

— THE BEAUTY OF THE TRIUNE GOD —

The Holy Loving Triune Lord God



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THE HOLY LOVING TRIUNE LORD GOD

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TRIUNE
LORD GOD

Holiness · Love · Fatherhood · Lordship · Unity
A Study in Christian Theology

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DEDICATION

*To the Holy Loving Triune Lord God,
who moved me to write, awakened me in worshipful study,
and strengthened me in this tiresome endeavor.*

*To my theological mentors from seminary days,
whose discipline in the deep waters of theology
shaped every page of this work.*

*To my beloved Estrella —
my queen Esther, the star of my hard life
in this sin-broken world.*

*To my firstborn son, Ellaṣar,
and to my only daughter, Zarelle Grace,
whose love is my daily strength.*

*And to Miss Joycelyn Paulo,
whose faithful hands put these words into their final form.*

To Him be all glory, now and forevermore.

Soli Deo gloria.

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For any literary defects in this work, and for any failure to be fully persuasive or convincing, the author bears full responsibility. The shortcomings are unintended; the earnestness is not.

"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!"

— Romans 11:33

Preface

This theological work starts with God and ends with God. That is not merely a rhetorical gesture — it is the methodological conviction that drives every page. The author begins with the faith-assertion that there is a God, proceeding from this foundational deductive proposition through inductive engagement with the particular evidences of Scripture, creation, conscience, and human experience, and returning at last to a confirmed and deepened general conclusion about the nature of God.

This is the shape of genuine biblical and Christian thinking: deductive assertion of faith, inductive argumentation of valid reasoning, unbiased learning through experience and careful reflection, and a concluding generalized deduction — a circle that does not trap reason within itself but orients it perpetually toward the One who is the source and ground of all rationality.

The subject of this work — the Holy Loving Triune Lord God — is the only subject that covers the whole of Christian biblical theology. Every other theological topic is, in the end, a subdivision of this one: the doctrine of God. Theism (that there is God), theology proper (the study of God through His natural and special revelation), theodicy (His righteousness in the face of evil), theoretical philosophy (the logical implications of His existence), and cosmology (the divine purpose for the universe's existence) — all of these converge on and flow from the knowledge of this one God.

It therefore behooves us to approach this subject with humility, with reverence, with the awareness that we are wading into waters deeper than any human mind can fully plumb. The invitation of this book is not to master the knowledge of God but to enjoy it — to swim, as it were, in the wide and deep waters of theology, delighting in its corals and colorful

plants and myriads of fish, knowing that the ocean floor is immeasurably deeper than our dive can reach.

"For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

— Romans 11:34

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Introduction

The Subject of All Subjects

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

— Genesis 1:1

The Holy Loving Triune Lord God is the only subject that fully encompasses the whole of Christian biblical theology. Every other discipline that human thought has generated — philosophy, science, ethics, aesthetics, political theory — finds its proper orientation only when it is understood in relation to this foundational reality: there is a God, He is the Triune Lord of Scripture, and He is both holy and loving in the infinite perfection of His eternal Being.

The scope of what this claim encompasses is astonishing. Theism — the conviction that God exists — is the precondition for every other form of rational inquiry. Theology proper — the careful study of who God is through His revelation in creation, conscience, and Scripture — is the queen of the sciences, providing the framework within which every other discipline finds its proper place. Theodicy — the vindication of God's righteousness in the face of evil — is the most pressing practical application of theology to the human condition. And cosmology — the question of why the universe exists at all — receives its only satisfying answer in the recognition that God created the world for His glory and for the delight of those He would redeem and bring into fellowship with Himself.

To study God is not a merely intellectual exercise. It renders the student in sacred worship. It produces gratitude — gratitude for the sheer grace of being permitted to inquire into the nature of the One who is infinitely beyond our inquiry, and who has nonetheless condescended

to reveal Himself to us in ways we can, however partially, understand. The Psalmist's declaration, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 111:10), captures this precisely: genuine knowledge of God does not produce arrogance but reverence, not mastery but devotion.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!"

— Psalm 111:10

This volume approaches the doctrine of God through six successive studies, each focusing on a defining attribute or relational reality of the Holy Triune God. We begin with His holiness — the attribute that most radically distinguishes Him from every created being. We then explore His integrity, His uniqueness and infinity, and the perfection that encompasses all His attributes. We turn then to the love of God — not a sentimental warmth but the eternal, holy, purposive love of the Tri-Personal Being for His creation and supremely for His redeemed people. We examine the Fatherhood of the Triune God — the family, fellowship, and covenant that exist eternally within the Trinity and are extended by grace to those He adopts. And we conclude with the Lordship of the Triune God — His sovereignty as Ruler and His work as Redeemer.

The goal throughout is not exhaustive theological treatment — no finite volume could accomplish that. The goal is a coherent, biblically grounded, doxologically oriented account of who this God is — an account that equips the reader to know Him better, love Him more truly, and worship Him more faithfully.

