

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Theology Proper, Session 2, Biblical Soundings

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on Theology Proper, or God. This is session 2, Biblical Soundings.

We continue our study of the doctrine of God.

The word theology means the word or the discourse or the study of God. Theology, so all of theology has to do with God. Theology proper is the doctrine of God himself.

Having hopefully benefited from David Wells' good cultural introduction in God in the Whirlwind, we move on to the doctrine of the Trinity proper, or actually even before that, an introduction, thinking about God and the biblical story, and then taking some soundings in biblical passages. God in the biblical story. The Bible is the grand story of creation, fall, redemption, and new creation, or consummation.

God is the author of the story as he plans it from eternity past, Ephesians 1.11. God is also the main character, and the storyline focuses on God and how he relates to us. As creator, God makes us. As the covenant Lord, God is the offended party when we rebel. As redeemer, God saves us in Jesus. And as victor, God ensures that justice will prevail and that he will bring about his new creation. God is the creator who makes the heavens and earth and everything in them.

Genesis 1:31 and 2:1. Before space, time, or matter exist, the eternal God already exists. Without the use of pre-existing materials, God freely, graciously, and powerfully brings into being all that is. He does so by his word, Genesis 1, Psalm 33, verses 6 and 9. That is such a beautiful passage.

Psalm 33, reading from the ESV, 6, By the word of the Lord the heavens were made. And by the breath of his mouth, all their host. Verse 9, for he spoke, and it came to be.

He commanded and it stood firm. God not only creates by his word, he also preserves by his word. Colossians 1:16, by Christ all things consist or hold together.

Hebrews 1:3, Christ: Interesting, both of these passages are Christological. They do not speak of God the Father but of God the Son. He upholds all things by his powerful word or by the word of his power.

That is that text. God likewise governs his world, directing it mysteriously toward his goals. Ephesians 1:9 and 10, these are the two aspects of providence.

Preservation and government. Preservation is God preserving the world he made, maintaining it. Government is God directing the world toward his own ends, purposes, and glory.

Ephesians 1:9 and 10 is amazingly sweeping. God made known to us the mystery of his will. According to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. Ephesians 1:9 and 10. Therefore, everything belongs to God, and he is worthy of our worship.

Revelation 4:11, it's a song of praise to God. Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and by your will, they existed and were created.

The crown of God's creative work is making Adam and Eve in his image. He makes them holy and blesses them so that they might know, love, and serve him with their minds, bodies, and lives. He is their Lord, and they are to function as little lords, small l, stewards of his good creation.

He makes them in proper relation to himself, one another, and his world. They are to praise the magnificence of their creator's name forever. Psalm 8, 1, and 9, O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

Sadly, Adam and Eve rebel against him. They reject God's word and are unfaithful to him. Their rebellion disrupts their relationship with him, one another, and the world.

Their mutiny brings disorder and pain into God's good creation. They need a redeemer, and God, in his mercy, immediately promises one. Before expelling Adam and Eve from the garden, he makes the first promise of redemption, the so-called Proto-Evangelion, in Genesis 3:15. The serpent will bruise the seed of Mary's heel, and Mary's seed will bruise his head, will deal with him a fatal blow.

God alone is creator, sustainer, and savior. There is no other. He makes promises to Abraham and enters into a saving relationship with him and his offspring, a covenant.

He promises that the seed of Abraham will be the redeemer, Galatians 3:16. God changes the name of Abraham's grandson, Jacob, to Israel, and from him brings 12 tribes, from one of which he will bring the redeemer, Judah. Micah 5:2. In the fullness of time, he does just that. God sent his Son to become a man, live a sinless life, and die in the place of sinners.

God raises him on the third day, promising eternal life to all who trust him. After ascending to the Father, Jesus pours out the Spirit on the church, empowering it to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. God triumphs over sin, death, demons, the devil, and hell in the death and resurrection of his Son, Colossians 2:10, Hebrews 2:15. In the return of Christ, God will raise the dead, judge human beings and angels at the last judgment, send people to their eternal destinies, and put all things under his subjugation, 1 Corinthians 15:28, Philippians 3:21. God will dwell in the midst of his people on the new earth for eternity, banishing grief, pain, and death.

