers of creatures.
- 4C Righteousness is somewhat like matter: you cannot create or destroy it. Only God can create righteousness.
- 5C The ability of righteousness.
- 6C The Bible also portrays righteousness as an ability to do right. Often this ability is described by the word ‘justice.’

- 7C So righteousness as an innate principle is often confronted with reality; with real life situations which demand action.
- 8C It is not enough, therefore, to be righteous. Those who are righteous must be able to bring righteousness into reality.
- 9C Righteousness in man.
- 10C Man does not have an inherent righteousness; he neither has it as a matter of birth, nor is he able to create it. Isaiah 64:6, "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away."
- 11C Therefore, man depends on God for righteousness, both for its quality and ability.
- 12C God's righteousness in man is both qualifying and enabling. That is, it qualifies us for various things within the plan of God, and it enables us to do acts of righteousness.
- 13C Biblical synonyms for righteousness.
- 14C Holiness.
- 15C Perfection.
- 16C Goodness.
- 2B Justice (as righteousness in action).
  - 1C Justice is the application of the righteous standards of the soul.
  - 2C God is just, and the ultimate source of justice for man.
  - 3C Psalm 75:7, "But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another."
  - 4C Psalm 89:14, "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You."
- 3B Love, compassion, mercy
  - 1C Divine love is pure of motive.
  - 2C Divine love is wanting the very best for some other person.
  - 3C Divine love is independent of external or internal instinct.
  - 4C It is independent of attraction.
  - 5C It is independent of virtue in its object.
  - 6C Divine love is sacrificial and unselfish when necessary.
  - 7C Divine love is inseparable from the other attributes, and therefore it has integrity.
  - 8C Scripture often calls the application of divine love either mercy or compassion.
  - 9C Divine love comes from an abundance which is characterized by integrity and happiness.
  - 10C God has a virtue love for His creatures that works even when they are sinful and separated from Him.
  - 11C Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
  - 12C Compassion: Compassion is directed toward the helpless, whether physically or spiritually.
  - 13C Exodus 2:5-6, 5 The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it to her. 6 When she opened it, she saw the child,

and behold, *the* boy was crying. And she had pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children.

14C Zechariah 7:8-10, 8 Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying, 9 "Thus has the LORD of hosts said, 'Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; 10 and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.'

#### 4B Logos

1C Christians and non-Christians alike are guilty of de-emphasizing the rational aspect of faith.

2C By emphasizing emotional and ecstatic experiences, Christians wrongly focus away from a rational relationship with God.

3C Non-Christians commonly ridicule faith as being the opposite of rational thought, though this is of course a great fallacy.

4C If we can scripturally determine the logical and rational nature of God, then that demands of us much the same: a life measured by logical and rational thought.

5C The "Word of God" is presented as the creative principle (Gen 1:3; Ps 33:6);

6C Genesis 1:3, "Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light."

7C Psalm 33:6, "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host."

8C Christ is the agent of creation, Colossians 1:15-16, "15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities -- all things have been created through Him and for Him.

9C John 1:1-3, "John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being."

10C God reasons, and demands reason of man. Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, and let us **reason** together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool."

11C Organization and Time.

12C Genesis 1:14, "Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;"

13C This allows an organization for the lives of men. The division of time allows for us the division of our lives.

14C So God gave us ways to divide up our time, intending for us to use these lights for organization.

15C There is a proper time for everything.

16C Ecclesiastes 3:1-11, "1 There is an appointed **time** for everything...

#### 5B Grace

1C Ephesians 2:8-9 defines grace as well as any biblical passage: 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.



- 2C You can see here that grace replaces human effort in order to solve the problem of total depravity.
- 3C It is not only that grace is a free gift, but that it replaces the works of man, that defines grace.
- 4C Therefore we can define grace as follows: Grace is God's solution to man's problems, wherein God freely provides what is needed. (R.B. Thieme)
- 5C But furthermore, God has respect for human free will in the provision of grace.
- 6C Grace does not overwhelm man's freedom, so that it is forced upon him unwillingly.
- 7C God provides the grace, informs man of its availability, and then He lets man decide whether he will take the free gift.
- 8C Since grace is predicated on the inability of man, it appears that the reception of grace would be an easy decision.
- 9C This where Satanic propaganda reaches its peak.
- 10C The propaganda arm of the cosmic system is incredibly efficient in deterring people from the grace of God.
- 11C It argues against man's need for grace.
- 12C it argues against the efficacy of grace.
- 13C In grace we have the omniscience of God recognizing a problem in man.
- 14C God longs to be gracious to man, Isaiah 30:18-19, 18 Therefore the LORD longs to be **gracious** to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him. 19 O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be **gracious** to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.
- 15C Grace excludes works: Romans 11:5-6, 5 In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to *God's* gracious choice. 6 But if it is by **grace**, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise **grace** is no longer **grace**.
- 16C Humility is the condition for grace. James 4:4-7, 4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? 6 But He gives a greater **grace**. Therefore *it* says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES **GRACE** TO THE HUMBLE." 7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

#### 6B Truth

- 1C God is truth, He gives truth, He demands that we live by the truth, He demands truth of our words and lives.
- 2C Truth is the nature of absolute reality. It is the relation of knowing to reality. (The following is from Milton D. Hunnex, Chronological and Thematic Charts of Philosophies and Philosophers.)
- 3C Truth may be descriptive, applying to statements, propositions, or beliefs that are:
- 4C Necessarily, i.e., analytically, true, as, e.g., "If P implies Q and P is the case, then Q is the case," or,
- 5C Contingently, i.e., empirically, true, as, e.g., "The earth is round."

- 6C Truth may be instrumental, applying to beliefs that guide thought or actions successfully, as, e.g., acting on the belief that fire burns helps one to avoid getting burned. "Truth" functions as an adverb, e.g., one believes truly.
- 7C Truth may be substantive or ontological, referring to the real, as, e.g., "God is Truth." "Truth" functions as a noun.
- 8C Truth may be existential, referring to one's way of life or ultimate commitment. One lives rather than knows the truth. "Truth" functions as a verb.
- 9C God is absolute reality, and He communicates absolute reality. His version of reality is a true one.
- 10C Since truth is also about communication, there are a few human virtues that attend to this concept.
- 11C Honesty. That with your communication you represent the truth.
- 12C Clarity. That with your communication the truth is made clear.
- 13C Forthrightness. That you communicate at least as much truth as is necessary for the need.
- 14C Veracity. That you keep your given word.
- 15C God is truth and He abounds in truth.
- 16C Exodus 34:6, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;"
- 17C Psalm 57:10, "For Your lovingkindness is great to the heavens And Your truth to the clouds."
- 18C Psalm 117:2, "For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!"
- 19C God has veracity; He keeps His word.
- 20C Psalm 132:11-12, "11 The LORD has sworn to David A truth from which He will not turn back: "Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne. 12 "If your sons will keep My covenant And My testimony which I will teach them, Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever.""
- 7B God is faithful. Faithfulness is at the very core of God's being.
  - 1C 1 Corinthians 1:9, "God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."
  - 2C God is faithful to us when we are in difficulty.
  - 3C While we are under temptation, 1 Corinthians 10:13, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."
  - 4C When we are the targets of the schemes of the evil one, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, "But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil *one*."
  - 5C When we fail.
  - 6C 2 Timothy 2:13, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."
  - 7C 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

8C When we suffer as a part of God's plan, 1 Peter 4:19, "Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right."