

Page 10, titled Preparation for Lessons 4 and 5, and we have some true or false questions here. First, true or false, God is made up of material substance, i.e. stuff you can see and touch. Yeah, so it's false, right? And why would you say it's false? Why would you say that he's not made up of material substance? Because he's a spirit, right? He's a spirit.

You know, this may not be something that y'all have maybe come across too much, I don't know, but I've heard it among, I think especially in the last 10 years, because of all the focus on race, for example, I've heard really well-meaning people, even Christian people, you know, well is God black or is he what color? And it's just so, you know, we know by God's grace that Jesus said very clearly, right, that God is spirit. Worship him in spirit and truth. But my point with that is these things have actual ramifications. People get divided over things. I've seen people get sort of heated over these sorts of things, and we know that God is a spirit. Now, we know God the Spirit, of course, because Jesus says as much, and other passages of the Scriptures teach this, but one of the factors that comes as a result of this is that he is without limitation.

He's without limitation physically. He's not contained anywhere because he's a spirit. And that matters because, well, we'll see that one of the attributes of God is that he's infinite. So if he were a material substance, bound by material substance, he actually could not be infinite, right?

Because material things are bound to a certain location, whereas as a spirit and as an infinite spirit, he can actually transcend all space and actually transcend even the concept of space, which is beyond our comprehension, but it is true. So there are real ramifications when we don't understand that he's a spirit. For example, second question, this would be one of the ramifications if you don't understand that he's a spirit.

Second, true or false, it is a violation of God's law to try to make God visible by a picture. true, right? And we know this is true, and we'll get into this more in our study due to, you know, the clear teaching of the second commandment, as well as some other things we'll see later on in our study today. But also, again, even from what we've already said, if he could be contained by a picture limited by some sort of image, you're actually indicating that God is bound, that you can put him in a container. One of the things, you'll have heard me pray many times, because one of the things that just sort of comes out of me when I contemplate the being of God, as I will pray from our pulpit, I'll say something like, you know, you are the great uncontained and uncontainable God. I say that a lot in my prayers because it's one of those things that when you start to think about it, that's just crazy, right?

It's beyond our comprehension. Not only is He uncontained, He's uncontainable. You can't find something big enough to put around Him. And so when you put an image together and say, hey, look, look, here's Jesus, or you know, here's God the Father. Well, you just indicated that this picture that you've created can contain the uncontainable God.

And surely people don't always think these things through when they do that. I'm not suggesting that every time somebody's painted a picture of one of the beings, the persons of the Trinity, they've thought this through in this sort of way, but it is true that they are communicating that by their drawing or whatever it is, statue or fill in the blank. True or false?

We can see God indirectly. Indirectly. So we can say, we can say true, that we can see him indirectly, meaning that you can see him in the created world, or you can see his reflection of his being indirectly, not a direct, but sort of indirectly. You can also, you can think of theophanies, not that we get to see those today in the way that they did, but I think we could say that Moses got to see a God was revealing himself in a theophany, right, in a way to Moses in the burning bush. So it was an indirect seeing of God. Yeah, so I would say it's true, we can see God indirectly. I would say true to that, yeah, that we can see him indirectly. Now I don't believe that we see the Theophanies in the way that Moses did, but he did in fact see indirectly God. Now again, the passage is very clear when you go and look at it in Exodus 3.

He didn't see God directly, right? He heard a voice from a flaming the unburnable bush, right? Not the burning bush, it's actually the unburning bush, right? Because the bush is on fire but it's not being consumed. But he heard a voice. He did not see God directly, but he did see indirectly God, and so we can say we can see him. God can be seen indirectly, and we even have that today through his world, through his word in a sense, right? We're getting to know him in that way. So 4. True or false, God is QUANTITATIVELY different from humanity, i.e. much greater than we are.

5. True or false, God is QUALITATIVELY different than humanity, i.e. in a separate category than humanity. True. So both of those are true.

