

Systematic Theology for the Local Church
#75—Hamartiology—I¹
The Fall and Its Immediate Results

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Helpful for the studies in hamartiology are House, sections 50-52, and Reymond, 431-458.

Someone has said that two great doctrines of Scripture go hand in hand: sin and redemption. “It is sin that has drawn out redemption from the heart of God, and redemption is the only cure for sin.”² As we study the doctrine of sin (called *hamartiology*) one of our purposes will be to show how offensive sin is to God, and how much it has damaged the human race. In the coming studies on the theology of salvation, we will describe how God has provided everything necessary to overcome sin—past, present and future. We should always keep in mind that it is logical strategy for Satan to minimize the sinfulness of sin, and thereby slight the greatness of the cross-work of Christ.

A second very important biblical fact about sin is that along with the holiness of God it is one of two central doctrines. Sin is antithetical to the holiness of God. Human beings continually attempt to downgrade the holiness of God and increase their own importance. Raising our estimation of own goodness automatically decreases our view of the holiness of God. Increasing our appreciation of the holiness of God automatically decreases our view of our own value and increases the heinousness of sin. The purpose of this study is to help us to understand the roots of sin and how it affects us.

1. The background of human sin

Although human sin began in Eden, to get the full picture of sin’s history we must go back further to the offense of the first angel. It is there, at a time not delineated in Scripture, that sin entered the universe, and with it the great distortion of the goodness and purposes of God.

Some have suggested that the time of the sin can be located between vv. 1 and 2 of Gen. 1. Here is the text:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was^a formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

According to this view, Satan’s first sin and consequent fall from his place of privilege before God occurred after the creation of the earth and the passing of a considerable period of time, during which extensive life forms existed on earth. His fall occasioned a judgment of the earth by God, resulting in the condition described in Gen. 1:2. Since there is a considerable period of time between vv. 1 and 2, this view has been called the gap theory.

Another view that at least allows for a long time period at the beginning of Genesis is that of Merrill F. Unger, who held that the fall of Satan occurred before Gen. 1:1, with the result that the earth was damaged, with v. 2 describing the outcome.

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² Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981) 3:224.

^aOr possibly *became*

I reject both of these views (see the earlier studies on biblical anthropology). Damage to the earth came because of human sin in Gen. 3. Genesis 1:1 describes the original creation of the physical universe, with no gap between vv. 1 and 2 or time before v. 1. Under this view v. 2 describes the condition of the earth immediately after the initial act of creation.³

I believe that the Bible does not tell us when Satan fell. Job 38:7 may help us with this issue:

⁴ ”Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. ⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? ⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—⁷ while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

Since v. 7 describes all the angels rejoicing at the creation of the earth, angels must have existed before the events of Gen. 1. If “all the angels” included those that would later fall, then Satan had not yet fallen by the point of the creation of the physical universe and he would then have fallen between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 3. If not, then it is possible that Satan fell before that point. Ultimately, it is not necessary to determine the point when Satan fell. What is important is that he fell sometime before Genesis 3.

The background to the events of that chapter is found in two passages: Ezek. 28:11-19 and Isa. 14:12-17. In the former passage, the reason for Satan’s sin is not indicated. Instead, we are simply told (v. 15) that wickedness was discovered in him—quite an understatement! Although he had a favored position, including access to God as a “guardian cherub,” apparently he was carried away with his great beauty and power. Needless to say, this pattern of being taken up with self has spread to the human race, too, and is repeated over and over.

A direct biblical statement concerning the exact nature of Satan’s sin *is* found, however, in Isa. 14:13. In power and importance he wanted to be a duplicate of God. This was clearly an act of his will—a will in opposition to God’s. The result was the spiritual fall of v. 12.

These two passages delineate the pattern sin would follow as it spread through angelic ranks and entered humanity. Sin would manifest itself as an act of the will, a desire to function in the place of God and to be like Him through self-effort (note that in contrast the goal of the believer is to be like God as He produces that likeness in us!), overestimation of one’s position and assets and disregarding of the consequences of thus rebelling against God. We should learn a great deal from these short but pithy accounts of the fall of the one who introduced sin into the universe. As much as we dislike saying it, we act like him and, outside of Christ, face the same consequences (Rev. 20:10-15).

