

6. Holiness. He is Holy.

The holiness of God first means that He is “apart” or transcendent or profoundly different from everything else. He is majestic and worthy of our awe, fear and worship. Secondly, holiness means that He always does what is right, pure and good. The children’s prayer, “God is great and God is good” speaks about His Holiness.

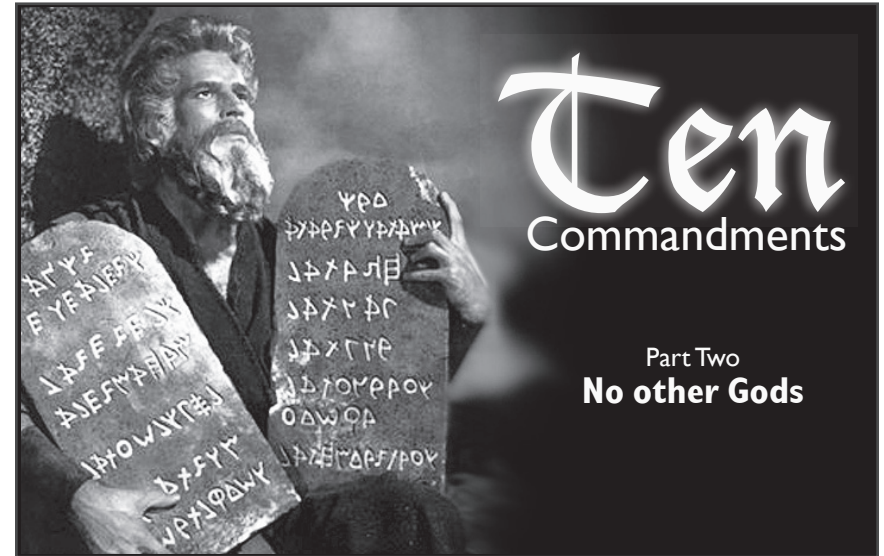
7. Goodness. He is the Source of all Goodness.

This is a reference to God’s character, He is good. But He is not only altogether good, but He is consistently and unchangingly good. His actions proceed from out of His being - He acts according to what He is. His goodness is neither arbitrary or capricious. He is the Source of all Goodness, Mercy, Grace and Love. Ultimately, all things which God has done will be understood as flowing from His goodness and His love.

Suggested Questions for Small Groups

1. Looking over the seven understandings of the existence or nonexistence of God - which viewpoints have you held in the past? What viewpoint do you now believe to be true?
2. The four classic arguments for the existence of God do not scientifically prove that God exists. So how can a rational person come to the conclusion that God does exist?
3. According to Paul in Romans 1:18-25 what have we humans done with the knowledge/evidence we have been given of God’s existence? Look for six to eight different negative things.
4. For you, what is the most important attribute of God from the list of seven above? Which one brings you the most comfort? Which one most inspires you to worship God?

Next Sunday, May 2, 2010: **Ten Commandments**
Part 3 Do not Worship Images - Travis Marsh Speaking



Message 1: Does God Exist? Seven Understandings

1. Atheistic, Skeptic, Agnostic Viewpoint: No God Exists

God does not exist or at the very least no one can prove that he does. The world was not created, it is eternal. What is morally right or wrong is relative, changing and situational. The Humanist would declare, “We can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species...No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.” Karl Marx, Ayn Rand, Freud, Skinner, Nietzsche and Sagan did not believe in the existence of God.

2. Deism: God exists, but He never intervenes.

If God were a watchmaker it would be as though he made a watch (the universe), wound it up and left it alone to run. God created earth with natural moral laws which through reason we can know and follow. God never intrudes into the creation and therefore Jesus is not God incarnate. Thomas Paine, Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson are famous Deist.