"And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

— John 17:3

CHAPTER 1

The Holiness of God

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

— Isaiah 6:3

Of all the attributes of God, holiness is the most essential and the most comprehensive. It is the attribute that most radically sets God apart from every created being, and the attribute from which every other divine perfection derives its ultimate character. God is not merely holy in the same way that He is omnipotent or omniscient — as one attribute among many. Holiness is, in a profound sense, the attribute that governs all other attributes: His love is a holy love, His wisdom is a holy wisdom, His justice is a holy justice, His grace is a holy grace.

This is why the seraphim of Isaiah's vision do not cry "Omnipotent, omnipotent, omnipotent" or "Love, love, love" but "Holy, holy, holy" — the triple repetition of holiness being, in Hebrew literary convention, the superlative of superlatives. Holiness is the innermost sanctuary of the divine nature.

"There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God."

— 1 Samuel 2:2

A. God Is Holy in All His Works

The holiness of God is not merely a static attribute — a quality that God possesses in the abstract. It is dynamically expressed in everything He does. He is the holy Father, holy Creator, holy Sovereign, holy Savior. In each of these roles and relationships, His holiness is the irreducible

characteristic that distinguishes His action from every other action, and His person from every other person.

God's holiness means, first, that He is entirely set apart from all that is imperfect, limited, unable, weak, capricious, unrighteous, and morally evil. He is unlike angelic beings, human beings, or any created conscious being. Even His holy angels are not holy as He is holy — their holiness is derivative, creaturely, and confirmed through probation; His holiness is eternal, uncaused, and absolutely incorruptible.

"You are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you."

— Psalm 5:4

Second, God's holiness means that He is positively characterized by a moral perfection that is the standard of all goodness. He does not merely avoid evil; He is the very definition and source of good. Every genuine moral value — justice, love, truth, beauty — is what it is because it derives from and reflects the character of the holy God. There is no independent standard of goodness to which God conforms; He is the standard.

B. The Command to Be Holy

The holiness of God is not merely an object of theological contemplation. It is a command: "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2; 1 Pet. 1:16). This command is extraordinary: it calls finite, fallen creatures to a conformity with the infinite, sinless God. It is a command that can only be obeyed in and through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit — who is holy not merely in name but in nature — progressively conforming the believer to the image of the holy God from whom they were separated by sin.

"As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"

— 1 Peter 1:15–16

To study God's holiness is therefore not only to understand what God is like. It is to be confronted with what we are called to become. The knowledge of the holy God — in contrast to our own unholiness

— produces both the conviction of our need and the desire for the transformation that only He can accomplish. It is, ultimately, the knowledge that leads to worship: “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?” (Ex. 15:11).

"Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?"

— Exodus 15:11

Reflection Questions — Chapter 1

1. In what ways does the holiness of God challenge your own assumptions about what God is like? How might a deeper grasp of divine holiness change the way you pray, worship, and live?
2. The command “Be holy, for I am holy” is addressed to the whole people of God. What practical steps does pursuing holiness require in your specific life and circumstances?
3. How does the holiness of God ground the seriousness of sin? And how does it simultaneously ground the greatness of grace — the astonishment that the holy God would redeem sinners?

CHAPTER 2

The Integrity of God

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

— James 1:17

The integrity of God is the theological reality that His Being is wholly perfect, absolutely undivided, and incapable of internal contradiction, inconsistency, or diminishment. He is not composed of parts that could be separated, of faculties that could fail, or of commitments that could conflict. He is the Great I AM — the self-existent, self-sufficient, utterly simple Being whose wholeness is the precondition of all other realities.

The concept of divine integrity encompasses several interlocking truths about the nature of God: His wholeness (that He cannot be broken into parts), His immutability (that He cannot change), and His perfect self-consistency (that He always acts in complete accord with what He is).

1. His Wholeness

God's wholeness means that He cannot be broken into pieces. He has no limits, no frustrations, no mental fatigue, no emotional stress, no defects of will, and no partialities of any kind. The theological tradition describes this as divine simplicity — not that God is uncomplicated or uninteresting, but that He is not composed of parts. His attributes are not separate realities competing within Him; they are each the fullness of His one undivided Being expressed in different relations and directions.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."

— Psalm 90:2

2. His Immutability

God's immutability means that He cannot and does not change in His essential Being, character, or purposes. He is not in process, not developing, not learning, not improving. He was, is, and will always be the same God in the fullness of all that He is. James 1:17 expresses this with the image of the "Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

"For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed."

— Malachi 3:6

The pastoral significance of divine immutability is immense. The God who saved, sustained, and kept His people through the centuries is the same God who saves, sustains, and keeps His people today. His promises do not expire, His purposes do not drift, His love does not cool. The one who trusts in the immutable God stands on rock that will not shift, even when the rest of the world is moving.

