

## CHAPTER XII

# THE PERSONALITY OF GOD

### A. INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Person and personality.

a. By definition, God is pure, underived, self-conscious, self-determining, self-dependant, self-manifesting, holy, living being, and thus is personal.

(1) A dog, fish, tree, plant, amoeba, are not persons even though each possesses life.

(2) Man has *derived, limited* personal existence, being self-conscious, self-regulating, self-manifesting, unholy, living being, after the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27).

(3) God, having *underived, transcendent*, holy, living, personal being, exists as the only absolute "I AM."

(a) He is perfectly self-conscious or self-aware, declaring "I am." "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent Me to you''" (Ex. 3:14).

(b) He is perfectly, actively, self-determining or independently decisive, declaring "I will," based upon "I AM." Doing presupposes being. "2 God spoke further to Moses and said to him, 'I am the LORD; 3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. 4 I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned. 5 Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.' 6 Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 I will bring you to

the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.'" (Ex. 6:2-8).

- (c) He is perfectly self-expressive or self-manifesting, declaring "I actively show." "But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you [Pharaoh] to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth" (Ex. 9:16; cf. 16:6-10; 19:16-20).
- b. Hence, while God *is* personal, His *active* self-expression or self-manifestation is a revelation of His personality. Human personality is at best derivative and in no way is to be foisted upon divine revelation.
- (1) However, it is important that the revelation of God's personality be perceived as the expression of the fullness of His revealed attributes, and not unrelated emotions and radiance, especially those which are gleaned from human experience.
  - (2) At the level of mankind, we may strongly assess a human being according to certain incongruous personality traits, such as an outwardly happy countenance that does not betray inner melancholy. The emotions, descriptive names, and general aura of a human being may be deceptive in terms of reality in the soul. However the personality of God is in perfect harmony with His essential being.
    - (a) The emotions of God, as revealed in Scripture, truly reflect His attributes and essential existence.
    - (b) The names of God, as revealed in Scripture, truly reflect His attributes and essential existence.
    - (c) The radiance of God, as revealed in Scripture, truly reflects His attributes and essential existence.
- c. Since personhood is sourced in God who expresses the perfect, righteous personality, and man as a person is modeled after God (Gen. 1:26-27), it follows that man was created to have personal fellowship with God and express a godly personality (Gen. 3:8-9). However, the corruption of man's person and personality through sin has resulted in a breach of personal fellowship between God and man. There is estrangement since the only holy God cannot enjoy fellowship with unholy man. Thus, God alone can reconcile alienated man to Himself by restoring the person and personality of man to its original holy matrix.

- (1) As a sinful person, my warped personality finds satisfaction and eternal rest only through renewal and realignment unto the righteous personality of God.
  - (a) My sin-biased intellect finds true correction and stability only in the righteous intellect of God. "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16; cf. Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:5).
  - (b) My sin-biased will finds true correction and stability only in the righteous will of God. "The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever" (I John 2:17; cf. Col. 4:12; I Pet. 4:2).
  - (c) My sin-biased emotions find true correction and stability only in the righteous emotions of God. "I [the Lord GOD] will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying" (Is. 65:19; cf. Neh. 8:10; Phil. 4:4).
  
- (2) This means that only in Jehovah God are my personal needs truly met, for in Him I find:
  - (a) The truest Friend, as did Moses. "Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent" (Ex. 33:11).
  - (b) The most merciful Helper. "So that we confidently say, 'The LORD is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?'" (Heb. 13:6; cf. Ps. 10:14).
  - (c) The most steadfast Sovereign. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'" (Isa. 46:10; cf. Ps. 33:11).
  - (d) The kindest Father. "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!" (Matt. 7:11; cf. 6:9; Rom. 8:15-16).
  
- (3) The popular cult of excessive self-analysis, subjectivism, existential encounter, introspection, and relational theology, finds its demise at this

point. True personhood is attained, not by self-preoccupation, but rather through preoccupation with the God of the Bible. Man's urgent need at this time is a true and holy God-image rather than a stimulating, egocentric self-image. "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18).

2. Triunity and personality.

- a. If the one living God is a triunity of persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, does this mean that God has a trichotomous personality, or three personalities? Decidedly not, for the personality of God is the expression of His essential attributes which are of the same essence for each person of the Trinity.
- b. Our problem here is, as is so often the case, that of conceiving of the term "person" in crassly human terms. Three human persons do have different personalities, but this is not so with the triune Jehovah. We might say that God has one holy personality manifest through three holy individual persons.

B. THE PERSONALITY OF GOD COMMUNICATED.

1. The image of God in the constitution of man.

a. Introduction.

Concerning God's attributes communicated to man, it ought to be understood that they are predicated, of necessity, upon the communication of God's image to man. Such impartation appears to be directly described in Genesis 2:7 where it is revealed that, "the LORD God formed man of the dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." In other words, God made man in the physical realm, and his soul was formed by the transmission of life, though not God's essence, whereby a living human being was created.

- (1) God is glorified throughout all of His creation. But His resplendent majesty is supremely comprehended when the creature is enabled to have personal adoring fellowship, and not mere presence, with God. Such fellowship requires a created being that, cast in a mold similar to God, can commune with God according to His personal/moral nature. It is for this reason that man was created in God's likeness and image (Gen. 1:26-27; 3:8-9), indeed, he was made in "the image [εἰκῶν, eikōn] and glory [δόξα, doxa] of God" (I Cor. 11:7).

- (2) However, because man received nobility and dignity at his creation, and yet is now depraved, disfigured, delinquent, and disreputable, through the fall, a tension presents itself that needs to be carefully resolved. In other words, does man today still have nobility and dignity as a thorough sinner? Much popular teaching has stressed this dignity in terms of human self-worth and self-esteem, and is quick to glibly claim supposed support from the fact that modern man still retains a measure of the image of God in his being. Now in general terms this biblical premise is true, though the extrapolation concerning self-value is questionable. What precisely is retained and what is lost concerning the "imago Dei"? Does the Bible gratify polluted humankind by describing it in terms of nobility and dignity? It must be admitted that it flatters and comforts sinners to think that this is so. But what specifically, yet universally, does the Bible teach?
- b. Key biblical principles concerning man made in the image of God.
- (1) Man was framed in the image of God. <sup>26</sup> Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' <sup>27</sup> God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. <sup>28</sup> God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" (Gen. 1:26-28; cf. 5:1-3).
- (a) God shaped "mankind" (plural), so that His reflected image is international. Man was therefore destined to reflect God's glory.
- (b) The terms "image" and "likeness" are synonymous in meaning according to Hebrew parallelism.
- (c) Man's image is to be after the *triune* God, cf. "Our image, . . . Our likeness," not only that of God the Son.
- (d) The likeness of man to God is illustrated by the generated likeness of Seth, as a son, to Adam (Gen. 5:3).
- (e) Both man and woman were made in the image of God. Neither gender has any distinctive feature in this regard.
- (f) Because man is unique and superior in the earthly sphere, he is to exercise dominion over the animal world.

- (2) Man is to revere man made in the image of God. "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man" (Gen. 9:6).
- (a) To murder or slay man is in effect to attempt to slash, deface, and defame God by proxy.
  - (b) A shedder of human blood is a spiller of sacred life who outrages God, the giver of personal/moral life after His image.
- (3) Man retains the image of God as a congenital sinner. "<sup>8</sup> But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup> With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God" (Jas. 3:8-9; cf. Gen. 9:6; I Cor. 11:7).
- (a) Even a murderer or a gossip retains at least portion of the image of God, but it is perverted to some degree. Nevertheless, a measure of glory also remains.
  - (b) Calvin comments: "Even though we grant that God's image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in him, yet it is so corrupted that whatever remains is frightful deformity."<sup>1</sup>
- (4) Man is recreated in the image of God. "<sup>22</sup> That, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup> and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup> and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth" (Eph. 4:22-24; cf. Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:45-49; Col. 3:9-10).
- (a) God's elect, delivered from the image of the first Adam, are destined to be conformed to the image of the last Adam, Jesus Christ, who is the precise image of God.
  - (b) Through Jesus Christ, morally perverted man is created anew, that is in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, after God's holy image that His Son embodies.

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<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I, XV, 4.

c. Possible elements that comprise man made in the image of God.

(1) The physical image of God in man?

- (a) According to Ecclesiastes 7:29, some have identified God's image with man's vertical posture. "Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices." But surely this passage refers to man's moral uprightness. Besides, if we relate the "imago Dei" merely to physical features, even as found in Jesus Christ, then we would be forced to confess that certain monkeys are endowed with a lesser divine image.
- (b) Mormonism takes us to the realm of absurdity when it declares: "Joseph Smith has proclaimed anew to the world the simple truth that the Eternal Father and His glorified Son Jesus Christ are in form and stature perfect Men; and that in their physical likeness mankind has been created in the flesh."<sup>2</sup>
- (c) But God is pure spirit whom "the highest heaven cannot contain" (I Kings 8:27). "Now the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses are flesh and not spirit" (Isa. 31:3; cf. John 4:24). The "imago Dei" relates to God's essence in all three persons of the Trinity (Gen. 1:26), not material substance.

(2) The dominion image of God in man?

- (a) Certainly man's appointed dominion over the animal world is closely related to the "imago Dei" in Genesis 1:26-28. Furthermore, it appears that man, having received God's image, especially in the realm of personality, is consequently well equipped to reign over the earth. Dominion or sovereignty is the responsibility of man under God, having been made in His image.
- (b) Although the image of God in man is diminished and distorted, yet man continues to exercise dominion in a manner that Scripture describes as remaining glory.
  - 1) Psalm 8:4-8. "4 What is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? 5 Yet You have made him a little lower than God, and You crown him with glory and majesty! 6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 7 all sheep and oxen, And

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<sup>2</sup> James E. Talmage, *The Vitality Of Mormonism*, p. 44.

also the beasts of the field, <sup>8</sup> the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, whatever passes through the paths of the seas." This glory is man's present dominion over the animal world.

- 2) I Corinthians 11:3, 7. "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. . . . <sup>7</sup>For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man." This glory is man's present dominion or headship over the woman.

(3) The personal image of God in man?

- (a) Since God is the only underived, transcendent personal being, we have previously concluded that personhood is sourced in God, and that He expresses the perfect righteous personality. Hence:

- 1) God is self-conscious, self-determining, self-dependant, and self-expressive. He is wholly complete in Himself; there is no comparable or higher Being.
- 2) Any fellowship with the person of God by a creature must be by means of another person, and this role or image has been incorporated within the being of man.

- (b) As a sinner, man retains the undiminished elements and framework of personhood as endowed by God. He continues to have being, self-consciousness, limited determination, and expression, and in this sense continues to reflect the image of God's person.

- 1) Strong explains: "This first element of the divine image [personhood] man can never lose until he ceases to be man. Even insanity can only obscure this natural image. . . . The lost piece of money (Luke 15:8) still bore the image and superscription of the king, even though it did not know it, and did not even know that it was lost."<sup>3</sup>
- 2) However, it is the moral base of a man's soul that colors these faculties and framework of personhood. The unrighteous soul of a man stains his being, limited determination, and expression, and in this sense he bares the image of Satan! Thus for man as an

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<sup>3</sup> Augustus Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 515.

unregenerate sinner, personhood, as well as dominion, are the only remaining vestiges of the *imago Dei*.

- (4) The moral image of God in man?
- (a) Adam was created with original righteousness (Gen. 1:31), which although unverified in innocence to begin with, yet was positively good without any tendency toward evil. Thus the first man was a *holy person*; his being, limited determination, and expression, found perfect fulfillment in an acceptable, loving and obedient relationship with God. Hence, the moral soul of Adam was able to bloom through personality.
- (b) Strong gives priority to holiness over personhood concerning these two chief elements of the *imago Dei* as follows: "Since holiness is the fundamental attribute of God, this must of necessity be the chief attribute of his image in the moral beings whom he creates. That original righteousness was essential to this image, is also distinctly taught in Scripture "Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices" (Eccl. 7:29; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:9-10)."<sup>4</sup>
- (c) However, at the Fall, man's original righteousness was supplanted by original sin with the result that the holy moral element of the *imago Dei* was completely, not partially, lost. John Bunyan graphically portrays this tragic transformation in his classic allegory *The Holy War*, as follows:

When the giant [Diabolus] had thus ingarrisoned himself in the town of Mansoul, and had put down and set up whom he thought good; he betakes himself to defacing. Now there was in the market-place in Mansoul, and also upon the gates of the castle, an image of the blessed King Shaddai; this image was so exactly engraven, and it was engraven in gold, that it did the most resemble Shaddai himself of anything that then was extant in the world. This he basely commanded to be defaced, and it was as basely done by the hand of Mr. Notruth. Now you must know, that as Diabolus had commanded, and that by the hand of Mr. Notruth, the image of Shaddai was defaced. He likewise gave order that the same Mr. Notruth should set up in its stead the horrid and formidable image of Diabolus; to the great contempt of the former King, and debasing of his town of Mansoul.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 517.

<sup>5</sup> George Offor, ed., *The Works Of John Bunyan*, III, p. 263.

- d. Man was made in the image of God as a *holy, dominant person*.
- (1) It is the combination of the elements of holiness, dominion and personhood that constitute the original and complete imago Dei in man. Eric Sauer best states this principle thus:

If there is to be a relation of mutual love between the Creator and His creature, between God and man, then His finite creature, in spite of his ever remaining different from the infinite Creator, so far as philosophical thought is concerned, must nevertheless be united with him in a *morally based spiritual relationship*. But God's moral nature is holy love. Hence man must also have been so made that holy love is his vocation and ideally the basic power of his personality. Therefore he must be a created likeness of his eternal Creator, and, since God's moral creation is called to have fellowship in love with God, he must also of necessity be in the image of God."<sup>6</sup> In basic agreement with this understanding of the imago Dei are Bavinck,<sup>7</sup> Edwards,<sup>8</sup> Pieper,<sup>9</sup> and Strong.<sup>10</sup>

It should be noted that the element of dominion is included because of it being integral to the description of the imago Dei in Genesis 1:26-28. In other words, as God has total dominion over all of His creation, so He has communicated His image in giving man some dominion over some of His creation.