And then I put this little thing here, the footnote to something I had said in a sermon, and I referenced this even last week, but I will go ahead and read it. This is something I—this is literally just a transcript of my sermon. It's kind of fun. You can go on SermonAudio, and if you have a subscription to SermonAudio, which we have to as a church to be able to post, one of the cool features is you can actually go and just click transcript and I can just pull the whole transcript. So this is literally verbatim exactly what I said in a sermon. Yeah it's super helpful. It's really helpful and if I'm trying to see what like either what I said in a sermon or like oh I remember hearing a sermon one time from 10 years ago from somebody about such and such I can go find them on SermonAudio, download the transcript, and then I can use Ctrl-F, you know, Find, and I can look up keywords, and I can not listen to the whole sermon if I don't, you know... I also could help is if somebody, like, heard your sermon and had a question, and maybe didn't hear what you said, or you may have said it wrong.

Yes, yes, yes. You can say, wait, let me go back and hear what I said, so I can either clarify... Yes. You know what I'm saying? Oh, it's very helpful. That would be so helpful for someone that maybe didn't understand what you're saying. It's very helpful. Yeah, I don't know what the subscription costs, I just know that we have it. You can go use SermonAudio for free, but the subscription thing, you have to have like an account, but I don't know, maybe it's super cheap, maybe it's even free, but you at least have to have an account. So here's what I said. Beloved, our theology about God matters. What you think about God shapes how you functionally relate to him.

But here's the problem that all of us face. We all tend to think that God is just like us, only bigger. So that would be the qualitative factor, which is true, but he's also... or the quantitative factor. Like us, but bigger. But he's also qualitatively different, and that's where the sermon will go. We think that God is like us in that he has some strength, but he's unlike us in that he's stronger than us. We think that he's like us in that he has some wisdom, but he's unlike us in that he's wiser than us. We think he's like us in that he has some knowledge, but he's unlike us in that he has more knowledge than we have.

But what the scriptures teach is actually that God isn't just quantitatively different than us, he's qualitatively different than us. The theologians call this God's being *sui generis*, which simply means that he is in a category all of his own. God is not like us. When we do our theology from the perspective that God must be like me, we end up with all sorts of problems.

Why? Because we assume that how I act must be how God acts. So, for example, if I blow up and lose my temper with my children, then that must be how God acts towards me. I blow up and lose my temper towards my children, therefore God must blow up and lose his temper with me. If I can't forgive myself for some wicked thing that I've done, then God can't forgive me either. Why? Because God is just like me. If other people hate me and think lowly of me, then God must hate me and think lowly of me. Why? Because God is just like one of us. What's the problem with this way of thinking? Well, here's the problem.

It doesn't let God be God. God tells us who He is, and it is our job to listen. We don't get to tell God who He is. In our passage tonight, obviously in the context of this sermon that I was preaching, God says four things about how he relates to his people, and all four of these things are rather shocking. All four of these things that God says about how he relates to his elect children are shocking. They're hard to believe. But I want to ask you this question tonight before we even get into the text. Will you let God be God tonight? Will you simply let him tell you who he is, and how he relates to his people. Will you receive it?

So the biggest problem, I think is what I'm suggesting in this sermon, the biggest problem with us thinking that God is just like me, only bigger, is at the end of the day, it doesn't let God simply be who he is. It's me saying, God, here's how you have to act. Here's how you have to be. Where instead, we should say, who have you told me you are? And that is a posture of humility, it's a posture of trust, it's a posture of allowing God to really speak and us to really listen to him, not trying to tell him who he is and what he gets to do. And so it is important that we understand these truths, that he's not only bigger than me, he's also in a different category than me. So sixth year, true or false? Given enough time, we could know as much as God knows.

Right? No, of course not. Seven, true or false? The doctrine of the Trinity is not taught in the Bible. Right? Of course I agree with you. False is obviously the answer. Now, what are you going to say to the person who says, well, the word Trinity isn't in the Bible? Because you're going to hear that, or, you know, people say that, right? Well, the word Trinity, which is true, of course, the word Trinity isn't in the Bible. Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's right. You can count to three. That's right.

Yeah, yeah, so right, we say the concept's all over the place, right? The concept's all over the place. Imagine, you know, imagine Vicky has to take a phone call and she's so she thinks she's just gonna stay in the room when she takes this phone call Vicky would never do but she takes a phone call and We're all sitting in here and we're kind of waiting for Vicky to get off phones a little bit awkward But we're just trying to be patient with her. She's on the phone.