Revelation 21, one to four, I'll read this as a conclusion of God in the biblical story. Quoting words from Isaiah 65, John writes, and I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people.

And God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

We move now to God in selected passages. Wanting to get a lay of the land before systematizing, before drawing theology from these passages and other ones, we want to look at some important texts to set our thinking in the right direction. We will examine passages that portray God as the Almighty Creator.

The I Am is marked by freedom and faithfulness. He is the loving, just, and jealous lawgiver. He is of immeasurable greatness and has a glorious and gracious name.

He's all-knowing and everywhere present for his people. He's the great and awe-inspiring God who keeps covenant with them despite their obstinacy. He's Yahweh, the covenant Lord, who punishes sin and abounds in love.

He's our forgiving and firm Father. Indeed, he is the Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Genesis 1. Genesis 1 forcefully declares that God is the creator of all things. As it does, it highlights the nature of God.

God is the king who sovereignly decrees, let there be, and creation obeys over and over again. Genesis 1:3, verse 6, verse 14, see also verses 9, 11, 20, 24, 26. God is unique and distinct from his creation.

He creates the sun, moon, stars, animals, and humans. He is not them. This sovereign and independent king is also good.

He sees that what he creates is good, even very good. 1:4, 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 1:31. God is personal and personally and intricately making humans in his image.

1:26 through 31 of Genesis 1. Then God said, let us make man in our image after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. And God blessed them.

And God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. And have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. God is active, not only creating the world but interacting with it before and after the fall.

God is on a mission, creating humans to love and serve him, as well as to lead the creation to fulfill its intended purposes. Some of which I just read, 1-26 to 31. Such truths about God show us he is the sole creator of all against naturalism and atheism.

Naturalism is the view that all there is, is nature. Naturalism is thus anti-supernaturalistic. It's the opposite of anti-supernaturalism.

It's the opposite of supernaturalism. Naturalism is anti-supernaturalism. Atheism is, of course, a denial that there is a God.

Moreover, he is the true God, as opposed to the gods of Egypt, the ancient Near East, and numerous others today. He's separate from his creation against animism and pantheism. Animism says there is Spirit in everything.

Every entity has Spirit within it. Pantheism confuses God and his creation. Indeed, everything is God, and God is part of everything.

God is infinite against panentheism, which is the more moderate development from pantheism. It says God is not everything, but the world is the body of God, and God is in everything, and he needs the world to be God. He has that kind of a relationship with the world.

God is personal and active against deism. The view that God created and then abandoned the world, built into it principles to run on its own. The old watchmaker is the illustration.

God made the watch. He set it running, and he's off on other more important endeavors, I suppose. He is not personally involved in this world.

Our forefathers, some of them were evangelical Christians, others were deists. Thomas Jefferson is famous for the Jefferson Bible, which has the moral sayings of Jesus, with the miracles cut out of the Gospels, because God doesn't do that kind of thing. We know better than that deists claim and deism claimed.

Contrary, God is personal and active, and the biblical view of the present relationship to God and his world is neither pantheism, which confuses God and his world, nor deism, which separates God from his world, but rather creation and providence, whereby God is present in his world, preserving it and directing it toward his own ends. Both preservation and government are two aspects of providence. Furthermore, as we'll see later, he is both transcendent above his world, he's wholly other in that sense, and he is imminent and present in his world.

In other words, he is God. God is separate from his creation, against animism and pantheism, he's infinite against panentheism, he's personal and active against deism, and he's good against dualism. Dualism is the view that there is indeed a God, but that good and evil are eternal principles.

Star Wars reflects this theology, Star Wars reflects the worldview and cosmology of Zoroastrianism. Remember, the force had a dark side and a light side. It might make for a good story, but it is not God's holy truth.

God and his nature set the contours of our Christian faith, and we begin thinking about God and his nature with Genesis 1 and 2 and 3. Exodus 3:13 and 14 have exerted a tremendous effect on the history of the doctrine of God. When God appoints Moses to deliver his people, Moses asks God for his name. God replies, I am who I am.

This is what you are to say to the Israelites. I am has sent me to you. God also said to Moses, the Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, this is my name forever.