2. The spread of sin to humanity

a. Historicity

Although many modern theologians have viewed the account of the experience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden as mythical and attempt to explain existing realities by resorting to a contrived account, there is every reason to take it as factually true. The account is presented as genuine history and was regarded as such by other biblical writers, for example, Paul in 2 Cor. 11:3:

³ There is not sufficient space to discuss all the factors involved in the interpretation of this passage and the gap theory. For an easy-to-read introduction see John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *The Early Earth* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982); see also Bruce Waltke, “The Creation Account in Genesis 1:1-3,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 132 (1975):136-44.

But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

It fits integrally with the rest of the Word of God and explains many facts that we cannot account for otherwise. We should take it as a description of real events, recorded under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Here is Genesis 3:1-24:

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

22 And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." 23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he planted on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 3 records the presence of three individuals in the Garden—Satan, Adam, and Eve (actually she is simply “the woman,” since she is not named until 3:20). How could a serpent as we know it today act in the manner given in this account? To begin with, we are not dealing with a snake or other reptile that we know now, since it is clearly described as being the most wily of all the animals that had been created. Furthermore, Satan must have been possessing the serpent, since the curse of 3:15 (as taken by most Bible interpreters) goes far beyond the serpent—although the curse is addressed to it—and focuses on Satan himself. Further, both Rev. 12:9 and 20:2 identify Satan as the serpent. Exactly how he possessed or utilized a real serpent for his purposes is never disclosed in the Bible, and we should not speculate beyond what the text tells us. At least we should notice that at the very beginning of Satan’s dealings with humanity we see deviousness that channels his attacks through unsuspecting vehicles. He delights in approaching us in disguise.

b. Rejection of blessings

Adam and Eve ignored four great provisions or blessings when they fell. We do the same thing all the time, but can avoid it.

(1) God gave human beings a wonderful makeup. They rejected it (2:4-7).

A warning for us: God gives us limits but also likeness to Him. We reject both, trying to be something other than what He intended for us and what is best for us.

(2) God gave human beings a perfect environment. They rebelled anyway (2:8-10).

Do you and I blame circumstances for our sin? We do, but it’s never an excuse.

(3) God gave human beings all the information they needed to do His will. They didn’t listen (2:15-17).

At the heart of our relation to God is obedience. He has spoken, and we are to respond with obedience. If we don’t obey, disaster comes. In fact this is one of the main themes of Genesis, and indeed of the whole Bible. God blesses and promises more blessing if there is obedience. If there is disobedience, there will be curses. Do you and I always obey? God’s commands are there for blessing, not hurt (see Joshua 1:7, for example).

(4) God gave human beings a beautiful and perfect relationship. They turned it upside down.

The male/female relationship was established by God at creation. It was designed to be a blessing. Do we uphold and support that today? What about the increasing number of divorces? The increasing number of Christians who subscribe to the tenets of evangelical feminism? Do we uphold and support God’s order of the sexes today? Writing in U.S. News and World Report, William Manchester said, “The erasure of distinctions between the sexes is not only the most striking issue of our time, it may be the most profound the race has ever confronted.”⁴ Remember: Disobedience to God’s order always leads to disorder, cursing by God and heartache.

c. Six features of the first sin

These are seven things that are always true when we sin.

(1) Adam and Eve rejected God’s Word.

⁴ October 25, 1993.

Eve questioned what God had said. The serpent suggested, and she believed, that doing something else would lead to something better. But it led to heartache, as it always does. She thought it would bring wisdom. But obeying God's word is the way to wisdom, as Prov. 1:7 reminds us: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." About this disobedience to God's word, Robert Reymond says:⁵

What precisely occurred here? Our first parents permitted Satan to challenge God's word concerning the tree and to give an alternative interpretation. When the pair remained silent in the face of Satan's lie and thus demonstrated their willingness to reject God's authority over them and their unwillingness to take God at his word merely on the basis of his sovereign authority, they in effect permitted Satan to reduce God's word to a mere *hypothesis* at best and a lie at worst, the invalidity of which could be demonstrated by scientific testing. This means, however, that the center of authority for man had shifted away from God to himself. Adam and Eve came to believe that they were to be their own authority, that they had the right to determine for themselves by experimentation what is true and what is false. Of course, the fact that they "experimented" at all makes it clear that at the moment they ate they already believed the serpent's hypothesis concerning the tree to be true, for had they really believed that their experimentation might lead to their deaths they would hardly have tried it. This shows, as Paul says, that we are never truly autonomous, but rather are walking either in obedience to God or according to the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:20). But Adam and Eve thought that it was they who were determining the course they would follow, that they were only exercising their autonomous right to determine for themselves the true, the good, and the beautiful. They became, in their understanding, their own authority, and their fallen descendants ever since that time have claimed a similar autonomy from God.