She's saying to somebody Yeah, so the dress, you're going to want to have a white dress. Yeah. Veil, you can have a veil if you want. The cake, probably three tiers. I would say the men should be in suits. Make sure you bring the

rings. Yeah, that'll be good. All right, bye. Now, what do you think Vicki's talking about there? A wedding. But I never used the word wedding in that whole... I never said the word wedding one time. But everybody knows I'm talking about a wedding, right?

Because it's so obvious, right? The evidence is glaring. It's everywhere in that conversation. So that's maybe the one way we can think of whether or not the Trinity's in the Bible, which is so God has clearly revealed himself as a triune God. And so, you know, no fear there.

But question eight, true or false? Christ is equal in power and authority with God the Father. True, right? Christ is equal in power and authority with God the Father. It's true. The Holy Spirit is a divine force in our lives, not a person. False. Yeah, He is a person. He's the third person of the Trinity. Now, this is you know this is something that is important that we see in the scriptures because it's something i have found even among orthodox christians which they don't get that. They don't understand.

And so I just want to take a moment to show this from Scripture. There's a few different ways we can do this. I mean, Miss Betty's already brought up one of the great ways, right? You can look at passages like Matthew 28 where it says, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, obviously each of those that each of each is a person. You can see that, for example, in the baptism of Christ. So there are a lot of different ways, but let's look at a few different ways we can see specifically that he's a person.

So let's turn to John 16. We're about to see in John 16 verses 5 through 15 is this you go to a lot of places to see this this is just one place where you see it with more it's more concentrated the amount that you see what what we're about to see so starting in verse five but now i am going to him who sent me and none of you asks me are you going?

But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you." So what does the Holy Spirit call there? He's called a Him, not an It. Now let's continue. An It would be a force, a Him would be a person, right? And so we continue, and keep that in mind.

And when He not it, when HE comes, HE will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. Concerning sin, because they do not believe in me. Concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you will see me no longer. Concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them.

When the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come. he will glorify me for he will take what is mine and declare it to you all that the father has is mine therefore i said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you so it's he him he him he him he him he him talking about the holy spirit and in greek you know not that this is should be shocking to anybody because it's not so unlike english they have the word it right they could have said the the author writing by divine inspiration could have said you know I will send it to you, and it will do this, and it will do that." But repeatedly, the Spirit is called a he. Now, I'm not going to go to all these passages

because it's the exact same thing we're seeing, but you would see this if you went to John 14, 15 through 17, verse 26 of John 14, John 15, 26. All these different passages talk of he, him, he, him.

Another just really brief way we can say we see specifically that he is a person, not a force, is when you look at Ephesians 4.30 as well as Isaiah 63.10 both of those passages talk about grieving the Holy Spirit. Now how can you grieve an impersonal force? Right?

If the Holy Spirit is like a door that you stub your toe on or something like that, that door is not grieved. If you slam the door a little bit too hard, the door might fall off the hinges, but you would never say, I just grieved the door. The door is sorrowful. You would say, you know, the door broke. But the Spirit of God can be grieved because He's a person.

So the evidence is very clear in Scripture, when you look at the whole of Scripture, that He indeed is the third person of the Trinity, not a force, but a person, not an impersonal force. Just some, list some things just for our reflection. No particular doctrine do I have in mind here. List some attributes or characteristics of God. So, I don't know, what are some attributes of God? Nothing special here, just anything. Page 11. Holy. Yep. All-knowing. Some others? Immutable. Immutable. Any others that we want to say? Infinite. Infinite, yeah.

And the reason this is helpful is because it's good for us to take time in our lives, just in general, every now and then. Really, I would say we, at some level, really daily, ought to try to, you know, even if it's laying on your bed at night for a couple minutes before you go to bed, I mean, I know we, some of us have varying levels of busyness in life, and I do understand that, but we really need to be thinking, who is God? That does impact my life. It absolutely impacts our lives.

So just contemplating, who is the God? What does this mean for my life, for the way I live, for the way I think? And so of those attributes you listed, which are unique to God? and which are found, well, we probably should have listed a few more to do this well, but anyways, which are unique to God and which are found in man as image bearers of God. So what are some attributes that are unique to God? Well, first of all, the one that man can. Exactly, yep, so that would be one. We do share that. Yep.

