



Systematic Theology for the Local Church
#37—Christology—Part III¹
The Results of the Incarnation

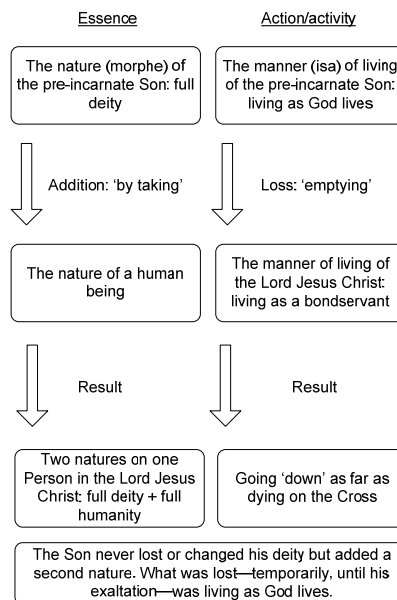
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The next study will be on the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Helpful for that study is Reymond, pp. 547-552. Helpful for the present study are sections 29 and 30 in House's *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*, and Reymond, 615-622.

Here is a passage that contains some strange contrasts (Lk. 2:41-52):

⁴¹ Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. ⁴³ After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. ⁴⁴ Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." ⁴⁹ "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

This Jesus is somehow like a 12-year-old but also very unlike any other. We saw in Phil. 2:6-8 that the incarnation results in a person who has the nature of God, and so is really God, and the nature of a bondservant, and so is really human. He corresponds to us—with the same features that we have—and even looked like a human being as he walked on earth. Here is the summarizing chart again, which emphasizes that a human nature is added to a divine nature without any part of either being lost.



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But what was it like for Jesus to be God and man together? If we were to fill in between the lines in the Lukan passage above, we would observe that the young Jesus sometimes broke his father's tools, asked his mother when breakfast would be ready and ate voraciously when he was 15. But unlike normal teenagers he always obeyed his parents without grumbling and was always happy to take out the garbage. How could his two natures interact? How could he live? What did it mean for Jesus to be God but like me, too? And how is the incarnation a pattern for me today in living the Christian life? In this study we will look at 11 theological results of the incarnation.

Here is my translation of the Philippians passage again:

- 1 If there is any encouragement in your association with Christ, if there is any comfort produced by love, if there is any fellowship produced by the Spirit, if there are any compassions and tenderesses (and there are!), then
- 2 make my joy complete by having the same way of thinking, having the same love, being knit together in your souls, focusing your minds on one thing,
- 3 doing nothing because of strife or empty glory, but with humility regarding each other as being better than yourselves,
- 4 not paying attention—each of you—to your own affairs, but also to the affairs of others.
- 5 Have this way of thinking among you that was also in Christ Jesus,

- 6 Who, although He existed with the nature of God, did not regard living the way God lives as something to be retained in His grasp,
- 7 but emptied Himself by taking the nature of a bondservant, entering into a correspondence with human beings; and outwardly appearing just like any human being
- 8 He humbled Himself by being obedient to the point of death, and a Cross-death at that!

- 9 For this reason God lifted Him to the heights and graciously bestowed on Him the name that is above every name,
- 10 in order that at the name of Jesus every knee of those in heavenly realms and earthly realms and sub-earthly realms might bow,
- 11 and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord—to the glory of God the Father!

1. Jesus was like us in every way except one.

Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus had a human nature, but Rom. 8:3 says this constituted only a likeness when we figure sin into the picture:

For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.

Jesus had real humanity, but the similarity stopped short of including participation in the condemnation resulting from the fall. This is clearly stated in Heb. 4:15:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

We can say “Jesus is like us” *only* if we make sure we keep this statement in the picture. Jesus’ life experiences were just like ours, except for acts of sin. His experiences included temptation, which is a precursor to sin, but not sin itself. The presence of the nature of deity meant that he would not yield to

temptation (which would have to come from outside him, since he could not generate temptation [Jas. 1:13]), and subsequently sin. We will return to this in a future study.

