

T3P3: Systematic Theology and the Doctrine of God

*If human words cannot describe the aroma of coffee,
how can they express something more difficult like God.*

Every word we say about God uses analogy/analogous thinking.

Sources of a Doctrine of God

1. Uncritical Tradition
 - Old wives tales and anthropomorphism
2. Rational Construction or Speculation
 - “God” in the abstract
 - NeoPlatonic philosophy
 - a. *via negativa*: describes what God is not
 - b. *via eminentiae*: the analogy of being: God must contain in infinite degree the qualities we value in ourselves
 - c. *via causalitatis*: the way of causality, use of cause and effect analysis to explain the world of nature and intelligence
 - ex., sun rises = God’s world has an element of regularity; so does God
3. Biblical Revelation
4. Christian/Church Tradition

Arguments for the Existence of God

1. Rational Arguments
 - a. Ontological: argue from perception of perfection
 - b. Cosmological: argue from the observation of facts and things (Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas)
 - i. motion: Prime Mover
 - ii. causation: First Cause
 - iii. contingency: Necessary Being
 - iv. degrees of perfection: Infinitely Perfect Being
 - c. Teleological: argue from design or ultimate purpose (Master Designer/Creator)
 - If there is a watch, there must be a watch maker.*
 - d. Moral: there is a moral “oughtness” in all people (Lewis)
2. Arguments Based on Experience (Trueblood)
 - a. The evidence of science
 - b. The evidence of morality
 - c. The evidence of aesthetics (beauty)
 - d. The evidence of history
 - e. The evidence of religion (personal religious experience)

You cannot prove; you can only point. (Buechner)

Jesus, Then and Now

NT Context

Christological Title

My Context

Christ/Messiah

Son of Man

Suffering Servant of God

Son of God

Lord/*Kyrios*

Word/Wisdom of God

Other(s) you would add: