

The doctrine of God: review

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[0 : 00] Sovereign one, the verse 10 tells us, sovereign one who is all-powerful, almighty, reigning over all things.! And we've certainly seen that, haven't we, over these last six weeks.

How absolutely wonderful, majestic, powerful our sovereign God is. How He is more powerful and greater than we could possibly imagine.

As we read this morning, who is equal to Him? Who is like Him? There is none like Him. And yet verse 11 says this, He tends His flock like a shepherd.

He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart. He gently leads those that have young. He is more powerful and greater than we can imagine, but He is also more gentle and loving than we could possibly imagine.

He is like a tender, caring shepherd for His flock, gathering in His people, like gathering little lambs close to Him.

[1 : 20] He carries them and He leads them along. And these are words which are to comfort Israel. In Isaiah 40, they're spoken to a people in exile, suffering exile for their rebellion against Him.

And yet this is their God. Isaiah said, here is your God. He's almighty, He's all-powerful, and He's all-loving and all-gentle. What a wonderful thing then this evening to be meditating on what this almighty and all-compassionate God is like.

Our test for you. Can anyone remember? And you can call out. What have we looked at? What have been the titles over these last six weeks of our sermons?

What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? What have we looked at? Basically, we looked at the trinity. Excellent. Uncreated creative.

Well done. That was the first one. Did someone say something else? Unchangeable. Yes. Two more. Incomparable.

[2 : 39] That was this morning. Excellent. And one more. God's holiness. Yes. So here we go. Uncreated, creatable things, trinity, unchanging or immutable, holy, incomparable.

And these are all true things about God. We've looked at them in separate weeks, but none of them are against one another.

They all sort of flow into each other because they are who he is. And let's remind ourselves a little bit about what we thought about when we were looking at God being the uncreated creator.

And for this, there is a little bit of discussion to have in our groups. But first, let's turn to Revelation.

Revelation chapter four, verse nine to 11, because that's where we were on that particular week.

Revelation four, verse nine to 11. Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives forever and ever, the 24 elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever.

[4 : 12] They lay their crowns before the throne and they say, you are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power.

For you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being. Thank you. Chat together in your groups for a few moments.

How, looking at these verses, how is God unlike us? And what does that mean? We are. Hopefully that makes sense.

Just for about five minutes or so, chat together in your groups. How are we doing?

Should we come back? I feel like the room feels really quiet. What were people chatting about?

[5 : 19] Anyone want to grab the microphone and say a few things? Huh? Absolutely not. That's fair enough.

If you haven't got that, that's absolutely fine. I've got plenty of things to say, but it's good to hear from one another. Well, we said that whenever, yeah, in verse 9 it says, he sits on the throne and he lives forever and ever.

So, obviously, not many of us sit on a throne and we don't live forever and ever. Yeah. So, God is eternal.

We thought on that particular Sunday God didn't have a birthday and will never have a day when he will die. And when we're thinking about Jesus coming to earth, that things change.

But it's true. God lives forever and ever. God is so unlike us. God is so unlike us. And he's on his throne forever and ever. Which came up again this morning.

[6 : 31] Phil. Picking up on the idea if he receives glory and honor and power and be as worthy. Just taking that thought on a bit and into the beginning of Romans.

The fundamental sin of humankind is to not give God honor and glory. It says, doesn't it, they didn't honor him nor give thanks.

And that's a really fundamental sin to fail to honor God as our creator. It's a deep insult to God and terribly irreverent.

So, I think that's just worth pointing out on that. Yeah. Because he is worthy as our Lord and God, as our creator.

Yeah. Jorame. You've already touched on it, but we were considering the whole idea of the kind of creator-creature distinction.

[7 : 40] Particularly in verse 11. For you created all things. And by your will they existed and were created.

And we were thinking about how other religions, pantheism, kind of collapses. That distinction. And the world itself, matter, the creation, is seen as the deity. And doesn't have that clear distinction between creator and creature.

And that leads to all kinds of problems. And how its ultimate conclusion is worship of self, I guess. Yeah. And Bill was talking also about the independence of God.

The aseity of God. Which is a posh word, I think you said, Bill. Aseity, independence. The self-existence of God that we get from these. Thanks, Jorame.

[8 : 40] And that creator-creature distinction was why I wanted us to begin this series in this way. To remind us of who we are.

Our limited, our creatureliness before our great creator. Yeah. Any other thoughts?

That's okay. Trying to work out where we are. Let's move on to the next thing.

Let's move on to Trinity. So, I've had a lot to think about this week. I didn't preach this one.

So, Phil, if you at any point want to chip in with thoughts, please do. I think when we were looking at the Trinity, Phil took us back to where it tells us in the Old Testament.

[9 : 45] Here, O Israel, the Lord your God is one. He is the only one. There are no other gods beside him. All other gods, they are like 40 imitations.

And we as Christians, we don't believe in no gods. Atheists do. We don't believe in lots of gods. Other religions do.

We don't believe there are three gods. Rather, we see this one God in three persons or three persons in one.

And it's made much clearer to us in the New Testament. So, we could read perhaps Matthew 28. Matthew 28. It's not the only place to go, but one of the places we could go. Where we see the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

[11 : 07] From verse 18. And then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

And teaching them to obey everything I've commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.

Jesus, who is God, who is part of the Godhead, the Trinity. Says, All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me.

Given to him by his Father. And he says, Therefore, go and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Here's a place where we see the three persons come together. I was looking back on some notes from when I was teaching on Trinity on a Sunday evening last year.

[12:15] And we spent a Sunday thinking about the Spirit being God. And quote from somebody. If the Spirit is honored with the Father and the Son in baptism, then he must have an equal, inseparable role with the Father and the Son.

So it's just helpful for us to see the three persons of God together. And there's this interesting diagram I came across.

Hopefully you can see it's a bit dark. But to try and illustrate something that's really hard, if not impossible to illustrate, how the relationships in the Godhead work.

So it says here, Father is not the Son. The Son is not the Spirit. The Spirit is not the Father. They are distinct persons. But all of them, they are God.

[13:18] They are one God. And you can read around the side. You have to slightly tilt your head. But the Son is eternally generated by the Father. He's eternally the Son.

The Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. So that's sort of helping us to see. Hopefully that's helpful in some way.

How the Godhead works. That's a big thing. We're not doing justice to it at all this evening. But does anyone have any comments or questions on the Trinity?

And does Phil want to add anything? Let's go to Phil first.

And then I think Ruth had a hand up. Instagram shows me lots of nonsense things. But one of the things that I saw on Instagram was somebody from an American church, a young lady, saying, I've been brought up here in this church.

[14:28] And one thing we're never allowed to do is question the Trinity. And I don't really understand why it's there. But I'm not allowed to ask. And what I wanted to do is to show us how the fact of the Trinity is revealed to us in Scripture.

And as you're rightly saying, the Hebrew Scriptures emphasize the uniqueness of God. There is one God. There is one Lord.

And he is, as we were saying, incomparable. He's in a league of his own. He fills the space that is describing the Creator.

He fills it. So there's no room for anybody else in that space. And then suddenly and remarkably, Christians start talking about a three-in-one God.

And it isn't as though this gradually dawns on them through the course of the New Testament. So early in the New Testament, they're not too sure. But later on, it's clear.

[15:35] It sort of explodes onto the scene before the New Testament is written. All the New Testament documents are Trinitarian. So what is it that has made this difference? And I think it's pretty clear that the thing or the event or the person that makes this difference is Jesus.

And you see in the Gospels people grappling with who he is. Who is this that even the wind and the waves obey him?

Depart from me. I am a sinful man. His authority. And I think even during his life, the disciples struggle to get it all into place.

But when in the resurrection and on the day of Pentecost, it becomes totally clear. You could put it in the words, Jesus is Lord.

So he is in that space of total lordship. He is the son of God making himself equal with God. And I try to isolate, pick on some events that produce the evidence for this.

[16:45] So at his baptism, you have the father speaking, the spirit descending, the son. This is my son with whom I'm well pleased. You have the events around the feeding of the 5,000 and the walking on the water, which Jesus sort of presents to them without a lot of explanation.

But he asked them, did you get the point of this? Are you so dull? Have you understood about the loaves? And it seems pretty clear there to understand that Jesus is exactly doing what Yahweh in the Old Testament does.

The Yahweh-ness of Jesus, if you put it like that. And then Jesus tells us about the coming of the Holy Spirit.

I suppose John's gospel is the gospel that most profoundly explores these themes. And like you're saying on the screen there, if we've seen the son, we've seen the father because he exactly describes the father.

And when Jesus describes the coming of the spirit, he says, if the spirit comes, the father and the son come. We will come to the person who receives the spirit. The spirit so exactly expresses the father and the son is not one tiny little bit less than, but a total expression or description.

[18:17] You always get lost for words, don't you? And so this is the trinity. The word isn't used, but the idea is fully there in the New Testament.

