2016 Fall Semester

Foundations

# Genesis

## Knowledge about God is important (Romans 1, Romans 10:1-2 “Brothers my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.”)

### But knowledge is not the measure of a disciple, love is.

### They will know that you are my disciples by the way that you love one another.

### 2 Peter 1:5-7

### Paul tells Timothy that our aim is love issued from a pure heart.

### “For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone 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

## Trinity is seen in creation: “Let Us make man in Our image.” (Genesis 1:27)

## Trinity: God is three persons, each person is fully God, there is one God.

### God is three persons - Illustration

#### The fact that God is three persons means that the Father is not the Son, etc.

#### This is seen in John 1:1-2: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”

##### The distinction between father and son is also seen in Christ’s continued advocacy for us before the Father.

#### The Father and the Son are not the Holy Spirit. John 14:26 says “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and will bring to remembrance all that I have said to you.”

##### The Holy Spirit also intercedes for us, showing that He is a separate person from God the Father, whom the intercession is being made.

#### This is most clearly seen in the account of Jesus’ baptism: When Jesus was baptized, “the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and…a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” You see each member of the Trinity is performing distinct actions all apart from one another.

### Each person is fully God

#### The Father is clearly God. This is seen from Genesis 1:1, all throughout the Old Testament and New Testament.

#### The Son is God

##### Again, John 1:1 says that the Word is God.

##### Hebrews 1:3 says that Christ is the “exact imprint of the nature of God.” Titus 2:13 refers to “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” And 2 Peter 1:1 speaks of “the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Finally, but not at all exhaustively, Romans 9:5, speaking of the Jewish people, says “Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”

#### The Spirit is God.

##### Great Commission baptized in the name of

##### Acts 5:3-4, Peter asks Ananias, “Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit…? You have not lied to men but to God.”

### There is one God

#### Scripture is abundantly clear on this matter. The three different persons of the Trinity do not constitute three different Gods. They are not only one in purpose and are in complete agreement on everything that they think and do, but they are also one in essence, one in their essential nature. In other words, God is only one being.

#### Back to illustration

#### This is most clearly seen in a familiar passage of Scripture called the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4-5: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”

## Unique Attributes (Incommunicable)

### Unlimited by Time (Eternality)

#### God has always existed, having no beginning and no end, and experiencing no succession of moments.

##### “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Your hand had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.” – Psalm 90:2

##### “The number of his years is unsearchable.” – Job 36:26

#### God sees all time as equally vivid.

##### “For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it has passed, or as a watch in the night.” – Psalm 90:4

##### Illustration of God outside of time

#### Implication: The importance of this doctrine is most fundamentally seen in the cross, specifically in Christ’s atonement for our sin. If God is not outside of time, then He would have only been able to atone for the sins that had been committed up until that point.

### Unlimited by Change (Immutability)

#### God does not change in His being and perfections.

##### Notice the compare and contrast:

##### “Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you endure; they will all wear out like a garment. You change them like raiment, and they pass away; but you are the same, and your years have no end.” – Psalm 102:25-27

##### “[God], with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” – James 1:17

#### Because of this, God does not change in His purposes or promises either

##### “For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.” – Malachi 3:6

##### I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose’…I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.” – Isaiah 46:9-11 – Notice the joining of eternality and unchangeableness.

#### God’s purpose is His glory and that will never change

##### “Bring them from afar, all of my Sons and My Daughters, all those who are called by my name, whom I created for my glory.” – Isaiah 43:6

##### “For my name’s sake I defer my anger, for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off…For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.” Isaiah 48:9-11

#### At first glance, the importance of this doctrine may not seem significant. But if you stop for a second and consider what it would be like if God could change, then its importance becomes much more clear.

##### God’s being could become better or worse

##### God’s perfections could become more or less emphatic/unbalanced

##### God’s purposes could change

##### God’s promises could possibly not be kept or trustworthy

#### Implication: God can always be trusted because He always keeps His word. There is nothing that we can do to thwart God’s good plans and purposes for our lives.

### Unlimited by Space (Omnipresence)

#### God has no size or shape and is present in all places with His entire being.

##### “Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.” – Psalm 139:7-10

##### There is nowhere in the entire universe, on land or sea, in heaven or in hell, that we can flee from God’s presence.

#### God’s eternality combines with his omnipresence and his immutability to show us that God can be present to Bless or to Punish:

##### “Not one of them shall flee away, not one of them shall escape. Though they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down. Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search out and take them; and though they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. And though they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall slay them; and I will set my eyes upon them for evil and not for good.” – Amos 9:1-4

#### Implication: Since God is everywhere, we cannot flee from Him, so we must flee to Him. God can be sought anywhere regardless of place. Believers should never feel lonely, and the wicked should never feel safe.

## Shared Attributes (Communicable)

### Love

#### God eternally gives of Himself to others for their joy.

##### 1 John 4:8: “God is love.”

##### This love existed in the Trinity before time began.

##### It is expressed most fully in the cross: 1 John 4:10 says, “in this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Here we have a definition of what love is.

##### “God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” – Romans 5:8

##### This love is general: John 3:16

##### And this love is individually towards you, not toward humanity as a whole only, but towards you. Paul speaks in Galatians 2:20 of the “son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.”

#### Implication: God is eager to extravagantly give of himself to meet the needs of the lost, so they should flee to him with confidence.

### Wisdom

#### God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals.

##### Romans 16:27 says that God is “the only wise God.” Job says that God is “wise in heart” in Job 9:4. And “with Him are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding” in Job 12:13.

##### Another interesting point is that God’s wisdom is seen specifically in creation. The psalmist says “O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.”

##### You are fearfully and wonderfully made.

#### Implication: God’s wisdom is not always clear to us, but it is great, deep, valuable, and should it highly desired and sought. It is much more precious than silver or gold. God’s wisdom shouldn’t be doubted even in circumstances that upset us.

## Application

### The cross displays all of these attributes.

#### It’s no wonder that Paul, when talking about this bursts forth into praise in Romans 11:33-36, saying “Oh the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? Or who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

### Best of all possible worlds.