We're not infinite. Yep, we're not infinite, right? We are complete. exactly yeah it's perfect yep so there's some of these right that we can have as image bearers, there are others that, obviously, none of them do we have in the same degree. I think we understand that, right?

None of these do we have in the same degree as God, but we can relate to, we understand something of the word merciful. There's really no sense in, like, we can talk about infinite, but the idea of infinity does transcend anything we can really even begin to grasp.

And we're gonna talk a little bit more about this. I don't wanna say too much about it right now. But yeah, so infinite, eternal, right? It's not just that he lives forever, it's that he's outside of time, that he's not bound by time, that he created time, right? I mean, these things are, we're at a loss of words at some level to understand these things.

Now, with that in mind, we're going to explore some of these concepts further, so I don't want to say too much. Let's go to page 12. Let's go to page 12. And as a side note, as we're transitioning to our lesson now on page 12, lesson four, the nature of God, there's this great quote, and I don't remember who said it. Honestly, it might have been, frankly, it may have even been an unbeliever. I just don't remember who said it, but I think they were right about this, whoever said it.

A God that I can fully know is not a God worth knowing. A God I can fully understand, a God I can fully comprehend isn't a God worth believing in, because at that point, They're really... They're really not that good. They're not that awesome, right? They're sort of puny like me.

If it's a god, I can sort of, you know, if they're just like, Superman's really cool, right? I mean, he can lift up heavy things and fly, but there's nothing about Superman that transcends my ability to understand in the sense of, okay, he's flying around, he can pick up heavy things. That I can get. Okay, he's not infinite, right? He's not limitless.

Even Superman can be crushed by something. that's not really a God we're believing in, not that anybody believes in Superman as God, but my point is, you know, we need something that is beyond even our ability to comprehend. There's something about that that is fitting if he's really going to be God. So what is God here? God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, and is being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. We have some scripture references there.

I'm not going to have us read them right out because I think we'll turn to many of them throughout the study, so since we're going to be turning them probably as we go through the lesson we don't need to turn to them all right away. So first, what is theology? What is theology?

Study of God. Yeah, the study of God. Study of God. And I'm going to use two definitions that I find helpful. I always say the study of God because obviously that's the breakdown of the etymology, the study of God, but a couple things that might be helpful too. One person said the study of God himself as he has revealed himself to us, as he has revealed himself to us, and what I think that definition helps to drill down on is the fact that it's not the study of God as I might want Him to be, as I might think Him to be, it's the study of God as He Himself has revealed Himself to us. So it's reminding me in that definition that I must submit myself to who He Himself has declared Himself to be in the Holy Word of God.

Another guy, y'all would know him, St. Thomas Aquinas. Now, I know we don't agree with Aquinas on a number of things. For example, he's the guy who really got going the idea of transubstantiation in the Roman Catholic Church several hundred years before they canonized it. So that's an interesting thing to think about, that the Roman Catholic Church, it was not agreed upon that transubstantiation was their view of the sacrament, as I recall, until the Council of Trent in the 1540s, 50s, and 60s in response to the Reformation. So we think that they've always, my point is, Rome's always been all over the place. So they didn't all, their idea that transubstantiation is, it is their

view officially today, and has been for 500 years, Aquinas in the 11th and 1200s started to get that doctrine really grooving and going, but anyways, it just shows you, Rome will always claim, well, we're the historic church, we've always, well, you've changed all over the place over the years, but anyways, I get off my little Rome tangent. But Aquinas did say some good things, he really did, and this was one of them, I think.

Theology is taught by God, teaches of God, leads and leads to God. Theology is taught by God, teaches of God, and leads to God. So obviously, Quinas is helping us see here that God himself is the teacher of all theology. He's true theology anyways, right theology. He's the one who teaches it, and when he's teaching it, he's teaching it about himself, and it's not just so that we would learn about him in some sort of abstract way, but that we might learn about him so that we might be led to him, to a real affection for him, to a real reverence for his being.

So it's taught by God, teaches of God, and leads to God. It is the nature of blank which is foundational for all of life. It is the nature of God that is foundational, which is foundational for all life. So God goes in that little blank there. It is the nature of God. Here's what one author wrote.