And I think I might have remarked on the fact that in the Old Testament it says, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord and one God.

In the New Testament, Christians saying there is one God, the Father, there is one Lord, Jesus.

And in other places they will say there is one spirit. So that rallying cry of Israel, which describes monotheism, becomes the rallying cry of Christians to describe the Trinity.

And, you know, totally wonderful. Amazing. Yeah. And I think also the fact that as believers, we are drawn into this because we receive the spirit we call God Father, which is an amazing thing.

Steve's going to. I thought Ruth had a hand up, so. Yeah. Just quickly, because I. I guess it's one of these things that really perplexed me because I've.

[19:36] So different doctrines that can be quite hard to. To kind of struggle with, get my head, can't get my head around. I've always really seen it very clearly as Trinity in scripture.

So I've not had a problem. But I've met quite a few people who really kind of push against it. And some, some professing Christians.

So there's one person I know who's just really stuck on this in terms of, even regarding baptism.

Maybe come across to the book. It's kind of, you mentioned the kind of Matthew 20, 28 in the kind of go baptizing the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And then in Acts 2, there's the exhortation, peace of exhortation to go baptize in the name of Jesus.

And then there's this confusion that this friend of mine really stuck with.

It's like, oh, which is it? And surely this kind of puts into question Trinity. I'm like, I don't understand.

So I guess a question is just, how do we respond to what kinds of challenges, maybe any typical challenges to Trinity, to the doctrine of Trinity?

[20:55] And yeah, some of the ways we respond to them, if that's, that might not be a neat question. But just, yeah. And Phil had his hand.

Do you want to answer that? I think. I have a thought as well, but go for it. I think if we're looking at the roots of why we believe it, which I think is what you're asking, isn't it?

I think it comes down to what you think about Jesus. And you can come at that in a number of ways.

So Jesus pours out the Spirit. That has to be divinity.

It would be blasphemous for a creature to pour out the Spirit. Jesus is worshipped. That would be blasphemy if Jesus is not divine.

He is Lord. That would be blasphemy if he were not divine. So there's some very solid lines of reasoning.

[21:55] And once you've said Jesus is divine, then you have to listen to what he says about the Holy Spirit, which admittedly is less front and center in the Gospels.

But I think it's still inescapable. Yeah. I will pass it to Steve in a sec, if that's okay. This is quite a live issue for me at the moment.

I had a Jehovah's Witness turn up to the door a few weeks ago. And I was trying to show her from the Scriptures that Jesus is God. So she's since written a letter and wants her and her husband to meet up with me at some point.

And so I've been trying to think about this. And I think Phil might have mentioned this just earlier.

But at the end of John 8 is one couple of verses I've been thinking about.

And again, about what we see true of Jesus. John 8, verse 58. Give you a moment if you want to turn there. Where it says, He's claiming to be older than Abraham.

[23:16] And I think he's claiming that to be eternal. And this clearly offended those Jewish people because they picked up stones to stone him.

But Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. And it offended them because he was claiming to be God. Yeah. That's my addition to it.

Steve. I think it sometimes gives the impression that the Trinity was a New Testament invention.

And that's not really the case.

I mean, the Trinitarian ideas are there in the Old Testament. I mean, right back in Genesis 1, verse 2, it says, The earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep.

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, let there be light. In Proverbs chapter 8, you read a wisdom being brought forth before the creation.

[24 : 14] And the companion of God in creation. And in a sense, John 1 brings these ideas together. Yeah. It says, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He's bringing the idea of Genesis 1 and Proverbs 8 together, I think, in saying that. Definitely. Thanks, Steve. And I was just thinking, as you were saying that, like, David in Psalm 51 that we looked at a little bit last week, says, Do you not take your spirit from me?

And in King Saul, we see the spirit departing from him. So, yeah, see it in the Old Testament. It's made so much clearer to us in the New, but we do see it in the Old Testament. Any other thoughts or questions on this? This is turning into quite a hot topic.

I need to mention something a little different, is that there is something very relational in the Trinity.

[25 : 26] Apart from that diagram, it's the beautiful interaction between three persons who, and there are many other scriptures that point to how one, they all love to honor the other.

They love to do, you know, the Spirit loves to bring honor to the Son and the Father. And so it's worth pausing just to see the wonder of that beautiful relationship, because, of course, God didn't make us because he was lonely.

Yeah. He was perfectly happy. Yeah. In himself, and yet we're made in his image. And although we know so much about how marred we are, you know, there is something about him sharing this, because, you know, we ought to be getting better and better at these good relationships and honoring one another.

