

Lesson 4 **THE ONE TRIUNE GOD**

4.1 Who is **God**?

The whole of our confession is a confession concerning our covenant God as He has revealed Himself in His Word. In revealing Himself to us in His Word, the LORD God accommodates Himself to our limited created capacities as human beings. He speaks to us in a human way; yet, all He says about Himself is completely true and reliable.

4.1.1 The **Essence** of God

a. existence

Our sovereign God exists from eternity to eternity in a way completely different than the existence of man. He is not dependant in any way, and fully possesses and controls His existence in Himself, Job 38f; Acts 17:24f; Hebrews 11:6.

b. unity

We confess one God who fully provides for our salvation. We confess this in opposition to the religions of polytheism, and in opposition to humanism and atheism, Deuteronomy 6:5; Psalm 115:3, 4; Isaiah 46:9.

c. simplicity

There are no internal contradictions in God, as if He is in any way in conflict with Himself, or composed of any parts or members, 1 John 1:5; 4:8.

d. spirituality

The LORD God is not a physical, but a spiritual Being. He never has a bodily form, although in His revelation He occasionally took on human characteristics and forms, Genesis 18:2f. He came in the flesh in only one way: the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, the revelation of the Father, John 1:14,18, Deuteronomy 4:15f; John 4:24.

4.1.2 The **Names** of God:

Some names which also describe our covenant God to us are:

- a. God - Genesis 1:1
- b. the LORD, I am - Exodus 3:6
- c. Most High - Numbers 24:16; Psalm 21:8, 146:4
- d. Almighty, God Almighty - Genesis 17:1; Numbers 24:4; Isaiah 13:6; Revelation 1:8
- e. God of gods - Deuteronomy 10:7; Jeremiah 2:28, 11:13
- f. the Lord of Hosts - 1 Sam. 1:11, 17:45
- g. the Fear of Isaac - Genesis 31:53
- h. the Jealous One - Exodus 34:14
- i. the Rock - Deuteronomy 32:4
- j. Wonderful - Judges 13:18
- k. the Holy One - Isaiah 29:19, 30:11, 12, 15
- l. the Righteous One - Isaiah 24:16
- m. the Glory of Israel - 1 Samuel 15:29
- n. the hope of Israel - Jeremiah 17:13
- o. the God of Israel - Jeremiah 32: 14,15

4.1.3 The **Attributes** of God:

The LORD God also fully reveals His virtues or attributes in His Word. God is:

- a. eternal - Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 57:15; Ephesians 3:21
- b. incomprehensible - Job 9:10, 11:7; Romans 11:33
- c. invisible - Deuteronomy 4:15; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 1:17, 6:16
- d. immutable - 1 Samuel 15:29; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17
- e. infinite - Psalm 139, Ephesians 4:6
- f. almighty - Genesis 18:14; Matthew 19:26
- g. perfectly wise - Psalm 104:28; Proverbs 8, Romans 16:27
- h. just - Deuteronomy 32:4; Job 4:17; Genesis 18:19f; Jeremiah 50:7
- i. good, longsuffering - Numbers 14:18; Romans 2:4, 9:22; Matthew 5:45
- j. good, merciful, kind, gracious - Exodus 34:6; Psalm 86:15; Jeremiah 16:13.¹
- k. holy - Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; 1 Peter 1:15,16

4.2 The **Triune God**

God is one essence, but three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although they are all of equal majesty, glory, power and honour, they each have their own attributes. The attributes of one

¹ In those passages which speak of the repentance of God, for example, Jonah 3:10, His mercy and kindness is portrayed to us vividly in human language. This language represents an accommodation to the human level of understanding, in order to make God's mercy that much more clear and real for us.

person are not shared by another, for they are three **distinct** persons. The attributes are divided as follows:

- a. Father - cause, origin, beginning of all things, Isaiah 48:12; 1 Corinthians 1:30, 8:6.
- b. Son - begotten of the Father, the word, wisdom and image of the Father, John 1:14, 1:1; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3.
- c. The Holy Spirit - proceeds from the Father and the Son, John 14:26, 15:26, 16:3.

1. The **Tasks** in the Trinity

- a. the Father - creation, providence, guidance
- b. the Son - redemption, salvation, judgment
- c. the Holy Spirit - sanctification, renewal, rebirth

2. The **Proofs** of the Trinity

- a. General texts which speak of the three persons are Genesis 1:26, 3:22; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Isaiah 63; 1 Corinthians 13:14.
- b. Texts showing the agreement and harmony in their work are Hebrews 1:2; Luke 1:35; Matthew 3:16; Revelation 11:15f.
- c. The deity of the Son: Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 17:5, 16:16; Colossians 1:16,17; Revelation 5:6.
- d. The deity of the Holy Spirit: John 14:16; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 12:3; Acts 5:4; Matthew 12:31,32.

Exercises Lesson 4

I. Reference Passages

Memorize: Deuteronomy 6:4-6

Study and Review: Belgic Confession, Articles 1, 8, 9, 10, 11.
Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 8, 34.
Athanasian Creed, Articles 1-28

II. Review Questions

1. What does the name "I am that I am" say about the LORD?
2. What is the LORD called in Hosea 2:16? What does this term say about Him?
3. Prove from Scripture that Jesus Christ is true God.
4. Show how the doctrine of the Trinity is revealed gradually in the Bible.
5. Can you show from Scripture that the Holy Spirit is a Person?

III. Extra Questions

1. How must we understand the repentance of God as found in Genesis 6:6, Jonah 3:10? The incomprehensibility of God?
2. If God is invisible, how must we understand and interpret the various appearances of the LORD in the Bible? See Genesis 16:13, 32:30.