

DEFINITION OF GOD

Arlington McRae

The Holy God of the Bible is one (Du 6:4) and He is the only true God (Isa 44:6, 45:5-7), a spirit being (Jn 4:24), eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – the One mutually indwelling the Other, each of whom possesses equally the fullness of Deity¹ and the characteristics of personhood²; who created the heavens and the earth and all contained therein, including man (Gn 1:1-2, Jn 1:3, Ps 24:1-2, Col 1:16). God is the self-existent and the self-sufficient One³, infinite⁴ – omniscient (Ps 139:15-17), omnipotent (Mt 28:18), omnipresent (Ps 139:7-12, Mt 18:20), transcendent⁵ and immanent⁶ – immutable⁷ (Heb 13:8), true and wise, good and faithful, holy and just. Our God desires an intimate relationship with each of us for He is love, our Shepherd, and our Provider.

But the first man disobeyed God (Gn 2:17, 3:6), acquired a sin nature (Rm 5:12, Eph 2:3) that has no desire to know God (Rm 1:18-23), and doomed all mankind to eternal separation from God (Gn 2:17, Rm 5:18, 19). Yet God the Father, full of love, grace and mercy, sent His Son (Ex 34:6-7, Jn 3:16-17, 17:23, Rm 5:8), who became a man (Jn 1:14), pure and undefiled (Jn 19:6), to sacrifice himself in atonement for our sins, that by believing in the Son of God, we should receive the gifts of forgiveness of sin and eternal life with God (Jn 3:16-17, 17:3, the Father of us all (Eph 4:6).

God the Father (Mt 5:16, 48, 6:6, 9, 18) Almighty, has made himself known in the beauty, order, and harmony of His creation (Rm 1:18-20), in His self-revelation in Scripture, and through the incarnation, life, teachings, sacrificial death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Jn 11:25-26, 17:6, His Son (Mt 14:33, 16:16). He is the Sovereign Ruler (1 Tm 6:15), who impartially judges (1 Pe 1:17). He is the Fons Divinitas, the divine fountainhead from whom all else proceeds, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. And He is the One to Whom all things finally returns so that He might be all in all (1 Cor 15:24-28).

Jesus Christ, the living Word⁸ (Jn 1:1,14), eternally begotten (Jn 3:16) (not created) from the Father, became flesh through the miraculous conception of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 2:30-35). He is the Son of God, perfect Deity (Jn 1:1,18, Php 2:5-8), of the same essence, and attributes as the Father (Heb 1:2-3); and He is also the Son of Man⁹ (Mt 12:8, 32), true humanity, of the same essence with us as to His humanity¹⁰, sin excepted; two natures united in one person-without confusion, without change, without division, without separation¹¹, the God-man, forever. He is the Creator, Sustainer (Jn 1:1-3, Col 1:16, Heb 1:2), Emmanuel (Mt 1:23), the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End (Rev 22:13), Savior (Isa 43:11, Lk 2:11), Redeemer, Holy One (Isa 43:10), King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev 19:16). He is the image of the invisible God (Col 1:15) and the exact representation of His nature (Heb 1:3). He has the power to forgive sin (Lk 7:48) and He is worthy of our worship (Mt 28:9, 17, Lk 19:38-40). The "Firstborn of all creation"¹² (Col 1:15, Heb 1:6, Rev 3:14), He is the only mediator¹³ between God and man (1 Tm 2:5). And He continually makes intercession on our behalf.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Grace (Heb 10:29), who proceeds from the Father, is the spirit of Yahweh (Jn 15:26) and of the Son of God (Mt 3:11). He is a person possessing intelligence (Ac 6:10, 1 Cor 2:10), demonstrating His will (Ac 8:29, 13:2), manifesting emotions (Eph 4:30), and expressing relationships with God the Father and with believers (Ac 7:51, 13:2).

DEFINITION OF GOD

Arlington McRae

Bible.Org. "The Creed of Chalcedon (A.D. 451)." Bible.org, 2005.

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology* Second Edition ed. Grand Rapids, 1998.

Horrell, J. Scott. "St102 Class Notes." Dallas Theological Seminary, 2006.

McGrath, alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Second Edition ed.: Blackwell, 1997.

Strauss, Richard L. "*The Joy of Knowing God*, "From Everlasting to Everlasting"."

Tenney, Merrill Chapin. *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*. Rev. and enl. ed. Grand Rapids,: Zondervan, 1967.

