

Westminster Confession of Faith: Session Three

WCF 2 - Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation" (Exodus 34:6-7 NKJV)

Intro: The Vital Importance of Theology: Doctrine for Life

A. Place of Theology: The Fountainhead of all Knowledge

B. The Source of Theology

1. The Book of Nature

2. The Book of Grace

C. The Necessity of Theology

1. Without the saving knowledge of God, no one can know anything truly

2. Without the saving knowledge of God, no one can live in communion with Him
2 Cor 13:14 & Eph 2:18

I. The Only God - "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me" (Isaiah 46:9).

A. Oneness - Deut 6:4, Mark 12:29-32

B. Nature - John 4:24

C. Incomprehensibility

D. Perfections/Attributes

1. **Definition:** *the perfections which are predicated of the Divine Being in Scripture or are visibly exercised by Him in His works of creation, providence, and redemption [Berkhof]*

2. **Incommunicable:** those to which there is nothing analogous in the creature

a. Aseity (self-existence)

1) Gen 1:1 - In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth

2) Ex 3:14 - And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.

b. Immutability

1) Ps 102:27 - But You are the same, And Your years will have no end

2) Is 48:12 - I am He, I am the First, I am also the Last

3) Jas 1:17 - ...from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning

c. Infinity

1) Eternity - Ps 90:2

2) Immensity - 1 Kings 8:27; Is 66:1

d. Unity

1) He is one God - Deut 6:4

2) He is simple - free from division, not composite

3. **Communicable:** properties of which the human spirit bears some analogy

- a. **Spirituality** - Jn 4:24
- b. **Intellectual**
 - 1) **Knowledge** - Is 40:27-28
 - 2) **Wisdom** - 1 Tim 1:17
 - 3) **Truthfulness/Veracity** - Jn 14:6, 17:3
- c. **Moral**
 - 1) **Goodness** - Ps 100:5
 - General Benevolence - Ps 145:9,15,16
 - Love - 1 Jn 4:8
 - Grace - Eph 2:7-9
 - Mercy - Ex 34:7
 - Patience - Ex 34:7
 - 2) **Holiness** - Is 6; Rev 4
 - 3) **Righteousness/Justice** - Ps 97:2
- d. **Sovereignty** - Ps 33:10-11

II. The Glorious God

- A. God alone is Self-Sufficient

- B. God alone is Worthy of Worship

III. The Triune God

- A. Trinity: Matthew 28:19
 - 1. Father
 - a. Ascription of Deity: John 1:14; 1 Cor 8:6; Heb 12:9
 - b. Work: Decreeing the work of redemption, election, creation and providence,
 - 2. Son
 - a. Ascription of Deity: Matt 1:21; Mark 2:1-12; John 1:1-4; John 8:58; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:5-12; 2 Peter 1:2-3; Revelation 1:12-20, 4-5
 - b. Work: Mediator, surety, one who accomplishes redemption for the elect, prophet, priest, and king
 - 3. Holy Spirit
 - a. Ascription of Deity: Isaiah 40:13, 63:10-11; Acts 5:3-4, 2 Cor 3:17; Revelation 1:4-5
 - b. Work: Regeneration; Applies salvation to the elect; Helper of God's people; illuminator of the mind; inspired Scripture
- B. Personal Properties
 - 1. Father: neither begotten nor proceeding
 - 2. Son: eternally begotten of the Father
 - 3. Holy Spirit: proceeding from the Father and the Son

The 'glory of the Lord' is the splendor and brilliance that is inseparably associated with all of God's attributes and his self-revelation in nature and grace, the glorious form in which he everywhere appears to his creatures. This glory and majesty in which God is clothed and which characterizes all his activities, though manifest throughout his creation, is nevertheless especially visible in the realm of grace.

~ Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Vol 2, 252 ~