

Chapter 3

God

*I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me... .
I say: My purpose will stand,
and I will do all that I please.
Isaiah 46:9-10*

This chapter introduces some of the major theological concepts and vocabulary regarding the study of the doctrine of God. More specifically, it looks at how the Bible portrays God, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the attributes of God. In addition, the grammar and vocabulary section introduces adjective clauses and prefixes.

Introduction

From Genesis 1

“In the beginning God ...” (Gen 1:1). Take a moment to think about this opening phrase of the Bible. One thing you may have observed is that these very first words simply assume the existence of God. Nowhere in Scripture do we find an attempt to prove or argue for God’s existence. Nor do we find what we might call a formal definition of God. How then does the Bible describe God?

PART I: Vocabulary and Reading Skills

General Academic Vocabulary

► Chapter 3 Vocabulary

Use the following numbers to evaluate each of the words in the chart below. Write 1, 2, or 3 before each word. Then, as you work through the next three exercises, pay particular attention to the words that you marked with 2 or 3.

- 1 = I know the meaning of the word.
- 2 = I am not sure of the meaning of the word.
- 3 = I don’t know the meaning of the word.

<input type="checkbox"/> accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> consequent	<input type="checkbox"/> identify	<input type="checkbox"/> reveal
<input type="checkbox"/> acknowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> contrast	<input type="checkbox"/> initial	<input type="checkbox"/> role
<input type="checkbox"/> aspect	<input type="checkbox"/> debate	<input type="checkbox"/> integrity	<input type="checkbox"/> source
<input type="checkbox"/> capable	<input type="checkbox"/> emphasis	<input type="checkbox"/> perspective	<input type="checkbox"/> sustain
<input type="checkbox"/> conclude	<input type="checkbox"/> goal	<input type="checkbox"/> rely	<input type="checkbox"/> visible

► **Word Selection**

Fill in each blank with the correct form of one of the words on the left. Use each word only once.

acknowledge
capable
identify
rely
sustain
various
visible

God is the Creator of all that is (1) _____ and invisible. He cares about and (2) _____ his creation and interacts with it in (3) _____ ways. Not only is he the Creator of the universe, but he is also a personal being and is (4) _____ of having fellowship with humans. God showed us that he is a personal being by (5) _____ himself with a name. God relates personally to those who (6) _____ him as their Savior, and he wants us to (7) _____ on him for our needs.

► **Vocabulary in Context**

For each item below, find the word in the text (e.g., p. 83, ¶ 4, line 5), determine the meaning from the surrounding context, choose the best definition, and then write the letter in the blank. If the text uses a variant of the word in the general academic vocabulary list, the variant is included in parentheses. For example, debate (debates).

Example: b aspect
(p. 83, ¶ 4, line 5)

- a. a general direction
- b. a part of something
- c. a way of thinking
- d. a consideration of something complex

1. _____ role (roles)
(p. 83, ¶ 2, line 1)

- a. a part someone assumes in a group
- b. a character played by an actor
- c. a socially expected behavior pattern
- d. a behavior copied by others

2. _____ goal
(p. 84, ¶ 6, line 9)

- a. an expected end
- b. a purpose
- c. a dream come true
- d. a score

3. _____ debate (debates)
(p. 86, ¶ 4, line 2)

- a. a deliberation of a legal case
- b. a consideration of an issue
- c. a discussion involving opposing viewpoints
- d. a formal contest

4. _____ source
(p. 101, ¶ 3, line 9)

- a. a point of origin
- b. a record of information
- c. a person who supplies information
- d. a place where a river begins

5. _____ contrast
(p. 102, ¶ 5, line 5)

- a. a difference in ideas
- b. a difference between beings
- c. a difference in meaning
- d. a difference in color

6. ___ perspective
(p. 102, ¶ 9, line 5)
- a particular view from a distance
 - a correct understanding of what is important
 - an interest in one's own judgment
 - a certain set of beliefs
7. ___ integrity
(p. 104, ¶ 6, line 2)
- strength
 - unity
 - moral character
 - completeness

► Dictionary Use

Look up each boldfaced word in your English language dictionary. Write a short definition that is appropriate for the word as it is used below.

Example: **area**: Many olive trees grow in the **area** around Jerusalem.

a particular part of a region, country, or city

- accurate**: The Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah are **accurate**.
- conclude**: The Creator will **conclude** his work of reclaiming and regenerating his own.
- consequently**: **Consequently**, God is not limited in knowledge or power.
- emphasize**: In this chapter we **emphasize** the attributes of God.
- initial**: Our **initial** reaction to God's holiness should be obedience.
- reveal**: When sin entered the world, God began to **reveal** his plan.

