



Doctrine of God

Introduction

I. MODELS FOR THE STUDY OF THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

A. Traditional Model

1. Built on concepts of Greek philosophy [see *The Doctrine of God* by John M. Frame (p.3-5)]
 - a. Early Christian theologians developed their doctrine of God in response to Greek philosophy and Gnosticism. Although they denied much of the false teaching in these systems, they adopted the terminology and their modes of thought from these false systems instead of from the Bible.
 - b. The Catholic theologian, Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274), systemized the earlier arguments with the logical forms of Aristotle and pseudo-Dionysius, a Neo-Platonist in thought.
 - c. The Reformed theologians did little to alter the doctrine of God as it came down to them from the Roman Catholic Church.
2. Tends to intellectual reasoning without much practical value for the lost man or for the believer.

B. Liberal Models

1. Various systems built on modern concepts of truth: “the feeling of absolute dependence (Schleiermacher), the fatherhood of God (Harnack), the Word of God (Barth), the divine-human personal encounter (Brunner), existential self-understanding (Bultmann), the new Being (Tillich), the language event (Ebeling), holy history (Cullman), theological imagination (Kaufman), hope (Moltmann), liberation (Gutierrez and many others), the experience of women in a patriarchal setting (Elizabeth Johnson and other feminists), history (Pannenberg), community (Grenz), and the openness of God (Pinnock).” –from *The Doctrine of God* by John M. Frame (p.8). All of these systems depart from the concept as the word of God as the absolute authority for truth.
2. These systems tend to support whatever social or practical program they are designed to support. They come up empty.



C. Biblical Model

1. The doctrine of God must be determined from the direct teaching of the Bible. It must be accepted as the only absolute source of divine truth. All that it says about the doctrine of God must be accepted as true.
2. The doctrine of God as taught in the Bible leads to:
 - a. Salvation for the unbeliever
 - b. Sanctification and service for the believer

II. BASIC OUTLINE OF THE DOCTRINE OF GOD FOR THIS COURSE

A. The Knowledge of God

1. What does it mean to know God?
2. Why is knowing God so important?
3. In what ways can we know God?

B. The Existence of God

1. How should we think about the existence of God?
2. How does the Bible approach the existence of God?
3. What are the false concepts of God?

C. The Names of God

1. What are the primary names of God in scripture?
2. What are the major compound names of God?
3. How does God proclaim His name?
4. What do God's names tell us about Him?

D. The Essence of God

1. What makes up the essential nature of God?
2. What does it mean that God is a Spirit?
3. What does it mean that God is self-existent?
4. What is the immensity of God?

E. The Attributes of God

1. What is an attribute of God?
2. What are the attributes of God's greatness?
3. What are the attributes of God's goodness?

F. The Nature of God

1. What does it mean to say that there is one God?
2. What is the nature of the trinity?

G. The Works of God

1. What are the primary works of God?
2. What is the Bible teaching about the covenants of God?
3. What work did God do before creation?
4. What is the significance of the providence of God?