He said this, this is an important word for us to understand that it's theology and an important word for us to come to love because theology impacts your entire life. Theology impacts the way you approach school, the way you handle relationships, the way you respond to parents, the way parents respond to their children. Every decision that you make in life flows in some way from your theology. It might be bad theology, and that's why it's important that we give our attention to who God is. Even bad theology impacts our daily life. It's from that foundation of God's nature that everything else we talk about flows. Everything in our life should start with God. So one of the ways that I've thought about this just on, you know, myself, and I'm sure y'all can relate, but okay, all of us in this room would profess that God is everywhere and God is all-knowing.

And that's a good doctrine. It's very good. It's clearly taught in Scripture. How how much differently would I live if I functionally really took that to heart, right? I know that to be true theologically, but that needs to seep into the way that I actually act. Okay, God is everywhere, so how am I going to treat this person? God is here right now in this room. How am I going to act towards that frustrating clerk in the Walmart who doesn't seem to be paying attention or doing anything when I'm trying to get my groceries through the you know, just whatever.

We all go through the life that we live, and there's daily things, and I speak for myself here, too. I need, we need to have our theology seeping into the way we live in all aspects of life. So what is the meaning of the word spirit? What is the meaning of the word spirit?

Yes, that's great. Yeah, that's perfect. I wish I would have put that. Oh, no. Yeah, exactly. I know exactly what you're thinking, but that's great. Yeah. Yeah, it doesn't have a body like man. That's perfect. He doesn't have a body like man. That's perfect, actually. That's, that's, that's definitely is. Yeah. Right, so he doesn't have a body like man. Yeah, without physical limitations. No physical limitations. A spirit doesn't have physical limitations.

So that's the same concept. That's just what I had written. A being without physical limitations is what I wrote. So angels, obviously, are spirits. They don't have physical limitations. Now, we know they can manifest themselves physically. We see that in the Bible, but... So...

Define these terms, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. So let's define each of these. What is infinite? Limitless. Yeah, I like that. Limitless for infinite. And we could maybe just add that limitless in relation to space, perhaps, just to clarify that it's in relation to space specifically that infinity is applied, infinity in relation to space.

Yeah, so what about eternal? What's the idea there? Forever, never ending. yeah i think probably forever is even more helpful in that never well well what we want to try to make sure we get at is the fact that there's no beginning and no ending right that it's not just because when we talk about like we're going to live for eternity that's not the same thing as saying we're eternal we're going to have eternal life in the sense that we live on forever and ever and ever but we're not going to have eternal life in the sense that we had no beginning right um scary thing about that we were there forever Yes, yes, and we cannot even begin to understand that.

Yeah, right, you're gonna be, yeah, I mean, hell is, yeah, hell is everlasting torture beyond anything anybody has ever, there's, other than, of course, Christ, but aside from Christ, nobody has ever, in their most horrible moment in their entire life, in the whole of human history, there's never been a single moment that anybody has gone through anything that will compare with hell. for a moment, and people will be there forever and ever without it. I mean, it's terrifying. I mean, that's the Scripture's teaching. It's just we can't—now, the opposite is true for those who have eternal life in Christ.

It's opposite in that it will be—the best moment anybody's ever had, even for a millisecond in human history, anybody who's ever lived, will not be as good as a single moment in heaven, and that will be forever and ever without end. So on both ends of the spectrum, whether speaking of hell and its incomprehensible terror, or heaven and its incomprehensible goodness, cannot be fathomed by us at this time. So yeah, eternal, though, we could say is, this is one way I've heard it put, it's infinity applied to time, right? It's the concept of limitlessness, but applied specifically to the realm of time. Whereas infinity is really applied specifically to the realm of space, if something is beyond measure in terms of space, eternal is beyond measure in terms of time, immeasurable in relation to time. And of course, I think unchangeable is perhaps the easiest to define, right? Just that it's immutable, it doesn't change. What are the things you'll notice about each of these words? Infinity, eternal, unchangeable.

Each of them have a prefix to them that means negation. So the opposite of infinite is finite. What was that? Yeah, so I was just saying the opposite. So each of these words has something on the front of it that negates. So the opposite of infinite is to be finite. I don't know that ternal is quite a word, but you can hear in the way the word is constructed etymologically, that E is a negation of its opposite, to be in time, and then the E on the front is saying it's beyond time. Or changeable, well, not changeable, but unchangeable. So we're trying to describe, these things are trying to get at what God is not, right? He is not finite, he is not temporal, he is not changeable. These are all things that he is not.