- (2) But the remnant skeletal form of God's image in unregenerate man, that is his distinctive, natural personhood, is directed by an unholy heart/soul on account of inherited (original) sin. Thus unsaved man, as a person, is unholy in his being, limited determination, expression, and dominion. John 8:44 illustrates this thorough pollution of man's personhood. "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."
- (a) The unbeliever has *spiritual being*, unrighteous birth through the devil as his father. Thus he *is* unholy.
- (b) The unbeliever has *limited determination* in doing the desires of the devil, who is his father. Thus he *wills* unholiness.

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<sup>6</sup> Eric Sauer, *The King Of The Earth*, p. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Herman Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith*, pp. 210-5.

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, I, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, I, pp. 516-517.

<sup>10</sup> Strong, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 514-523.

- (c) The unbeliever has *expression* in murdering and lying like the devil who is his father. Thus he *expresses* unholiness.
- (3) By way of illustration, the *imago Dei* in fallen man may be likened to a new, prestigious, smooth-running automobile of distinctive character, such as a Cadillac or Rolls Royce, that suddenly develops serious engine and transmission trouble. Because of developing noise, vibration, a smoking exhaust, and unpredictable stops and starts, the still functional vehicle is yet gradually ravaged through accidents and overall body deterioration. The vehicle now retains a remnant part of its original image, and increasingly reflects a deformed and disreputable character. Nevertheless, such an automobile remains a Cadillac or a Rolls Royce.
- (4) However, it must not be thought that the Christian, through redemption, is merely restored to the full *imago Dei* of the innocent first Adam. Rather, the New Testament believer is ultimately to be made conformable to the image of the last Adam, Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:45; I John 3:2-3). This is to boldly suggest that the redeemed sinner shall ultimately have a more complete *imago Dei* than the first Adam, since the Christian abundantly, distinctively reflects the grace of God that could not possibly be reflected in innocence. <sup>17</sup> For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. <sup>19</sup> For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. <sup>20</sup> The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:17-21).
- e. The significance of man made in the image of God.
- (1) While horizontal relationships at the human level are important, yet the full *imago Dei* in man was principally designed to establish a holy, vertical relationship between God and man (Gen. 1:26-27). So Charnock explains that "[God] did not only make man so noble a creature in his frame, but he made him after his own image in holiness. He imparted to him a spark of his own comeliness, in order to a communion with himself in happiness."<sup>11</sup> From this we conclude:

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<sup>11</sup> Stephen Charnock, *The Complete Works of Stephen Charnock*, II, p. 308.

- (a) Man originally received the complete imago Dei so that through fellowship he might personally glorify God.
  - (b) Man is primarily fulfilled in personally knowing God. This purpose radically contrasts with sinful man seeking for fulfillment in himself.
  - (c) Man is also fulfilled in personally knowing men who personally know God. They enjoy glorifying God in fellowship.
  - (d) Man is unfulfilled in personally knowing men who do not personally know God. They enjoy glorifying man.
- (2) When it is realized that the unholy image of Satan has been imposed upon man's God-given personhood any enthusiasm for unregenerate man's boasting in human nobility and self-worth based upon the imago Dei is rightly dampened. "3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (II Cor. 4:3-4; cf. 3:16). Natural man is an indignity before God!
- (a) While unsaved man's continuing dominion reflects a degree of glory, yet it is but a pale reflection of God's original holy purpose. His reign is now more ignoble.
  - (b) To ascribe to godless man dignity and nobility is to attempt to turn a sow's ear into a silk purse, or flatter the prodigal son while he revels in the far country.
  - (c) Yet it is true that the lost sinner does have value in the sight of God, but only insofar as he is fully worthy of judgment and thus qualified to receive grace. "6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . 8But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6, 8; cf. 4:5).
- (3) While the first Adam was instantly, fully created in God's image on the sixth day (Gen. 1:23-31), yet the re-creation of lost sinners into the likeness of the Son of God is both instantaneous *and* ongoing.
- (a) At conversion, the Christian has become a "new creature [species]." "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15).

- (b) Following conversion, the Christian is progressively “transformed into the same image [of Christ] from glory to glory” “<sup>1</sup>But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (II Cor. 3:18; cf. Gal. 4:19).
- (c) However, the Christian is created in the image of God the Son so that, like the first Adam, he might glorify God in holy personal fellowship. “What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (I John 1:3; cf. Rev. 5:6-14).

## 2. The emotions of God directed towards man.

### a. Introduction.

It is a surprising fact that while the Bible describes the emotions of God at every hand, yet some of the most respected writers concerning the attributes of God, including Charnock, Bavinck, Pink, Tozer, and Packer, give little if any attention to such an important though complex aspect of His being. It may be that the reason for this regrettable omission is the frequent explanation given by evangelical Christians that, in general, God’s affections are anthropopathic, that is mere human emotional representations of the eternally blessed and spiritual Jehovah. At a more technical level is the definition of God as being “impassible,” that is incapable of feeling or emotion. On the other hand it may be that we simply shrink from ascribing emotion to God in His essence since it tends to improperly humanize Him. Be that as it may, the considerable weight of biblical testimony at this point calls for a fresh, reverent, and exceedingly careful analysis of an aspect of God’s being that has been neglected for some time.

- (1) Nevertheless, great caution is called for as we consider the revealed spectrum of God’s affections, since this closing twentieth century finds man inordinately fascinated with personal feelings, emotions, passions, temperament, sensuality, etc. This should lead us to be concerned lest the priority of warped human emotions is impressed upon the triune God with the result that His holy name is defamed. Even so, we ought not to regard Jehovah as stoically passive and quiescent, after the manner of Greek conceptions of deity. In an article entitled *The Emotional Life Of Our Lord*, Benjamin B. Warfield enlarges upon this problem as follows:

There is a tendency in the interest of dignity of his [Jesus’] person to minimize, and there is a tendency in the interest of the completeness of his humanity to magnify, his affectional movements. The one tendency may run some risk of giving us a somewhat cold and remote Jesus, whom we can scarcely believe to be able to sympathize with us in all of our infirmities. The

other may possibly be in danger of offering us a Jesus so crassly human as scarcely to command our highest reverence. Between the two, the figure of Jesus is liable to take on a certain vagueness of outline, and come to lack definiteness of thought.<sup>12</sup>

As we also consider the emotions of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, similar reverence and care ought to be invested.

- (2) In the realm of personal human expression, both the soul/spirit and the flesh are intimately related insofar as emotions and affections are concerned. When joy, laughter, sorrow, and anger are experienced, the human body is invariably involved, though the source of this expression via the body is in the realm of the immaterial, that is the movement of the soul/spirit. Hence, there is a sphere of mystery here, and this being so, how much greater is the mystery with regard to the emotions of God. A variety of profound questions has to be considered, such as:
  - (a) Are the emotions of God mere anthropopathic expressions of His dealings with man, while He remains essentially unmoved and ever blessed?
  - (b) Because God in His essence is pure spirit, simple and immaterial, does He experience emotion in His being?
  - (c) Is it possible for the immutable God to experience a change of emotion and mood in His being?
  - (d) What distinction, if any, can be made between the generation or stimulus of emotion in God within and without His being?
  - (e) Are there real emotional expressions evident between the triune Persons of the Godhead?
  - (f) Are the numerous emotions of Jesus Christ only expressions of his humanity?
  - (g) Are the emotions of spiritual beings such as "a multitude of the heavenly host" and angels (Luke 2:13: 15:10) real?
- (3) If it be agreed, as a general principle, that emotions are sourced in the immaterial being or personal essence of God and man, radically different though they be, then it follows that a correct understanding of essence, is of

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<sup>12</sup> Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *The Person And Work Of Christ*, p. 94.

fundamental and critical importance. Hence, priority must be given to comprehending God's essential attributes before considering His expressions of emotion. To contemplate the emotions of God while being relatively ignorant of His perfections is to unfailingly reduce the Almighty to puny, unworthy, unholy, and human proportions.

b. The emotions and feelings of the triune God.

(1) God the Father is described in the Bible as expressing:

- (a) *Joy, delight, gladness, laughter.* "He who sits in the heavens laughs, the LORD scoffs at them" (Ps. 2:4); "Let the glory of the LORD endure forever; Let the LORD be glad in His works" (Ps. 104:31); cf. Deut. 28:63; Is. 65:19).
- (b) *Compassion, pity, concern, great mercy.* "But He [the LORD], being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; and often He restrained His anger and did not arouse all His wrath" (Ps. 78:38; cf. 119:156; Ezek. 36:21; Joel 2:18).
- (c) *Zeal, marching, riding, guarding.* "<sup>3</sup> Gird Your sword on Your thigh, O Mighty One, in Your splendor and Your majesty! <sup>4</sup> And in Your majesty ride on victoriously, for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness; let Your right hand teach You awesome things" (Ps. 45:3-4; cf. Isa. 9:7; 27:2-3; 37:32; Hab. 3:12).
- (d) *Sorrow, grief, repentance, displeasure, hatred, weariness.* "<sup>158</sup> I behold the treacherous and loathe them, because they do not keep Your word. . . . <sup>163</sup> I hate and despise falsehood, but I love Your law" (Ps. 119:158, 163; cf. 5:5-6; 45:7; 95:10; Is. 43:24; Amos 6:8; Mal. 2:16).
- (e) *Anger, wrath, fury, indignation, jealousy.* "<sup>1</sup> Gather yourselves together, yes, gather, O nation without shame, <sup>2</sup> before the decree takes effect—the day passes like the chaff—before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger comes upon you" (Zeph. 2:1-2; cf. Num. 11:1; 25:4; Isa. 34:2; Jer. 4:8; 51:45; Rom. 1:18; I Cor. 10:5).

(2) God the Son is described in the Bible as expressing:

- (a) *Joy, gladness, wonder, astonishment.* "At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, 'I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this

way was well-pleasing in Your sight" (Luke 10:21; cf. Matt. 8:10; Mark 6:6; 15:3-7; John 11:15; 17:13).

- (b) *Compassion, visceral pity, mercy, sympathy.* "Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36; cf. Mark 8:2; Heb. 2:17; 4:15).
  - (c) *Sorrow, anguish, grief, inner disturbance.* "He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hid their face He was despised and we did not esteem Him" (Isa. 53:3; cf. Matt. 26:37-38; Mark 14:33-34; Luke 12P:50; John 13:21).
  - (d) *Tears, sighs, groaning, screaming.* "When Jesus therefore saw her [Mary] weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled. . . . Jesus wept. . . . So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it" (John 11:33, 35, 38; cf. Matt. 27:46; Mark 7:34; 8:12; Heb. 5:7).
  - (e) *Rebuke, warning, condemnation, woe.* "<sup>30</sup> And He warned them [His disciples] to tell no one about Him. . . . <sup>33</sup> But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's'" (Mark 8:30, 33; cf. Matt. 17:18; 23:13-36; Luke 4:39).
  - (f) *Anger, indignation, sternness, righteous zeal, irritation.* "After looking around at them [the Pharisees] with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored" (Mark 3:5; cf. Matt. 9:30; Mark 10:14; John 2:17; Rev. 6:16).
- (3) God the Holy Spirit is described in the Bible as expressing:
- (a) *Grief.* "But they [God's people Israel] rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them" (Is. 63:10; cf. Eph. 4:30).
  - (b) *Sympathetic groaning.* "In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26).

(c) *Joy, through the Son.* “At that very time He [Jesus Christ] rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight’ (Luke 10:21); also the believer. “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17; cf. Gal. 5:22).

c. The reality of the emotions and feelings of the triune God.

(1) Definition.

According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the fundamental meaning of “emotion” is “out + motion,” or “to move out,” thus, “any agitation or disturbance of mind, feeling, passion; any vehement or excited mental state.”<sup>13</sup> Emotion is outward expression of inward arousal of the soul.

(2) A creedal definition critiqued.

(a) *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, completed in 1648, declares that God is, “a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions,”<sup>14</sup> the last mentioned quality being supported by the footnote reference to Acts 14:11, 15. While the commentary of A. A. Hodge at this point regarding God being passionless is helpful at several points, yet other aspects ought to be questioned. He declares:

We deny that the properties of matter, such as bodily parts and passions, belong to him [God]. We make this denial - (a) because there is no evidence that he does possess any such properties; and (b) because, from the very nature of matter and its affections, it is inconsistent with those infinite and absolute perfections which are of his essence, such as simplicity, unchangeableness, unity, omnipresence, etc. When the Scriptures . . . speak of his repenting, of his being grieved, or jealous, they use metaphorical language, . . . teaching us that he acts toward us as a man would when agitated by such passions. Such metaphors are characteristic rather of the Old than of the New Testament, and occur for the most part in highly rhetorical passages of the poetical and prophetic books.<sup>15</sup>

(b) In a similar vein, Robert Shaw adds that, “when he [God] punishes men for sin, he is said to be angry; when he does that by severe and redoubled strokes, he is said to be full of fury and revenge; when he

<sup>13</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 5, p. 183.

<sup>14</sup> Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, III, p. 606.

<sup>15</sup> A. A. Hodge, *The Confession of Faith*, p. 49.

punishes for idolatry, or any dishonor to himself, he is said to be jealous."<sup>16</sup> Again some criticism is necessary here concerning several matters.