This is how I am to be remembered in every generation. Exodus 3, 14 and 15. This revelation to Moses, the mediator of the Sinai covenant, Mosaic covenant, old covenant, is weighty because with it, God proclaims his identity by his own word forever.

First, God declares he is I am. He uses the same verb contained in his promise to be with his people in verse 12, promising his covenant faithfulness to them. Second, I am from the verb to be, which also reveals God's sovereign freedom.

He does not depend on the Israelites, but they depend on him. Third, God replaces I am with Yahweh, translated the Lord in capital L-O-R-D, sometimes capital G-O-D. That's biblical convention in Bible translation ever since Wycliffe.

I'm not sure of that fact. I think maybe John Wycliffe. God says he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

He is the Lord who keeps covenant with his people. In other words, he is faithful to his people in making covenant with Abraham, the primary Old Testament covenant which is fulfilled and becomes the new covenant in Jesus. God commits himself to his people, amazingly, to be their God, and he claims them as his people.

I will be your God, and you will be my people. Exodus 19 and 20, God also reveals his nature in the Ten Commandments. These famous truths underline God's covenant faithfulness and love, as his words to Moses show.

"You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself," Exodus 19:4. God routes Israel's oppressors, delivers his people, and enters into relationship with them. Indeed, he identifies himself as their Redeemer. "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery," Exodus 20 and verse 2. God's will to bless outshines his desire to punish, as he may punish a few generations, three and four, he says, but shows faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

He does judge, but as Luther said, God's proper work is not judgment. That is his strange work. He does it, but his proper work, the work, the desire of his heart is to bless.

For those who love him and keep his commands, human responsibility is part of the Bible's teaching. It is not ultimate, but it is real and important. God declares his uniqueness and primacy in prohibiting the worship of other gods, verse 3. God's nature as Spirit is clear, for physical representations of him are forbidden, verse 4. God is the only one worthy of worship.

He is suitably jealous for our affection and judges those committing idolatry, verses 5 and 6. God is holy and requires his name to be treated as such, verse 7. He is the creator who rested, and he requires that his people rest in honor of his provision and lordship, verses 8 to 11. God is good, blesses his people with family, and expects them to honor their parents, verse 12. He is the creator who gives life and his Lord over life, not allowing anyone to murder, verse 13.

God is good, providing marriage and forbidding adultery, verse 14. God is truthful and opposes false testimony, false testimony, verse 16. He is generous, providing us with enough and requiring that we neither steal nor covet what he has given others, verses 15 and 17 of Exodus 20.

Exodus 19 to 20 make clear that God calls us to live according to his nature. His holiness is to be reflected in our holiness, 19:5 and 6. His universal lordship shapes our universal mission, verses 5 and 6. His nature shapes our worship, 20:3 to 11. His goodness, generosity, truth, and love are to be reflected in ours.

These are fundamental, foundational passages. Thus you shall say, Exodus 19:3, God tells Moses, to the house of Jacob and to the people of Israel, you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel. Remarkable words. Treasured possession speaks of a king's special possessions.

The king owes everything, but the king has certain treasures he keeps to himself. That's the language used here. God is the Lord of all the earth.

That's exactly what he says. All the earth is mine, and yet he chooses Israel to be his treasured possession and a kingdom of priests. From the beginning, God intended for his people to be missionaries, to spread the knowledge of his name across the ancient Near East.

Israel failed in that mission, but that was God's heart. He is a missionary God. They were to be a kingdom of priests spreading the knowledge of God as Israel was a center of trade and commerce and had great influence or could have for God and his kingdom.

They were to be a holy nation. In a sense, they are a holy nation set apart by God. In another sense, they're to be what he set them apart to be.

In the New Testament studies, we call that the indicative and the imperative. They are his people, and they are to be his people. Once again, largely Israel failed in the task that God gave them.

Our purpose right now is not to blame Israel so much but to underscore the character of God in surveying certain passages. We're taking biblical soundings to see the depth of the water in different places, as it were. Exodus 34:5 through 8, is as

important as any passage in the Bible concerning the character of God, and its influence on the rest of the Bible is enormous.

