Theology Proper

Table of Content

Unit 1: Foundations

Session 1: Why Study About God?

Session 2: Can we know God?

Session 3: How has God revealed Himself? Part 1: General Revelation

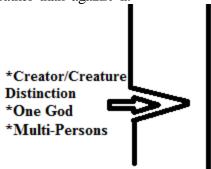
Session 4: How has God revealed Himself? Part 2: Special Revelation

Session 5: How has God revealed Himself? Part 3: God's Names

Unit 2: Trinity

Session 6: Foundations for the Trinity Part 1: Creator/Creature Distinction

- I. Foundations for the Trinity Part 1: Creator/Creature Distinction
 - a. <u>Overview:</u> Before we look at God as a Trinity and later God's attributes we need to understand that there is a difference between God and man. This doctrine is called the Creator/Creature Distinction.
 - b. Establish the need: Have you ever met someone or been one who said that God is not like X or Y because you wouldn't be like X or Y? We need to understand that God is different than us and we cannot assume what God is like merely by "gazing at our own navel" or looking inside ourselves.
 - c. Purpose: Understand there is a Creator/Creature Distinction.
 - d. How does this fit into our consideration of the Trinity?
 - i. The Trinity is very different than anything or anybody on earth.
 - ii. It is difficult to understand.
 - iii. Sometimes people object to the Trinity because it is different and difficult to understand.
 - iv. The Doctrine of the Creator/Creature Distinction makes us anticipate the Trinity rather than object to it on the ground that it is difficult and different from us.
 - v. Illustration: Before we demonstrate the Biblical proofs for the Trinity other doctrines in the Bible slants us towards believing in the Trinity rather than against it.



Non-Trinity

Trinity

- e. In session two we looked at some verses of the incomprehensibility/mystery of God that also support the Creator/Creature distinction.
 - Note: We will review some of those verses and add different insight for this doctrine:
 - i. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9)
 - 1. We see here that man cannot be compared to God.
 - 2. God is different from us in terms of:
 - a. Thoughts
 - b. Ways

- 3. Specifically the reason why is because God is greater in terms of His:
 - a. Ways
 - b. Thoughts
- 4. Note there is a poetic emphasis of "Ways" with this verses' Chiasm (Hebrew word 'sandwich'):
 - a. Thoughts
 - i. Ways
 - ii. Ways
 - b. Thoughts
- ii. "Oh, the depth of the riches ^[] both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?" (Romans 11:33-34)
 - 1. This is a doxological praise that Paul broke into after some serious intense theology of God's predestination and the role of Israel and Gentiles in Romans 9-11.
 - 2. No one can search His ways and His Judgment.
- f. Other verses on the Creator/Creature Distinction
 - i. He is different than other false gods
 - 1. "For even though they knew God, they did not whonor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Professing to be wise, they became fools, 3 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and wcrawling creatures." (Romans 1:21-23)
 - 2. "For they exchanged the truth of God for wa lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." (Romans 1:25)
 - a. Both Passages imply that the Creator ought to be Worshipped.
 - b. Both Passages shows that it is a bad thing to worship creatures and creation.
 - ii. He is different than His creature Man
 - 1. "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19)
 - a. Distinctions between God and men being made.
 - b. Discussion Question: How is God different?
 - 2. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (1 Corinthians 1:25)
 - a. Distinctions between God and men being made.
 - b. Discussion Question: How is God different?
- g. Theological Implications
 - i. We should not be surprised that some of God's attributes are not like us and His creation (incommunicable attributes).

- ii. We should not be surprised that even some of God's attributes that we have (communicable attributes) is different from us not in terms of degrees but kind as well.
 - 1. His knowledge is not like our knowledge of something.
 - 2. His love is not like our love.
 - 3. With importance for the Trinity: His personhood and Being is different than our personhood.
- h. What does this mean for our lives?
 - i. Knowing He's different than us as our Creator and we are His creatures means we should worship Him with awe and praise!
 - ii. Have humility when we study God: We don't know about Him unless He reveals Himself to us and its not because of our wisdom!
 - iii. We should expect to learn about things about God that shows how He is different than us—and that includes the possibility that He is Triune.
 - iv. Meditate on how is He different than us has implication for our lives:
 - 1. He does not lie; we can trust in Him!
 - 2. His ways of things are different but also better than our plans and ways: we need to trust in Him.
 - 3. He does not lie so His words are promises: we must love to trust in Him!
 - v. Yet at the same time though He is different He is also the original archetype and we are to "mirror" Him in a creaturely humble way as His image; How have your life mirror God in terms of love, holiness and patience?
 - vi. What other implications can you think of?