- (c) The exclusive association of passions and affections with material, human bodily expression, ignores the real emotions of spiritual beings such as angels and seraphim who manifest:
- 1) *Joy*. "In the same way, I [Jesus Christ] tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10; cf. 2:13-14).
  - 2) *Adoration and praise*. "<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights! <sup>2</sup> Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts!" (Ps. 148:1-2).
  - 3) *Reverence and awe*. "<sup>2</sup> Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup> And one called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory'" (Isa. 6:2-3; cf. Rev. 4:8-9).
  - 4) *Craving desire*. "It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look" (I Pet. 1:12).
- (d) While it is readily agreed that some emotions attributed to God, such as repentance and laughter, are more anthropopathic than others, yet surely the human analogy represents an essential feeling and motion within God rather than insensible quiescence. The appeal to God's immutability is misplaced as shall subsequently be explained. Also note that Hodge and Shaw do not mention such less anthropopathic emotions as God's joy and pity. But are these, as Hodges suggests, merely terms of "condescension to our weakness,"<sup>17</sup> or preferably representations of the transcendently affectionate soul of the living God?
- (e) Concerning the appeal of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* to Acts 14:15, here Paul and Barnabas describe themselves as "of the same

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Shaw, *Exposition Of The Confession Of Faith*, p. 27.

<sup>17</sup> Hodge, *Confession of Faith*, p. 49.

nature [ὁμοιοπαθής, *homoioopathēs*]” NASB, “like nature” ESV, when compared with the citizens of Lystra; they are contrasting themselves with the vanity and lifeless apathy of the gods Zeus and Hermes. In any case, surely this verse does not prove that Paul and Barnabas believe God to be passionless; elsewhere God is wrathful (Rom. 1:18), not well-pleased (I Cor. 10:5). If Paul and Barnabas do draw a contrast with the “living God,” it is one of degree in which they are merely mortal in their sensible nature when compared with God’s infinite, spiritual sensibility.

- (f) Shaw’s comment is really evasive since nobody questions that God’s action such as punishment *depicts* emotion. The real question is, does the emotion expressing act *arise* from a holy, spiritual movement in God’s essential being or not? Again, the impression this author gives, albeit unintentionally, is that God, although *portrayed* as emotional, is in reality insensible, indeed impassible or incapable of emotion, even if active, in holiness.

(3) A defense of God as being really emotional.

It is proposed that the Bible clearly, repeatedly describes God as being essentially, spiritually emotional and affectionate. When one considers the fullness of emotion that is expressed by the Son of God, and his confession to Philip, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9), it appears quite inadequate to explain away the affections of Jesus Christ as being anthropathic and exclusive to his humanity.

- (a) John Owen, being representative of the teaching of the Westminster Assembly at this point, describes divine emotions, particularly anger, fury, zeal, wrath, hatred, jealousy, repentance, grief, joy, fear, as anthropathisms, though in reality, passionless metaphorical acts of the ever blessed God’s will. “To ascribe, then, affections to God properly, . . . is to deprive him of his perfection and blessedness”<sup>18</sup> In this denial of any real affections in God’s being, Owen maintains that: “To ascribe affections properly to God is to make him weak, imperfect, dependent, changeable, and impotent.”<sup>19</sup> More specifically he reasons:

<sup>18</sup> John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, XII, pp. 108-109. In *The Lion Concise Book of Christian Thought*, there is an interesting comment concerning pre-Christian concepts of God in this realm: “The Greek God belongs to the realm of being. He is thus unchanging or immutable. This means that he cannot have any direct contact with this world of becoming and change. It also means that he is impassible: not subject to any emotions or feelings. The early fathers had to grapple with the inherent contradictions between the Greek and the biblical concepts of God,” p. 12. Owen was highly trained in Aristotelian and Platonic thought at Oxford University; of course this does not refute his idea of God being “impassible,” but it ought to be carefully considered.

<sup>19</sup> John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, XII, p. 110; also refer to pp. 108-115.

- 1) Emotions require stimuli, and for God this would make Him dependent on such emotional causes. But as we have seen regarding God being fully satisfied with fellowship in His own triune Self (pp. 275, 332-333), and thus not lonely, so God has full emotional satisfaction within His own triune Self apart from any necessary external stimulation (Matt. 3:16-17; 17:5; Luke 10:21; John 1:18; 3:35; 5:20; 14:31; 15:9). This being so, God may respond emotionally to external stimuli, such as angels or men, without being emotionally dependent, in the same way that He may have fellowship with angels and men without being dependent.<sup>20</sup> Further, Owen's argument would deny God as being essentially gracious since this exhibition is dependent upon the manifestation of sin.
  
- 2) Emotions necessarily require change, whereas God is immutable (Mal. 3:6). However God's joy in righteousness and hatred of sin are expressions of God's unchanging righteous essence. God's essence is unchanging though He acts variously, such as in not creating, then creating, and then ceasing to create with the acknowledgment that the creation is good (Gen. 1:31). As Charnock states: "The creation was a real change, but the change was not subjectively in God, but in the creature."<sup>21</sup> A judge who both protects the innocent with joy and judges the guilty with anger is not chargeable with essential change.<sup>22</sup>
  
- 3) God is "blessed forever" (Rom. 9:5; I Tim. 6:15). Hence, "can he be blessed, is he all-sufficient, who is tossed up and down with hope, joy, fear, sorrow, repentance, anger, and the like?"<sup>23</sup> Because we so easily impose human conceptions upon the character of God, it escapes our puny thoughts that God could be blessed in His anger and joy! Again, claiming that God could be emotionally "tossed up and down" is merely to describe human perception and experience. When God has feelings and emotions, He is always blessed. Further, the blessedness of Romans 9:5 (εὐλογητός, eulogētos), that which the Father bestows upon His Son, describes an attributed rather than a contemplated condition.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.110.

<sup>21</sup> Charnock, *Works*, I, p. 397.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 399.

<sup>23</sup> Owen., p. 115, cf. p. 109.

- (b) William Shedd, though unconvincingly denying that God has passions, to uphold it would seem the language of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, yet convincingly declares that God “has feelings and emotions,” not stated in the *Confession*, and that “he is self-moved in all his feelings.” He further adds that,

the two feelings of love of holiness and hatred of evil coexist in the character of God, the most perfect of beings, and in that of angels and redeemed men. . . . These emotions of love and wrath are compatible with the Divine blessedness. . . . The feelings of wrath against the wickedness of man and devils, is constantly in the Divine essence. Yet God is supremely and constantly blessed. . . . While therefore God as a most pure spirit has no passions, he has feelings and emotions. He is not passively wrought upon by the objective universe, so that he experiences physical impressions and organic appetites, as the creature does, but he is self-moved in all his feelings.<sup>24</sup>

- (c) The emotions of Jesus Christ.

Concerning the earthly passions of the Son of God, Warfield cautions us at the commencement of his study in this regard: “It cannot be assumed beforehand, indeed, that all the emotions attributed to Jesus in the evangelical narratives are intended to be ascribed distinctively to his human soul. Such is no doubt the common view.”<sup>25</sup> While undoubtedly some, but by no means all, of the emotions in Jesus Christ arise more from his humanity, the truth of the transcendent, affectionate, spiritual nature of the triune God dispenses with any artificial distinction which admits only an emotional humanity.

- 1) In support of this consider:

- a) The Father expresses satisfaction and pleasure at the ministry of His Son. “And behold, a voice out of the heavens said, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased’” (Matt. 3:17; cf. 17:5). To suggest that this emotion is anthropopathic is almost to accuse God of putting on a charade on account of human weakness.
- b) In Luke 12:50, Jesus expresses “how distressed/inwardly pressured/afflicted [συνέχω, *sunechō*]” He is at the prospect of His undergoing a baptism of suffering, by means of His betrayal and crucifixion, that yet must be accomplished.

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<sup>24</sup> William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, I, pp. 170-8.

<sup>25</sup> Warfield, *Person And Work Of Christ*, pp. 94-95.

- c) In Mark 14:33, Jesus having come to Gethsemane is “terribly distressed [ἐκθαμβέω, ekthambeō] and troubled [ἀδημονέω, adēmoneō].” Then in v. 34 he exclaims to Peter, James, and John, “My soul [ψυχή, psuchē] is deeply grieved/extremely sad [περίλυπος, perilupos, intensive compound] to the point of death,” which response seems to draw from a well that is deeper than mere human emotion.
  - d) In Hebrews 4:15, not only is Jesus Christ as high priest able to sympathize, συμπαθέω, sumpatheō, with human frailty, but through him, as the fully tempted impeccable mediator, the Godhead is emotionally able to identify with the human predicament.
- 2) Since Jesus Christ is the Son of God:
- a) In his assumption of human flesh, the emotional capacity of his deity is united with the emotional capacity of his perfect humanity. “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form” (Col. 2:9)
  - b) There is a real emotional relationship between the Father and the incarnate Son. “The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand” (John 3:35; cf. 5:20; 14:31).
  - c) The suffering and anguish of the Son during his earthly passion were not only according to the will of the Father, but also sensibly appreciated by the Father. “About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” (Matt. 27:46).
- (d) Problems with an emotionless God.

Although it is freely granted that the emotions of God, who is pure spirit, infinitely transcend their human counterpart as well as human language, yet the denial of God as being essentially affectionate presents the child of God with some depressing conclusions.

- 1) While man is really sensible and emotional as a person, yet God is really insensible and unemotional as a person. It little comforts the soul to be told that nevertheless, God is eternally blessed. The approach of John Owen in this regard leads to a form of stoicism.

- 2) If the Bible describes God as loving and merciful, it matters little to the human spirit to be told that these attributes, for all their grand display in Scripture, are rooted in a willing but unfeeling God!
  - 3) But for finite man to grasp that the infinite God is affectionately moved in His essential being to holy joy, and compassion, and anger, is to be aware that a saving relationship with Him is intensely real, and more than an accommodation.
- d. The communication by God of emotion and feeling to man.
- (1) It ought not to surprise us that God, who is personally emotional within Himself, and about Himself, should create man as an emotional person. At the same time, let us be quick to recognize the chasm which separates God as an infinite, emotional spirit, and man as a finite, emotional, carnal creature. Yet God has communicated to man an emotional capacity that in a finite way bears some resemblance to Himself, and enhances personal fellowship.
  - (2) Since God's fundamental demand upon man includes an emotional response, that is to "love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut. 6:4-5; cf. 10:12), it seems proper to expect that an emotional God would model such a capacity after Himself, even though His emotions remain infinitely lordly.
  - (3) Since the Holy Spirit is affectionately joyous, so He communicates joy as an aspect of love. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness" (Gal. 5:22). Charnock comments: "The thoughts instilled by the Spirit of adoption (Gal. 5:22), are not violent, tumultuous, full of perturbation [disturbance]; but *like himself* [emphasis added], gentle and dove-like solicitings, warm and holy impulses."<sup>26</sup>
  - (4) Hence, the emotional capacity that God emotes or communicates is the full range of personality from which human emotional personality is derived; nevertheless, human personality is regulated by an unholy or holy set of the heart.
    - (a) An unregenerate personality will emote according to the set of the soul which, after the image of Satan, manifests the deeds of the flesh. "19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy,

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<sup>26</sup> Charnock, *Works*, V, p. 315.

outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup> envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21; cf. II Cor. 12:20; I Tim. 6:3-5).

- (b) A regenerate personality will emote according to the set of his soul which, having been renewed after the image of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:10), manifests the fruit of the Spirit. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup> And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (Jas. 3:17-18; cf. Gal. 5:22-23).

### C. THE PERSONALITY OF GOD DESIGNATED

#### 1. Introduction.

- a. Personal names are important since they not only reveal levels of truth concerning character, whether desired or actual, but also establish relationships at different levels of intimacy.
- (1) Consider how few people have the names Ichabod, Delilah, Jezebel, or Judas, since they all suggest an unsavory reputation. However the names Ruth, David, Mary and Paul suggest honorable and admirable qualities.
  - (2) Consider how the Bible describes individuals whose names reflect their subsequent manner of life, such as Abraham, "a father of many nations" (Gen. 17:5), Jacob, "supplanter" (Gen. 25:21-26), which became Israel, "to strive with God" (Gen. 32:28), and Nabal, "foolish" (I Sam. 25:2-38).
  - (3) Consider how we may remotely know someone by a generic title such as man or woman, formally know someone by a surname, and intimately know someone by a Christian name.
- b. It should not surprise us then to discover in the Bible that names are important with God, as with terms by which man is known by Him. "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (John 10:3; cf. I John 3:1; Rev. 2:17; 3:12). Then there are names by which man knows God. "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name'" (Matt. 6:9; cf. John 20:28; Rom. 8:14-15). So God is not anonymous; such a thought would leave man in a hopeless state of perplexity and despair. Rather, the Bible nominates God according to His

own given names, both personal and generic. These names designate the essence of His being in terms of attributes and consequent activity.

- (1) The names of God are revelatory and not according to human discovery. Bavinck explains that, "men do not give him [God] a name; he gives himself a name. God's name is, therefore, most of all God's revelation of himself whereby he actively and objectively makes himself known."<sup>27</sup>
- (2) The names of God are descriptive of the panorama of his nature, which titles are revealed for frequent reference by man to His attributes and activity. Hence, the names of God are designed to constantly focus our attention upon who God is in particular, that is quite apart from a mere basic confession of His existence.
- (3) The names of God are suitable to creation, that is they are designed to edify personal creatures, namely:
  - (a) The hosts of heaven, that is seraphim, angels, and living creatures. "And one [seraph] called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory'" (Is. 6:3; cf. Luke 2:13-14; Rev. 5:11-12).
  - (b) The humanity of earth, through the mediation of Israel to the Gentile nations. "<sup>33</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD, 'On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt. . . . <sup>36</sup> Then the nations that are left round about you will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken and will do it.'" (Ezek. 36:33, 36).
- (4) The names of God are progressively revealed. While God was known to Abraham as God Almighty or El Shaddai (Gen. 17:1), yet a greater revelation was given to Moses and Israel in the name of Jehovah or Yahweh. "And I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them" (Ex. 6:3). Yet Jehovah was more fully revealed in the New Testament in His triunity as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19).

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<sup>27</sup> Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God*, p. 84.

## 2. The primary names of God in the Old Testament.

a. The primary name of God as *Elohim*.