Theological Vocabulary

► Word Families in Context

Complete each passage by filling in the blanks with the words at the left. Use each word only once.

justice

Judge

justifies

just

God's nature is further revealed to us in his activity as a (1) _____ Judge. His administration of justice, which includes punishing wrong, must be seen alongside his work of redemption. He is the (2) _____ who also provided an absolutely fair redemption. Paul asserts that God's (3) _____ is vindicated and human helplessness is overcome through his actions in Christ. He is both just and the one who (4) _____ (Rom 3:21–30).

truthful

true

truly

truthfulness

The God of Israel is not only the (1) _____ God, he is truthful. He represents things as they (2) _____ are. Anything else, lying or any other kind of falsehood, is contrary to his nature. In Titus 1:2 the apostle Paul describes God's (3) _____ by saying he is the one "who does not lie." Those who are his people are to reflect his character by being (4) _____ in what they say and even imply.

Reading for Meaning

► Reading Strategy: Locating the Main Idea and Topic Sentence

Review basic paragraph organization from Chapter 1, pp. 33–35. You should recall that in English academic writing, one of the most common approaches is to discuss one main idea in each paragraph. There is often a topic sentence for each paragraph. The topic sentence is the sentence that best describes the main idea. It is usually, but not always, the first sentence in the paragraph.

► Exercises

1. Read the paragraph below. For each question, circle the letter representing the correct answer.

Theological concepts are broad biblical and theological ideas. These concepts are formed by combining specific characteristics of a biblical truth into a larger, more general idea. For example, when referring to God, the concept of glory includes his majesty, his holiness, and the greatness of his entire nature.

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
 - a. theological concepts
 - b. broad biblical and theological ideas
 - c. the formation of theological concepts
2. What is the topic sentence?
 - a. Theological concepts are broad biblical and theological ideas.
 - b. These concepts are formed by combining specific characteristics of a biblical truth into a larger, more general idea.
 - c. For example, when referring to God, the concept of glory includes his majesty, his holiness, and the greatness of his entire nature.

2. Read the paragraph below. For each question, circle the letter representing the correct answer.

The statement "God is spirit" could leave us with some vague notions of an influence of good, or an impersonal ideal or force. So it is important to note that the Bible shows God as a personal being. Not only did he identify himself with a name, but we see him revealed as one who knows, wills, feels, and acts. He is to be treated as a personal being who is to be loved and valued not for what he does for us but for who he is.

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
 - a. God is spirit.
 - b. God is to be loved and valued as a personal being.
 - c. According to the Bible, God is a personal being.
2. What is the topic sentence?
 - a. The statement "God is spirit" could leave us with some vague notions of an influence of good, or an impersonal ideal or force.
 - b. So it is important to note that the Bible shows God as a personal being.
 - c. He is to be treated as a being who is to be loved and valued not for what he does for us but for who he is.

► Reading Strategy: Scanning for Specific Information

In Chapter 1 (pp. 35–37) we discussed skimming, which is looking over the whole reading passage very quickly in order to find the most important ideas. Using this strategy before you read a passage will help you to understand what you are reading and remember the important points more easily. An equally important strategy is **scanning**. This is very helpful for locating specific information in a reading passage. When you scan a passage, you look through it very quickly without actually reading the words of the text in order to find a specific word or phrase.

Steps for scanning:

1. Know what piece of information you want to find, such as a name, a date, a specific word, or a phrase.
2. Move your eyes quickly from left to right over the page.
3. Do not read whole sentences. Rather, look very quickly through the passage, line by line, until you find the information you are looking for.
4. When you find the information you need, quickly read the phrases or sentences around it.
5. Underline, circle, or highlight each piece of information you find. Then continue your scanning process until finished.

► **Exercises**

1. Scan the reading on pp. 83–84 for seven biblical references. List them below.

2. Scan the same reading for the following sentences or phrases. Write the paragraph number in the space before each item.
 1. _____ visible creation
 2. _____ The Christian life is lived in relationship with our Maker.
 3. _____ We are in a “fallen state.”
 4. _____ He is the just Judge who has also provided an absolutely fair redemption.
 5. _____ salvation history

PART II: Focused Reading

How is God Portrayed in the Bible?

► **Pre-Reading**

1. As you think about God, what words can you use to describe him? That is, what is God like, or what is his nature? Write your answer, and then compare it with the answers of your classmates.

