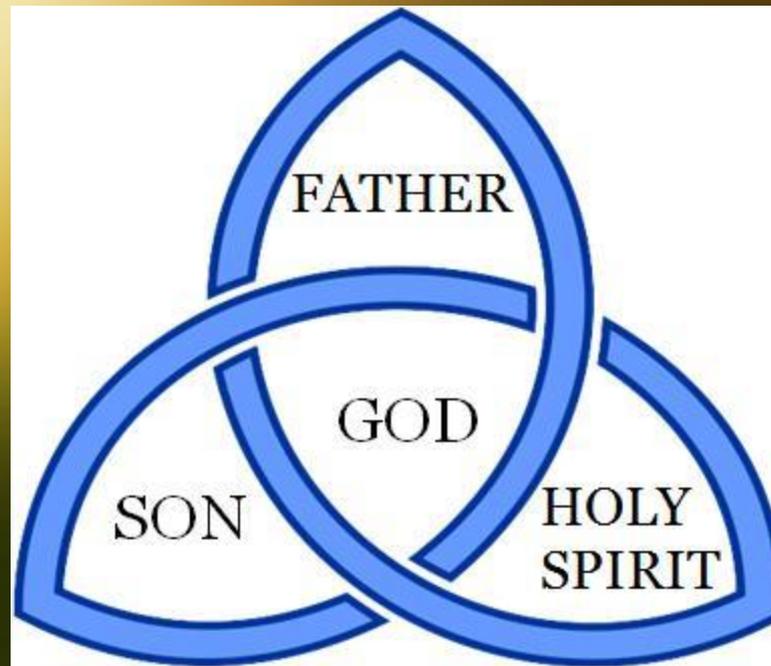


Theology: The Study of God

The Existence of God

“Theology Proper” is doctrine concerning the character and nature of God



Romans 1:18-23

A Downward Spiral

- Humanity has suppressed the truth about God
- The choice not to honor God or give thanks
- Our foolish hearts were darkened
- We exchanged worship of the incorruptible God for corruptible creatures (idolatry)
- God has given mankind over to our sinful desires

False Views of God

- Polytheism – belief in many gods
 - Regional gods: of the mountains, or the valleys, rain, wisdom, or war...
 - Example: Greek mythology
 - Israel commanded to worship the one true God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:4–5

