

Introduction:

The word "theology" comes from 2 Greek words: "theos," meaning "God," and "logos," meaning "word" or "doctrine." Thus "theology" is the teaching, doctrine, or study of God.

In a broad sense, the word "theology" means the entire study of Bible doctrine, the study of the Creator and His creation. In a more narrow sense it refers to the study of the doctrine of God, His attributes and works. It is in the latter sense that we will study Theology: God, His nature, and His attributes.

I. The Existence of God

A. It is assumed

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1).

God never argues His existence. He expects us to accept the fact that He exists. He simply states His existence in His Word.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God **must believe that he is**, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6).

B. Acknowledgments of God's existence

It cannot be proven there is no God. To prove there is no God, one would have to go to every corner of the universe and look under every rock to show that He is not there. Man does not have the capability of doing this, and never will.

We can believe there is a God because of:

1. The Word of God

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" (Hebrews 1:1-3).

We must accept by faith that God has given us His Word. Without it we would not know how to be saved nor how to have fellowship with Him. Apart from God's revelation, man drifts along on a meaningless existence without purpose or goals.

2. Intuition

It is natural for man to believe there is a God. The abnormal mind is the only one that cannot accept the fact of God's existence.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Psalm 14:1a)

William Evans once said, "All the evidence points to the conclusive fact that this universal faith in the existence of God is innate in man and comes from rational intuition."

3. Tradition

It has been the common characteristic of peoples throughout history to believe there is a God and a life after death. History proves that man is a religious creature. After a detailed study of some of the remote tribes of Africa, David Livingstone concluded that all people have a conception of God which they have passed on from generation to generation.

It is not uncommon for missionaries to go to people who have never been reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to see those people worshipping a Supreme Being of some sort.

4. Reason

By looking all around us, it seems obvious that Someone with intelligence created, ordered, and organized this marvelous universe. Everything exists in perfect order.

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:” (Romans 1:20)

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalm 19:1)

“For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.” (Hebrews 3:4)

Reason tells us that such perfect design demands a Designer.

God has assisted man's reason by showing Himself to man in His general revelation. God's works are seen in nature.

5. Nature

“And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, **which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein**: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless **he left not himself without witness**, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” (Acts 14:15-17).

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:3-4).

6. His Son

God revealed Himself to reasonable men by a special revelation. He came to this world in the form of a baby. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” (I Timothy 3:16).

The best ways God could show Himself to mankind are: 1. Show Himself, and 2. Write it down (the safest form of communication imaginable!). This is what the Lord has done. He has revealed Himself to this earth (as a human being in the form of Jesus Christ) and has left man with a written record (the Bible).

Man is without excuse. “For the **invisible things of him** from the creation of the world **are clearly seen**, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that **they are without excuse**:” (Romans 1:20).

II. The Natural Attributes of God.

Attributes are the qualities or characteristics of a person or thing. Let us look at God's natural attributes.

A. Transcendent

God is transcendent to both time and place. By this we mean He is above His creation.

“For thus saith the high and lofty **One that inhabiteth eternity**, whose name is Holy; I dwell

in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isaiah 57:15).

"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." (John 3:13). Jesus was in both places at the same time!

B. Immanence

Immanence means that God is within His creation.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; **I dwell** in the high and holy place, **with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit**, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isaiah 57:15).

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and **in you all**." (Ephesians 4:6).

God is not only above and all around His creation, He is in His creation, especially dwelling within them who are believers in His Son.

C. Eternal

God has no beginning nor ending. There is no past, present nor future with God. Only eternal present. He is not limited by time.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even **from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God**." (Psalm 90:2).

D. Infinite

God has no limitation in space. All of His attributes are without limit. He cannot be limited as seen in the following verses:

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (1 Kings 8:27).

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." (Psalm 147:5)

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:24).

E. Immutable

God is unchangeable, invariable, and permanent. He is not capable of, nor susceptible to, change.

"For I am the Lord, **I change not**;" (Malachi 3:6).

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, **with whom is no variableness**, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17).

Sometimes, God changes in His judgments and decisions towards an individual or nation based on their behavior (see Genesis 6:6; I Samuel 11:35). But God never changes in his character. For instance, God will always be holy. He will never become unholy for anyone.

F. Omniscient

God is all knowing. He knows the future as well as the past. He knows all things, whether actual or merely possible. He knows things immediately and spontaneously. He knows the thoughts of man better than man knows himself.

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" (Isaiah 46:10).

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." (Psalm 147:5).

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13).

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine upris-

ing, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." (Psalm 139:1-4).

G. Omnipresent

God is everywhere, present in the universe.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:7-10).

"Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:23-24).

H. Omnipotent

God is all powerful. He is able to do any thing He desires.

"Then Job answered the Lord, and said, **I know that thou canst do every thing**, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (Job 42:1-2).

"Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and **there is nothing too hard for thee:**" (Jeremiah 32:17).

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but **with God all things are possible.**" (Matthew 19:26).

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for **the Lord God omnipotent** reigneth." (Revelation 19:6).

He is called the Almighty God:

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the **Almighty God**; walk before me, and be thou perfect." (Genesis 17:1)

He is also called the Lord God Almighty:

"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, **Lord God Almighty**, which was, and is, and is to come." (Revelation 4:8).