## (1) The essential meaning of Elohim.

- (a) Elohim, אֱלֹהִים, is the most general name for God meaning, “the Exceedingly Strong and Mighty One.” As such, it is most suitable for Moses’ description of God as the mighty Creator in Genesis 1:1. The *plural* form here adds an intensity of majesty, which point is supported by the fact that in Genesis 1:1, the verb “create,” bara, בָּרָא, takes a *singular* subject. Literally, “In the beginning Gods [He] created the heavens and the earth.
- (b) While other forms such as Eloah (singular), Elah (Aramaic), and the simple El, may or may not be related etymologically, yet they “express the same idea. . . . All occur, together with Jehovah, in Deuteronomy 32:15-19.”<sup>28</sup>
- (c) Nevertheless, Elohim is basically generic so that it can refer to both God and pagan deities. “For the LORD is a great God and a great King above all gods” (Ps. 95:3; cf. I Sam. 5:7; Ps. 96:5), It can also refer to human judges. “God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers” (Ps. 82:1; cf. Ex. 22:8-10).

## (2) The compound names using El.

- (a) *El Shaddai*, or “God Almighty.” (Gen. 17:1-8). This was the main patriarchal name for God. “May God Almighty bless you [Jacob] and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples” (Gen. 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 49:25). This was prior to the revelation of Jehovah or Yahweh during the Exodus (Ex. 6:3).
- (b) *El Elyon*, or “God Most High.” “And they [Israel] remembered that God was their rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer” (Ps. 78:35; cf. Gen. 14:18-22).
- (c) *El Roi*, or “God Who Sees.” “Then she [Hagar] called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, ‘You are a God who sees’; for she said, ‘Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?’” (Gen. 16:13).

<sup>28</sup> Robert Girdlestone, *Synonyms Of The Old Testament*, p. 31.

- (d) *El Olam, or "God Everlasting."* "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable" (Isa. 40:28).
- b. The primary name of LORD or GOD as *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*.
- (1) The essential meaning of *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*.
- (a) Strictly speaking, God has only one proper, personal name, which was revealed through Moses to Israel. "13 Then Moses said to God, 'Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?' 14 God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15 God, furthermore, said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.'" (Ex. 3:13-15). This four-lettered, consonantal word or Tetragrammaton, יהוה, commonly pronounced as *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*, is the unique name of God which came through self-disclosure and not human discovery or nomination. Most English translations identify this name by means of the capitalized forms of either LORD or GOD, or alternatively with the use of *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*.
- (b) To avoid the defamation of God's name, that is blasphemy, and the consequence of the death penalty by stoning (Lev. 24:16), the Jews attempted to place a hedge around the Third Commandment, "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain" (Ex. 20:7). This was done by using the substitute, generic name, "Lord," אֲדֹנָי (Adonai), for the ineffable or unutterable name, often referred to as Hashem, "the Name." Consequently, the original pronunciation of *Jehovah* or *Yahweh* has been lost. While the modern "Yahweh" may represent more correct vowel pointing of the consonantal name, yet it lacks the awesome majesty that "Jehovah" has historically conveyed. Since both words communicate the same meaning, this writer continues to sing, "Guide me, O Thou great *Jehovah*."
- (c) It is commonly believed that the root meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the verb "to be," so that God reveals Himself to His people as "the self-existing One," who inhabits the eternal now. Furthermore, the exclusive revelation of God's name to Israel at the Exodus

signified the new covenantal relationship that had just been established. The Hebrew received a new means of expressing the ground of his access to God, that is the vocalizing from the heart of God's proper name, especially in prayer. <sup>14</sup> Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. <sup>15</sup> Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, 'O LORD, the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. <sup>16</sup> Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God'" (II Kings 19:14-16; cf. I Kings 8:22-25; II Chron. 20:5-11; Ezra 9:5-15; Dan. 9:3-5; Hab. 3:1-2).

- (d) In addition to Jehovah being the "I am" God of Israel, He consequently becomes the "I will be" God of Israel who is covenantally and irrevocably committed to continually saving and sanctifying His people. <sup>2</sup> God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am the LORD; <sup>3</sup> and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. <sup>4</sup> I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned. <sup>5</sup> Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. <sup>6</sup> Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. <sup>7</sup> Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD'" (Ex. 6:2-8). In response, Israel is to reverently delight in the praise of Jehovah's holy name. "O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!" (Ps. 8:1; cf. 5:11; Is. 42:8).
- (e) When Jesus Christ taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matt. 6:9), he is reflecting his preeminent desire that *the* name of God be universally regarded with holy awe, praise, and reverence. In other words, the Christian is to pray for the fulfillment of the third commandment, that is according to inward desire and affection, not legal conformity. It was Jesus Christ's own desire, expressed in passionate prayer, that His disciples should

become deeply acquainted with the security, wonder, fellowship and awe that soul encounter with Hashem produced (John 17:6, 11-12, 26).

- (2) The compound names using Jehovah or Yahweh.
- (a) Jehovah Elohim, or commonly "LORD God". "You are the LORD God, Who chose Abram and brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees, and gave him the name Abraham" (Neh. 9:7; cf. Ps. 84:11; Jer. 44:26; Amos 3:7).
  - (b) Jehovah Adonai, or commonly "Lord GOD." "Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" (Gen. 15:2; cf. Ps. 71:5; Ezek. 5:11; Hab. 3:19).
  - (c) Jehovah Elohay, or "the LORD my God." "I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, 'Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments" (Dan. 9:4).
  - (d) Jehovah Elyon, or "the LORD most high." "I will give thanks to the LORD according to His righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High" (Ps. 7:17).
  - (e) Jehovah Jireh, or "the LORD will provide." "<sup>13</sup> Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. <sup>14</sup> Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, 'In the mount of the LORD it will be provided'" (Gen. 22:13-14).
  - (f) Jehovah Nissi, or "the LORD my banner." "Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner" (Ex. 17:15).
  - (g) Jehovah Shalom, or "the LORD is peace." "Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites" (Judg. 6:24).
  - (h) Jehovah Sabbaoth, or "the LORD of hosts." "Now this man would go up from his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the LORD there" (I Sam. 1:3).

- (i) Jehovah Maccaddishkem, or “the LORD who sanctifies you.” “But as for you [Moses], speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.’” (Ex. 31:13).
  - (j) Jehovah Raah, or “the LORD is my shepherd.” “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want” (Ps. 23:1).
  - (k) Jehovah Tsidkenu, or “the LORD our righteousness.” “In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness’” (Jer. 23:6).
  - (l) Jehovah Gmolah, or “the LORD is the God of recompense.” “For the destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon, and her mighty men will be captured, their bows are shattered; for the LORD is a God of recompense, He will fully repay” (Jer. 51:56).
  - (m) Jehovah Neka, or “the LORD who strikes.” “My eye will show no pity nor will I spare. I will repay you [Israel] according to your ways, while your abominations are in your midst; then you will know that I, the LORD, do the smiting” (Ezek. 7:9).
  - (n) Jehovah Shammah, or “the LORD is there.” “The city [Jerusalem] shall be 18,000 cubits round about; and the name of the city from that day shall be, ‘The LORD is there’” (Ezek. 48:35).
  - (o) Jehovah Rapha, or “the LORD who heals.” “And He said, ‘If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer’” (Ex. 15:26).
  - (p) Jehovah Hoseenu, or “the LORD our maker.” “Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker” (Ps. 95:6).
- c. The primary name of Lord as *Adonai*.
- (1) The essential meaning of Adonai.
    - (a) Adonai, אֲדֹנָי, as a generic name, is most commonly translated as Lord, meaning master or sovereign as a king has dominion over his

servants or vassals. "So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master/lord, and swore to him concerning this matter" (Gen. 24:9). Adonai may even express ownership. "He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner/lord of the hill" (I Kings 16:24). But most frequently in the Bible it is either a substitute for or a qualifier of the name Jehovah, the unique God of Israel.

- (b) Girdlestone comments that Adonai "indicates the truth that God is the owner of each member of the human family, and that He consequently claims the unrestricted obedience of all."<sup>29</sup> It should also be added that such lordly dominion has special application to God's redeemed children. "<sup>28</sup> Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons and their daughters, all those who had knowledge and understanding, <sup>29</sup> are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to observe all the commandments of GOD our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes" (Neh. 10:28-29).
  - (c) Also note in Daniel 9:4 that Adonai is associated with both Elohim and Jehovah. "I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, 'Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments.'" In Malachi 1:6 it refers to man and Jehovah Sabaoth. "A son honors his father, and a servant his master/lord. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master/lord, where is My respect?' says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, 'How have we despised Your name?'"
- (2) The compound names using Adonai.
- (a) Adonai Elohai, or "O Lord my God." "For I hope in You, O LORD; You will answer, O Lord my God." (Ps. 38:15; cf. 35:23).
  - (b) Adonai Adonim, or "the Lord of lords." "For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe" (Deut. 10:17).

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

## 3. The primary names of God in the New Testament.

## a. The names expressing unity.

- (1) God, or Θεός, Theos, is a generic title equivalent to elohim in the Old Testament, though it can also specifically refer to Jehovah (Acts 2:17; cf. Joel 2:27-28). While theos describes the deity of Israel in general (I Cor. 8:6; Heb. 6:13), as well as pagan gods (Acts 14:11), yet it is also used with reference to all three persons of the Trinity.
  - (a) *God the Father.* "You are doing the deeds of your father. They said to Him, 'We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God'" (John 8:41; I Cor. 8:6).
  - (b) *God the Son.* "Thomas answered and said to Him [Jesus Christ], '[You are] my Lord and my God!'" (John 20:28; Rom. 9:5).
  - (c) *God the Holy Spirit.* "<sup>3</sup> But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? <sup>4</sup> While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God'" (Acts 5:3-4).
- (2) Lord, or κύριος, kurios, is a generic title that most frequently is equivalent to Jehovah in the Old Testament. "For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, 'THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'" (Matt. 3:3; cf. Isa. 40:3). It infrequently translates Adonai in the Old Testament (Matt. 1:22-23; cf. Isa. 7:14). The Father takes the name of Lord (Matt. 11:25), as does the Son in no lesser degree (John 20:28). Kurios also describes angels (Acts 10:4), idols (I Cor. 8:5), kings (Acts 25:26), and is a common title of respect at the human level (Matt. 13:27; 21:30; I Pet. 3:6).
- (3) Lord, or δεσπότης, despotēs, is a generic title equivalent in meaning to adonai in the Old Testament, that is, God is absolute Master and Owner. "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant [Simeon] to depart in peace, according to Your word" (Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24; Rev. 6:10). Jesus Christ receives this title. "For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 4; cf. II Pet. 2:1). However it can also refer to human masters (I Tim. 6:1, 2).

- b. The names expressing triunity.
- (1) The Father is God, but distinctively (cf. pp. 316-338), as His name suggests. He is the person of headship, generation, and gracious benefaction. "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ" (I Cor. 11:3; cf. Matt. 5:44-45; 6:26-33; John 15:26; I Cor. 15:24).
- (a) In the Old Testament Jehovah is the Father of Israel. "So David blessed the LORD in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, 'Blessed are You, O LORD God of Israel our father, forever and ever'" (I Chron 29:10; cf. Isa. 63:16; 64:8). Yet a concordance study will quickly reveal that the Fatherhood of God is overwhelmingly a New Testament emphasis. So Wilbur Smith reminds us:
- It is strange how in almost all of our theologies we develop attributes of God, with long Latin words and arguments for God, but when you go to look for a treatment on the fatherhood of God, in a systematic theology, you can hardly even find the idea in an index, yet our blessed Lord Jesus referred to God as our Father over forty times.<sup>30</sup>
- (b) From another perspective, Thomas Smail, an Anglican who was formerly Charismatic, perceptively comments that,
- we have had in recent years a Jesus movement and a charismatic movement. The one has almost disappeared and the other is threatening to run out of steam, perhaps because each is in a different way inadequate to the gospel, which is basically a Father movement. It is not first a Jesuology (a doctrine about Jesus) or a pneumatology (a doctrine about the Spirit) but it is a theology or even a patrology, a doctrine about God the Father. It starts not with the cross of Jesus or with the gift of the Spirit, but with the Father who so loved the world that he gave his Son in his Spirit."<sup>31</sup>
- (c) God the Father is to be clearly distinguished with regard to His relationship with God the Son in contrast with that of adopted children of God. This distinction is noticeably evident in the Gospels where, not only are references to God's fatherhood more than double those found in the remaining books of the New Testament, but also Jesus Christ "never joins his disciples with himself in allusions to his relationship with the Father, in such a way as to suggest that their relationship to God is of the same kind."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> R. T. Kendall, *The Word Of The Lord*, p. 247.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas Smail, *The Forgotten Father*, p. 20.

<sup>32</sup> William Cameron, *Baker's Dictionary Of Theology*, p. 215.

- 1) While pagan religions declare God to be Father as the Creator, yet the Bible makes no explicit declaration (cf. Matt. 5:45; Acts 17:29; Heb. 12:9). In terms of creation, not redemption, it may be implicit in Acts 17:28. "For in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'" However under inspiration, here Paul quotes pagan Greek literature. Consider that, "man is created in the image of God, not begotten; God-sonship is a thing not of nature but of grace."<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the Bible expressly states that some of mankind are children of the devil. "By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother" (I John 3:10; cf. Matt. 13:38; John 8:44).
  
- 2) The relationship of God the Father to His redeemed children is descriptive of several facets of the believer's filial union with God. These include:
  - a) Adoption. "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'" (Rom. 8:15; cf. John 1:12; Gal. 4:4-7).
  
  - b) *Sonship*. "<sup>1</sup> See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (I John 3:1-2; cf. Rom. 8:14, 16; Gal. 3:26).
  
  - c) *Likeness*. "<sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matt. 5:44-45; cf. I John 3:2, 9-10).
  
  - d) *Inheritance*. "Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God" (Gal. 4:7; cf. Rom. 8:16-17).

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<sup>33</sup> Alan Richardson, *A Theological Word Book Of The Bible*, p. 77.