3. His Eternal Peace — Shalom

God's integrity means that He cannot be disturbed in His eternal peace — the divine shalom that belongs to His tri-personal life. He is not anxious about the future, not troubled by present evil, not haunted by the past. His governance of all things flows from a place of unshakeable, eternal serenity. This is not indifference — God is genuinely concerned for His creation and His people — but it is a concern that never degenerates into anxiety, because He knows the end from the beginning and holds all things in His sovereign hand.

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

— Philippians 4:7

4. His Love as Essential Nature

God's essential love is not a behavior or a mood but an attribute of His very Being. He does not merely act lovingly; He is Love (1 John 4:8). This distinction matters enormously. If God's love were merely behavioral, it could in principle be withdrawn — He might cease to love if circumstances changed or if His people proved unworthy. But if God's love is essential — if it belongs to what He is rather than merely to what He does — then it is as immutable, as eternal, and as inexhaustible as God Himself.

"Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

— 1 John 4:8

5. His Truth

God's truth means that He is the True Reality — that His existence is the most fundamental fact about the universe, that His character is the ultimate standard of all truth, and that His word is the measure of all genuine knowledge. He is not merely truthful in the sense of not lying; He is Truth in His Being. As Jesus declared, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) — a claim that identifies the Second Person of the Trinity with Truth itself, not merely as its messenger.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

— John 14:6

Reflection Questions — Chapter 2

1. How does the immutability of God provide comfort and stability in a world of constant change? What specific situations in your own life need to be anchored to this truth?
2. What is the difference between God's love being an attribute of His Being versus merely a characteristic of His behavior? What are the practical implications of each view?

- 3.** God is Truth in His Being. How does this ground the possibility of genuine knowledge, honest inquiry, and intellectual integrity for the Christian?

CHAPTER 3

The Uniqueness and Infinity of God

"To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One."

— Isaiah 40:25

The uniqueness and infinity of God are, together, the confession that there is nothing in the whole of creation that is like God, and that God Himself is unlimited by anything in the creation. These are two sides of the same theological coin: God's uniqueness establishes that He is in a category entirely His own; God's infinity establishes that nothing within creation can define, confine, or comprehend Him.

A. The Uniqueness of God

God's uniqueness means that He is the one and only Being in and outside this universe who has no equal in all His Tri-Personal Being. This uniqueness is expressed in His Being, in His behavior, and in His relation to all other existence.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."

— Deuteronomy 6:4

1. **In His Being** — His Being is Pure Spirit, Eternal, Infinite, Perfect, immutable, and the Sole Ground of all existence — the One who guarantees all created beings their existence and their continuity. No other being is self-existent; every created being exists because God sustains it in existence.
2. **In His Behavior** — He behaves always and only in perfect accord with His Being. As He is Perfect, He does everything perfectly. The

evil irregularities and chaos visible in creation are events — accident in time — not parts of His eternal decree of the perfect order He created. His behavior is never reactive, never compromised, never less than the expression of His perfect character.

3. **As Ultimate Being** — He is the Ultimate Cause of all that exists, the Ultimate Ground of all creaturely power and existence, and the Ultimate End and Purpose of all creation — whether creatures acknowledge this or not. Every existence will end and then continue everlastingly: in everlasting glory for the redeemed, or in everlasting shame for those who rejected Him.
4. **As Infinite Being** — He is Infinite — unlimited by space, matter, force, time, or knowledge. He is Omnipresent, Eternal, Omniscient, and Omnipotent. His infinity is not a quantitative reality (as though He were simply very large or very powerful) but a qualitative one: He transcends the very categories by which we measure finite things.
5. **As Impartial Being** — His impartiality is grounded in His perfect wisdom and knowledge. He is too omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent to be partial. His judgments are not influenced by appearances, by social position, or by the pressure of any creaturely reality. He sees all things as they truly are, and His assessment of all things is therefore perfectly just.

"For God shows no partiality."

— Romans 2:11

B. The Infinity of God

God's infinity means that He is one hundred percent perfect — that His perfection admits of no extension, expansion, or supplementation. He is not almost infinite, or infinite in some respects but not others. He is absolutely, comprehensively, incomprehensibly infinite in every dimension of His Being.

1. **His Transcendence** — God is not limited by space, knowledge, time, or glory. He exists above, beyond, and outside the created order, not as a distant absence but as the sustaining presence that underlies and upholds all creation. His transcendence means that no creaturely category can adequately contain or describe Him — all our language about God is analogical, pointing toward a reality that exceeds the capacity of human thought.
2. **His Eternity** — God is eternal because He has been before His creation of space, force, energy, angelic spirits, matter, biological life, and time itself. Time is the measurement of motion in a continuum of space; God precedes and transcends the continuum itself. All our measurements of time — atomic, molecular, cellular, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, astronomical — are needless to ascribe to the One who is Eternal. He is the great I AM, not the great “I was” or “I will be.”

"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.'"

— Exodus 3:14

3. **His Omnipresence** — God is omnipresent: He is spiritually present everywhere and in everything. This does not mean that He is materially present in filth and evil as though sin were His habitat. He is Pure Spirit, and as such He is present everywhere without being contaminated by anything. His omnipresence is the ground of the Psalmist's confidence: wherever we go, whatever we face, we cannot escape His presence — and for the redeemed, that is the deepest possible comfort.

"Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!"

— Psalm 139:7–8

4. **His Omnipotence** — God is All-Powerful. All lords and kings are His subjects, though many do not acknowledge Him as the Lord of lords and King of kings. He appoints them and gives them their powers and authority to fulfill His divine decree as the Everlasting

and All-Sovereign Lord of this universe. No creaturely power exists independently of His permission and governance; none can ultimately frustrate His purposes.

"For nothing will be impossible with God."

— Luke 1:37

- 5. His Omniscience** — God knows everything that has happened, is happening, and will ever happen. There is nothing that escapes His knowledge. He divinely decreed all things in His perfect wisdom and power, and He knows their end from their beginning. All causations and their secondary means are fixed in the continuum of time by His foreknowledge and sovereign decree. He is not caught by surprise by any particular thing or event.

"Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure."

— Psalm 147:5

Reflection Questions — Chapter 3

1. How does the uniqueness of God — His absolute incomparability — challenge the temptation to fashion God in our own image, or to reduce Him to a larger version of a human person?
2. The omnipresence of God means there is nowhere we can go to escape His presence. Is that primarily a comfort or a challenge for you? What does your answer reveal about the state of your relationship with God?
3. How does God's omniscience — His complete and perfect knowledge of all things, including your own thoughts and motives — affect the way you relate to Him in prayer and in daily life?

CHAPTER 4

The Love of God

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

— John 3:16

The love of God is exclusively and inclusively of His own Being and Character. He loves because it is His nature to love — not because we are lovable, not because we have earned His affection, and not because He needs the objects of His love to complete Himself. He is Love in His Being, not merely love in His behavior. The distinction, explored in Chapter Two, bears its full fruit here: because God's love is essential and not merely behavioral, it is as eternal, as unconditional, and as inexhaustible as God Himself.

The love of God is expressed both within the eternal Trinity — where it is incommunicable and private, shared among the three Persons — and outwardly toward His creation — where it is communicable and expressed in the forms of goodness, grace, and mercy toward His creatures.

A. The Mental Preoccupation of the Triune God

God is preoccupied with His own Being because He is self-existent. He alone lives by Himself in eternal bliss and peace — the shalom that belongs to His tri-personal life. This is not narcissism or self-absorption in the creaturely sense; it is the entirely appropriate and entirely holy orientation of the most perfect Being toward the most perfect Object of contemplation: Himself. The eternal mutual knowledge and love among

Father, Son, and Spirit is the original form of love, from which all other love in the universe derives.

1. **His Holy Name** — He has the Name beyond, over, and above all other names. To speak evil of God is to commit blasphemy — to treat the Name of the infinitely worthy One as though He were common or secular. The third commandment is not merely about profanity; it is about the dignity of the One whose name is the expression of His whole being.

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain."

— Exodus 20:7

2. **His Fatherhood** — He is the Father of all that exists by virtue of His creation of inorganic and organic reality. This is not pantheism or the evolutionary myth of spontaneous generation. Creation ex nihilo — from nothing — is not a violation of sound logic but the affirmation that the Personal God is the ultimate cause of all that exists, the One who called the universe into being by the word of His power (Heb. 11:3).
3. **His Sovereignty** — Since He is the All-Sovereign Lord and Master, it follows logically that He can and does exercise His sovereignty over all His creation. Our salvation is ultimately grounded in His Fatherhood — the eternal, real, and factual reality that He is the Father who both creates and redeems, and whose redeeming love is the expression of His sovereign Fatherly purpose.
4. **His Benevolence** — His benevolence is His good-willed attitude and action toward all His creation. His Goodness, Grace, and Mercy are the three faces of the communicable love that He has with all of His creation. They are abundant and everlasting. Yet they are received in their fullness only by those who come to Him in repentance and faith — for His divine displeasure, wrath, and judgment fall upon those who persist in rebellion against His holy love.

"The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made."

B. The Moral Perfection of the Triune God

God's moral perfection is a reality within His Being and among the Tri-Personal nature of His one Being. Each attribute of His moral character is perfectly possessed by each of the three Persons — not as a quality distributed among them, but as the full expression of the one holy, loving, true, and righteous God.

1. **His Holiness** — The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are absolutely and essentially morally Perfect. Their holiness is not derivative or contingent; it is the eternal, irreducible nature of the one God in three Persons.
2. **His Love** — God's love means that He is not, will not, and cannot be or do anything against His holiness and love. His love is eternal. Even His divine displeasure, wrath, and judgment to condemn are expressions of His jealous holy love — His refusal to allow what is unholy to persist in the presence of what is perfectly and eternally holy.

"God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him."