I want to go to a couple of scripture passages for each of these, just to—I always think it's helpful to see God's Word teaching this, not just our—but we know this to be true. We've grown up—obviously we're all, by God's grace, part of really solid churches, so I know that we believe these things, but it is helpful to see it.

One of the ways I think we can see this is actually—I think we can at least say we see infinite and eternal Genesis 1.1 because it says, in the beginning God created.

So that gets at the idea of eternal and infinity because In the beginning, God already was. In the beginning of time, in other words, Genesis is saying, God. God was already there, and then he did something. So God precedes, according to Genesis 1-1, time. In the beginning, God was already here, and here's what he did. So it's indicating to us already in Genesis 1-1 in the eternal, and what he did was he created.

And that means that he's infinite because he created what? The heavens and the earth. So he has to be infinite because he created all the earth and he already existed. So he wasn't bound by the earth because he already existed. He also had to be infinite because he created the heavens, right? So the heavens did not contain him. The heaven does not contain God because he's infinite. Nothing can contain him.

And if he created it, in the beginning, then where was he before he created the heavens and the earth? So if he created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, where was he before he created the heavens and the earth? And the answer is he just was, right? There was no, there he is. It was just God. So he had to be infinite.

Already in Genesis 1.1, he had to be infinite because he created everything, but he had to be somewhere before he created it or else he would be surrounded by something that Existed but he didn't but he created everything enough. So nothing existed other than him so so you already can see from Genesis 1 1 that he is actually infinite and an eternal but some other passages to help us see his His infinity would be 2nd Chronicles 6 18 2nd Chronicles 6 18 We certainly don't.

I think we can say that we could have evidence by their fruit, right, that they're in Christ, and so we can say that they're with the Lord. yeah in general we can't yeah in general like yeah I mean it's yeah yeah yeah Yeah, some people say, you know, well, we know he's in a better place and I feel like actually, I don't remember the occasion, I know I wouldn't have just said it, but I feel like there was an occasion where I just felt, I don't know if I actually said it or I just felt, I think maybe I just felt it internally and it probably, hopefully I had enough, I don't know, but sometimes, you know, somebody will say that and you think, You think, well, I hope so.

And I really mean, I hope they're in a better place. But the assumption is, in our culture, is definitely they're always in a better place. And we just simply can't, we just, you know, when there's not evidence to suggest that, we just don't have the right to assume it just because we wish it were. During Vacation Bible School a couple of years ago, and they just said, well, you don't have to worry about them because they're happy now because they're dead.

And I said, what? yep yep yep yep so second Chronicles Yep, no, it certainly does. Yes, yes, we must warn people if we love them because, yeah, because they're going to go to hell if they don't know Christ and they're not trusting in him alone for their salvation.

So 2 Chronicles 6.18, speaking of infinity, This is Solomon's dedication of the temple he's praying. He says, So he says that even heaven cannot contain you. That's what he just prayed.

And you see the same exact thing in the sort of parallel passage in 1 Kings 8.27. Solomon, again praying, says, So you see, obviously, his infinity from those passages, not being bound by space.

You can see this in, you can think of Psalm 139, right, where the psalmist is talking about, you know, if I go down to Sheol, there you are. If I go up to the highest heavens, there you are. Wherever I go, whether I'm in the sea, or whether I'm, you know, there you are, Psalm 139, you will be with me. So that obviously implies that he is infinite, that he's everywhere, that he's omnipresent.

So the common, yeah, the Reformed teaching is that God is God is present in hell, but he is withholding, in a sense, he is withholding, you know, any of his loving mercy. So it's his full wrath, his unmitigated wrath in hell. So that's why some people will say, you know, you're going to go to a Christless eternity. It's not that God's not going to be present, but the effectual work of Christ will not be. There will be no intercession, there will be no mediator, there will be nothing but His wrath.

So yeah, Psalm 139, for example, verse 7, 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. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me and the light about me be night, Even the darkness is not dark to you. The night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you."

So that's just another passage. I have a few other I had jotted down that show us his infinity, but I think we've seen enough of that. His eternity, I think a good passage for that is Psalm 90. Psalm 90 verse 2 helps us see that God is eternal, without beginning and without end. Psalm 90 verse 2, it says, "...before the mountains were brought forth, wherever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God."

