

Theology Proper

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3



Institutes of
Theology

SEMESTER 4

2026

Stephen Charnock

The Existence and Attributes of God

“True theology is erected on the Word of God. It rests on exegesis, collates the results of that task, and carefully articulates the results.”



J. I. Packer
Knowing God

“Imagining God in our heads can be just as real a breach of the second commandment as imagining him by the work of our hands.”



J. I. Packer
Knowing God

“Just as it forbids us to manufacture molten images of God, so it forbids us to dream up mental images of him. Imagining God in our heads can be just as real a breach of the second commandment as imagining him by the work of our hands.... To follow the imagination of one’s heart in the realm of theology is the way to remain ignorant of God, and to become an idol-worshipper, the idol in this case being a false mental image of God, made by one’s own speculation and imagination.”



Augustine of Hippo

“For God is a whole and not a number of parts and does not consist of diverse elements, but is Himself the Maker of the system of the universe.”



Belgic Confession

“We all believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths that there is a single and simple spiritual being.”



Francis Turretin

“The Orthodox have constantly taught that the essence of God is perfectly simple and free from all composition.”



James Dolezol

“[If we reject divine simplicity] we run the very real danger of worshipping that which is not the unsurpassable and absolute being.”



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition



James P. Boyce

“Power in God, therefore, may be defined to be the effective energy inherent in his nature by which he is able to do all things. The exercise of that power is dependent upon his will or purpose, and is limited not by what he can do, but by what he chooses to do.”



Charles Hodge

“We can do very little. God can do whatever He wills. We, beyond very narrow limits, must use means to accomplish our ends. With God means are unnecessary. He wills, and it is done. He said, Let there be light; and there was light ... This simple idea of the omnipotence of God, that He can do without effort, and by a volition, whatever He wills, is the highest conceivable idea of power, and is that which is clearly presented in the Scriptures.”



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

- a) The Key Terms—He is all-powerful
- b) God's Ability—He can do whatever He pleases
- c) God's Strength—Nothing is too hard for Him
- d) God's Simplicity—There are some things He cannot do



What God Cannot Do

1. God cannot sin
2. God cannot make a stone so big that He Himself can't pick it up
3. Such an idea or proposal doesn't accord with His being
4. God cannot change would be another example
5. God cannot create laws that oppose His character
6. God cannot change His nature
7. God cannot change His will and decrees



James P. Boyce

“If it be asked why God can do none of these things, the answer is, because his own nature is to him the law of what he does, as well as of what he wills and of what he is. He is not just and holy because he wills to be so, but he wills to be just and holy because he is so. His will does not make his nature, but his nature controls his will.”



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

A. The Biblical Witness

- i. An Essential Definition
- ii. The Key Categories
 - a) Absolute Power
 - b) Ordinate Power



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

A. The Biblical Witness

- i. An Essential Definition
- ii. The Key Categories
- iii. The Key Examples



iii. The Key Examples

- a) In the creation of the world (Heb. 11:3)
- b) In the creation and formation of its inhabitants
 - Angels (Ps. 33:6)
 - Animals (Gen. 1)
 - Humans (Gen. 1:26–27)
- c) In the preservation of all things (Col. 1:16–7)
- d) In beginning and ending human life (Job 1:21)
- e) In raising the dead (John 11)
- f) In regenerating men's hearts (Exod. 33:19; Rom. 9:15)
- g) In hardening men's hearts (Exod. 7:12; cf. 10:1)
- h) In working miracles (Exod. 3–12)
- i) In bringing to pass the drama of redemption (in Christ)



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

- I. God's Omnipotence
 - A. The Biblical Witness
 - B. The Historical Witness
 - C. The Christian Application



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

D. The Christian Application

- i. God the Father has the power to decree salvation (Eph. 1:4)
- ii. God the Son has the power to accomplish salvation (Eph. 1:7–8)
- iii. God the Spirit has the power to apply salvation (Eph. 1:13–14)



J. L. Dagg

“At our will, a finger moves, but at the volition of God, a planet is launched in its orbit, with a force of which the cannonball gives but a very vain conception. Hurricanes, which sweep the earth, and lift up the dwellings, and the very bodies of men, in the air, have their power. The ocean, which sports with mighty ships, has its power. The volcano, which bursts forth with such awful grandeur, has its power.”



J. L. Dagg

“But when we have combined the force of air, ocean, and subterranean fire, we must multiply it by the number of such agencies which are operation, through all the worlds in the whole of God’s vast empire, before we can begin to conceive adequately of his omnipotence.”



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

- I. God's Omnipotence
- II. God's Omnipresence
 - A. The Biblical Witness
 - i. An Essential Definition



Joel Beeke and Paul Smalley

“All of God is in every place; he indwells creation fully and completely.”