At the very beginning of the experience in the Garden, then, we see part of the essence of sinning. It is disobedience to the revealed will of God. There are other components, but it always starts there. This is confirmed in the account by the fact that Satan himself reversed the statement of God, saying that there would be no resulting death, when God had said there would. It is significant that although Satan and the woman both tried to dismiss God's Word, it turned out that God's Word had the final say. What it predicted was exactly what happened. Failure to believe what God says to us always leads to disaster.

(2) Adam and Eve rationalized their actions (v. 6).

Concerning the restriction of eating from the tree (v. 3), we are simply told that God prohibited it. In itself it may not have been wrong—but it was wrong because God said it was. And Eve must have reasoned that evident damage would not be done if she were to eat. That, of course, is the way sin always proceeds. We attempt to rationalize around God's prohibition. What makes an act sin is the fact that God has prohibited it. Whether it seems good to us, appears to do no damage, or may even feel good, is irrelevant. God's Word is sufficient to establish something as right or wrong.

Eve manipulated what God had said and turned it around until she thought that eating would bring something good. After all, eating, seeing and having something beautiful, and having wisdom are all good, aren't they? See 1 Jn. 1:16 for a perfect parallel: cravings, lustful seeing and boasting of possessions. All these things entered the race with Eve, and will pass away.

As she reasoned—really already in sin—concerning the restriction, Eve evidently thought it presented an unnecessary limitation on her freedom (see Isa. 14:12-17). In doing this she had already set herself up as

⁵ Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of The Christian Faith*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 445.

an entity operating against God, since up to this point there had been perfect fellowship with Him, as evidenced by the fact that shortly after the fall the previously pristine conditions of contact between God and the pair were suddenly altered (v. 8). Thus before she ate the fruit—which, by the way, is never said to be an apple!—she had already pulled herself away from God, and thus had sinned.

(3) Adam and Eve stepped out of the roles and restrictions God had for them.

They rejected the restriction not to eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and they rejected the roles of leader and follower that God had established. Verse 6 indicates that Adam was present throughout the whole conversation with the serpent. He was clearly wrong in listening to his wife and following her lead. And she was wrong for going ahead of her husband in this important matter. God established marriage with the man as leader and the wife as follower and helper. Satan has had great success in the last few decades in reversing this throughout American society and in the Body of Christ. First Timothy 2:11-14 tells us more about what Adam did:

11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

Eve was tricked by the serpent, but Adam sinned knowingly. He stepped out of his role as leader and listened to Eve's invitation and he also had opportunity to evaluate what he was doing. It is very significant that although the woman is the first of the human race to sin, Adam is blamed for what happened in the Garden (Rom. 5:12-19). He was responsible for Eve and failed to direct and control her. Not only was he responsible for what he and Eve did but he was also chargeable as a conscious transgressor.

Several principles that we see in life today are inherent here. First, the male of our species is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the female. That does not mean that she cannot approach God. But she was created as her husband's helper, not as his head. Since the moment of the fall, she has attempted to reverse that God-given order.

That this will always be a problem is indicated in 1 Tim. 2:11-15, where the prohibition against a woman's teaching *or* usurping authority comes because, in Paul's words, the woman was thoroughly tricked by the serpent. (The Greek of 1 Tim. 2:12 cannot be construed to mean "I do not permit a woman to teach if she usurps authority over a man," as some suggest. In such a view women would be allowed to teach if they didn't try to "lord it" over men in the church. Instead, Paul prohibits a woman's teaching biblical things to men *or* usurping authority over them—here, in the context of the local church and its functions.) In the light of this spiritual weakness—not that she cannot be as spiritual as a man, but that she is more easily tricked in doctrinal matters—she is to be under the sheltering control of her husband (I am not saying a woman cannot be as intelligent or more intelligent than her husband). It is important that we realize that this restriction is actually a blessing, since the balancing role of the husband is to be a help to enable her to fulfill herself. Paul's promise in 1 Tim. 2:15 ("she will be saved in childbearing") is thus positive, giving a place of worth and value to the woman after the fall. Of course, the fact that Paul had to give the prohibition concerning teaching and usurping authority indicates that lack of subordination has continued since the fall. One of a woman's greatest problems, then, since the fall, is that she tends to act on her own apart from restrictions by her husband (or any other male spiritual head, for that matter). The fall obviously has highly practical consequences for life through every age. We should be very careful not to minimize God's analysis of our condition—whether male or female—before Him.

