

The Lord is One: God's Unity

The Attributes of God – Session Seven

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”
—Deuteronomy 6:4 NKJV

- I. Introduction

- II. Defining God's Unity
 - a. The “Shema” (Deut. 6:4[-9]) in Various Translations

 - b. Unity: God's essence is *singular* (as opposed to plural).

 - c. The Unity of God in the Creeds and Confessions

- III. Two Aspects of God's Unity
 - a. *Unitas singularitatis* (Unity of Singularity)
 - i. God is *numerically* one.
 - 1. There is only one God (properly so called).

 - 2. Deut. 6:4; Jas. 2:19; 1 Cor. 8:4-6

 - ii. God is *uniquely* one.
 - 1. With God, there is no species or genus.

 - 2. God cannot be defined.

 - b. *Unitas simplicitatis* (Unity of Simplicity)
 - i. Meaning: Free of all composition

 - ii. Two Kinds of Composition
 - 1. Physical: God is not composed of physical parts.

- a. God is a Spirit (John 4:24).
 - b. WCF 2.1: “There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, *a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts...*”
 - c. Deut. 4:15-18
 - d. The Importance of Physical Simplicity
2. Metaphysical: There is no distinction between God’s essence and existence.
- a. Essence: *What* Something Is
 - b. Existence: *That* Something Is
 - c. “All that is *in* God *is* God.” “God *is* his attributes.”
 - d. Scriptural Support
 - e. Distinctions between God’s Attributes?
 - i. Three Positions
 - ii. Hodge: “The attributes of God, therefore, are not merely different conceptions in our minds, but different modes in which God reveals Himself to his creatures (or to Himself).”¹

IV. Practical Considerations

- a. All God’s attributes belong properly and entirely to each Person of the Godhead.
 - i. “Perichoresis” and “Circumincession”
- b. God himself defines—and indeed *is*—truth, love goodness, beauty, justice, etc.

¹ Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (New York, NY: Charles Scribner and Company, 1873), 1:374.