Exodus 34 contains a foundational revelation of God's character. After Moses boldly asks to see God's glory, show me your glory. My word.

God says, no one can see my face and live. But he allows Moses to see his back, so to speak. The language speaks of God allowing Moses to have a glimpse of him, rather than a full-bore vision that would kill Moses on the spot.

Moses boldly asks to see God's glory. Exodus 34, God graciously gives him a partial revelation of it. 33:21 to 23, he hides him in the rock and covers it with his hand, so to speak, and goes by, and Moses sees God's aftermath, his back, so to speak.

A small revelation, nevertheless, of God. Moses is honored, indeed, as the mediator of the old covenant. God then proclaims his name.

This is a biblical proof passage that shows that the name of God means his character and identity. God proclaims his name and his identity to him, and I'm quoting Exodus 34:6 through 7 from the Christian Standard Bible. I should have mentioned that this is from Christopher Morgan's Systematic Christian Theology book, which I helped him write, and it's for the publisher Broadman and Holman B&H, and so it uses their Christian Standard Bible, which in large measure is good.

A few places I quote the ESV when it's not good, but overall it's a good translation. I prefer the ESV, enough said. Exodus 34:6 and 7, the Lord is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth, maintaining faithful love to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin, but he will not leave the guilty unpunished, bringing the father's iniquity on the children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation.

Exodus 34:6 and 7, God reveals himself as Yahweh, the covenant Lord, who is full of mercy and grace. He explains he is angry towards sin and sinners, but he is patient, slow to wrath. He's holy and must punish sin, and he abounds in love and faithfulness.

He forgives iniquity, rebellion, and sin. Why the three terms? Three discreet compartments? No, no. Absolutely synonyms? No, but it's for emphasis.

Here's the kind of God he is. He forgives iniquity, rebellion, and sin. God punishes the next few generations descended from those who hate him and who continue the evil practice of their parents.

That is the thought, but he shows his covenant faithfulness and love to his people for a thousand generations. Is God just and holy? Yes. Is God loving and gracious? Yes and amen.

We do not deny the former, but the latter is the emphasis. The latter is the heart. John 3, God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

Will God condemn? Yes, he will. Is that his desire? No. God's love is overflowing toward us, and he is tenacious to keep his covenant promise to us.

Psalm 139. I love Psalm 139. Astoundingly, scripture tells God's people to call the creator of the heavens and the earth our God and our Lord.

Psalm 99:5, 147:1-5. 99:5, 147:1-5. God enters into covenant with us, promises to be our God, and claims us as his people. In Psalm 139, David simultaneously expresses vital truths about God in both universal and personal terms. As God's people sing his greatness, the Psalms are the songbook of ancient Israel.

They proclaim that they belong to him as a people, corporately, and he belongs to them. God, who knows everything, knows his people intimately. Verses 1-5.

He knows their daily routines, their comings and goings, and their words before they speak them. As his knowledge surrounds them, he compassionately puts his hand on them as a loving parent on a child or as a loving grandparent on a grandchild. My age gives me away.

The Psalm continues by declaring, God is everywhere in the world and is everywhere with those who love him. It is expressed unusually in the first person singular. God knows me.

God is with me. It's so beautiful. As the Israelites sing it corporately, it's true of them as a group, but it's true of every believing heart that knows God's grace within the group.

Verses 7-12. God is everywhere in the world, but he's everywhere with me. David imagines that he wants to get away from God, but finds it impossible.

If he ascends high into the clouds or descends to the depths of the grave, God is there. Whether he travels east or west, God is there. If he tries to hide in the dark, it's impossible, as God is present everywhere.

As we'll see later, he is omnipresent. Anywhere we believers might go, God is there with us to guide us and lovingly hold us in his hand. There's that personal touch again.

What a Psalm! The psalmist continues, rejoicing that God, the creator of his heavens and the earth, is also the creator of every human being. He sees us when we were formless and knits us together in our mother's wombs. Psalm 139:13, and 16.

This implies continuity of personhood for the child in the womb and the human being who is born as a child from the womb. God wondrously, wonderfully makes us and plans each of our days before birth. Psalm 139, 14, and 16.