You also think, for example, of Exodus 3.14 where God reveals himself as I am, right? He's suggesting there not that I was, not that I will be, but simply that I am, I just exist. I'm outside of time, in other words, I'm eternal, as well as self-existent and other attributes are indicated by that word I am, but eternity is one of those attributes that is indicated.

Unchangeable, a great one here is Malachi 3.6, for God's being unchangeable, so I'll turn there and I'm gonna read that for us. Let's see here. All these little minor prophets run together. There we go.

Malachi 3.6.

For I, the Lord, do not change. Therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. And so that's a very encouraging reality of God's being unchanged. We change, we fall short, but God in His faithfulness, He does not change. What's really neat to see is, for example, and we'll get there in about a year or two in Hebrews, but Hebrews chapter 13 verse 8, speaking specifically of Christ. It says Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. So of course if God doesn't change, and there it's indicated that Jesus doesn't change, then Jesus must be God. Hebrews 13, 8.

Many other passages suggest that, or not just suggest, you state that God does not change, but we'll let those suffice for now. One other brief comment on the unchangeability of God. It's not just that he doesn't change, right? It's that he cannot change. and the reason I say that is because change always indicates either an increase or decrease in your in your being, if I could say it like that, in the sense of, uh, I'm always changing, hopefully for the better, but frankly sometimes we change at least for a moment, for the worse, and then maybe we get a little better again, and then we, you know, we're fluctuating.

But if God is indeed perfect in the fullest sense of the word perfect, not just morally, but perfect in his being, he's not just morally without sin, he's perfect in his very being, his attributes are perfect, his Infinity is perfect. His eternality is perfect. If he's perfect in the fullest sense of the word, perfect, in all that a being can be, if he were to change, he can't certainly change and become any better, can he? Because he's perfect. Which means if he changes at all, he must change to be worse, and he cannot get any worse because he's perfect. And to get worse would be to cease to be perfect. But one of the attributes of his being perfect is that he can't change.

So I say this not to just like make us have our brains shatter a little bit, but I say this to say like these doctrines matter. I'm not saying every day when we're walking about our, you know, taking our dog for a walk or cooking breakfast, we have to be just perpetually sort of What did it mean about it? But my point is, if we don't understand some of these foundational things, it can lead to really errant theologies, really bad views of God. And ultimately, these things seep into salvation, right?

Because if God can change in any sense, if we only knew he changed in one area, he just simply changes in his ability to be holy, his ability to be a truth teller. Just that one area. We know from Scripture he changes in that one just small area. Well, how do we know it's not going to be true of other areas? And how then do we have any assurance of salvation?

Which is the argument of Malachi 3.6, right? The unchangeability of God is what brings him confidence that God will save his people. If God can change, you know, I remember Hank doing his prayer meeting one time in here, and he said, you know, with the flower, and if y'all remember the flower petals, he's like, he loves me, he loves me not, because if God was up there, you know, I love you, I love you not, I love you, I love you not, you know, Well, we'll find out in the end if he loved me or not, if he wanted me or not, and if he was just sort of capricious, I think that's the right word, but if he was just sort of all over the place, changing, variant, but because of his unchangeability, we can have confidence in relation to our eternal salvation. So again, these things do matter. What does the second commandment teach us? What does the second commandment teach us?

Yeah, do not make any carved images, right? Now, I thought this was kind of a fun question for us to wrestle with. What if somebody comes to you and they say, but you don't understand, when I make these carved images and

these statues and stuff, it just, it really makes me feel close to God. And when I do my Bible time in front of these, or I just, before I go out the door, if I just bow and just sort of just feel really deeply as I put myself before this image, it just, it makes me feel close to God. Are you gonna tell me I can't do that? It means a lot to me. Right, but obviously y'all but but but these are like I you know These are real things that you have to deal with when you're talking to actual people. They're going to feel like you're attacking them, like, why don't you like me? You just don't like my way I like to worship, and it's just your opinion. Who are you? And of course, we can say to that person, well, it's not my opinion. God told us in His Word how He wants us to worship Him, and if you really want to worship If you're really worshipping God, don't you want to do it the way He wants you to do it? Right?