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

II. God's Omnipresence

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

a) The Key Terms—He is all-present

b) A First Related Attribute—He is immense

c) A Second Related Attribute—He is spirit



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

- i. An Essential Definition
 - a) The Key Terms—He is all-present
 - b) A Related Attribute—He is immense
 - c) A Second Related Attribute—He is spirit
 - d) The Wrong Views—He is not...
 - “Stretch Armstrong” God
 - Pantheistic God
 - Deistic God



Gregory of Nyssa

“The Logos “upholds the universe by his word of power” from nonexistence to existence. For all things, as many as exist in connection with matter and as many as have received an immaterial nature, have one cause of their substance: the Word of unspeakable power. On Perfection.”



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

II. God's Omnipresence

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

ii. The Key Categories

a) God's Universal Presence—His *essential* presence in the world



Geerhardus Vos

“Is God present everywhere in the same way? No, He reveals His presence in a different way in heaven than in the place of the lost, and differently on earth than above.”



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

II. God's Omnipresence

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

ii. The Key Categories

a) God's Universal Presence—His *essential* presence in the world

b) God's Covenantal Presence—His *gracious* presence with His people



b) God's Covenantal Presence—His *gracious* presence with His people

- The Garden of Eden
- The Exodus from Egypt
 - Burning Bush, Pillar of fire/cloud, Mt. Sinai
- The Tabernacle
- The Temple
- The Incarnation of The Son
- The Coming and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- The Presence of Christ in the Church
- The Second Coming
- The Millennial Kingdom
- The New Heaven and Earth



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

II. God's Omnipresence

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

ii. The Key Categories

iii. A Special Covenantal Presence



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

II. God's Omnipresence

A. The Biblical Witness

B. The Historical Witness

C. The Christian Application

i. You are never hidden from His sight

ii. You are never barred from drawing near to His presence



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

I. God's Omnipotence

II. God's Omnipresence

III. God's Omniscience

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

a) The Key Terms—He is all-knowing



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

- I. God's Omnipotence
- II. God's Omnipresence
- III. God's Omniscience
 - A. The Biblical Witness
 - i. An Essential Definition
 - ii. The Primary Categories



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

A. The Biblical Witness

i. An Essential Definition

ii. The Primary Categories

a) Infinite Knowledge

b) Self-Knowledge

c) Creaturely Knowledge

- God knows the hearts and minds of men
- God knows the actions of men
- God knows the beasts of the earth



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

A. The Biblical Witness

- i. An Essential Definition
- ii. The Primary Categories
 - a) Infinite Knowledge
 - b) Self-Knowledge
 - c) Creaturely Knowledge
 - d) Foreknowledge
 - e) Wise Knowledge



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The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

- I. God's Omnipotence
- II. God's Omnipresence
- III. God's Omniscience

A. The Biblical Witness

- i. An Essential Definition
- ii. The Primary Categories
- iii. A Compassionate Act of Omniscience



THEOLOGY PROPER

The Incommunicable Attributes of God – Pt. 3

- I. God's Omnipotence
- II. God's Omnipresence
- III. God's Omniscience
 - A. The Biblical Witness
 - B. The Historical Witness
 - C. The Christian Application