— 1 John 4:16

3. **His Unity** — He is the One and Only Eternal Self in His Tri-Personal Being. His three Persons and one Being are united in the one Essence called God, the Elohim. The doctrine of the Trinity is not a violation of monotheism but its deepest expression: one God, existing eternally in three co-equal, co-eternal, and co-essential Persons.
4. **His Standard** — His perfect holiness is the reason why fellowship with Him is both the greatest possible privilege and the most demanding possible calling. His Tri-Personal Being, being morally perfect, meets fully the moral standard of His holy love — and His invitation to His redeemed people is to be conformed, progressively, to that same standard.

C. The Mutual Preference and Practical Love of the Triune God

Within the eternal Trinity, each Person of the Triune God prefers the glory of the Other Two to His own. This is the eternal form of the love that the New Testament commands of Christians: “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves” (Phil. 2:3). That command finds its ultimate ground and model in the mutual self-giving love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant."

— Philippians 2:5–7

God's love within His Tri-Personal Being — the incommunicable love shared privately among Father, Son, and Spirit — is the eternal ground from which His communicable love flows outward toward His creation. The love that created the world, that sustains it in existence, and that redeemed it in the blood of the Son, is the overflow of the eternal love that the Triune God has been living and sharing within Himself from before the foundation of the world.

"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."

— 1 John 4:9

Reflection Questions — Chapter 4

1. What is the difference between God's incommunicable love (shared within the Trinity) and His communicable love (extended to His creation)? How does understanding this distinction deepen your appreciation of the gospel?
2. God's love is the ground of His benevolence toward creation — but His wrath is also an expression of His holy love. How do you hold these two realities together? What happens theologically when one is emphasized at the expense of the other?

- 3.** The mutual self-giving love of the Triune God is the ultimate model for human love and community. In what specific ways does the Trinitarian love of God challenge and shape the way you love others?

CHAPTER 5

The Fatherhood of the Triune God

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are."

— 1 John 3:1

The Fatherhood of the Triune God is one of the most intimate and most carefully structured doctrines in the whole of Christian theology. It encompasses three distinct but interrelated realities: the eternal Ontological Fatherhood that exists within the Trinity itself (God the Father in relation to the Eternal Son), the universal creative Fatherhood by which God stands as the source and sustainer of all creation, and the redemptive Fatherhood by which God draws repentant, believing sinners into His family through adoption in Jesus Christ.

These three forms of divine Fatherhood must be carefully distinguished if we are to understand both the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of salvation. Conflating them leads either to a universalism that denies the particularity of redemptive grace or to a view of the Trinity that dissolves the eternal relations of the three Persons into merely functional roles.

A. The Family in the Triune God

The Triune God is the original Family. Before any created family existed, before any created being existed, there was the eternal communion of Father, Son, and Spirit — a communion of perfect knowledge, perfect love, perfect holiness, and perfect joy. It is this original Family that, in the mystery of sovereign grace, adds to itself: unfallen angelic creatures by probation, and saved human beings by regeneration.

This mystery — called the divine Trinity — is logically and biblically explained in the ecumenical standards of the universal Christian faith, particularly in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds. These creeds do not invent the doctrine; they articulate what Scripture teaches — that the Father eternally begets the Son, that the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father (and the Son), and that these three are one God, co-equal, co-eternal, and co-essential.

1. **God the Father** — He is the Eternal Ontological Father because He eternally begets His Eternal Son through His Eternal Spirit. This eternal generation is not a temporal event; it is an eternal relation that belongs to the very structure of the divine Being. The Father is not “older” than the Son; He is eternally, essentially, and relationally Father.

"The LORD said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you.'"

— Psalm 2:7

2. **God the Son** — The Begotten Son, the Lord and Savior Christ Jesus, is in eternity Eternal (Ontological Trinity) and in time Everlasting (Economic Trinity). He is of the same substance as the Father — homoousios — fully divine and, in the incarnation, fully human: one Person in two natures, the God-Man who alone can reconcile Creator and creation.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

— John 1:1

3. **God the Spirit** — The Holy Spirit is the Eternal Spirit who, like a mother incubating new life, moved upon the face of the primordial waters at creation (Gen. 1:2). He is the executive agent of the divine purposes in creation and redemption — the One who regenerates, indwells, sanctifies, and seals the people of God until the day of their final redemption.

"The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

— Genesis 1:2

B. The Fellowship in the Triune God

The Fellowship that exists eternally within the unique Family of God is characterized by three qualities: holiness, love, and truth. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit enjoy an eternal, holy, loving, truthful fellowship in their Tri-Personal Being and Existence — a fellowship that is the archetype of all genuine creaturely community.

1. **In Holiness** — The Trinitarian fellowship is characterized by holiness — the mutual wholeness, integrity, and cooperation of the three Persons, each working in perfect accord with the others' purposes, each honoring the holiness of the others, each committed to the same holy standards of justice and righteousness.
2. **In Love** — The fellowship in mutual holy love means that each Person is in holy love to each of the other two Persons. No creaturely reality exists between them; no external influence shapes their love for one another. It is pure, eternal, self-giving, and inexhaustible.

"The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand."