The analogy I always give is, I always, you know, whenever I was dating Sarah or, you know, or girls before Sarah, that you're not nearly as good as Sarah. But whenever I dated Sarah, you know, I always asked, like, do you prefer chocolates or flowers?

So imagine Sarah says to me, well, you know, I really, I really prefer prefer flowers, but if you do ever get me chocolate, just please get me dark chocolate. That would be my preference if you were to get me chocolate. And then, you know, the next day I roll up and I have this just tons of milk chocolate. And I go, here, Sarah, I got you all this milk chocolate. And she's like, oh, that was kind of nice of you, but did, I thought I, I told you that I really prefer flowers, but if I do get chocolates, I really prefer dark chocolate. Oh, no, no, no, I heard you. I just really like milk chocolate.

It's like, what do you mean you love me? What do you mean you care about me? You literally know exactly what I want you to do, and you're just doing what you want to do because you like that. And frankly, that's what happens when we start worshipping God by images or any other way, not prescribed in His Word. It's like, but God, you don't understand, because I like images of you. It's like, yeah, but I told you I don't want you to do any images, right? So who are we really worshipping there? And in a sense, we're worshipping ourself, right? So we need to be very, like, these things, again, they matter. They reflect our heart posture to God. Is he gonna be God in my life, or am I gonna, you know, kind of call him God, but then kind of do whatever I want?

So is there any way we can see God? Of course, not in and of himself, right? There's no way we can see God in and of himself. Now, we can talk about that indirectly, which we talked about earlier, in the way that, like you might say in the theophany, you might say that Moses saw God indirectly, right? Not God in and of himself, but a way that God was specially manifesting himself to him. We might say we indirectly see him in the world around us, but we don't directly see him.

I'm not going to say it's a trick question, but it sort of just depends on what exactly you're thinking of when you read the question. Is there any way we can see God? It depends on what you mean by that question. But God in and of himself as spirit? No, because spirits are invisible.

So, yeah. We'll maybe just do this last question, and then we'll close, and I'll make a note to stop here, and we'll pick back up next time. We'll probably be able to finish this lesson and the next one next time. We'll stop after this question. Can God do all things?

No, he can't sin. That's right, he can't sin, or he can't lie. So it's great, good, Beckbeck's onto it. So yeah, he can't lie, right? He can't sin. So we can say, He can do all His holy will, or He can do all things that are not against His nature. those two ways of thinking about it. So he can do anything that's not against his nature. He can do all his holy will.

Now this is one of those fun things that you had to deal with if you went to philosophy classes with a bunch of unbelievers and stuff, which I did. So the question then comes up, doesn't that make God unlimited? I thought he was all powerful. Well, the answer to that is sin isn't power, sin is weakness. So it's not that he's not all powerful, it's that he can't do anything that's weak, and under the category of weak, false, sin, right? And then somebody would say, well, can he square a circle? Can he build a rock too big he can't carry it? Right?

You'd say, well, God's also a God of logic. So the answer is no, because it's illogical. The problem isn't that God can't do things, the problem is what you just said doesn't make sense, right? You just made an illogical statement, and God's illogical. So there are answers. Yeah, there are answers. Yeah. Depending on the environments in which... I can't imagine being in a classroom having to... I mean, I don't think my mom would go there and say, you're just stupid. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, yeah.

There are a lot of folks that you, yeah, you have to, well, anyways, but I didn't always do everything, you know, as well as it could have been done, but... Tried to be faithful. Well, it's been good. Let's let's pray dearly father. We do. Thank you for your faithfulness for your steadfast love God we do praise you for your being for who you actually are in and of yourself and even pleased to say Here's a bit of who I am. Oh god. You didn't have to do that.

Even that is evidence of your infinite condescension, to stoop low, to lisp into the ears of your children, that we might understand something of who you are. O God, forgive us for our sins, our sins against your character. Lord God, our doubts, our anger, our waywardness, O Lord, help us, God, to take fresh courage and strength from the being who you have made yourself, who you've revealed yourself to be to us in your word. Oh our God, we pray that more and more we would want to let you be who you are. Not that you're bound by us, but in our hearts we would want to listen to what you say and receive who you have revealed yourself to be with humility. Help us in the name of Jesus. Amen.