- e) *Discipline.* "For whom the LORD loves He reproves, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights" (Prov. 3:12; cf. Heb. 12:5-7).
  - f) *Unity.* "<sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name" (Eph. 3:14-15; cf. I John 1:3).
- 3) The relationship of God the Father to His only begotten Son is descriptive of an eternal relationship within the Godhead. Through the heavenly patronage of the Father:
- a) He gives eternal generation to the Son. "<sup>26</sup> For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself" (John 5:26; cf. 1:1, 14, 18; 8:58; 17:5, 24; Col. 1:15; I John 4:9).
  - b) He embraces the Son to His bosom. "<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him" (John 1:1, 18).
  - c) He endows the Son with a glorious inheritance. "<sup>7</sup> I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. <sup>8</sup> Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession'" (Ps. 2:7-8; Eph. 1:18).
  - d) He directs the Son to accomplish His will. "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work'" (John 4:34; cf. 5:30; 6:38; Heb. 10:5-7).
  - e) He encourages the Son in his obedience. "<sup>42</sup> [Jesus Christ was] saying, 'Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.' <sup>43</sup> Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him" (Luke 22:42-43; cf. Matt. 3:17; 17:5).
  - f) He cultivates the Son unto fruitfulness. "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser" (John 15:1; cf. Heb. 5:8-9).
  - g) He appoints the Son to judge and reign. "<sup>30</sup> Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to

men that all people everywhere should repent,<sup>31</sup> because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31; cf. Ps. 2:7-9; John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42).

- h) He glorifies the Son so that He may be glorified through him. "Jesus spoke these things; and (lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You'" (John 17:1).
- (d) How then is God the Father to be properly honored? Through obedient children who reflect their holy parentage.
- 1) God cries out for respect as Father. "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.'" Yet His children dishonor His sacred name. "'A son honors his father, and a servant his master Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?' says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name" (Mal. 1:6).
  - 2) The Son of God gives honor to the Father with his life (John 17:4) and lips. "Holy Father, keep them [My disciples] in Your name. . . .<sup>25</sup> O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me" (John 17:11, 25). So true adopted children of the Father will honor Him with their works. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16, 44-45). They will honor Him with their words. "<sup>32</sup> Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven"(Matt. 10:32-33; cf. 6:9; John 5:23; 16:23).
- (2) The Son is God, but distinctively (cf. pp. 316-338), as His name suggests. He is the person of precise representation, subordination, and implementation "<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4:34; 14:9). "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" Col. 1:15; cf. 2:9).
- (a) As Jesus Christ, he takes names that identify him as the incarnate God of Israel.

- 1) He explicitly takes the "I am" name of Jehovah. <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.' <sup>59</sup> Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple" (John 8:58-59; cf. 4:25-26; 6:35; 8:12; 10:7, 11, 36; 14:6; 15:1; Rev. 1:8; 21:3-6).
- 2) He takes the name of Jehovah itself. "3 For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, 'THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'" (Matt. 3:3; cf. Isa. 40:3. John 12:37-41; cf. Isa. 6:1-10), as well as compound forms:
  - a) Jehovah Raah, or "the LORD is My Shepherd." "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11; cf. Ps. 23:1).
  - b) Jehovah Tsidkenu, or "the Lord Our Righteousness," which title is prophetically given to Christ as the "righteous Branch" of David. " <sup>5</sup> 'Behold, the days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>6</sup> In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness'" (Jer. 23:5-6).
- 3) He takes the name of God (Elohim).
  - a) As the Creator. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1; Col. 1:16; cf. Gen. 1:1).
  - b) As the Almighty. "'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty [παντοκράτωρ, pantokratōr]'" (Rev. 1:8; cf. Gen. 17:1; Shaddai).
  - c) As the Highest. "<sup>27</sup> I also shall make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. <sup>28</sup> My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall be confirmed to him. <sup>29</sup> So I will establish his descendants forever and his throne as the days of heaven" (Ps. 89:27-29; Elyon, prophetically, cf. Gen. 14:19; 'The Son of the Most High' Luke 1:31-32).

- d) As Immanuel, or “God [Elohim] with us.” “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, ‘GOD WITH US’ (Matt. 1:23; cf. Isa. 7:14).
- 4) He takes the equivalent name for Adonai, that is, δεσπότης, despotēs, or Master. “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves” (II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).
- (b) As Jesus Christ, he takes names that identify him with God’s saving work in the Old Testament.
- 1) Jesus, or Ἰησοῦς, Iēsous (Matt. 1:21), meaning “Savior,” is equivalent to Joshua, likewise meaning “Savior,” Yehoshua, יהושׁע. <sup>15</sup> Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, <sup>16</sup> ‘May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, <sup>17</sup> who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the LORD will not be like sheep which have no shepherd.’ <sup>18</sup> So the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him’ (Num. 27:15-18),
- 2) Christ, or Χριστός, Christos (John 1:41; 4:25-26), or Messiah, מָשִׁיחַ, mashiach, meaning “the anointed” of God. <sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup> ‘Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!’” (Ps. 2:2-3; cf. Dan. 9:25-26). This Christ is equipped to accomplish salvation (Luke 2:11) and reign over an everlasting kingdom (I Cor. 15:22-25; Rev. 11:15).
- 3) Son of Man, is the title most commonly attributed by Jesus to himself. “For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” (Matt. 12:8). “As they were coming down from the mountain, He gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen [concerning Jesus’ transfiguration], until the Son of Man rose from the dead” (Mark 9:9; cf. Luke 19:10; John 1:51). It reflects more the messianic/prophetic sense of Daniel 7:13-14 and the frequent use,

over 90 times, of this name by Ezekiel, rather than simply the concept of an ideal man.

- 4) Son of God, is the title that finds the greatest emphasis in John's writings, it often being a synonym for Messiah. "Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" (Matt. 16:16; cf. Mark 1:1; John 1:49; I John 5:5-6). It can also describe intimate union with the Father. "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27; John 10:15, 38). The Jewish leaders readily acknowledged this title as a reference to Deity. "For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him [Jesus], because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18; cf. 10:33; 19:7). At the annunciation, Jesus is described as the Son of God because he is "the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1:32, 35), or El Elyon (Gen. 14:18-20).
- 5) Root of David. "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star" (Rev. 22:16; cf. 5:5; cf. Isa. 11:1).
- 6) Chosen One. "4And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God. . . . 6For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS STONE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED" (I Pet. 2:4, 6; cf. Isa. 42:1).
- 7) Cornerstone. "7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,' 8 and, 'A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE'"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed" (I Pet. 2:7-8; cf. Ps. 118:22).
- 8) Lamb of God, incorporating both the Passover lamb and the messianic lamb of Isaiah 53:7. "2The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29; cf. Cor. 5:7; cf. Ex. 12:3-11; Isa. 53:7-9).

- 9) Great High Priest. "Therefore, He [Jesus] had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17; cf. 3:1; 4:14; 7:11-28; cf. Ex. 28:1-3).
  - 10) Last Adam. "So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." (I Cor, 15:45; cf. Rom. 5:12-21).
- (3) The Holy Spirit is God, but distinctively (cf. pp. 316-338), as His name suggests, He is the person of holy presence and dynamic enablement. "Then he said to me, 'This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts'" (Zech. 4:6; cf. John 16:7-8; Acts 1:8; 2:17).
- (a) As the Holy Spirit, or literally "the Spirit, the holy One." "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26). He is essentially holy as are the Father and the Son, and quite distinct from unholy spirits (cf. pp. 52-53).
  - (b) As the Helper, or Comforter, or Counselor, *παράκλητος*, *paraklētos*. "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me" (John 15:26; cf. 14:26; 16:7). He is sent to the Christian by the Father through the mediation of the Son (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). He substitutes in the life of the Christian for, and represents, the person of Christ (John 14:16-18), while ministering conviction to the world (John 16:7-11).
- 1) Hence, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father. "For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you" (Matt. 10:20).
  - 2) Hence, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (Rom. 8:9; cf. I Pet. 1:11).
- (c) As "the power of the Most High." "The angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be

called the Son of God.'" (Luke 1:35). He is the Spirit of God Most High, or El Elyon (Gen. 14:18-20).

4. The practical significance of the names of God.
  - a. While the faithful Hebrew believer of the Old Testament could passionately declare his devotion to the God of Israel through the praise and adoration of His individual attributes, still by means of the unique personal name he could encapsulate all of this essential truth within one title, namely the "I am" Jehovah.
    - (1) Yet fervent worship of Jehovah required that other lesser names be used to further describe His glory. Hence, in Deuteronomy 10:17 we find this majestic confession that goes to the limits of human language: "For the LORD [Jehovah] your God [Elohim] is the God [Elohei] of gods [elohim] and the Lord [Adonei] of lords [adonim], the great, the mighty, and the awesome God [El]." Surely in times when Christians speak so glibly and loosely concerning Jehovah, it behooves them to return to a more serious study of God in the Scriptures such as Moses here describes. Many Christians, who might lightly confess to believing in a more full revelation of God through His Son, in reality have a sub-Hebrew understanding of the only living and true, triune God!
    - (2) Consider also the lofty, Hebrew regard for the name of Jehovah in the Book of Psalms alone:
      - (a) His name is to be praised. <sup>2</sup> The LORD is great in Zion, and He is exalted above all the peoples. <sup>3</sup> Let them praise Your great and awesome name; holy is He. <sup>4</sup> The strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob. <sup>5</sup> Exalt the LORD our God and worship at His footstool; holy is He" (Ps. 99:2-3; cf. 113:1-3).
      - (b) His name is to be loved. <sup>35</sup> For God will save Zion and build the cities of Judah, that they may dwell there and possess it. <sup>36</sup> The descendants of His servants will inherit it, and those who love His name will dwell in it" (Ps. 69:35-36; cf. 5:11).
      - (c) His name is majestic in the universe. "O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!" (Ps. 8:1). "Let them praise the name of the LORD, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven" (Ps. 148:13).

- (d) His name shall endure forever. "But You, O LORD, abide forever, and Your name to all generations" (Ps. 102:12). "Your name, O LORD, is everlasting, Your remembrance, O LORD, throughout all generations" (Ps. 135:13).
- (e) His name is holy and awesome. "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name." (Ps. 103:1). "He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; holy and awesome is His name" (Ps. 111:9).
- (f) His name is salvation. "May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high!" (Ps. 20:1). "Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your power" (Ps. 54:1).
- b. For the Christian, the New Testament presents an advance in emphasis insofar as an understanding of the personal name of God is concerned. While the Hebrew believer has his hope grounded upon the only saving, covenant name of Jehovah, yet this relationship maintained a degree of detachment, except for the priesthood (Ex. 19:21-24), that can only be reconciled through Messiah who introduces us to the Son of Jehovah. "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'" (Ps. 2:7; Jer. 23:5-6; Acts 4:25-26). Furthermore, it is the name of this Son as Jesus, the Christ, that is the exalted and pre-eminent name of God in the New Testament. It is Jesus Christ "who comes in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 21:9; cf. Matt. 23:39; John 5:43; 10:25; Rev. 14:1), who has "manifested Thy name" (John 17:6, 26).
- (1) While Jesus has taught his disciples to pray to the Father [Jehovah], "Hallowed be Your name" (Matt. 6:9), yet in the clearest terms he indicates that a radical change will be ushered in with his death, burial and resurrection. "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. . . . Until now you have asked for nothing in My name" (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24, 26). In the New Testament it is the name of Jesus Christ that supplants the name of Jehovah as the ground of the believer's intercession with God. "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5).
- (2) Hence, the early Christian church, "Every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. . . . [They were] rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer shame for His name [Hashem? cf. Phil. 2:9-11]" (Acts 5:42, 41).
- (3) While in the Old Testament Jehovah was proclaimed as, "the God of gods and the Lord of lords" (Deut. 10:17), yet in the New Testament it is written

of Jesus Christ that, “on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16).

- (4) While in the Old Testament “Jehovah” was  $\text{יהוה}$ , Hashem, or “The Name” (Isa. 42:8), now in the era of the New Testament, “God [has] highly exalted Him [Jesus Christ], and bestowed on Him the name [exclusively attributed to Jehovah] which is above every name, that at the [common] name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [God], to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).<sup>34</sup> “<sup>22</sup> Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. <sup>23</sup> I have sworn by Myself, ‘The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.’ <sup>24</sup> They will say of Me, ‘Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.’ Men will come to Him, and all who were angry at Him will be put to shame. <sup>25</sup> In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be justified and will glory” (Isa. 45:22-24; cf. Eph. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:1-5).
- c. For the Christian, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is supremely glorious affecting every aspect of his daily life. Here is no trite verbal formula, so often thoughtlessly used at the conclusion of prayer, but the holy name of God incarnate before whom he bows with reverent and adoring worship.
- (1) Since he names the name of Christ, he is careful to live in conformity with the righteousness that the name of Jesus personifies. II Timothy 2:19 exhorts: “Let every one who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness.” To this John Bunyan comments that, “the apostle’s design in this exhortation was, and is, that the naming of the name of Christ might be accompanied with such a life of holiness as might put an additional luster upon that name.”<sup>35</sup>
- (2) Since he prays in the name of Christ, he is careful never to presume, but rather to always meditate upon the mediatorial work of his Lord and Savior. “Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father” (Eph. 5:20; cf. Col. 3:17). “Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

<sup>34</sup> Note that in Ephesians 2:9, the more correct translation reveals that God the Father has bestowed on Jesus Christ “*the name* [emphasis added] which is above every name.” In other words, Jesus has received the name of Jehovah. In v. 10, “Jesus” is not the bestowed name, but rather a very common Hebrew name. However, in v. 11 we are told that “Jesus Christ” is to be superscribed with “the name,” that is “Lord” or “Jehovah.”

<sup>35</sup> John Bunyan, *The Works of John Bunyan*, II, p. 513.

- (3) Since he sings concerning the name of Christ, he will delight in such representative hymns as:

- (a) *Jesus! The Name High Over All*, by Charles Wesley.

Jesus! The name high over all,  
 In hell, or earth, or sky;  
 Angels and men before it fall,  
 And devils fear and fly.