— John 3:35

3. **In Truth** — The Trinitarian fellowship in truth means that each Person possesses the same Absolute Truth in common with the other two — perfectly, completely, and personally. The Father is the Truth; the Son is the Truth ("I am the way and the truth and the life"); the Spirit is the Spirit of truth who guides the people of God into all truth (John 16:13).

C. The Friendship and Covenant of the Triune God

The friendship within the Triune God is the eternal form of covenant — the mutual friendship and friendliness of the three Persons toward one another, grounded in their one shared Being. This eternal covenant within the Trinity becomes, for fallen humanity, the Covenant of Grace — the astonishing extension of Trinitarian friendship to those who, by nature, are enemies of God.

1. **The Eternal Covenant** — Since every Person is eternal, their mutual covenant — their friendship and friendliness — is eternal in their Being. Christians are included in that eternal covenant by the benevolence of God — not because we are worthy, but because He is pleased to extend His friendship to those He has chosen in Christ.
2. **The Covenant of Grace** — This eternal covenant became for fallen humanity the Covenant of Grace. God is benevolent toward His elect — gracious and merciful in ways that are not applicable within the Trinity itself, where no Person needs grace or mercy. We, forgiven sinners, receive from His grace His love instead of His wrath, and from His mercy, everlasting comfort and peace.

"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

— Romans 8:38–39

3. **The Covenant of the Blood** — The Blood of the Lamb — the Lord and Savior Christ Jesus — makes the elect, His church, His everlasting friends. The Lamb of God shed His own blood for the covering and cleansing of sin and its filth, sealing the New Covenant in His body and blood (Luke 22:20) and securing the eternal friendship between God and His redeemed people.

"This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

— Luke 22:20

Reflection Questions — Chapter 5

1. What is the difference between God's creative Fatherhood (He is Father of all as Creator) and His redemptive Fatherhood (He is Father of the redeemed through adoption in Christ)? Why does the distinction matter?

- 2.** The eternal fellowship of the Trinity — in holiness, love, and truth — is the archetype of all created community. What does genuine Christian community look like when it is modeled on Trinitarian fellowship?
- 3.** The Covenant of Grace is the extension of the eternal Trinitarian friendship to fallen sinners. What does it mean for you personally to be called a friend of God (John 15:15)? How does that reality shape your daily life?

CHAPTER 6

The Lordship of the Triune God

"The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all."

— Psalm 103:19

The Lordship of the Triune Personal God refers to His claim and His exercise of authority as the Ruler and Redeemer of the universe and of every human being within it. Lordship is not incidental to the divine character; it is the natural and necessary expression of who God is. Because He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, because He is the Ultimate Ground of all existence, and because He is morally perfect in His holiness and love, He is the only Being who can legitimately claim absolute sovereignty over all that exists.

The Lordship of God is expressed in two great works: His rule over creation and history, and His redemption of sinners through the blood of His Son. These two dimensions of Lordship must be held together: a God who rules without redeeming is a tyrant; a God who redeems without ruling is a sentimentalist. The God of Scripture is the Sovereign Redeemer — the one whose rule is the context within which His redemption accomplishes its purpose.

A. The Triune God, the Ruler

God's rule is holy and loving. It is holy as He is holy — each Person of the Trinity is Holy Ruler, not merely in behavior but in essential nature. It is loving as He is loving — a rule that serves the ultimate good of those over whom it is exercised, not their immediate comfort, but their deepest flourishing and their eternal salvation.

"The LORD is king forever and ever; the nations perish from his land."

— Psalm 10:16

1. **The Holy Ruler** — His rule is holy as He is holy. The Father is holy as the Son and the Holy Spirit are holy — there is only one Holy Triune God, and His rule flows from and expresses His one holy nature. The Nicene and Athanasian Creeds of the universal Church articulate the foundation of this truth with precision that centuries of theological reflection have not surpassed.
2. **The Loving Ruler** — The Triune Personal God is Love; therefore, His rule is of love — a fatherly love that silences the present debates among His people about soteriology and makes them friends to one another. Christ Jesus prayed for this in His High Priestly Prayer (John 17): that the love of the Father for the Son might dwell in His people and produce among them the unity that bears witness to the world.

"I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me."

— John 17:23

B. The Triune God, the Redeemer

The Triune Personal God is the only One worthy and qualified to be the one and only Redeemer — by and through the Only Begotten Son of God. Redemption is not an afterthought or a response to an unexpected crisis. It is the outworking of the eternal covenant within the Trinity: the Father elects, the Son redeems, the Spirit applies. The whole Triune God is engaged in the single work of bringing the people of God from bondage to freedom, from guilt to justification, from death to life.

1. **The Redemption of All — Unlimited Atonement** — The unlimited redemption of the Son is for all people of this totally sinful world. He, being the Father, does not enjoy the punishment worthy of reprobate sinners. Christ's death is a propitiation sufficient for all — an appeasement of the divine wrath upon the inherited sin of all humanity, a covering and propitiation for sin.