This has great significance for our own salvation. The effects of the fall touch every human being. Jesus in his incarnation had to be unlike us, because we are condemned in Adam. The sinlessness of the Lord Jesus Christ highlights the point where we are condemned. It is not that we don't manage to please God, but rather that we cannot please God. If Jesus was to bring us to God—by pleasing him—he had to be unlike us in this regard.

2. Jesus never used his attributes to benefit himself.

While he could have instantly escaped the terrible rigors of the temptation by using his power as God, Jesus endured the taunting of Satan. Matthew 4:2 tells us that after fasting for 40 days and nights he was hungry, yet he refused to turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger. I believe that the point of testing in Satan's first attack was precisely whether or not Jesus would use his own powers to benefit himself. Jesus endured a similar temptation to make his life easier during his time in Gethsemane and while he was on the Cross (Mt. 27:39):

³⁹Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

Jesus' whole life was one of hardship, on the Cross and before:

Mt. 8:20: Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.

We regularly seek to profit ourselves, to gain comfort, ease and popularity for ourselves. Jesus had every right to do so, but he did not. He could have done miracles to gain a following, but he did not. We do. The writer to the Hebrews applies this to our lives:

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

Jesus' resistance against sin included his refusal to benefit himself and depart from the will of God. This wonderful outcome of the incarnation is to be the pattern for our lives.

3. Jesus depended on the Spirit for empowerment for at least some of his miracles.

This is demonstrated by Mt. 12:28 and Lk. 4:14-19:

²⁸But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. ¹⁶He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it,

he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Why would Jesus do this? He certainly was able to do miracles on his own, and perhaps he did. But the Holy Trinity had planned from eternity past that the incarnate Son would be subject to the Father and would be ministered to by the Holy Spirit (notice also Mt. 4:1: “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil”). If Jesus, as part of his “emptying” himself, depended on the Spirit, yet in terms of capabilities did not need to, why do we, who do need to depend, so often try to live the Christian life in our own strength? Once again, the incarnation provides a practical model for the believer.

4. Jesus’ glory was veiled, yet present.

Recall that in an earlier study we defined God’s glory as the greatness of God’s perfections. Some have claimed that the emptying of Phil. 2:7 involved the loss of the glory of the Son. It is not difficult to show the error of this view. Consider the following scriptures:

Jn. 1:4: In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Jn. 2:11: This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Jn. 17:22: I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:

The glory of the Second Person of the Trinity was present in the Lord Jesus Christ, yet apparently was covered for most of the time he walked among men.

It is important to understand that the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness was (as the Father controlled the events) designed to show that the Son was fully God and fully man and that he would not step outside the Father’s will in living with two natures. One of the tests in the temptation concerned whether he would claim the homage of men:

Mt. 4:8-9: ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

He could claim homage from human beings as a king at this point, but it would violate God’s plan, would be outside the will of the Father and would be sin. It would be a false glory. Perhaps this provides a clue as to why his glory was veiled and only seen on some occasions: it was not yet time for his full, continuous glory to be revealed. That awaits his coming in his Kingdom.

We regularly seek glory for ourselves, when we actually deserve none. That is part of the point of Phil. 2:3. When we get the glory for something we do, it is, as Paul says, empty.

doing nothing because of strife or empty glory, but with humility regarding each other as being better than yourselves,

If we aren’t seeking glory for ourselves, we are often giving glory to people when it should go to God. Here is what James says (2:1-4):

2 My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

The next time you find yourself seeking honor for yourself, consider the one who rightfully possessed glory, but was willing to have it veiled for the sake of accomplishing salvation for sinners.

5. Jesus' humanity was subject to temptation, distress, weakness, pain and sorrow.

Mt. 26:36-38: ³⁶ Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

Heb. 4:15: For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Why are we told things like this? It shows that God is concerned with our weakness. It is not sin to be tempted, to be distressed, to hurt or to grieve. Because Jesus endured these things as a man, we know God knows in Christ what life is like for us. Here is this outcome as stated by the writer to the Hebrews in reference to Jesus' qualification for his high priestly ministry (5:1-10):

5 Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. ³ This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. ⁴ No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." ⁶ And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." ⁷ During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

In the book of Hebrews, when used of salvation and the work of Christ, the terms 'perfect,' 'perfection' and 'perfected' refer to being qualified to come into the presence of God or, in the case of Jesus, qualified to take people into the presence of God. Jesus' remaining in total submission to the Father while suffering changed him (the God-Man, not God) and resulted in the Father's approving him and designating him as an eternal high priest.