Unger, Merrill Frederick et al. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Rev. and updated ed. Chicago: Moody Press, 1988.

DEFINITION OF GOD

Arlington McRae

¹ The person of Jesus Christ is cited as God or deity in John 1:1, 14, 18; Col 2:9. The person of the Holy Spirit is cited as God in Acts 5:3-4, NASB.

² J. Scott Horrell, "St102 Class Notes," (Dallas Theological Seminary, 2006), 18-20.. "In general terms a person is both a self-conscious entity – an "I" that has intelligence, volition, and some kind of affective [e]motions – and a relational being capable of communicating with other persons..." For Scripture depicting the Spirit's intelligence in understanding the mind of God and teaching us humans, refer to 1 Cor 2:10-14. That the Spirit is both a relational and a volitional being is observed in Acts 7:51 and 13:2.

³ Richard L. Strauss, "*The Joy of Knowing God*, "From Everlasting to Everlasting"," (Bible.org, 2005).. In Ps 90:2, Moses says "from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God". Therefore God is eternal. "What we are really saying is that because God is eternal He is self-existent, the only being there is who does not owe His existence to somebody else. He is independent of any other being or cause. He is over and above the whole chain of causes and effects. He is uncreated, unoriginated, without beginning, owing His existence to no one outside Himself. He has life in and of Himself. As Jesus put it, "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). Were it any other way He would not be God. An eternal being must be self-existent."

⁴ God has no limits. This includes time, space, knowledge, power, ability, capability, or action. Man lacks the ability to comprehend the vastness of God for any aspect of His being. God's essence or perfections are beyond the scope of human understanding.

⁵ God is separate, distinct from, and forever beyond both His earthly and heavenly creation. He is unknowable aside from His self-revelation both now and forever more.

⁶ God is present everywhere within His creation yet He is not confused or united with it.

⁷ God's character does not change. God's creation can expect God to always act in accordance with His revealed character.

⁸ Merrill Chapin Tenney, *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, Rev. and enl. ed. (Grand Rapids,: Zondervan, 1967), 899.. In the Old Testament, the revelation of God came to men through the patriarchs, through Moses, the lawgiver, and through the prophets. In the New Testament Jesus is the definitive and supreme Revelation or Word of God made flesh. Merrill Frederick Unger et al., *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Rev. and updated ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988).. Jesus is the revealer of the Godhead (Jn 1:1m 14). The title declares Christ's eternity and deity (...and the Word was God) as well as His assumption of humanity for man's salvation ("...and the Word became flesh"). In the Person of the incarnate Logos, God made Himself known to man.

⁹ alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Second Edition ed. (Blackwell, 1997), 327-28.. Scholars have argued that the term "Son of Man" carries a range of associations, including suffering, vindication, and judgment, thus making it natural to apply it to Jesus. George Caird is one New Testament scholar to develop the argument that Jesus used the term "to indicate his essential unity with mankind, and above all with the weak and humble, and also his special function as predestined representative of the new Israel and bearer of God's judgment and kingdom."

¹⁰ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* Second Edition ed. (Grand Rapids: 1998), 722-23.. The importance of Jesus' humanity cannot be overestimated, for the issue in the incarnation is soteriological, that is, it pertains to our salvation. If Jesus was not really one of us, humanity has not been united with deity and we cannot be saved. For the validity of the work accomplished in Christ's death, or at least its applicability to us as human beings, depends upon the reality of his humanity, just as its efficacy depends upon the genuineness of his deity.

¹¹ Bible.Org, "The Creed of Chalcedon (A.D. 451)," (Bible.org, 2005)..

¹² Horrell, "St102 Class Notes.". Firstborn indicates a legal right as primary heir, not necessarily someone born first as in Dt 21:16). The beginning of the creation of God (Rev 3:14) usually translates "first cause, origin, fount, authority, sovereign, ruler".

¹³ Unger et al., *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*.. Jesus Christ is the peacemaker between God and man. The necessity for mediation arises from the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. It should always be borne in mind, however, that the whole provision of the mediatorial economy arises from the love of God (Jn 3:16, Rm 5:8). It was essential that the mediator should be divine; otherwise His sacrifice could not have availed to take away sins. It was necessary that He should also be human; otherwise He could not have died to redeem us, or stood as our representative, before God's law, or partaken in human experiences, or be united with us in a common nature.