God forbears the sins of the reprobate in His longsuffering love, suspending His final wrath until the Last Day.

"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

— 1 John 2:2

- 2. The Redemption of His Church — Limited Application** — His redemption is applied in its full saving power only to repentant, faithful elect sinners — His universal catholic Church. For them, God is not only appeased of His wrath but fully accepts them through His Beloved Son. He buys them from the sin-market of spiritual darkness by the ransom of His Son's holy blood. He covers and cleanses them by the sacred blood of His Sacrificial Lamb, propitiated in His holy wrath against their sin, expiated of their guilt, forgiven, adopted, and sealed for the day of redemption.

"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace."

— Ephesians 1:7

C. The Unity of the Triune God — One in Majesty, Glory, and Praise

The sixth and culminating study in this volume reaches the apex of Christian theology: the Unity of the Triune God. He is the Last and the First, the Omega and the Alpha, the End and the Beginning — the Holy Triune Lord God, the Elohim, in all His majesty, glory, dominion, authority, and everlasting praise.

The Unity of the Triune God is not the unity of mere numerical singularity — not the bare fact that God is one rather than many. It is the unity of the three Persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — in one Being, one essence, one will, one purpose, one love, one holiness, one truth. It is the unity that the eternal Trinitarian fellowship has always enjoyed, and that the redeemed will one day share perfectly in the new creation.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

— Deuteronomy 6:4–5

To this One — the Holy Loving Triune Lord God — be our true spiritual worship: one in our whole being, in our spirits, souls, hearts, minds, strengths, and bodies. This is the calling and the destination of every human life: to be drawn into the orbit of the Triune God's eternal love, to be conformed to His image, and to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, now and forever.

"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."

— Romans 11:36

Reflection Questions — Chapter 6

1. How does the Lordship of God as Ruler and Redeemer hold together in a way that avoids both the error of a tyrannical God (who rules but does not redeem) and a sentimental God (who redeems but does not rule)?
2. The unlimited propitiation of Christ for all sin, and the limited application of that redemption to the elect — how do these two truths fit together? What pastoral implications follow from each?
3. The call of this volume's final chapter is total worship: body, soul, spirit, heart, mind, and strength. What would it look like in your daily life to offer this kind of total, integrated worship to the Holy Loving Triune Lord God?

Conclusion

YAHWEH SHALOM — *The Mystery Remains*

"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever."

— Deuteronomy 29:29

The basic knowledge for all sound theoretical and practical philosophy, all real, true, pure and applied science, and all praiseworthy human art is the assertion that there is the Holy, Loving Triune God — the Lord over all existence. This is not the conclusion of an argument that could have reached a different destination. It is the foundational reality from which all genuine knowledge proceeds and toward which all genuine inquiry tends.

Since the Basic Knowledge is the Holy Loving Triune Lord God, the Climax of that Basic Knowledge is the same Triune Lord — the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the One from whom and through whom and to whom are all things (Rom. 11:36). Theology does not merely begin with God; it ends with Him in the only way anything can properly end: in worship.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

— Revelation 22:13

The mystery of this Holy Loving Triune Lord God abides eternally in Himself. He is the YAHWEH SHALOM — the LORD who is Peace — who dwells in a light so bright, so pure, and so wholly other that no creature has ever fully approached it, and who simultaneously dwells within and among His people by the presence of His Spirit. He is the God who is utter darkness to creaturely ignorance and utter light to

creaturely worship — the One whose glory no eye has seen, whose depths no mind has fathomed, and whose love no heart has fully received.

This is precisely why our assertions about Him are always short of the full knowledge of the TRUTH who alone is the One and Only Truth. The six chapters of this study have illuminated real and important dimensions of the divine reality. But they are a lamp in the daylight — genuinely illuminating, but illuminating a reality that is infinitely larger than the lamp. We know truly; we do not yet know fully. We see; but we see dimly, as in a mirror, awaiting the day when we shall see face to face and know even as we are known (1 Cor. 13:12).

"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known."

— 1 Corinthians 13:12

Until that day, the appropriate response to the knowledge of the Holy Loving Triune Lord God is worship. Not the performance of religious duties, but the total orientation of the whole person — spirit, soul, heart, mind, strength, and body — toward the One who made us for Himself, redeemed us through His Son, indwells us by His Spirit, and will one day bring us into the fullness of the eternal fellowship that Father, Son, and Spirit have always enjoyed.

He is YAHWEH SHALOM. He is the LORD, our Peace. And in the end, that is enough.

Soli Deo gloria.

To God alone be the glory.

Personal Questions and Challenges

The following questions are offered as a personal and communal invitation to bring the theological truths of this volume from the page into daily life. The knowledge of God is not an end in itself; it is the beginning of worship, of obedience, of love, and of witness.