Herman Bavinck

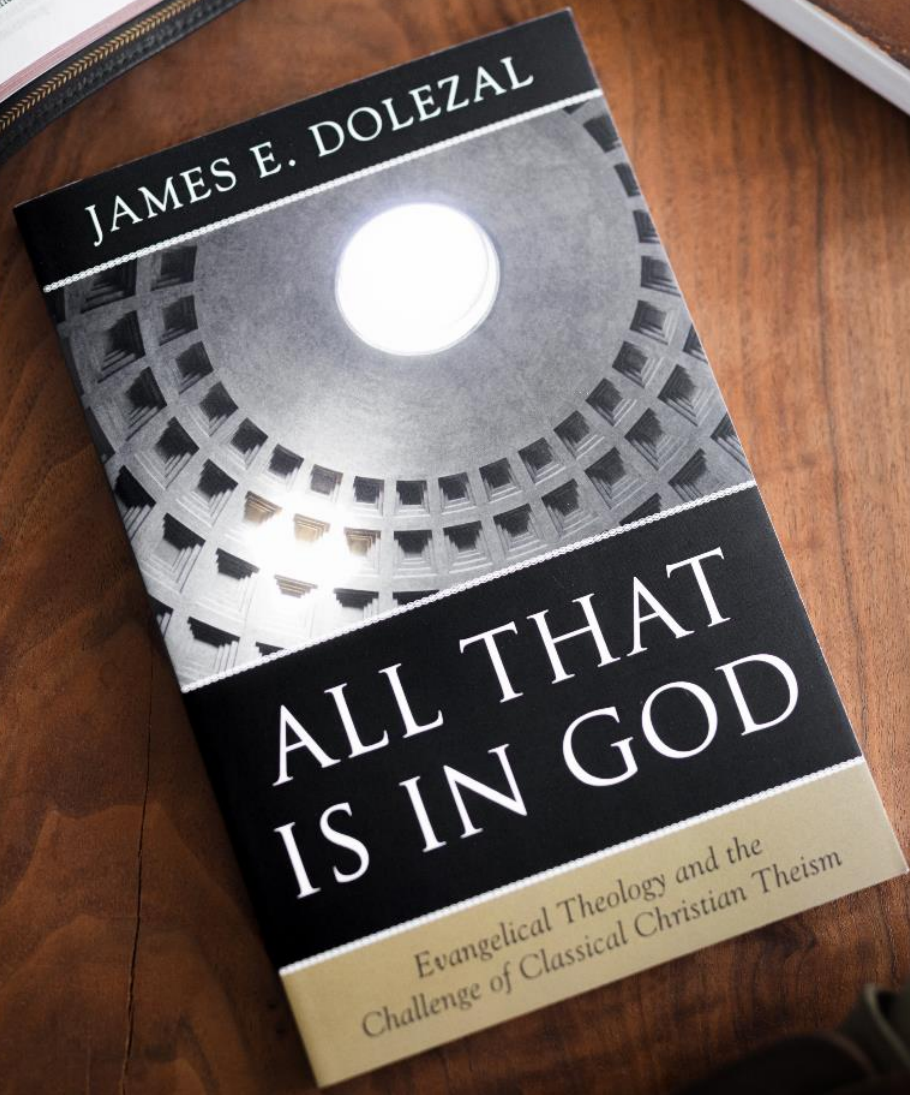
“For there is certainly no book in the world which to the same extent and in the same way as the Holy Scripture supports the absolute transcendence of God above each and every creature and at the same time supports the intimate relationship between the creature and his Creator.”



