

Colleyville Presbyterian Church  
Westminster Confession of Faith: Week 8 - Of God  
February 12, 2023

Introduction: a comment on the limitations of defining God

*Chapter 2 - Of God, and of the Holy Trinity*

**I.** There is but one only, (a) living, and true God, (b) who is infinite in being and perfection, (c) a most pure spirit, (d), invisible, (e) without body, parts, (f) or passions; (g) immutable, (h) immense, (i) eternal, (j) incomprehensible, (k) almighty, (l) most wise, (m) most holy, (n) most free, (o) most absolute; (p) working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, (q) for His own glory; (r) most loving (s), gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; (t) the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; (u) and withal, most just, and terrible in His judgments, (v) hating all sin, (w) and who will by no means clear the guilty. (x)

a. Deut 6:4; 1 Cor 8:4, 6. • b. Jer 10:10; 1 Thes 1:9. • c. Job 11:7-9; 26:14. • d. John 4:24. • e. 1 Tim 1:17. • f. Deut 4:15-16; John 4:24 with Luke 24:39. • g. Acts 14:11, 15. • h. Mal 3:6; James 1:17. • i. 1 Kings 8:27; Jer 23:23-24. • j. Psa 90:2; 1 Tim 1:17. • k. Psa 145:3. • l. Gen 17:1; Rev 4:8. • m. Rom 16:27. • n. Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8. • o. Psa 115:3. • p. Exod 3:14. • q. Eph 1:11. • r. Prov 16:4; Rom 11:36. • s. 1 John 4:8, 16. • t. Exod 34:6-7. • u. Heb 11:6. • v. Neh 9:32-33. • w. Psa 5:5-6. • x. Exod 34:7; Nahum 1:2-3.

Katherine Sonderegger: “God is supremely, gloriously One; surpassingly, uniquely One. Nothing is more fundamental to the Reality of God than this utter Unicity. Such is God’s Nature; such His Person: One. Oneness governs the Divine Perfections: all in the doctrine of God must serve, set forth, and conform to the transcendent Unity of God... Nothing, we say, is so close the heart of Scripture as is the Oneness of God. The people of God, the people Israel, worship the One God, and the everlasting covenant between this people and its Lord is affirmed, honored, and kept by the teaching that the Lord God is One, Unique. There is no form nor likeness, no visible presence in temple or cult—no “idol”—no consort nor rival, to this One God. From the first commandment to the Shema, from the prohibition of idolatry to the prophetic call for purity in Israel’s cultus, nothing is so adamant, so relentless, so holy as the call to honor the Oneness of God. Just this we learn from the lips of our Lord, Jesus Christ: that we are to love the One God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength. This is the first and greatest commandment. We follow the prophets and apostles as we teach, worship, and study the One God.”

KS: “The Oneness of God beckons us into the mystery of God. There is no contemplation of the supreme Oneness of God without taking to prayer. To attempt to speak of the One God whose nature is without form or similitude is to strive to name, approach, and worship the God who is unapproachable Light, Holy Fire, and Goodness; around this one is thick darkness. We pray that God’s entire Goodness may shield us and, in that shielding, pass by so that we may know the mystery of this God... We hunger to know the Oneness of God, to rest in it, and that hunger is the Spirit’s gift to us, quickening our appetite for divine things, our search into the Mystery of God, the pilgrimage of the Christian life. There is, then, no fully proper or exhaustively third-personal knowledge of the Lord’s Oneness... We do not stand and look at this predicate: always, Divine Oneness is contemplated on bended knees. It is an encounter at the foot of the holy mountain, and in the cleft of a rock... in living devotion and dependence upon God, then, we ask, What is this Oneness that is God himself?”

“The meaning [of ‘without passions’] in the Confession seems to me to run along the following lines. God is not to be compared to the creature. He is spiritual and invisible. Immediately after our phrase, he is described as immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, and almighty—all attributes that set him apart from his creation. In this way, he is without body and parts; he is not a composite being, he does not have the spatial and temporal limitations that are an unavoidable aspect of creaturely existence. He is therefore ‘without passions’ in the sense that he is not, nor can he be, subject to the limits or external constraints to which the creation is restricted, to the changeable locations, or the ebb and flow, of human feelings or appetites.” - Robert Letham

**II.** God hath all life, (a) glory, (b) goodness, (c) blessedness, (d) in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, (e) nor deriving any glory from them, (f) but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: he is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; (g) and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth. (h) In his sight all things are open and manifest; (i) his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; (j) so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. (k) He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands. (l) To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, he is pleased to require of them. (m)

a. John 5:26. • b. Acts 7:2. • c. Psa 119:68. • d. Rom 9:5; 1 Tim 6:15. • e. Acts 17:24-25. • f. Job 22:2-3. • g. Rom 11:36. • h. Dan 4:25, 35; 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 4:11. • i. Heb 4:13. • k. Psa 147:5; Rom 11:33-34. • l. Ezek 11:5; Acts 15:18. • m. Psa 145:17; Rom 7:12. • n. Rev 5:12-14.

Letham: “WCF 2.2 is a towering declaration of the supremacy of God over all his creation. He has all life, glory, goodness, and blessedness in and of himself...He is all-sufficient, the sole foundation of all being. He needs nothing outside himself, whereas we depend utterly on him. His sovereignty over all he has made will come to expression in WCF 3 onward, on the decrees of God and their outworking in creation, providence, and grace.”

**III.** In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. (a) The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; (b) the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. (c)

a. Mat 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 John 5:7. • b. John 1:14, 18. • c. John 15:26; Gal 4:6.

Letham: “Its brevity demonstrates the divine’s acceptance of the Council of Constantinople’s resolution to the fourth-century Trinitarian controversy. As the the reference to the *filioque* indicates, this acceptance is firmly in the tradition of the Western church.”