6. As the God-man the Son alone can take sinners into the presence of God.

Jn. 14:6: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

The incarnate Son becomes the conduit between the divine Being and beings with the same human nature as he has.

7. The Son subjected himself to the Father.

This new state is found in Phil. 2:6-8, where in taking on human nature the Son went to the Cross expressly following the will of the Father and received the Father's approval. We find it also in passages where the Son prays to the Father, obeys Scripture to carry out the plan laid out for him in Old Testament prophecy and explicitly says that he is subject to the Father.

Jn. 17:4: I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

Why this new arrangement in the Trinity? God is very concerned about order. For example, there is only one way of salvation. God lays down rules about how men and women are to relate to each other in marriage and the local church, about our relation to government and with employers. Regulations for life in the local church are carefully spelled out, with 1 Tim. 3:15 speaking essentially of all of 1 Timothy as a manual for what to do. Similarly, the New Testament clearly presents an ordering among the persons of the Trinity that results from the incarnation. The Son subjects himself to the Father and the Spirit supports the Son. We violate Scripture if we change this order in our relation to God. Here are the orderings:

- a. The incarnate Son is subject to the Father. The Father is not subject to the Son or the Spirit. The Son is not subject to the Spirit.
- b. The Father did not die on the Cross, nor did the Spirit. The incarnate Son did.
- c. The Spirit and incarnate Son intercede to the Father. The Father does not intercede to either of the other persons, and the Son does not intercede to the Spirit.

We have access to the Father through the incarnate Son, not vice-versa (Jn. 14:6: "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'") We do not approach the Father through the Holy Spirit. We are to pray to the Father through the Son, following this order. This is the predominant pattern in the New Testament. When we pray this way, we show that we understand that the incarnate Son's great work is to serve as the channel for approaching the Father. Acts 7:59 does say that Stephen prayed to Jesus.

Acts 7:59: ⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

And Jn. 14:14 does speak of asking Jesus for something.

Jn. 14:14: ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

However, notice what Jesus himself says in Jn. 16:23:

In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

It is noteworthy that there is a textual problem with 'me' in Jn. 14:14. Many manuscripts omit it. Its omission would fit with the pattern of prayer elsewhere in the New Testament. Whatever Jn. 14:14 means, Jn. 16:23 says that at a future time—which must be after his resurrection—believers would address their requests to the Father. I believe that Stephen's addressing Jesus rather than the Father was because he was not doing what we would normally call prayer but was addressing Jesus because he was seeing him standing at the right hand of God.

Why is there such a careful order among the persons of the Trinity? Ultimately it was and is a key part of the plan to save sinners. In his sovereignty God provided the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ to demonstrate that he would not step out of the post-incarnation order in order to satisfy himself.

There are many lessons for us in this, including whether we will always try to stay in God's appointed order for us. The temptation for us is to act on our own. Faith is the opposite of this and includes obedience.

8. The God-Man is unified but at times shows the nature of God or the nature of a human being.

Jesus ate, slept and walked on the water. He did these things as an entire, indivisible being. His divine nature did not get hungry or need to sleep. But his human nature did. However, it is best to say that the whole person got hungry and needed sleep. His human nature could not enable him to walk on water, but his divine nature could. Yet we say that the whole person walked on water.

His divine attributes did not diminish after the incarnation. His human attributes did not become less human after the incarnation. But because of the miracle of the incarnation they could be joined in one person who could function perfectly. This is ultimately beyond our understanding. Deity and humanity are together in one person forever. I believe that this is the deepest miracle in the Bible.

9. Jesus was perfectly obedient, even to death.

According to 1 Pet. 2:21-25, Jesus is our example for obedience to God in all things:

²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Heb. 5:8 says that he learned obedience from what he suffered. Philippians 2:8 uses the word obedient in describing his going to the Cross. Jesus is the perfect human being, demonstrating the obedience that Adam failed to give. Jesus by his adherence to the will of the Father reverses the course on which Adam sent humanity, opens access to God and provides human fulfillment that comes as we follow his example and live obedient lives. Remember that our obedience, as for Jesus on earth, is based on adherence to Scripture. We follow Jesus' pattern as established by the incarnation when we do what the Bible says.

10. The Son put himself last for the sake of others.

While Phil. 2:6-11 provides some of the deepest theological information in the Bible, it is actually set in a passage that is of great practical significance for the Christian, who is commanded to adopt the model of the pre-incarnate son putting himself last by assuming the nature and lifestyle of a bondservant. How can we do this? The key is found in the terms used in vv. 2 and 5. Three times Paul uses forms of a word that denotes an attitude, way of thinking or outlook. The Son had a way of thinking, a way of looking at things, that led him to be united with humanity. This passage has been described as a giant spiritual parabola, with the Son descending to the Cross and then being raised "up" to honor by the Father. The Son went "down" by first joining with humanity and dying as a bondservant and criminal, enduring the worst kind of death—a Cross-death at that! In all this he put himself last, having the outlook that said he would go as low as necessary in order to benefit sinners. He was literally a spiritual slave for others. And in dying as a human being he could take on himself the curse that human beings deserve as sinners.

Here is Phil. 2:1-5 again:

1 If there is any encouragement in your association with Christ, if there is any comfort produced by

- love, if there is any fellowship produced by the Spirit, if there are any compassions and tendernesses (and there are!), then
- 2 make my joy complete by having the same way of thinking, having the same love, being knit together in your souls, focusing your minds on one thing,
 - 3 doing nothing because of strife or empty glory, but with humility regarding each other as being better than yourselves,
 - 4 not paying attention—each of you—to your own affairs, but also to the affairs of others.
 - 5 Have this way of thinking among you that was also in Christ Jesus,

There are several specific components of this, all of them found in Phil. 2:1-5 and all drawn from the pattern established by the incarnation:

- a. We are to have the right spiritual attitude or outlook. Whether or not we put ourselves last for others depends on our mental/spiritual view of life and the things of God.
- b. The attitude consists of six things:
 1. Each of us is to have the same love for each other and for Christ (v. 2).
 2. We are to be knit together in soul, feeling the needs of others (v. 2).
 3. We are to have the attitude of Christ (v. 5).
 4. We cannot do anything from selfish motives (v. 3).
 5. We have to think of the other person as better than ourselves. How do we do this?
 - a. Believe he does not sin as much as you do.
 - b. Believe that his intentions are better than yours.
 - c. Believe that his service is more well intentioned than yours.
 - d. Do not ascribe evil motives to him.
 6. Be a slave to others—putting yourself last. How?
 - a. Put your time at the disposal of others.
 - b. Let others be first in reward, joy and attention. Are you a jealous person?
 - c. Notice the needs of others? Do you? Or do you let someone else do this?
 - d. Put your own welfare last—don't seek your own comfort.

If this all seems hard, it is. It is impossible for us to accomplish on our own. This is why Paul says in vv. 12-13:

¹²Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Verse 13 actually says “It is God who works in you to want to do and to actually do what pleases him.”

11. God is glorified by the results of the incarnation.

The final result of the incarnation will be that God will be glorified for all eternity for his wisdom in the incarnation—Phil. 2:11—“to the glory of God the Father.” However, already there has been a glorification of God by the Son’s willingness to be joined to humanity and suffer as a substitute for others. The Son has been glorified by the Father’s bestowal of the title “Lord” on the incarnate Son. Eventually every living being will acknowledge the greatness of the work of the Son that is based on the incarnation.

Study questions

1. What are the benefits of Jesus' sinlessness?
2. Why would Jesus depend on the Spirit for at least some of his miracles?
3. What relations do the temptation in the wilderness and Jesus' experience in Gethsemane have for our understanding of the makeup of the God-Man?
4. What are some ways in which the God-Man changed? Was this change beneficial or negative?

Running compilation of key definitions

1. Systematic theology: The organized presentation of all that the Bible teaches about God and His works.
2. Exegesis: The actual practice of studying or interpreting a document or other message to determine its meaning.
3. Context: Context in a document or utterance is the surroundings of a portion of a word, a word, or a group of words.
4. Bibliology: The doctrinal study of the nature of the Bible.
5. Biblical authority: The quality inherent in Scripture by virtue of which human beings are completely answerable to its content.
6. Revelation: The information about Himself given by God to human beings.
7. General revelation: God's disclosure of Himself, available directly to everyone, given through means other than dreams, visions, direct words and Christ Himself.
8. Special revelation: The disclosure of information from God that is not available directly to all human beings.
9. Inspiration: A term applied to the Bible denoting that it is the product of God's creative activity, figuratively breathed out from Him (2 Tim. 3:16); applies to the process of recording Scripture, not specifically to the people involved; actually, *expiration* would be a better term to reflect the concept of 2 Tim. 3:16; the result is *inerrancy*.
10. Textual criticism: The science and art of attempting to discover the original text of a literary work for which the original document does not exist. It is especially important for biblical studies, and the foundational endeavor to all subsequent investigation of the Scriptures.
11. Canon: Transliterated from a Greek Word meaning "standard"; as used of the Bible, it refers to books authenticated as possessing divine origin and therefore authoritative; the Jewish canon consists of thirty-nine books, the Protestant of sixty-six and the Catholic of eighty (including apocryphal books).
12. Inerrancy is a term applied to the Bible, although not specifically found in it; it denotes that the Bible, as originally written, possessed no humanly induced deviations from the message God intended to be recorded and that it is true in every respect; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:19.
13. Infallibility: Although some assert that this term has a different meaning from inerrancy, the two terms are, for purposes of biblical study, synonymous; the Bible is infallible because inerrant, and inerrant because infallible.
14. Illumination is the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God that imparts understanding of the message of Scripture to the believer; not to be confused with inspiration, which in the Bible is used of the work of God in giving Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16); 1 Jn. 2:20; Jn. 16:13.
15. Spirituality: God is not physical, but immaterial, incorporeal, invisible and alive.
16. Self-existence/Aseity: God exists independently of anything else. He is self-existent.
17. Immensity: God is infinite in relation to space.
18. Eternality: God is infinite with regard to time.
19. Simplicity: God is not a plurality and cannot be looked at as divisible into parts.
20. Pure actuality: There is nothing about God that is potential. He is not unfinished in any way.
21. Necessity: God is uncaused and exists because he must exist.
22. Immutability: God is unchanging and unchangeable.
23. Impassibility: God is incapable of being changed or disturbed by what he experiences and is incapable of suffering.
24. Transcendence: God and the world are distinct; he is not part of the world, and the world is not part of him.
25. Immanence: God is present in the world.
26. Infinity: There are no limits to God's person and his perfections.
27. Omnipotence: God can do whatever he wills.
28. Omniscience: God knows everything there is to know.
29. Omnipresence: God is present everywhere in his creation

30. Holiness: God is morally pure and separated from all moral evil and sin.
31. Goodness: A quality that describes or includes his love, benevolence, mercy and grace
32. Truth: God's person, actions, knowledge and revelations correspond to reality
33. Love: God's continual communication of himself to his creatures.
34. Benevolence: God's goodness toward his creatures.
35. Mercy: God's goodness toward those who are helpless.
36. Grace: God's goodness toward sinners.
37. Glory: The greatness of God's perfections.
38. Trinity: There is only one true God, existing as a single Being comprised of three Persons who are equal in every way, yet distinct in their tasks and relations to humanity.
39. God's decree: The decree of God is his plan for the universe that includes all things and is certain to come to pass.
40. Providence: God's care for and upholding of his creation.
41. Sovereignty: God's control over his universe.
42. Christology: The study of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
43. Incarnation: The joining of deity and humanity in one person forever. The word is based on the Latin word for flesh: the Lord Jesus Christ is God joined with human flesh.
44. Pre-existence: Used of the Son, it means that he existed before Bethlehem.
45. Theophany: An appearance of God.
46. Christophany: An appearance of Christ.