Jesus! The name to sinners dear,  
 The name to sinners given;  
 It scatters all their guilty fear,  
 It turns their hell to heaven.

Happy, if with my latest breath  
 I might but gasp His name;  
 Preach Him to all, and cry in death:  
 Behold, behold the Lamb!

- (b) *Jehovah Tsidkenu*, by R. M. M'Cheyne.

When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,  
 Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die;  
 No refuge, no safety in self could I see -  
 Jehovah Tsidkenu my Savior must be.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;  
 My guilty fears vanished, with boldness I came  
 To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free -  
 Jehovah Tsidkenu is all things to me.

Even treading the valley, the shadow of death,  
 This "watchword" shall rally my faltering breath;  
 For while from life's fever my God sets me free,  
 Jehovah Tsidkenu my death-song shall be.

## D. THE PERSONALITY OF GOD RADIATED

### 1. Introduction.

- a. It is fitting that this concluding section should focus attention upon the fullness of God's radiated personality, that is His expressed radiance and glory. By way of illustration, it is most helpful in musical appreciation to gain an understanding of the individual instruments of a symphony orchestra. However, this knowledge is only useful when the full weight of an orchestration is heard to resound as a vibrant, harmonious whole. So it is the case with regard

to a study of God's attributes. It is vitally important to study the individual perfections of the Godhead, and it is certainly correct to know that they are, in the great mystery of it all, part of Jehovah's individual, indivisible essence. Nevertheless, beyond this there must also be that overwhelming, all consuming encounter with the greatness, splendor, and majesty of God that causes us to bow in awesome yet adoring silence, as if kneeling upon holy ground. If we do but break the silence, it is only for the purpose of crying out as David did: "Blessed are You, O LORD God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You dost exalt Yourself as head over all" (I Chron. 29:10-11).

- b. B. B. Warfield points out that,

[T]he biblical idea of the *Summum Bonum* [chief and ultimate good] is the glory of God. [Why is this so? Because] [i]t takes man out of himself, and bids him seek the highest good in the glory, not of his pitiful self, but of his all-glorious God. In no self-gratification, in no self-glorification, can he reach the height of his ideal. He is forced to look out of himself; he is necessarily lifted above himself. . . . With his eye set on glorifying his Savior and Maker, his idea of virtue is transfigured and purified from earthly dross, his notions of duty are ennobled, his motives become holy, and his whole life divine. In this one point we can see the transforming greatness of Christian ethics.<sup>36</sup>

- c. When a person is dominated by a sense of the glory of God, there is no telling what he may accomplish. Consider the example of Jonathan Edwards who, when no older than twenty years of age, formulated seventy resolutions for private meditation. The following examples reflect Edwards' acute appreciation of the glory of God.<sup>37</sup>

- Resolution 1. *Resolved*, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to the glory of God.
- Resolution 4. *Resolved*, never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God, nor be, nor suffer it, if I can possibly avoid it.
- Resolution 23. *Resolved*, frequently to take some deliberate action, which seems most unlikely to be done, for the glory of God, and trace it back to the original intention, designs, and ends of it; and if I find it not to be for God's glory, to repute it as a breach of the fourth resolution.

<sup>36</sup> Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Selected Shorter Writings*, I, pp. 132-3.

<sup>37</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, I, pp. xx-xxi.

Resolution 27. *Resolved*, never willfully to omit anything, except the omission be for the glory of God; and frequently to examine my omissions.

2. The essential glory of God.

a. Definitions.

(1) In the Old Testament the primary Hebrew word for “glory” is **כְּבוֹד**, *kabōd*, meaning weight, heaviness, load, that is an impressive quality that is abundant and substantial in density and magnitude. It is related to greatness, splendor, and majesty.

(a) In a material and secular sense, it may refer to wealth (Gen. 31:1; Nah. 2:9), human honor (Gen. 45:13; Job 19:9), military might (Isa. 8:7), lush timber (Isa. 60:13), and priestly garments (Ex. 28:40).

(b) Concerning Jehovah, He is laden with magnificence which is the sum total of His attributes reflected in His name. “O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!” (Ps. 8:1; cf. Is. 59:19). Yet distinctively included in His overall glory are His:

1) *Personal glory, or face*. “<sup>18</sup> Then Moses said, ‘I pray You, show me Your glory!’ <sup>19</sup> And He said, ‘I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.’ <sup>20</sup> But He said, ‘You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!’ <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said, ‘Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; <sup>22</sup> and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen’” (Ex. 33:18-23).

2) *Moral glory, or holiness*. “<sup>38</sup> Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two one year old lambs each day, continuously. <sup>39</sup> The one lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; <sup>40</sup> and there shall be one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering with one lamb. <sup>41</sup> The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it the same

grain offering and the same drink offering as in the morning, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD. <sup>42</sup> It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. <sup>43</sup> I will meet there with the sons of Israel, and it shall be consecrated by My glory" (Ex. 29:38-43; cf. Isa. 6:3).

- 3) *Radiant glory, or light.* "<sup>26</sup> Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. <sup>27</sup> Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. <sup>28</sup> As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking" (Ezek. 1:26-28; cf. Deut. 5:22-26).
- 4) *Mighty glory, or power.* "<sup>1</sup>Who is this who comes from Edom, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, this One who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? 'It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save. . . . <sup>12</sup> Who caused His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, Who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name, <sup>13</sup> Who led them through the depths? Like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble; <sup>14</sup> as the cattle which go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So You led Your people, to make for Yourself a glorious name" (Isa. 63:1, 12-14; cf. Ps. 19:1-6).
- 5) *Infinite glory, or essence, which no man can see.* "<sup>20</sup> But He said, 'You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!' <sup>21</sup>Then the LORD said, 'Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; <sup>22</sup> and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen'" (Ex. 33:20-23).

- (2) In the New Testament, the predominant Greek word for “glory” is δόξα, doxa, from which is derived “doxology,” which has at its root the idea of a good opinion or estimate, which results in the meaning of brightness, splendor, magnificence, and related fame, renown, honor.
- (a) In a material and secular sense, it may refer to the radiant brightness of the sun, moon, and stars (I Cor. 15:41), the magnificent splendor of a king such as Solomon (Matt. 6:29), fleshly human attractiveness (I Pet. 1:24), and personal fame and honor (John 5:44).
- (b) Concerning the glory of God, it has particular reference to His “self-manifestation, i.e., what He essentially is and does, as exhibited in whatever way he reveals Himself in these respects. This glory is revealed in the person of Christ; essentially His glory has ever shone forth and ever will do (John 17:5, 24; Heb. 1:3), though for a brief period in history it was veiled in human flesh.”<sup>38</sup> Distinctive aspects include His:
- 1) *Personal glory, or face.* “<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . . <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him” (John 1:14, 18; cf. 6:46; II Cor. 4:6; Col. 1:15).
  - 2) *Moral glory, or holiness* “<sup>9</sup> For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. . . . <sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (II Cor. 3:9, 18; cf. Rom. 3:23).
  - 3) *Radiant glory, or light.* “<sup>4</sup> In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (II Cor. 4:4-6; cf. Tit. 2:13; Rev. 21:23).

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<sup>38</sup> Vine, Unger, White, eds., *Vine's Expository Dictionary*, p. 267-268.

- 4) *Mighty glory, or power.* “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS” (Matt. 16:27). “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30; cf. Col. 1:10-11).
- 5) *Infinite glory, or essence, which no man can see.* “<sup>13</sup> I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, <sup>14</sup> that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup> who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.” (I Tim. 6:13-16; cf. I John 4:12).
- b. Although the glory of God in the Bible primarily describes His radiant splendor, yet this emanation is sourced in His essential glory. The light rays of the sun are but a communication of the material/molten/gaseous/blaze of that star. So the shining forth of the glory of the triune God is also a procession from the glorious essence of His being. “<sup>15</sup> He [Jesus Christ] who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup> who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.” (I Tim. 6:15-16).

(1) Thomas Goodwin explains that:

God is most glorious in himself, though no creature had been to glorify him. He was as glorious when there was no world as now he is. Men’s honors depend upon the opinion and apprehensions of them that honor them. Where is the glory of a king, but in the multitude of his subjects? But God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are sufficient to glorify each other, if there were no creatures. . . . All three persons do mutually endeavor to give glory each to the other. . . . “The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all might honor the Son as the Father” (John 5:22-23). The Son he honored the Father: “I have glorified Thee on earth (John 17:4),” &c. And the Holy Ghost glorifies the Son: “He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine” (John 16:14).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Goodwin, *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*, VI, pp. 497, 499.

- (2) In an excellent and detailed article on the glory of God, as His chief end in creation, Edwards comments:

The thing significant by that name, "the glory of God," when spoken of as the supreme and ultimate end of all God's works, is the emanation and true external impression of God's internal glory and fullness. . . . It includes the exercise of God's perfections to produce a proper effect, [that is] the manifestation of his internal glory to created understandings, the communication of the infinite fullness of God to the creature.<sup>40</sup>

3. The reflected glory of God.

- a. By way of illustration, when a person sleeping in a totally dark room is suddenly awakened by a call, and the light is turned on at the same time, the immediate response of intolerance to the brilliance leads to a shielding or covering of the dazzled eyes. So the Bible describes God's revelation of Himself as the appearing of His radiant glory in a dark place. <sup>1</sup> Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. <sup>2</sup> For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. <sup>3</sup> Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (Isa. 60:1-3; cf. 9:1-2; John 1:5).

- (1) In the case of a newly converted person, as it were awakened from sleep by the truth, such a confrontation with the glory of God is the response of an aroused and redeemed sinner to moral radiance he has not been accustomed to in the past. "He [the man born blind] then answered, 'Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.'" (John 9:25, cf. 35-38). He is like the early disciples who did not readily comprehend too much revealed glory to begin with <sup>25</sup> And He said to them, 'O foolish [unthinking] men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?'" (Luke 24:25-26; cf. 9:28-36; Acts 1:6-11). Yet there is no desire to retreat from even initial illumination.

- (2) In the case of the unregenerate person also, as it were awakened from sleep in being confronted with the truth, yet in his perversity he is determined to put a blindfold over his eyes so that he refuses to acknowledge the light "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil" (John 3:19; cf. 9:39-41). However, when that day of the last judgment arrives, the

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<sup>40</sup> Edwards, *Works*, I, p. 119.

blindfold will forcibly be removed so that the accused will fearfully face the unveiled glory of the righteous Judge of all mankind (Rev. 20:11-15).

- b. The exhibition of God's essential or internal glory, or the outshining of His glorious attributes, is that which is reflected by a variety of ways.

- (1) The glory of God reflected from His Word.

- (a) In the Old Testament consider:

- 1) God's glory revealed to Moses <sup>18</sup> Then Moses said, 'I pray You, show me Your glory!' <sup>19</sup> And He said, 'I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.' <sup>20</sup> But He said, 'You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!' <sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said, 'Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; <sup>22</sup> and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen'" (Ex. 33:18-23). Moses could only stand to see obliquely God's back parts, or goodness, but not His face of essential glory.
- 2) God's glory revealed to Israel. <sup>3</sup> God comes from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His splendor covers the heavens, and the earth is full of His praise. <sup>4</sup> His radiance is like the sunlight; He has rays flashing from His hand, and there is the hiding of His power. . . . <sup>12</sup> In indignation You marched through the earth; in anger You trampled the nations. <sup>13</sup> You went forth for the salvation of Your people, for the salvation of Your anointed You struck the head of the house of the evil to lay him open from thigh to neck. Selah" (Hab. 3:3-4, 12-13). God jealously comes to deliver His redeemed people manifesting splendor, radiance, sunlight, and rays (horns) of power from His hands.

- (b) In the New Testament consider:

- 1) God's glory revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. <sup>1</sup> Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup> And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light" (Matt. 17:1-2; Mark 9:2-3;

Luke 9:28-29; John 1:14; II Cor. 4:6). At the Trans-figuration, Jesus' face is like a brilliant star close up; his person and garments are radiant as light, exceedingly white and gleaming. Risen with the Father, he has eyes as flames of fire while his feet glow as if in a furnace (Rev. 1:12-15)..

- 2) God's glory revealed in the New Jerusalem. <sup>1</sup> Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, <sup>2</sup> in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup> There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; <sup>4</sup> they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever" (Rev. 22:1-5). Coming from God in heaven, this holy city, the New Jerusalem, has overall brilliance that is sourced in the illuminating glory of God.

(2) The glory of God reflected in His triunity.

- (a) *The Father displays glory.* "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS" (Matt. 16:27; cf. Eph. 1:17).
- (b) *The Son displays glory.* <sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. <sup>17</sup> For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased'—<sup>18</sup> and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain" (II Pet. 1:16-18; cf. Matt. 16:27; cf. John 1:14; 2:11).
- (c) *The Holy Spirit displays glory.* "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you" (I Pet. 4:14).

(3) The glory of God reflected by His mighty acts.

- (a) God's glory is made known in creation. <sup>1</sup> (Ps. 19:1-6). God's glory is made known in providence. <sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling of the glory of

God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. <sup>2</sup> Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. <sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. <sup>4</sup> Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, <sup>5</sup> which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; it rejoices as a strong man to run his course. <sup>6</sup> Its rising is from one end of the heavens, and its circuit to the other end of them; and there is nothing hidden from its heat" (Ps. 19:1-6).

(b) God's glory is made known in redemption. "Jesus spoke these things; and (lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You'" (John 17:1; I Tim. 1:11).

1) *The glory of His grace.* "To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6).

2) *The glory of His resurrection power.* "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

3) *The glory of His gospel.* "The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (II Cor. 4:4; cf. I Tim. 1:11).

4) The glory of His church. "To Him [God] be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 3:21; cf. 5:27).