On the Holiness and Integrity of God

1. Have you confronted the holiness of God not merely as a theological concept but as a personal and searching reality — the reality that the God before whom you live and to whom you will one day give account is of purer eyes than to behold evil (Hab. 1:13)? What does that confrontation produce in you?
2. God's immutability means that He never changes in His character, purposes, or promises. What specific promise of God do you need to anchor yourself to today, trusting that it will not change, expire, or be revoked?
3. God is Truth in His Being. Are you a person of truth — in your speech, your commitments, your self-presentation to God and others? Where does your practice of truthfulness need to be brought into closer conformity with the God who is Truth?

On the Uniqueness and Infinity of God

4. The omnipresence of God means that there is no moment, no circumstance, and no inner experience from which He is absent. In what area of your life are you most prone to forgetting this reality — and what would change if you remembered it consistently?
5. God's omniscience encompasses not only your actions but your thoughts, your motives, and the hidden attitudes of your heart. Does this knowledge produce in you the response of hiding and self-justification, or of openness and confession? What does your response reveal?
6. The uniqueness of God — the fact that He has no equal, no rival, and no comparable Being in the universe — is the ground of all genuine worship. Are there things in your life that functionally rival God for your ultimate loyalty, trust, or delight? What does it look like to detach those things from their false ultimacy?

On the Love and Fatherhood of God

7. God's love is essential to His Being, not merely behavioral. What difference does it make to your prayer life, your struggles with sin, and your experience of suffering to know that God's love for you is as eternal and unchangeable as God Himself?
8. The Covenant of Grace is the extension of the eternal Trinitarian friendship to unworthy sinners. Do you live in the daily awareness that you have been called into friendship with God (John 15:15)? What would it mean to take that friendship more seriously?
9. The Fatherhood of God in redemption is distinct from His Fatherhood in creation. Have you personally received, by repentance and faith, the adoption that He offers in Jesus Christ? If you are uncertain about the reality of your adoption, what next step does God's word call you to take?

On the Lordship of God

- 10.** The Lordship of Christ covers every dimension of human life: personal, familial, vocational, social, political. Is there a domain of your life that you have not fully submitted to His Lordship? What would submission look like in that specific area?
- 11.** The redemption accomplished by Christ is sufficient for all and effective for those who repent and believe. Is there someone in your life whom you have given up on — whom you have concluded is beyond the reach of God's grace? How does the unlimited sufficiency of Christ's propitiation challenge that conclusion?
- 12.** The final call of this volume is total worship: body, soul, spirit, heart, mind, and strength, offered to the Holy Loving Triune Lord God. What one concrete change would move you closer to that kind of total, integrated worship in the coming week?

Scripture Index

The following index lists every Scripture passage cited or expounded in this volume, organized by biblical book in canonical order and cross-referenced to the relevant chapter or section.

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About the Author

Pastor Baltazar A. Niangar is a Pastor Emeritus who holds the degrees of Th.B. (Bachelor of Theology), A.B. (Bachelor of Arts), and D.D. (Doctor of Divinity). He has devoted his life and ministry to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the rigorous theological formation of God's people, and the equipping of pastoral leaders for faithful and effective ministry in church and society.

Dr. Niangar served for many years as a pastor and theological educator, and has been a central figure in the work of Holistic Enhancement for Lay-leaders and Pastors (HELP, Inc.) — a parachurch ministry committed to equipping the whole people of God for faithful service across every sphere of life. His monthly theological lectures to the HELP, Inc. fellowship have addressed the most foundational questions of the Christian faith, and four of those studies — expanded, deepened, and set in the full Crossway format — now form the Niangar Theological Library.

The four volumes in the series to date represent the range and depth of Dr. Niangar's theological vision:

Spiritual Unity and Personal Diversity in Christ

Why God Did Decree and Allow Evil to Exist

What the Christian Church Should Be

The Reformed Theological Paradigm

The Holy Loving Triune Lord God

His theological formation reflects sustained engagement with the whole of the Reformed and evangelical tradition. Among those whose thought has most shaped his own are Augustine of Hippo, John Calvin,

Abraham Kuyper, Louis Berkhof, Benjamin B. Warfield, Oscar Cullmann, Herman Dooyeweerd, Karl Barth, Paul Jewett, Francis Schaeffer, R.C. Sproul, and Ravi Zacharias. He reads every theological question through the lens of the whole counsel of God, and has spent a lifetime teaching others to do the same.

The present volume — The Holy Loving Triune Lord God — represents Dr. Niangar's most direct and sustained engagement with theology proper: the doctrine of God Himself. It is, in his own estimation, the foundational volume of the series — the one to which every other theological question is ultimately referred, and from which every other doctrinal conviction ultimately flows. To know God — truly, deeply, biblically — is the beginning and the end of all theology. It is also, Dr. Niangar would say, the beginning and the end of a fully human life.

He lives with his beloved wife, Estrella. He is the father of Dr. Ellazar and Zarelle Grace. He continues to preach, teach, write, and intercede for the reformation and renewal of the Church of Jesus Christ, until the day when faith gives way to sight and the knowledge that is now partial becomes the knowledge that is full.

Soli Deo gloria.