(4) Adam and Eve blamed others for their sin.

Adam blamed Eve and God and Eve blamed the serpent. She wasn't responsible. The serpent tricked her. He did, but she went along with her eyes wide open. No one ever has to sin. We have a choice at the time of temptation (temptation and sin are separated in time.) When we do sin it is our own fault. No one makes us do it.

(5) Adam and Eve played into Satan's lies.

Satan lied about God's Word. Eve did not bother to examine what he said. In addition, he promised something that seemed to be good would result if she ate the fruit. She did, and it didn't. Satan's promises never happen, do they?

(6) Adam and Eve questioned God's character.

They questioned that God really meant what he said and that his way was the best. This really amounts to saying God is not good and not loving to his creatures.

3. The immediate results of the first sin

- a. Adam and Eve became alienated from each other. They were ashamed before each other and immediately looked for covering. This alienation shows up again in ch. 4 with Cain and Abel. All human beings are alienated from each other because of sin. Being in Christ is the only thing that will help.
- b. The most far-reaching of the immediate results of the sin was loss of fellowship with God (3:8). This separation from God is the essence of spiritual death. They were alienated from God. This is a very sad moment. Previously they had perfect fellowship with God. Now as soon as they hear His voice they run and hide. This is also our greatest problem as human beings. We need some way to bridge the gap between us and God.

Along with this came the knowledge of what it means to sense guilt before God, and so Adam and Eve attempted to cover themselves, certainly in relation to each other and probably partly from the sight of God, too.

The long-term consequence of spiritual death in the life of every human being since then is physical death, described in v. 19. Spiritual alienation from God leads to aging and dissolution of the body, a proof and demonstration that we are all affected by the fall and its resulting curse. Physical death is unavoidable and unalterable, because the fact of our spiritual death is unalterable, also. We should never try to minimize its terrible effects.

- c. They became polluted by sin and subsequently passed it on to their descendants. This is the sin nature, the old nature or total depravity (every part of us is damaged by sin). Reymond points out that their immediate corruption is exemplified by the fact that right away they sinned several more times:⁶ They deny their disobedience, Adam blames Eve and she blames the serpent. In 3:22 God says that he knows that Adam would try to get at the tree of life again.

⁶ Reymond, 447.

- d. They failed a probationary test for the whole human race. As a result everyone else is charged with participating in their sin. This is imputed sin. Romans 5 treats this at length. The work of Christ is imputed to those who receive Him as Savior.
- e. God pronounced judgments on the figures in the Garden and on the earth. There are three parts to the specific judgment section of Gen. 3:14-19. There is to be a change in the condition of the serpent and an ultimate conquest of the one behind the serpent by the offspring of the woman. This is clearly a prediction of Satan's apparent victory over Christ from the cross to the resurrection, and then of the final triumph by the God-man. Interestingly enough, then, the outcome of the course of the ages is predicted right at the beginning, perhaps lest there be discouragement from then on that the results of sin might never be reversed.

The judgments on the woman include restriction in relation to the man and increased pain in childbearing. Since these are new pronouncements, we are led to believe that both areas would have been different for the woman had the fall not occurred.

Falling upon the man is the curse of pain in making a living. Prior to the fall, work was present and expected, since Adam was to tend the Garden (2:15) and subdue the earth (1:28). Yet there was no sin involved. God exerted effort in creation, yet there was no sin or curse present. Work itself is not a curse, and is not to be associated with sin. The difficulty of work comes as a result of the fall. As a matter of fact, the ground itself is cursed.