NIV

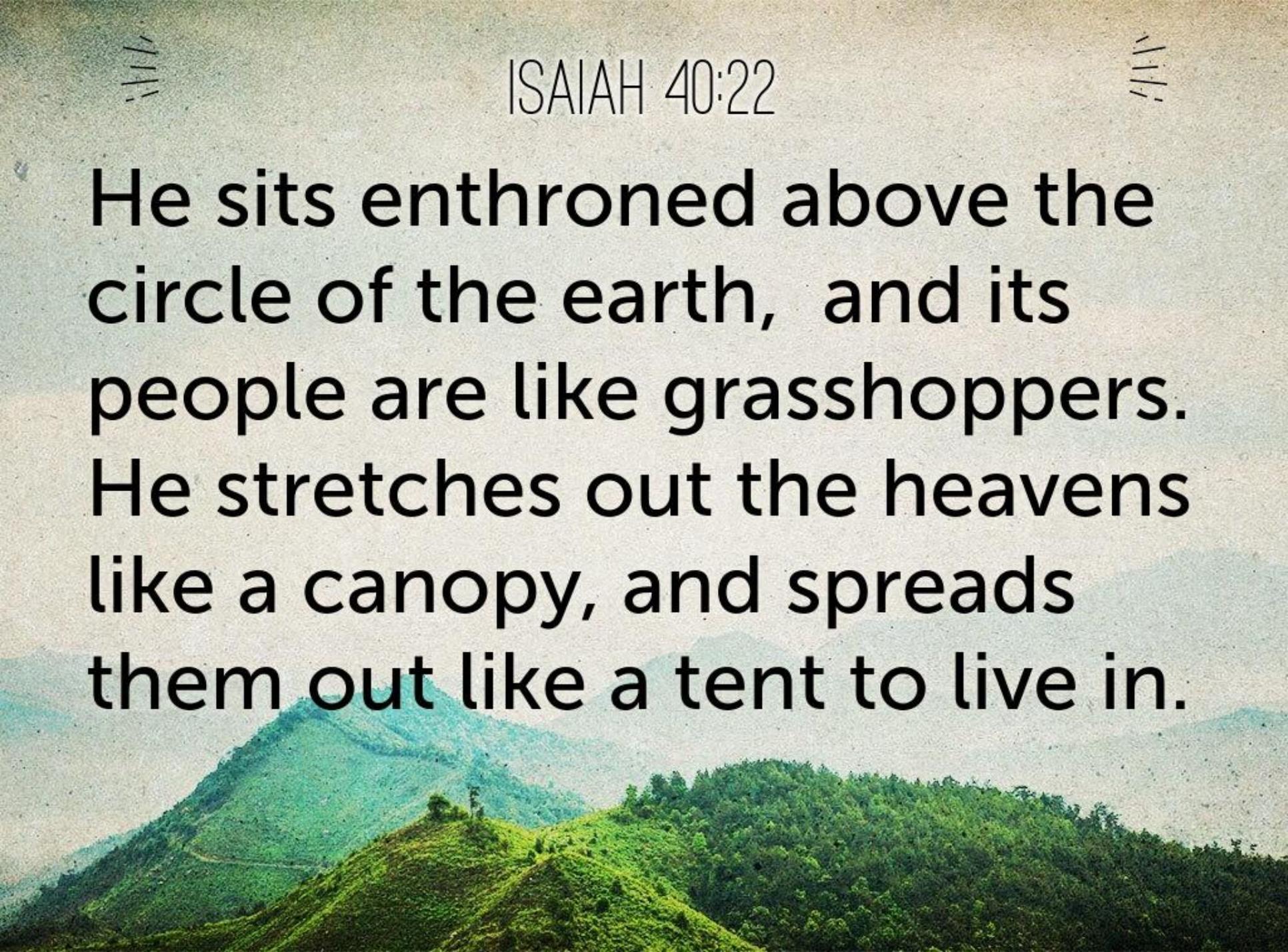
False Views of God

- Pantheism – belief that everything is god
 - God is not only present in the universe, all that exists in the universe is a part of God
 - Example: Native American religion
 - Greek philosopher Seneca (4BC – 65 AD) said “What is God? ...He is all that you see and all that you don’t see.”



ISAIAH 40:22

He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.



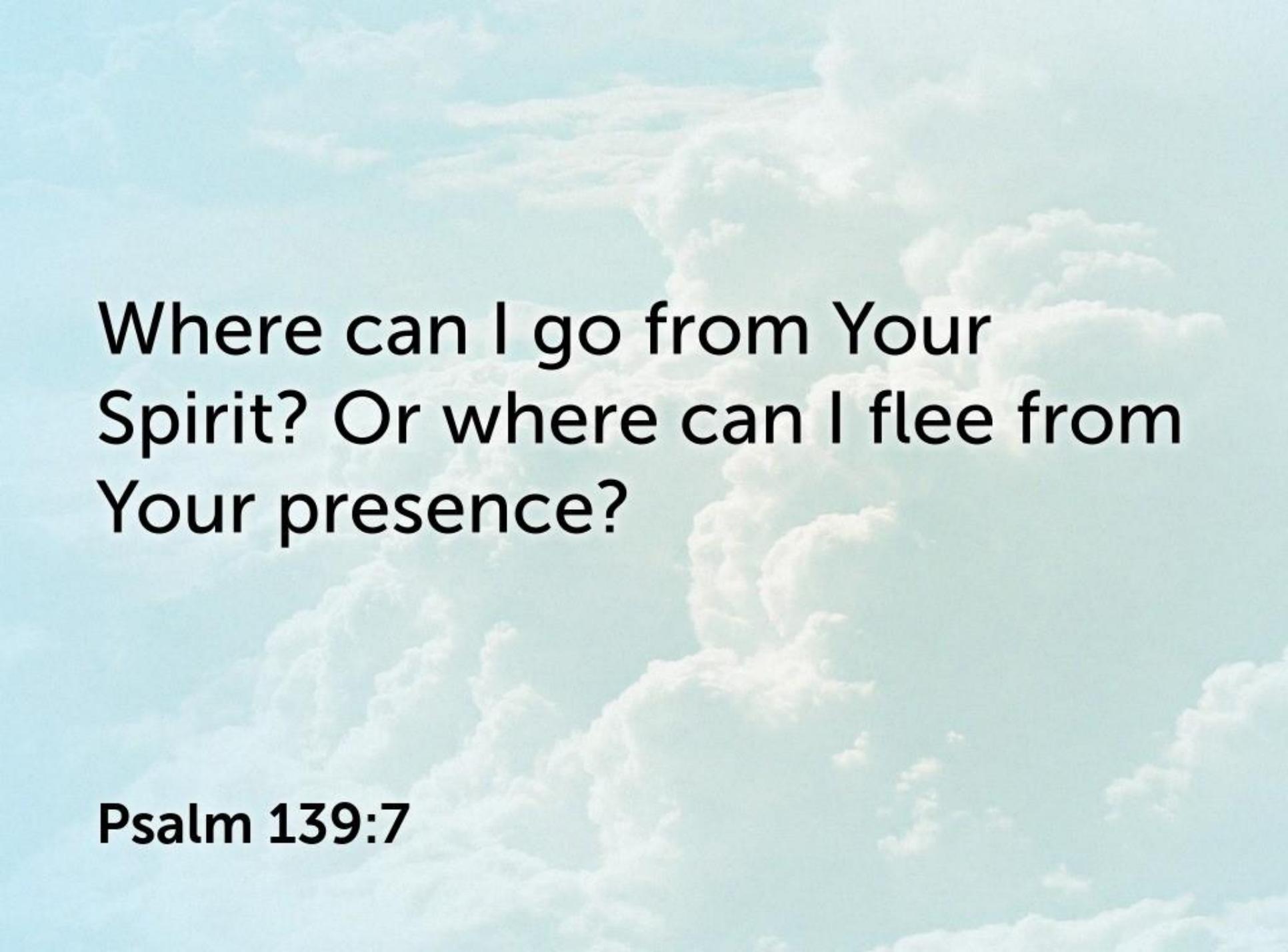
ISAIAH 66:1

ISAIAH

Thus says the LORD, "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest?"