This marvelous Psalm then teaches universal truths about God. He is all-knowing, everywhere present, creator of all, and holy. Omniscient, omnipresent, almighty creator, and a holy God.

At the same time, David personalizes these truths. Not only is God all-knowing, but he knows all about us. Actually, it says me.

Not only is he everywhere present, but he's present with us, even me. Not only is he the creator of the heavens and the earth, but he also shaped us in our mother's wombs. Thank God for mothers.

Not only is he the holy one who will judge his enemies, but he loves us enough to convict us of evil within that we may confess it and walk with him. Not only is God the true and living God, but he is also our God, and we are his people. For this reason, when describing God's attributes, we will not say merely that God is holy; we will say that, or God is loving, but sometimes we'll say, our God is holy, and our God is loving, reminding us of our covenant relationship with God and that he is, in fact, our personal God.

He's not only that, he's God of all, but he's committed himself to us in his Son. These expressions mean both that he is holy and loving in his very character, whether he created nothing or everything, and that he is ours and we are his because he did create, and he saved, and he keeps. Psalm 145.

This Psalm begins and ends the same way, praising God. I exalt you, my God, the King, and bless your name forever and ever. I will bless you every day.

I will praise your name forever and ever. Psalm 145:1 and 2. Verse 21. My mouth will declare the Lord's praise.

Let every living thing bless his holy name forever and ever. What's more, the Psalm overflows with praise throughout. This is fitting because, "the Lord is great and is highly praised. His greatness is unsearchable."

Verse 3. David extols God's many perfections, including greatness, verses 3 through 6, righteousness, verses 7 and 17, compassion, verse 9, power, verses 4, 6, 11, and 12, and faithfulness, verses 13 and 17. He acclaims God's loving kindness in a manner reminiscent of Exodus 34:6 and 7.

"The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and great in faithful love." Psalm 145:8. He expands on God's goodness, his generosity to all his creatures. The Lord helps all who fall.

He raises up all who are oppressed. All eyes look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Psalm 145, verses 14 through 16. God is the divine king. Verse 1. Adorned with splendor and glorious majesty.

Verse 5. He is mighty to accomplish awesome deeds. Verse 6. He abounds in goodness. Verse 7. He is good to all and generous to all his creatures, including animals, whom he blesses with nourishment as they eat from his open hand.

Verses 8, 15, and 16. His kingdom full of glory and splendor. Verses 11 and 12, He will never end. Verse 13. He responds differently to the godly and the ungodly.

He is near to, hears the cries of, guards, delivers, and preserves all who love and fear him. Verses 17 to 20. But he judges all the wicked. Verse 20.

Nehemiah 9. After the people rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and the exiles returned from captivity, the scribe Ezra read the law, and the people responded by weeping, confessing, and worshipping. The Levites then lead the people in a remarkable prayer that focuses on God's history with his people and their ongoing rebellion.

The Levites' praise is exuberant. Blessed be the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. Nehemiah 9:5. They praise him for his glorious name and for being the only God and the creator of all.

Verses 5 and 6. They praise him for his gracious dealings with his people, for his choice of Abraham, to his returning them to the land from captivity in Persia. The Levites recount many events in between, including God's deliverance of his people from Egypt, giving the law, miraculous provision and guidance in the wilderness,

enabling them to possess the promised land, warning them to the prophets, and not forsaking them in captivity. It's a summary of redemptive history.

Remarkable. Nehemiah 9. Alongside the litany of God's compassionate deeds is a list of his people's wayward behaviors. They are evil, arrogant, stiff-necked, disobedient, rebellious, idolatrous, blasphemous, and murderous. Verses 16, 18, 26, 29, 35 to 37, 33 to 35. By contrast, God is righteous. Verses 8 and 33. Faithful. Verses 8 to 15 and 33. Forgiving, gracious, and compassionate. Slow to anger. Abounding in faithful love. Verse 17.

Sound like Exodus 34 again? It's all over the Old Testament. And patient, verse 30. In light of God's grace and the people's confession of sin, they enter into a binding agreement in writing.