- f. Finally, Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden, indicating that idyllic conditions could not be retained and confirming the severity of God's reaction to their crime. Human beings have lost the privilege of special communication with God. Unless some way back were to be found, the cherubs and the flaming sword would exclude them permanently from the place of joyful fellowship with him. This is not to say that they could not be and were not the recipients of grace, and even of salvation. God's initiating of a covering in the form of skins in v. 21 is clearly an act of grace on God's part and it comes in spite of what they had done. He made skins to cover them and also allowed them to live and have children.

The fig leaves that Adam and Eve used to cover themselves were inadequate—for two reasons: (1) they themselves constructed the covering, and (2) vegetable material and not animal was used. The animal material God uses is superior to fig leaves because it prefigures the animal sacrifices to come, first in the case of Cain and Abel (4:3-4), later under the law, and especially in the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Adam and Eve were probably horrified as they witnessed the first slaying of animals to provide those skins. But they also could not help but be struck, as we should be, by the gracious act of the God whose commands they had so recently rejected.

This is a real account, real history—not myth. It teaches some of the most momentous events that ever occurred for the human race. Everything we do before God is conditioned by what Adam and Eve did, and everything God does with us can be traced back to Gen. 3. Making these chapters myth denies the reality of sin and the need for the work of Christ.

Questions for Further Study

1. What are the results for hamartiology if we do not take Gen. 3 as historically true?
2. In what ways does the early history of Satan provide a background to Gen. 3?
3. What provisions or gifts from God did Adam and Eve reject or pervert at the Fall?
4. What issues concerning truth and revelation come to the fore in the Fall?
5. In what ways does grace appear in the Garden with respect to the Fall?

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.
47. Priesthood: The system that God established to remedy the problem of alienation between a holy God and sinful human beings.
48. Son of God: A name for Jesus that describes his deity and his approval by the Father at the resurrection.
49. Son of Man: A messianic name for Jesus that emphasizes his humanity backed by deity and his role of taking humans to God through suffering and humiliation.
50. Messiah: A transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning 'anointed one'; used of the expected national deliverer of Israel; the linguistic equivalent of Greek *christos*, 'Christ'.
51. Efficacious grace: Efficacious grace is the working of God in an individual that cannot be thwarted and that leads that person to faith in Christ. It is also described as effective calling and irresistible grace.
52. Regeneration: Regeneration is the unseen and unfelt work of the Holy Spirit that overcomes depravity and brings spiritual life and the capacity to please God and exercise faith.
53. Spirit baptism is the nonphysical act of the Spirit of God that places a believer in the Body of Christ and makes him a partaker, along with all other believers, of the work and merits of Christ; should be distinguished from filling, sealing, and indwelling; cannot be felt or noticed, and hence must be appropriated by faith; there is no warrant in Scripture for assuming a second act of God for power, a 'baptism,' after salvation.
54. Sealing is a guarantee that the believer will persevere in Christ all the way to entrance into heaven, when God completes his work of purchasing the individual. It begins at the moment of salvation when the Father places the Holy Spirit in the believer for permanent indwelling. It is unseen and unfelt and should result in praise and obedience to the Spirit.
55. Indwelling is the spiritual presence of the Holy Spirit in every individual who has placed personal trust in Christ as Savior. Described in Jn. 14:17, this is the basis of His other ministries to the believer, such as sealing, anointing and filling and establishes the believer as a part of the spiritual temple that God is building today.
56. The filling of the Spirit is 1) A constant characteristic of a believer's life that consists of regular control by the Spirit that produces Christlikeness through Scripture; 2) A special enablement at particular times for service during the first century.
57. A spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service.

58. A cessationist (with regard to spiritual gifts) is a person who holds that the miraculous gifts are not present in the Church today as part of God's plan.
59. A continualist (with regard to spiritual gifts) is a person who holds that the miraculous gifts are present in the Church today as part of God's plan.
60. An angel is an individual, personal spirit being originally created by God to assist him in his plan for saving the elect.
61. The cosmos is Satan's organized spiritual system, in rebellion against God.
62. A demon is a fallen angel that is free to assist in carrying out Satan's plan of opposition to God.
63. Biblical anthropology is the study of what the Bible teaches about the nature and purpose of human beings.
64. Hamartiology is the study of sin and its consequences.