False Views of God

- Deism – belief in an impersonal god
 - Like a watchmaker who wound up the spring and then lets it go on ticking by itself
 - Scripture tells us God is actively involved in the world and in our lives, close to us
 - Psalm 139:7; 73:28



Where can I go from Your
Spirit? Or where can I flee from
Your presence?

Psalm 139:7

But as for me, it is good to be near
God. I have made the Sovereign
LORD my refuge; I will tell of all
your deeds.

PSALM 73:28

NIV

False Views of God

- *Atheism* – denial that there is a god
 - hardened heart and blinded mind
 - If there is no God, no accountability
 - Psalm 14:1 “*The fool says in his heart, ‘there is no God.’*”

False Views of God

- *Agnosticism* – belief there is no way to know whether or not God exists
 - Maybe there is, maybe there isn't?
 - Living as practical atheists
 - Scripture tells us God can be known
 - Rom. 1:19 “...*what may be known about God is plain to them, because God made it plain to them...*”

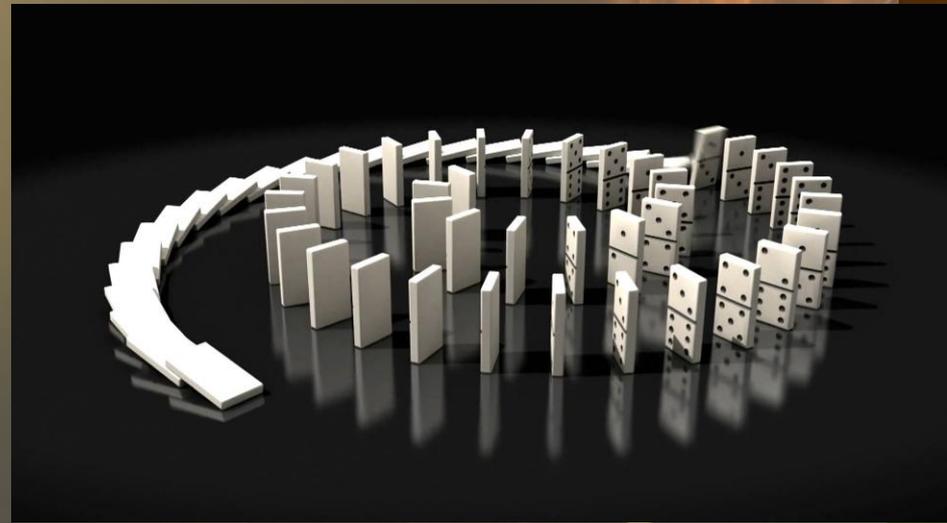
How do I know there is a God?



Arguments for the Existence of God

A) The Cosmological Argument

- “Cosmos” means world
- Everything in the universe has a cause
- Only God could create a world so great as ours
- God is the uncaused cause



Arguments for the Existence of God

B) The Teleological Argument

- There is evidence of order and harmony
 - This points to an intelligent being who designed the world with purpose
- 
- A set of architectural blueprints for a house, showing various views and details. The drawings are white lines on a blue background. Labels include 'BREXCHWAY CORNER DETAIL', 'FRONT PORCHES', and 'RIGHT SIDE PORCHES'. The main drawing shows a two-story house with a central entrance and a chimney.
- Distance between the earth and the sun
 - The moon's location and ocean tides
 - Tilt of the earth and the four seasons
 - What are the odds?
- God is the Master Designer

Arguments for the Existence of God

C) The Anthropological Argument

- “Anthropos” means man
- Man is not like the other animals, but is a spiritual and moral being
- Why? We are made in the image of God
- “A blind force... could never produce a man with intellect, sensibility, will, conscience, and inherent belief in a Creator” Lewis Sperry Chafer



Arguments for the Existence of God

D) The Ontological Argument

- The concept of God is universal because God has placed it within all people
- Our limited minds could not comprehend the idea of an infinite God unless He is real
- Anselm (1033-1109) reasoned, *“The fool may say in his heart, there is no God, but he only proves thereby that he is a fool, for what he says is self-contradictory. Since he denies that there is a God, he has in his mind the idea of God, and that idea implies the existence of God...”*

Is faith in God reasonable?

- Wayne Grudem writes, “...therefore when we believe that God exists, we are basing our belief not on some blind hope apart from any evidence, but on an overwhelming amount of reliable evidence from God’s words and God’s works...” *(Systematic Theology, p.143)*

The Limits of Reason

- 1 Corinthians 1:21 “...since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. “
- 1 Cor. 2:4–5 “My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power. “
- 2 Corinthians 4:4 “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

For Next Week

- Charles Baker “A Dispensational Theology,” chapter 18, The Biblical View of God
- P.131-141