Yeah. Yeah. Thanks, David. Jerome? On a practical basis as well, I think there are some aspects of the Trinity that, you know, just in terms of the Christian life, prayer, we come to the Father through the Son by the Spirit, things like that, and just the way we do worship, it's just woven into the fabric of who we are and what we do as church.

Just, it's good to think about that as well. I mean, yeah. I was struck as well about it. I was reading in my own quiet time yesterday. I think it's somewhere in Mark. I can't remember exactly where now.

[26 : 57] But they worship Jesus. Didn't say, don't worship me. Thanks, Jerome. Shall we pause there and say something?

And then think about one or two other things. Next thing we looked at was God being sovereign. God ruling over all things. Think of his sovereign will, which is completely unchanging.

It is independent. He has planned all things since eternity past. He doesn't have plan A and plan B for us in our lives.

But rather, his good and unchanging plan is being worked out. And as I was meditating on this just a little bit, I thought of three big words, which I think are related when we think about God's sovereignty.

[28 : 09] So his omnipotence, God is all-powerful. His omnipresence, God is everywhere. Presence simultaneously with his old being.

And omniscience, God is all-knowing. And just before we throw it open to discussion, we just wanted to turn you briefly to 1 Samuel chapter 2.

Some of us may remember looking at 1 Samuel in the not-too-distant past. Before I read it, just by way of context, this is Hannah's prayer to God and she has spent a long time suffering and in agony because she wasn't having a child.

She wasn't having a son. And yet her husband's other wife, Penina, her husband, Elkanah, was married to Penina and Hannah, his other wife had children, had sons and daughters, but Hannah didn't.

And she kept saying to Hannah, look at all my children and you have none. And it seemed that God had closed her womb and so she prayed and wept bitterly.

[29 : 50] But then the Lord in his goodness, in his sovereignty, in his omniscience, knowing all about Hannah's situation, God in his omnipotence, as all-powerful God, provided her with a son, Samuel.

And so in response, Hannah prayed this prayer, Hannah in 1 Samuel 2. Then Hannah prayed and said, My heart rejoices in the Lord.

In the Lord my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance. There was no one holy like the Lord.

There is no one beside you. There is no rock like our God. Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the Lord is a God who knows and by him deeds are weighed. He is all-knowing. The bows of the warriors are broken, but those who stumbled are armed with strength. Those who were full hire themselves out for food, but those who are hungry are hungry no more.

[31 : 02] She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away. The Lord brings death and makes alive.

He brings down to the grave and raises up. The Lord sends poverty and wealth. He humbles and he exhorts. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts them needy from the ash heap.

He seats them with princes and makes them inherit a throne of honor. For the foundations of the earth are the Lord's. On them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful servants, but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness.

It is not by strength that one prevails. Those who oppose the Lord will be broken. The most high will thunder from heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointing.

And I was particularly interested in reading verses 6 to 8 and thinking God is sovereign. He brings death. He makes alive. He's sovereign over our lives and our births, our deaths.

[32 : 13] By his will we were created. He brings down to the grave and he raises up. He's sovereign over our situations, over our poverty and our wealth.

He humbles people. He exalts people. He raises the poor from the dust, lifts the needy from the ash heap, seats them with princes and makes them inherit a throne of honor.

Just interesting reading that thinking God is sovereign. God is omnipotent. God is omnipresent.

God is omniscient. I'm not sure that Phil particularly said any of that in your sermon.

But Phil, you preached on this subject. Is there any more on God's sovereignty that you wanted to add to our thoughts? You'll need a microphone, I think.

I suppose the bottom line is, as Christians, having a clear and almost intuitive trust in God's sovereignty is so very basic to living the Christian life.

[33 : 30] So, as you read for Hannah, her particular stress was not having a child and God was able to change that for her and she sees that as, in a sense, the tip of the iceberg that underneath here is a God who not just enables her to have a baby but unseats princes, lifts people up, guides the nations and so on.

And I mean, a very precious verse that I think we can live by as Christians is he works all things together for good for those who love God and are called according to his purpose.

So, that covers everything, doesn't it? Our ethnicity, our gender, where we were born, where God's put us, what God has given us, what he's withheld from us.

None of these things are a mistake and so we need to learn a deep intuitive trust. It's okay, God's got this and he will work good purposes through it.

I think that, you know, bottom line, that's that's really, really you know, however you theologize it, whatever words you put it into, that's just fundamental to our peace, isn't it?

[34 : 55] I know who holds the future and he'll guide me with his hand. With God, things don't just happen, everything by him is planned. So, as I face tomorrow, whether it's problems large or small, I'll trust the God of miracles give to him my all.

The way I tried to unpack it, I think, was to say God is sovereign over things. So, in our sort of scientific world view, we would say, oh, the sun shines because of nuclear reactions and it rises because of Newton's laws of motion.

And those things are all true at one level, but underneath it, he makes the sun shine, he causes the grass to grow, he sends the rain, so there's sovereignty over things and there's sovereignty over people.

God rules the nations, but we're not to think that he makes the nations into robots who have no free agency, no responsibility.

And we took the example of the Assyrians that God sent to do his will, but the Assyrian had no idea that that's what he was doing, he thought he was going to plunder.

[36 : 08] So, it's important to keep God's sovereignty alongside the fact that although God plans everything, if somebody does something, they're to blame for it. If somebody does something good, they can be praised for it.

And then we also looked at God's sovereignty and saving us, which is another big subject, but just sort of trying to put it in a sentence.

We're Christians because God planned it long ago and arranged the circumstances by which we'd hear the gospel, changed our hearts, and he is so determined to do that, that he's tasked Jesus with bringing us safe to heaven and Jesus won't let us go because his hands are sovereign hands. I think that's absolutely wonderful, isn't it? Despite our sin, despite the pressures and circumstances, he won't let us go. He'll bring us safe to heaven. Amazing. Any thoughts or questions on this particular subject?

Shikondi. things? I think touching on the specific verses, the Lord kills and brings to life.

[37 : 33] He brings down and he raises up. He makes, the Lord makes poor and makes rich. He brings low and he exalts. I think it, one, gives the comfort that he is sovereign over all, but it helps to think through things and think through counsel that people might give of the Lord is far away because this situation is evidence that the Lord is far or this has happened because you're not faithful enough.

or even just the general notion that because you're a believer and because you're faithful, so bad situations or bad things shouldn't happen.

And then just to tie it in with all things work for the good of those that love the Lord, but also that all things work for his glory. And so, yeah.

I just, yeah. Yeah. As you were saying that reminded by, I think it says in Isaiah somewhere, his thoughts aren't our thoughts and his ways aren't our ways.

And they, we may go through, through things under his sovereignty that we wouldn't necessarily choose or one, he is sovereign over that and he is good and we can trust him in that.

[38 : 54] Yeah. Shall we move on? That there are two more, things.

I'm not going to spend any time actually, well, about a minute on this because I'd love to get to God being holy before we end. So, we thought about God being unchanging or immutable, like he doesn't mutate and change.

We looked at a few different passages on that, particularly Psalm 102 2 and James 1 17. You can go away and enjoy remembering those this week.

And maybe even meditate on how has it got good news for us that God is unchanging because it is really good news. We can really trust him.

He's our unchanging rock. we're resting in an unchanging love but I really want us to think about this I knew it was a big subject but didn't realise how big a subject it was until Phil and Jerem and I were chatting it through a little bit last week it's absolutely massive every bit of this is but it's been quite exciting to think about just a few thoughts from me and then we can open it up to Phil and other people so we won't turn here but in Exodus 3 we'll remember well that Moses came to see that strange sight that burning bush and he went over intrigued and then became afraid because the bush speaks it is God the God of his ancestors speaking and he would know that sinful mortals cannot look upon a holy God and live and so Moses hid his face and after a little bit we revealed who God is his name

[41 : 13] I am who I am I am the great I am set apart from the world other gods might be defined by what they have power to do the God of the sun the God of rain we ourselves are sort of we define ourselves by what we are what we do our jobs our positions in life we are sons we are daughters we are husbands wives brothers sisters doctors teachers retired people students but God exists independently he is eternal independent of everything else he just is I am nothing defines him he is simply God and then later in Exodus in Exodus 33 Moses asked to see his glory but God said well you can see my back but you are going to have to hide under this cleft of the rock to protect you and God showing himself to be kind of self excellent think of Israel

Israel was dependent dependent on God for growth and holiness dependent on God to be called a holy nation but God isn't dependent on anyone for moral excellency for holiness he is holy completely holy in and of himself and then where I want us to just turn to briefly Isaiah 6 I think it's my favourite Old Testament passage come to Isaiah 6 and we read in verse 1 that the king is dead in the year that king Uzziah died he had a long and pretty good reign all in all in that year Isaiah saw the king of kings I saw the lord high and lifted high and exalted seated on a throne and the train of his robe filled the temple above him were seraphim each with six wings with two they covered their faces and remind ourselves

Moses covered his face at the burning bush and with two they covered their feet and with two they were flying and they were calling out to one another holy holy holy holy is the lord almighty the whole earth is full of his glory apparently that's known as the trisagion the strongest form of the superlative in Hebrew this might not be a very good example but we might say something like something is good or really good or most good sort of what it's saying holy holy holy to show us so strongly that God is holy like no other there is no one holy like him complete holiness absolute and other total purity and we see that in Isaiah's reaction to all of this verse 4 at the sound of their voices the doorpost and threshold shook and the temple was filled with smoke it was absolutely awesome because the holy holy holy

God was there and so Isaiah cried woe to me I am ruined for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips and my eyes have seen the king the lord almighty woe to me I have come and seen absolute holiness but he also experiences holy love we love things because we see good in them I love pizza because I know it tastes and looks wonderful but God the incredible holy God shows love to Isaiah who is unclean whose righteousness is as filthy rags Isaiah says elsewhere a man who says I'm not worthy I am ruined but look at this look at this wonderful holy love that is shown to him verse 6 then one of the seraphims flew to me with a live coal in his hand which he had taken with tongs!

from the altar with it he touched my mouth and said see this has touched your lips your guilt is taken away and your sin is atoned for he experiences holy love from a holy God and Phil last week one of the most fresh sermons in our mind on this helped us to think about holiness it helped us to think about its relevance roots roll out it's hugely relevant because this is who our God is and we've experienced his holy love in our lives in the Lord Jesus in the Lord Jesus our guilt is taken away and our sin is atoned for and now dependent on him we can grow in holiness we can seek to follow that command be holy as he is holy it's a big thing it's a wonderful thing

[47 : 09] I been getting excited about it anything anyone wants to add or ask about this Phil go for it thank you you really explained those things really well I think this topic of God's holiness is vital in preaching the gospel tends to be reduced to God loves you and you think oh that's great well I quite love myself anyway I think I'm pretty good and God says yes that's right that completely omits the idea of God's holiness doesn't it that we are when we come near to God like Moses like Isaiah if we genuinely come near to

God we become embarrassingly and shamefully aware of our own moral failure in contrast to his holiness and as you're rightly saying that that's where God's love comes in that he provides a costly redemption so that we can come near a holy God and like it says in Hebrews which I think is an astounding thing therefore does it say let us draw near to the most holy place through the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which is astounding isn't it that we can come into the holiest place of all I think the other aspect of it is that struck me was be holy for I am holy so the call to us to be holy I mean that's a big subject in itself is sanctification we're not saved by trying harder we're not saved by making ourselves better but there is a sense in which having come to the

Lord Jesus he does change us he starts off with the heart and the deepest part of us and then works that through into our practical daily living the sort of people we're becoming so life's work but he does say that be holy for I am holy if you go back to the sovereignty he chose us in him to be holy and blameless before him and there's a deep miracle there isn't the holy spirit is trinitarianly is the one who's given to us who makes us holy so there's a lot going on there it's amazing amazing final chance if you have another thought or question uh steve final words for steve some people some people talk about the holiness of god as being sort of restrictive that you know that it means you have the things you don't do which doesn't mean there are things you don't do if you want to be like god but it's actually liberating because we're not we're not like

Zeus or Aphrodite you know contingent or god isn't we are but god isn't and we're not reduced to being what the latest guru says we have to be which is what's happening more and more nowadays you have to conform to a particular ideology or you're cancelled it's actually liberating we can say no we can be free to be what we should really be and I think it's worth that's the counterpoint to what Phil was saying you know that we need to emphasize the holiness of god not because it's restricting but because it's liberating yeah praise god thanks steve hopefully we have seen that this is really true that god really is incomparable just a final thing before we sing to close it's massive we could spend more and more weeks thinking about the doctrine of god if you want to can I suggest this there's this book quoted from a few weeks ago by

Nick Tucker over in Hove 12 things god can't do if anybody would be interested in getting together reading it it's a book club kind of thing be very happy to I've definitely got availability either on a Tuesday or maybe a Thursday during the daytime apologies if daytime doesn't work for you but love to do that and if there's a bunch of you that want to read it through together in the evening then go ahead do that organize it and enjoy but just to help us to continue to think about our great god let me know if that's of interest to you and we'll get something organized together together together Let's together together together together together together Let's together!

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