5) The glory of His appearing in Christ. "Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Tit. 2:13).

c. What then is man to do with such an exhibition? Is it designed merely for his wonderment and exhilaration? In no way! Rather the glory of God displayed has a reflexive purpose, namely that man, in himself beholding and receiving glory, should return glory to God. Charnock explains this principle as follows:

The glory of God must be principally in our minds, and nearest our hearts in all our supplications. Christ prays first for his own glory, but as a means for the glory of his Father, before he prays particularly for the good of the

church (John 17:1). . . . "Hallowed be thy name," is the first petition of the Lord's prayer. The glory of God must weigh more in our thoughts than our private interest: his glory is to be our end in our common actions (I Cor. 10:31), much more in acts of religious worship. . . . We must seek to God for all blessings, with the same end for which God gives them; he gives us the highest for his glory: "He hath accepted us in the beloved to the praise of the glory of his grace" (Eph. 1:6). We must beg for self subordinately, but for God's glory ultimately. Our Savior begged glory for himself, that he might return glory to his Father.<sup>41</sup>

4. The communicated glory of God.

a. It is to be expected that the works of a glorious God will be, by their very nature, inherently glorious, even if to a lesser degree than their Creator. However, the Fall has brought shame and ignominy to the universe so that vainglorious mankind only has hope of restored glory through the glorious grace of God. Thus the course of Adam's race may be understood with regard to:

(1) *Original glory*. "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1:27).

(2) *Lost glory*. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

(3) *Restored glory*. "The creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21; cf. 5:2; I Cor. 15:42-43, 49; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:27; II Thess. 2:14; I Pet. 4:13).

b. By way of illustration, Erich Sauer recounts:

I visited the church where not only Frederick I, but also Wilhelm 1 (the later emperor Wilhelm I of Germany) was anointed as king. On the walls, the choir-stalls and pillars I saw decorations seldom seen in a church. There were hundreds of coats of arms of the knights of the Black Eagle. I myself counted over seven hundred. The meaning this most unusual ornamentation in a Christian church is obvious. It was to maintain the memory of the historical event. When the ruler is honored his servants also shall be honored. . . . Crowns and principalities pass away. Dynasties sink into the dust. Human honor and earthly glory are alike transitory. But one thing remains - the eternal kingdom of the Most High. The essence of this kingdom is the Person of the King. . . . But He does not retain His kingly

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<sup>41</sup> Charnock, *Works*, IV, p. 7.

glory for Himself alone. His people are to share His splendor. . . . “The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them” [John 17:22].<sup>42</sup>

- c. How then shall people who are lack glory share in the glory of God and His kingdom (I Thess. 2:12)? How is glory communicated to vainglorious mankind (Ps. 94:3-4)? How shall anyone stand before the glory of God (I Sam. 6:20)? How does a person in darkness (Col. 1:13) become “light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8)? How do people, “in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, . . . appear as lights in the world” (Phil. 2:15)?

(1) By means of regeneration and atonement.

(a) Just as God brought light and glory to a dark creation (Gen. 1:1-3), so He has sovereignly entered into the darkness of men’s souls bringing regeneration, illumination, redemption, and glory, through “the gospel of the glory of Christ. “4 In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (II Cor. 4:4-6).

(b) Consider Ephesians 5:14. “For this reason He says, ‘Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’” Thomas Manton comments here that Christ, “doth not only rescue them [dead men] out of the power of darkness, but ‘he will give them light.’ . . . It implieth eternal glory and happiness, to which we have a right *now*, and for which we are prepared and fitted by grace.”<sup>43</sup>

(2) By means of spiritual osmosis through beholding faith and union with Christ.

(a) In Exodus 34:29-35, after Moses has been in the close presence of Jehovah for forty days and nights, he descends from Mt. Sinai with the result that his face is literally “rayed” or shining. However, Moses’ withdrawal from God’s presence results in fading, diminishing glory. It is significant to consider that though Moses was a redeemed sinner, yet in close union with God he became gloriously God-like. “<sup>7</sup> But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory,

<sup>42</sup> Sauer, *The King Of The Earth*, pp. 151-12.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Manton, *The Complete Works of Thomas Manton*, XIX, p. 337.

so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, <sup>8</sup> how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?" (II Cor. 3:7-8).

- (b) In II Corinthians 3:7-18, Paul describes the superior and more lasting metamorphosis or glorious transformation that results when the Christian has sustained faith in the glory of Jesus Christ. If Moses experienced glorious transformation as a minister of the Law, "how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory," vs. 8-9. What is this "ministry of the Spirit"? In v. 17 we are told that "the Lord [Jesus Christ] is the Spirit," so that in "beholding the glory of the Lord [Jesus], [we] are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord [Jesus], the Spirit," v. 18. According to Richard Sibbes, this gradual transformation is by Jesus Christ, "a powerful root that changeth all his branches into his own nature."<sup>44</sup>
- (c) Thomas Goodwin explains and then forcefully illustrates:

The law was a dead letter, and though it showed us the will of God, yet it changed us not into the image of it; but the gospel reveals the glorious image of Jesus Christ to true believers, and changeth them into the same image, yet so as by degrees, from one degree of glory to another, this glorious image being perfected by little and little, will we come to the full stature of Christ. . . . In *all* true believers, that have their eyes opened to see Jesus Christ in the gospel by true faith, there is a most blessed change [glorification] wrought in them into the same image of Jesus Christ, as he is revealed in that gospel. . . . At the latter day, and day of death, when your souls are brought to him [God], either to own, or to refuse, the very first things that he will inquire into will be, as Christ did when he saw the penny [Matt. 22:19-20], whose image is it? . . . So will God say; if it hath the image of Christ on it, give it to Christ, for it belongs to him; if of the devil (for one of these you must have), then give it to him, for it belongs to him. Nothing will pass current coin with God, but what hath the image [glory] of Christ on it.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Richard Sibbes, *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, IV, pp. 260-1.

<sup>45</sup> Goodwin, *Works*, VI, pp. 217-8, 221.

- (3) By means of resurrection and consummate glorification.
- (a) While the Christian is gradually irradiated “from glory to glory” (II Cor. 3:18), by his faith vision of the Savior, yet this process culminates at a point of time or swift moment, ἄτομος, atomos (I Cor. 15:52), when Jesus Christ “will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:21).
- 1) The believer, in his groaning body, eagerly waits for bodily redemption. “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom. 8:18, cf. 19-23, 30).
  - 2) The believer in his perishing body eagerly awaits for bodily immortality. “<sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; <sup>43</sup> it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power” (I Cor. 15:42-43, cf. 51-53).
- (b) Hence, what constant encouragement this hope offers to persevering Christians in this present life. Goodwin further exhorts:
- Whatever befalls us, let what will come, what afflictions, what throbs, what miseries or crosses will come, heaven will make amends for all; God will be better to thee than all. Put them all in one balance, and God with that glory he will bestow on you in another balance, and he will over-weigh them all, for they are not worthy to be compared to this glory. This was it that made the martyrs run through so many persecutions and tortures, and that with cheerfulness; they took God for their portions; so they had him, they cared not what became of their bodies.<sup>46</sup>
- This is confirmed in the case of John Bradford of St. Paul’s Cathedral, who in 1555 was burned at the stake in Smithfield, London. Kissing a faggot, he declared to a young fellow-sufferer named Leaf: “Be of good comfort, brother; for we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night.”<sup>47</sup>
- d. Hence, the Christian progresses from present glory (John 17:22; I Pet. 4:14), to that fullness of glory which he shall embrace when he passes over the river of death to the presence of Christ, and accompanies his Savior at his second

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., VII, p. 464.

<sup>47</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Five English Reformers*, p. 20.

coming (Ps. 73:24; 84:11; Rom. 5:2; 8:18, 23; II Cor. 4:17; Col. 3:4; I Pet. 5:1, 4, 10). This then is very much the theme of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, though it is the fullness of glory to come which is the constant incentive of Christian and his companions as they press forward. Consider three incidents:

- (1) The shepherds at the Delectable Mountains, by means of a telescope on top of the hill Clear, enable Christian and Hopeful to be spurred on by faintly seeing "some of the glory" of the Celestial City ahead.<sup>48</sup>
- (2) Beulah country finds Christian and Hopeful much closer to the Celestial City so that, "they had yet a more perfect view thereof; . . . [and] by reason of the natural glory of the city, and the reflection of the sunbeams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick; Hopeful also had a fit or two of the same disease."<sup>49</sup>
- (3) Having crossed the River of Death, Christian and Hopeful "went in at the gate [of the Celestial City]: and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. . . . Now just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold. . . . And after that, they shut up the gates; which when I [Bunyan] had seen I wished myself among them."<sup>50</sup>

## 5. The attributed glory of God.

### a. The self-glorification of God in all creation.

- (1) Having seen that God's essential glory is reflected and communicated by varying degrees to all of creation, there is yet that reflexive acknowledgment by creation of His glory which reveals the ultimate purpose for which all things were made, that is God's attributed or accredited glory. "34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? 35 Or WHO HAS GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:34-36).
- (2) According to Strong, both Scripture and reason attest to the glory of God as the principal purpose of creation, as follows:<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Bunyan, *Works*, III, p. 145.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>51</sup> Strong, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 397-402.

- (a) The Word of God declares that God's supreme purpose in creation is His holy glory exclusive of anything outside of Himself.
- 1) God's end is in Himself. "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; for how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another" (Isa. 48:11; cf Rom. 11:36; I Cor. 15:28; Col. 1:16 re Christ).
  - 2) God's end is His own will and pleasure. "<sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:5-6).
  - 3) God's end is His own glory. "Then all your people will be righteous; they will possess the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified" (Is. 60:21; cf. 43:7; 61:3; Luke 2:14).
  - 4) God's end is in making known His power, wisdom, and holy name. "For the sake of Your name, O LORD, revive me. In Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble" (Ps. 143:11; cf. Ezek. 36:21-22; 39:7; Rom. 9:17, 22-23; Eph. 3:9-10).
- (b) Reason declares that God's supreme purpose in creation is His holy glory exclusive of anything outside of Himself.
- 1) God's glory is the only end actually and perfectly attained in the universe. His supreme end cannot be that of creatures.
  - 2) God's glory is the end intrinsically most valuable. The good of creatures is of insignificant importance compared with this.
  - 3) God's glory is the end most consistent with His unique independence and absolute sovereignty. Every creature is dependant.
  - 4) God's glory is the end that alone comprehends and secures, as a subordinate end, every interest in the universe.
  - 5) God's glory, especially its moral primacy, is the end that best suits the system of a consistently moral and holy universe.

- (3) In Jonathan Edwards' superb discourse entitled, *The End For Which God Created The World*, he concludes:

Thus we see that the great end of God's works, which is so variously expressed in Scripture, is indeed but *one*; and this *one* end is most properly and comprehensively called, *the Glory of God*. . . . In the creature's knowing, esteeming, loving, rejoicing in, and praising God, the glory of God is both *exhibited* and *acknowledged*; his fullness is *received* and *returned*. Here is both *emanation* and *remanation*. The refulgence shines upon and into the creature, and is reflected back to the luminary. The beams of glory come from God, are something of God, and are refunded back again to their original. So that the whole world is *of* God, and *in* God, and *to* God; and he is the beginning, and the middle, and the end.<sup>52</sup>

In other words, God who is glorious, expresses and communicates His glory to His redeemed, through His glorious Son. "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one" (John 17:22). Thus glorified man is to refund this glory back to God. "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation." (I Pet. 2:12).

- b. The distinctive glorification of God by all creation.

- (1) By angelic beings.

(a) Such as the seraphim and heavenly creatures who are particularly occupied with the praise of God's holy glory. "<sup>1</sup> In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. <sup>2</sup> Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew" (Isa. 6:1-2; cf. Rev. 4:6-11).

(b) Such as that multitude of the heavenly host who glorified God before the shepherds at the birth of the Savior, Jesus Christ. "" (Luke 2:8-14).

- (2) By the inanimate created heavens. (Ps. 19:1-6).

(a) The loud proclamation of the silent heavens. "<sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. <sup>2</sup> Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. <sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not

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<sup>52</sup> Edwards, *Works*, I, pp. 119-20.

heard. <sup>4</sup> Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world." vs. 1-4a.

(b) The radiant proclamation of the rising sun. "In them He has placed a tent for the sun, <sup>5</sup> Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; it rejoices as a strong man to run his course. <sup>6</sup> Its rising is from one end of the heavens, and its circuit to the other end of them; and there is nothing hidden from its heat." vs. 4b-6.

(3) By the vegetative and animate creation.

(a) Such as botanical trees. "<sup>12</sup> The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. <sup>13</sup> Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, and it will be a memorial to the LORD, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off" (Isa. 55:12-13; cf. Ps. 148:9).

(b) Such as birds, beasts, and cattle "<sup>7</sup> Praise the LORD from the earth, sea monsters and all deeps; . . . <sup>10</sup> beasts and all cattle; creeping things and winged fowl" (Ps. 148:7, 10; cf. 84:1-4; Isa. 43:20).

(4) By humankind.

(a) Unregenerate, pagan humanity glorifies God. "<sup>9</sup> When God arose to judgment, to save all the humble of the earth. Selah. <sup>10</sup> For the wrath of man shall praise You; with a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself." (Ps. 76:9-10). Specifically consider:

1) *Pharaoh*. "Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them [the Hebrews]; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD." (Ex. 14:4; cf. Rom. 9:17).

2) *Nebuchadnezzar*. "<sup>34</sup> But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation. <sup>35</sup> All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?' <sup>36</sup> At that time my reason returned to me and my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the

glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. <sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride" (Dan. 4:34-37).

- 3) *Darius*. "<sup>25</sup> Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language who were living in all the land: 'May your peace abound! <sup>26</sup> I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and His dominion will be forever. <sup>27</sup> He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, Who has also delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.'" <sup>28</sup> So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian"(Dan. 6:25-28).
  - 4) *Cyrus*. "<sup>44:28</sup> It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! and he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.' <sup>45:1</sup> Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, Whom I have taken by the right hand, to subdue nations before him and to loose the loins of kings; to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: <sup>2</sup> 'I will go before you and make the rough places smooth; I will shatter the doors of bronze and cut through their iron bars. <sup>3</sup> I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden wealth of secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name'"(Isa. 44:28-45:3).
  - 5) *Pilate*. " Jesus answered [Pilate], 'You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin'" (John 19:11); "<sup>27</sup> For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur" (Acts 4:27-28).
- (b) National Israel glorifies God. "He said to Me, 'You are My Servant, Israel, in whom I will show My glory'" (Isa. 49:3). "<sup>21</sup> But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went. <sup>22</sup> Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus

says the Lord GOD, 'It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. <sup>23</sup> I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,' declares the Lord GOD, 'when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight'" (Ezek. 36:21-23; cf. Lev. 10:3).