Nehemiah 9:38, and 10, 29. And make a vow of faithfulness, quote, to the great, mighty, and awe-inspiring God who keeps his gracious covenant. 9, 32.

One last passage. Daniel 9. Daniel understands from Jeremiah's writings that the number of years for the desolation of Jerusalem would be 70. Daniel 9, 2. Consequently, he seeks the Lord in prayer and confession.

He pours out his heart in admission of his people's sins. They have acted wickedly, verse 15, and are guilty of disobedience, verses 10, 11, and 14. Disloyalty and rebellion toward God, verses 7 and 9. Furthermore, they reject God's prophets, verse 6, and remain unrepentant, verse 13.

As a result, God gives them over to public shame. Verses 7 and 8. Making them an object of ridicule to surrounding peoples, verse 16. Daniel entreats the Lord, the great and awe-inspiring God, who in spite of his people's obstinacy is faithful to his gracious covenant, verse 4. He is righteous, verses 7, 14, 16.

And full of compassion and forgiveness, verses 9 and 18. This is evidenced by his delivering his people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand. Daniel 9, verse 15.

Though Israel deserves only God's anger and wrath, verse 16, Daniel pleads with him, God, to hear his petitions on behalf of them and their ruined temple for the Lord's sake, verse 17. Daniel urgently appeals to God's glory. Quote, we are not presenting our petitions before you based on our righteous acts, but based on your abundant compassion. Lord, hear. Lord, forgive. Lord, listen and act.

My God, for your own sake, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your name, verses 18 through 19. When we... I'll keep going, because there is only a couple of short passages. Matthew 6, 9 to 13.

Jesus treats six verse areas in his famous model prayer in Matthew 6. First, we are to pray that God's name, his person, would be honored as holy, verse 9. Second, Jesus tells us to pray for the coming of God's kingdom. Third, closely related to praying that the kingdom would come is asking the fathers who will be done on heaven as it is on earth. Our Father who is in heaven, holy be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Fourth, Jesus instructs us to request daily bread from our Father's hand, verse 11. Give us this day our daily bread.

Fifth, we are to pray and forgive us our debts as we have also forgiven our debtors, verse 12. Six, Jesus tells us to ask our Father not to lead us into those places where we would stumble and fall. Instead, we are to seek God's deliverance from the devil and the evil with which he tempts us, verse 13.

The simple prayer covers the most important areas of life, glorifying God, his kingdom coming, doing his will, our daily food, ongoing forgiveness, and victory over evil. These are aspects of our Father's love for us and ways we can honor him as we live on earth with the knowledge that he is our heavenly Father. Through this classic prayer, Jesus teaches us much about God.

He is our Father, the covenant Lord of his people and the personal, loving, authoritative Father who has a relationship with his children. He is transcendent in heaven and imminent on earth. He is holy yet relates to this sinful world.

He is a king with a kingdom. He is personal with a will and sovereign in that he plans to accomplish it. He is good and provides for our physical needs.

He is gracious and forgives our sins. He is with us every step of the way, leading us into holiness and delivering us from evil. I'm going to briefly treat Jude, verses 20 and 21, because it's a good conclusion to this survey of some biblical passages and a great introduction to the topic of the Trinity.

Jude urges his readers to, quote, contend for the faith that was delivered to the saints once for all. Jude, verse 3. Because ungodly teachers are turning God's grace into sensuality and thereby denying Christ. He blasts these false teachers and points to their sure condemnation, verses 5 through 19.

Then he urges his readers to persist in faith, prayer, and God's love as they live in light of the second coming, verses 20 and 21. When Jude exhorts his readers to steadfastness, he includes the Trinity; they are to pray in the Holy Spirit, to remain in the love of God the Father, and to wait, quote, expectantly for the mercy of our Lord

Jesus Christ, close quote, 20 and 21. Jude teaches that each of the three persons of the Trinity is God.

He does this by putting each of their names in a role that only God can fulfill. We are to pray only in God, in this case, in the Holy Spirit. We must keep ourselves only in God's love, in this case, the Father's.

We are to wait expectantly for the mercy of God alone for eternal life, in this case, of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude thus teaches the deity of the Father, Son, and Spirit. In our next lecture, we will begin the study of God, the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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