3. Pantheism: All is God and God is all.

God is all - every molecule is God, including people. God is not a person but a force. The Star Wars movies popularized what religions like Hinduism, Taoism, Christian Science, Unity and Scientology have taught - God is a permeating force we cannot personally know. This Force has a light and a dark side, but is not evil or good because everything is God. Mary Baker Eddy (founder of Christian Science) taught that evil and disease were illusion that can be overcome by believing that all is God and by using the divine potential and power which is all around and in all of us.

4. Pantheism: God is All but more. God is developing.

This view is somewhere between Theism and Pantheism. Pantheism states that God is in the process of becoming; He is constantly being perfected and

changing. Everything that happens affects God and changes God. While God is everything, God is also more than everything created.

5. **Finite God-ism: God exists but is limited and imperfect.**

Rabbi Kushner came to this conclusion by saying, "...there are some things God does not control." Specifically God cannot control evil - God is either not good or not omnipotent which means God is imperfect and limited.

6. **Polytheism: There are many finite gods.**

The gods each have their domain. The gods were once men and some believe that people can too become gods. Mormons believe, as Jesus became a god, so also people can become celestial beings or gods. The Greeks, Romans, Norse and some would say Hindu's believe in many finite gods.

7. **Theism: There is one, infinite, personal God.**

The three largest religions of the world are Theistic; Jews, Christians and Muslims believe in One, infinite God. The Theist believes that God is independent from what He created. Christians state that God has revealed Himself through the Bible and He is Holy, Just, All-powerful, All-knowing, Everywhere present, Triune, Love, Invisible, Unchanging, Self-Existant and Sovereign.

Four Classic Arguments for the Existence of God:

- 1. Cosmological:** This is an argument from creation or of causality. Every finite thing has a cause. The creation shows evidence of having had a beginning which indicates a Beginning Cause. In contrast Carl Sagan said, "The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be." The Psalmist says in 19:1 *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*
- 2. Teleological:** This is an argument from design. A universe as complex as ours must have had a designer. When we look in a stream and see a rounded stone we think of the natural process of erosion that formed that stone, but if we saw a stone chipped into an arrowhead, we would know an intelligent designer was involved. Paul says in Rom. 1:18 *...his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.*
- 3. Axiological:** The argument from moral law. All men seem to be conscious of an objective moral law (how we ought to act) and this implies a moral Lawgiver or God. Immanuel Kant said, even though we can't know God exists, we must act like He exists to make sense of morality. Paul says in Rom. 2:15 that God's Law is written on all of our hearts.
- 4. Ontological:** The argument from being. If we have a concept of God as a necessary, Absolute and Perfect Being, then by definition that Being must exist and cannot, not exist.

Romans 1:18-25

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Message 2: What is God like?

Sources: [Essential Truths of the Christian Faith](#), by R.C. Sproul, [Systematic Theology](#), by Louis Berkhof

1. Self-Existant Creator. He is Eternal - not created.

God always was or is. He was not created, but instead exists in Himself eternally. He chose to create something from nothing and we are a part of that work. Acts 17:22-31 In Him we live and move and have our being. (see Job 38-40:5)

2. Incomprehensibility. He is Infinite.

We who are finite cannot know the infinite exhaustively. Our knowledge of God is partial and limited. We know God because He chooses to reveal Himself in the creation as well as in His Word. Is. 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

3. Omnipotence. He is All-powerful.

God holds all power over His creation. No part of His creation stands outside the scope of His sovereign control. He can do whatever He wills to do - no thing can restrict Him other than His own nature. As Gabriel said to Mary, "Nothing is impossible with God." (see Dan. 4:34-37 for Nebuchadnezzar's testimony)

4. Omnipresent. God is fully present everywhere.

Positively, we can come into His presence immediately - there is no special time or special place where we find God's presence. Possibly negatively, we cannot hide from His presence. Ps. 139:7 "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from our presence?"

5. Omniscience. He is All-knowing.

The Infinite and Eternal One knows all things. The future, the past, the present is known by Him. There is nothing that is unknown to God - He is never surprised. He understands and knows our hearts and minds - we don't puzzle Him. Nothing is hidden from Him.