(c) Regenerate humanity glorifies God. <sup>5</sup> Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, <sup>9</sup> and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, 'THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME'" (Rom. 15:5-9; cf. I Cor. 6:20; I Pet. 4:11).

1) Thomas Goodwin suggests fifteen ways by which the Christian ought to glorify God.<sup>53</sup>

- a) To earnestly desire to know and think much about God is to glorify Him. "Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps. 46:10).
- b) To admire God is to glorify Him. "When He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed" (II Thess. 1:10).
- c) To speak genuinely about God is to glorify Him. "My mouth is filled with Your praise and with Your glory all day long" (Ps. 71:8); "From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the LORD is to be praised" (Ps. 113:3).
- d) To ascribe all to God is to glorify Him. <sup>11</sup> Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt

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<sup>53</sup> Goodwin, *Works*, VI, pp. 501-5.

Yourself as head over all. <sup>12</sup> Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone" (I Chron. 29:11-12; cf. Ps. 115:1).

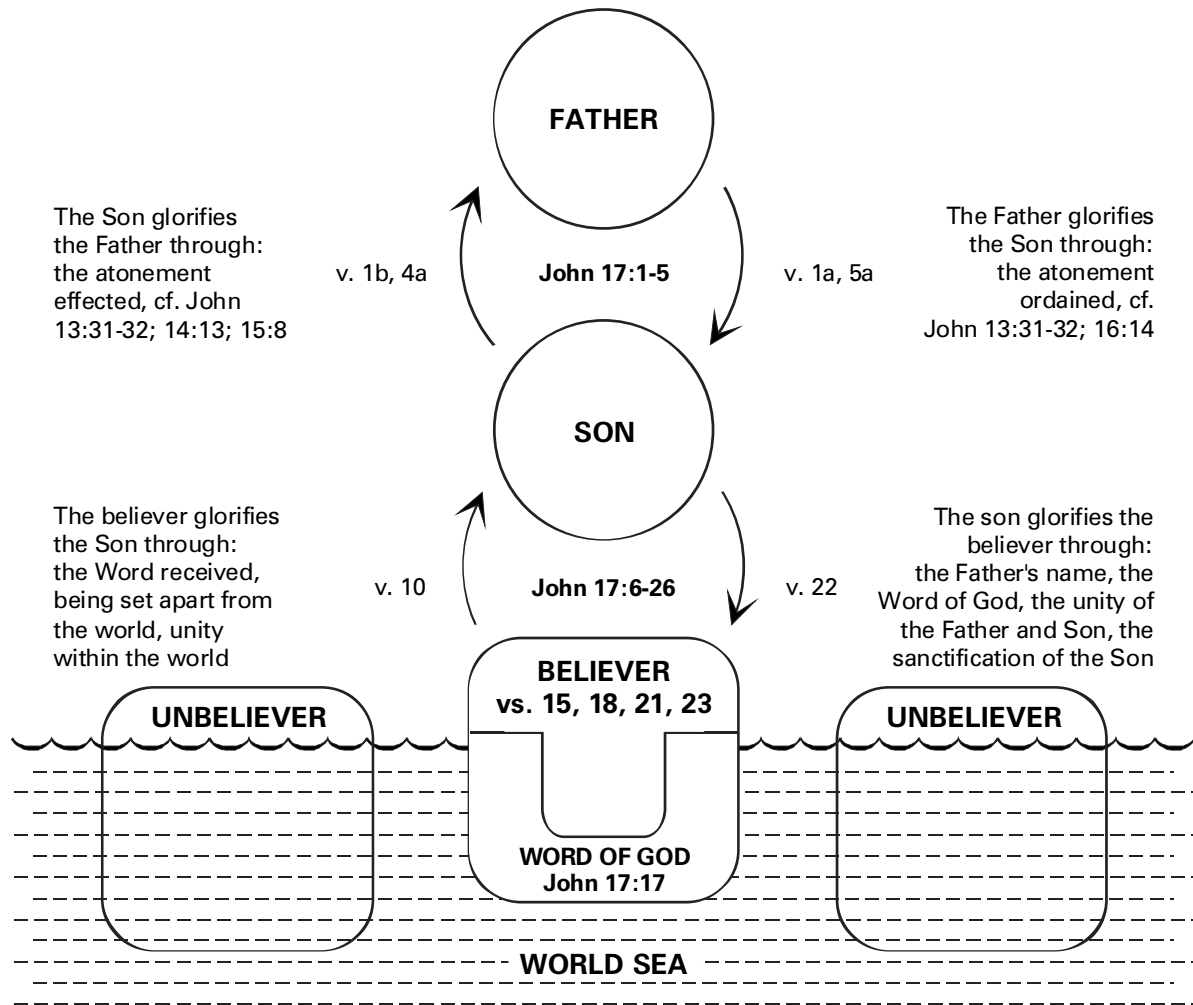
- e) To suffer for God is to glorify Him. <sup>14</sup> "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. <sup>15</sup> Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; <sup>16</sup> but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name" (I Pet. 4:14-16).
- f) To have a heart after God's image is to glorify Him. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16); "For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man" (I Cor. 11:7).
- g) To boast in God as our ground of happiness is to glorify Him. <sup>10</sup> "Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad" (I Chron. 16:10); "O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!" (Ps. 8:1).
- h) To boast in God as our source of fruitful holiness is to glorify Him. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:8).
- i) To do all things with God chiefly in mind is to glorify Him. "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36).
- j) To do all things for God through Christ our mediator is to glorify the Father. "Having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11).
- k) To repent from sin and turn to God is to glorify Him. "Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory" (Rev. 16:9).

- l) To call on God in trouble and praise Him for deliverance is to glorify Him. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me" (Ps. 50:15).
- m) To believe in God with pure faith is to glorify Him. "9 O Israel, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield. 10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield. 11 You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield. 12 The LORD has been mindful of us; He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. 13 He will bless those who fear the LORD, the small together with the great. 14 May the LORD give you increase, you and your children. 15 May you be blessed of the LORD, maker of heaven and earth" (Ps. 115:9-15; cf. Rom. 4:20).
- n) To fear God with awe and reverence is to glorify Him. "And he [an angel] said with a loud voice, 'Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters'" (Rev. 14:7).
- o) To properly fellowship with God's saints is to glorify Him. "7 All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you [Zion], the rams of Nebaioth will minister to you; they will go up with acceptance on My altar, and I shall glorify My glorious house. 8 Who are these who fly like a cloud and like the doves to their lattices? 9 Surely the coastlands will wait for Me; and the ships of Tarshish will come first, to bring your sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel because He has glorified you" (Isa. 60:7-9; cf. Lev. 10:3; Ps. 63:2).
- 2) Man also distinctively proclaims the glory of God when he comprehends Jehovah and His universe in contrast with himself.
- a) With respect to man's humble subjection before God's reigning grandeur, he declares the glory of His majesty. "9 So the common man has been humbled and the man of importance has been abased, but do not forgive them. 10 Enter the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty" (Isa. 2:9-10; cf. Ps. 104:1-2; 145:8-12).

- b) With respect to man's puny smallness before God's overwhelming immensity, he declares the glory of His greatness and magnificence. "3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; 4 what is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him?" (Ps. 8:3-4).
- c) With respect to man's appreciation of the beauty of the universe in contrast with God's incomparable holy loveliness, he declares the glory of His delightful splendor. "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!" (Ps. 8:1).
- c. The cyclical glorification of God according to John 17.
- (1) A study of the term "glory" as used in the New Testament, in both its common noun and verbal forms, reveals that this doctrine has distinctive emphasis in John's Gospel. Consider the following statistics.
- (a) In the four gospels, the noun δόξα, doxa, for "glory," and the verb δοξάζω, doxazō, for "I glorify," are used 80 times, 42 of which occur in John's Gospel, that is more frequently than the three synoptic gospels combined. The most frequent usage of these terms in the other writings of John is 19 times in Revelation.
- (b) In Paul's epistles, the greatest frequency of δόξα, doxa, and δοξάζω, doxazō, is 22 times in II Corinthians and 21 times in Romans.
- (c) In John's Gospel, 24 of the 42 instances of δόξα, doxa, and δοξάζω, doxazō, occur in chapters 12-17 inclusive, that is with regard to the six days immediately prior to Jesus' crucifixion. Further, these words are used 8 times in John 17, which chapter could aptly be titled, *Jesus Christ's Glorification Prayer* (cf. vs. 1 (2), 4, 5 (2), 10, 22, 24).
- (2) In considering God's essential glory as reflected, communicated, and acknowledged, no more concise revelation of this truth as a whole can be found than in John 17. It is common for this chapter to be titled *Jesus Christ's High Priestly Prayer*, since it reveals the Son of God prayerfully interceding for those disciples who the Father has given to him (John 17:2, 6, 9, 24). Certainly this is a significant truth, yet it falls short of reflecting the ultimate and all-embracing purpose of the glorification of the Father, which so consumed the Son. In simple terms, the Father glorifies the Son to the

end that the Son might glorify the Father. Moreover, the Son accomplishes this by glorifying the believer to the end that the believer might glorify the Son, and thus glorify the Father. The following diagram illustrates this cyclical pattern of glorification.

JESUS CHRIST'S GLORIFICATION PRAYER - JOHN 17:1-26



(3) There are three key verses in John 17 that together describe the cyclical nature of the glory of God, and concerning these, the following comments are helpful.

(a) Verse 1. "Father, the hour has come; glorify You Son, that the Son may glorify You." J. C. Ryle comments:

I think the meaning of this sentence must be this: Give glory to Thy Son, by carrying Him through the cross and the grave, to a triumphant completion of the work He came to do, and by placing Him at Thy right hand, and highly exalting Him above every name that is named. Do this, in order that He may glorify Thee and Thy attributes. Do this, that he may bring fresh glory to Thy holiness, and justice, and mercy, and faithfulness, and prove to the world that Thou art a just God, a holy God, a merciful God, and a God that keepeth His word. My vicarious death and resurrection will prove this, and bring glory to Thee. Finish the mighty work. Glorify Me, and in so doing glorify Thyself. Finish Thy work, not least, that Thy Son may glorify Thee by bringing many redeemed souls to heaven, to the glory of Thy grace.<sup>54</sup>

- (b) Verse 10. "And all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them." Thomas Manton comments and asks the question: "But what is it [for the disciple] to glorify Christ? I answer:"<sup>55</sup>
- 1) You will glorify him by faith, that is by accepting Christ. "This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone'" (I Pet. 2:7). You will glorify Him in presenting Christ "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—" (Eph. 3:1).
  - 2) You will glorify him by the holiness of your conversations. "<sup>7</sup> For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; <sup>8</sup> for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:7-8; cf. Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21).
  - 3) You will glorify him in your enjoyment of such privileges as your justification, sanctification, and glorification. "<sup>22</sup> Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, <sup>23</sup> and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God" (I Cor. 3:22-23).
  - 4) You will glorify him by living and suffering for the advancement of his interest and kingdom. "So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name." (Acts 5:41); "For to you it

<sup>54</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts On John*, III, p. 195.

<sup>55</sup> Manton, *Works*, X, pp. 262-7.

has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29; cf. II Cor. 5:13).

- 5) You will glorify him by being zealous for his household and commandments. <sup>12</sup> This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. . . . <sup>14</sup> You are My friends if you do what I command you. . . . <sup>17</sup> This I command you, that you love one another" (John 15:12, 14, 17).
  - 6) You will glorify him by taking time to admire his person and the fulness of his redemption so as to be ravished of heart. <sup>2</sup> For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2); "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21; cf. Rev. 4:10-11; 5:8).
- (c) Verse 22. "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one." Again Thomas Manton comments:

Our glory for substance is the same that Christ's is. In degree there is a difference, according to the difference that is between head and members. The head weareth the crown and badge of honor, and the eldest son had a double portion. So doth Christ excel in degrees of everlasting glory, but the substance is the same; therefore we are said to be 'co-heirs with Christ,' and 'to be glorified with Christ' (Rom. 8:17). . . . Christ's coming doth not eclipse, but perfect our glory; the more near Christ is, the more we shine.<sup>56</sup>

Union with Christ, bringing about spiritual osmosis through the Spirit of Christ, results in the believer receiving and reflecting the glory of Christ. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

- (4) By way of application, when the doctrine of the glory of God lays hold of a child of God, he is transported from mediocre religious commitment to a consuming passion that is always dominated by a God-centeredness which has, at the same time, displaced man-centeredness. A true vision of God enables man to see himself in right perspective, yet in losing sight of himself in the face of God's holy radiance, he finds that his former frustrated quest for fulfillment now finds satisfaction. In other words, in losing sight of ourselves, we find ourselves in the absorbing contemplation

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., XI, p. 57.

and enjoyment of the glory of God. Here is the answer to human happiness, and at the same time the reason why so many do not obtain it.

We give immortal praise  
To God the Father's love,  
For all our comforts here,  
And better hopes above;  
He sent His own eternal Son,  
To die for sins that man had done.

To God the Son belongs  
Immortal glory too,  
Who bought us with His blood  
From everlasting woe:  
And now He lives, and now He reigns,  
And sees the fruit of all His pains.

To God the Spirit's Name  
Immortal worship give,  
Whose new-creating power  
Makes the dead sinner live;  
His work completes the great design,  
And fills the soul with joy divine.

Almighty God, to Thee  
Be endless honors done,  
The undivided Three,  
And the mysterious One:  
Where reason fails, with all her powers,  
There faith prevails, and love adores.

*Isaac Watts*