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FOREWORD BY FRED SANDERS

NONE GREATER

THE UNDOMESTICATED
ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

MATTHEW BARRETT





Knowing
God

J. I. Packer

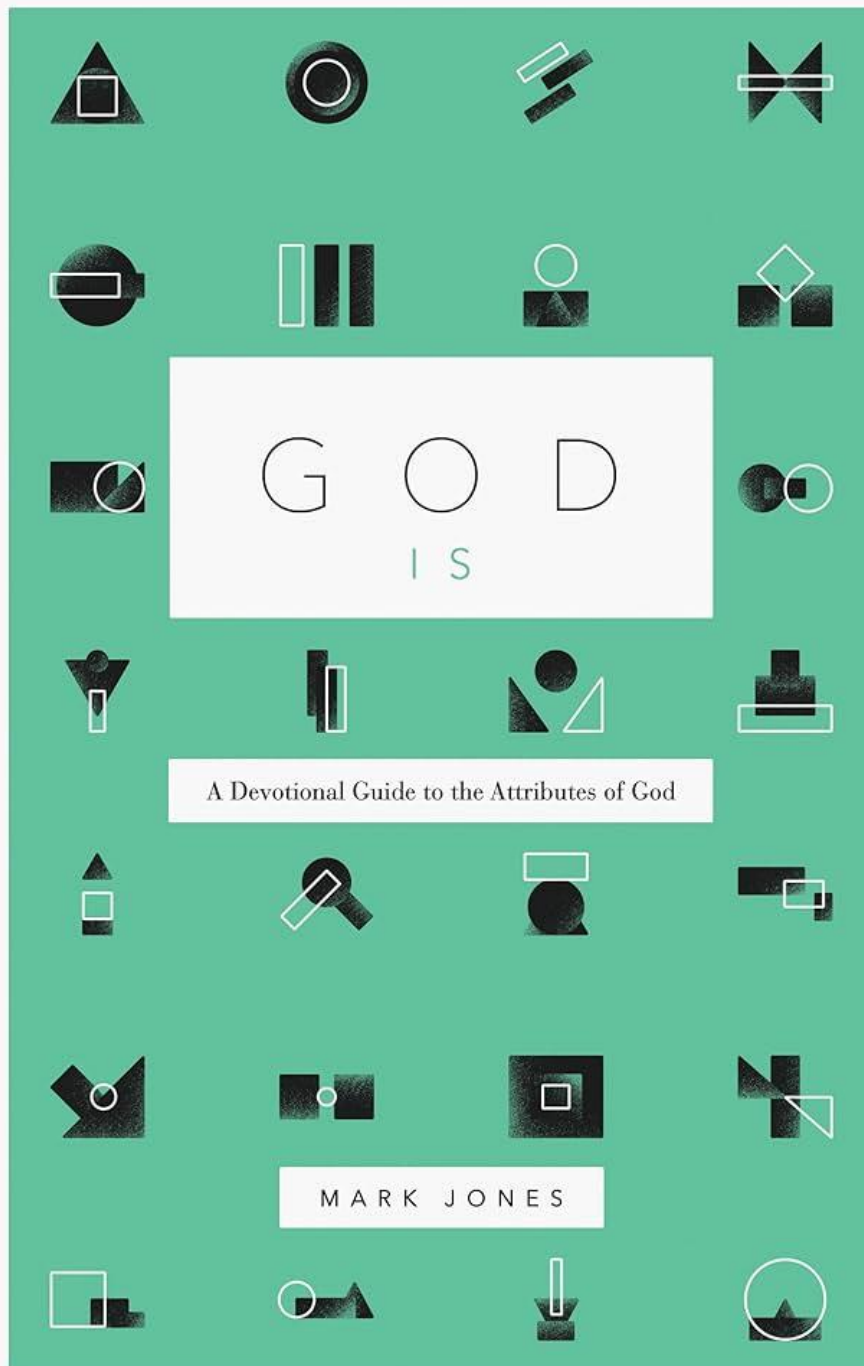


THE
ATTRIBUTES
of
GOD



ARTHUR W. PINK





THE
CHRISTIAN DEVOTIONAL
CLASSIC

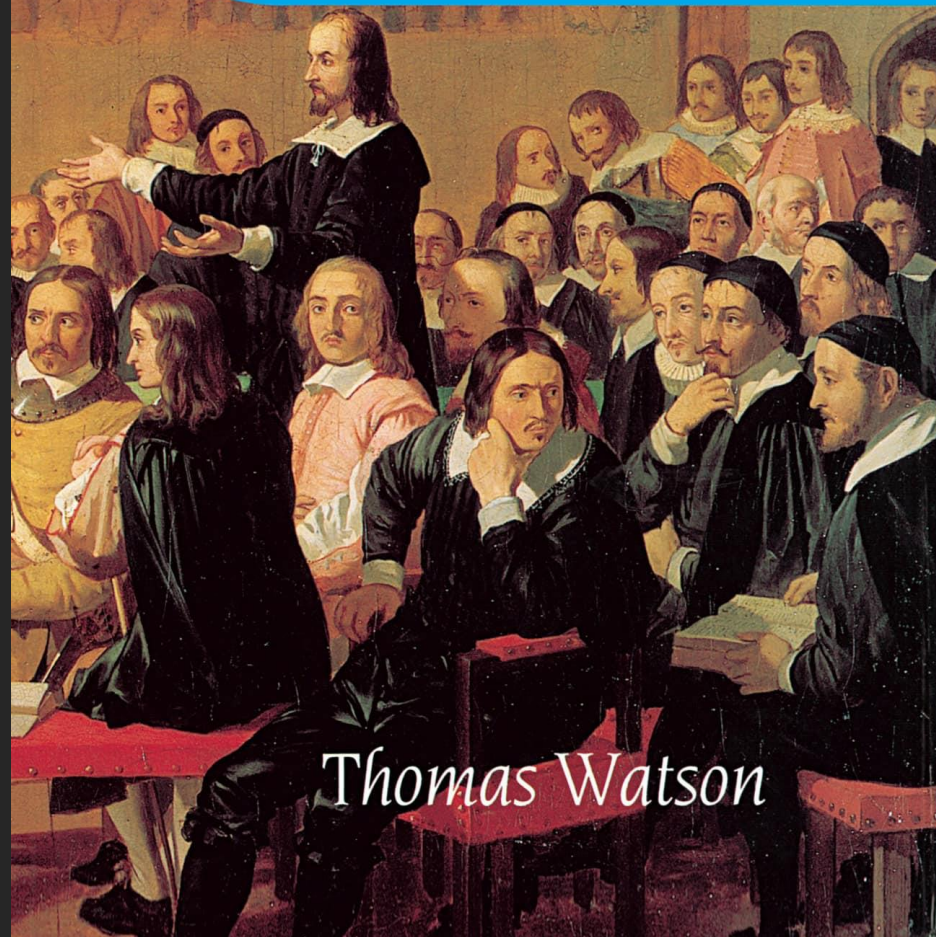
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A BODY OF DIVINITY



Thomas Watson



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