2. Review the steps for skimming listed on p. 36 of Chapter 1. Then, skim the following article before answering these questions.
 - a. What is the title of this section? What are the subheadings?

 - b. Read the first two paragraphs below. What do you think this reading passage is going to be about?

- c. Skim paragraphs 3–8. List the important theological words or terms that you see.

► Reading

Read the following article:

- You may refer to the definitions on the right, but do not use a dictionary.
- Underline the main ideas and most important words or terms.
- You may write comments and questions in the margin.

(1) The most *fundamental*¹ teaching of the Bible is that God exists and that he is the Supreme Being who is *ultimately in control*² of the universe. He is supreme in all he is and does.

(2) The writers of Scripture typically *portray*³ his nature through his roles, works, and words. It is as if the writers record something about God and pause to ask, “Now, what kind of being says or does this?” They then *recount*⁴ other words and deeds, pausing each time to ask the same *implied*⁵ question. The impact of all such accounts is intended to lead the reader, even as the speech and actions of God led people in the past, into knowing God himself. What this process reveals is a God who is Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Judge.

¹ basic, elementary

² the final one in charge

³ show

⁴ describe, state, tell

⁵ suggested

Creator

(3) God is the Creator of all that exists. Genesis 1:1 is only one of several *affirmations*⁶ that the whole universe came into being through God’s action. He brought everything into existence out of nothing (Latin: *ex nihilo*). The *climax*⁷ of this activity was the creation of human beings in his own image and likeness. Creator-created is the initial relationship between God and humans. The fact that God is Creator is the basis for his right to rule the universe and establish both the regular process of nature and the moral and ethical principles within which people must live. It is entirely proper, therefore, for him to receive and expect honor, reverence, worship, and obedience. Salvation is God’s work to reclaim and control that which he made. The Christian life is lived in relationship with our Maker. At the *consummation*⁸ the Creator will conclude his work of reclaiming and *regenerating*⁹ his own, who forever will remain in fellowship with him under his loving rule.

⁶ statements put forward as truth

⁷ final and most important event

⁸ fulfillment of God’s plan, see p. 39, ¶ 5–6

⁹ giving new spiritual life

¹⁰ continuation, additional act

Sustainer

(4) Closely related to God’s work as Creator, and an *extension*¹⁰ of it, is his continuing involvement in the created order. He sustains his creation and guides it toward the purposes he intended for it. This is what theologians call **providence**. The word *providence* is not found in the Bible, yet it represents a biblical doctrine which *permeates*¹¹ every aspect of God’s relationship with his creation. It portrays God not only as sovereign over the universe, but also as the one who relates personally to people, especially those who acknowledge him. Over and over again we see concrete ways in which God cares for his creation. The writer of Psalm 104, for example, views in detail the visible creation around

¹¹ is a very important part of

him and then sings the glory of its Maker and Sustainer. In Matthew 5:45 Jesus plainly states that God's goodness *extends*¹² beyond his own people: "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous." Providence is our *assurance*¹³ that God is present and active in our lives and that nothing happens simply by chance. Even if we find ourselves faced with trials, dangers, or *persecution*,¹⁴ we can be confident, as Paul was, that "neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:38–39).

(15) As Creator and Sustainer, God has the right to rule and make requirements of those whom he created. We see in Genesis 3, however, that the man and woman whom he lovingly created to be in relationship with himself, disobeyed, rebelled against him, and thereby committed *spiritual treason*.¹⁵ The *consequences*¹⁶ of their pride and disobedience were so *grave*¹⁷ that all of creation and all relationships—people's relationship to God, to other human beings, to their environment, and to themselves—were *radically*¹⁸ affected. Thus the nature of every human being, as well as the natural world, was changed by the entrance of sin. We are in a "fallen state." Not only do we commit sinful acts, but we *are* sinners.

Redeemer/Reconciler

(16) Yet God has continued to work out his purposes in his fallen creation. It is in this *realm*¹⁹ that we see God as Redeemer and Reconciler. He has provided what is required to *restore*²⁰ his creation to a proper relationship with himself and with others. Before the creation of the world, God chose us to be holy and blameless in his sight and *predestined*²¹ us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in whom we have redemption through his blood (Eph 1:3–14). When sin entered the world, God began to reveal his plan and *put it in motion*.²² He has acted not only within human history in general but also in a special series of historical events that eventually will lead to the grand goal and climax of the world's history. Within this redemptive or salvation history, he has revealed himself and made reconciliation and redemption available through Jesus Christ.

Judge

(17) God's nature is further revealed to us in his activity as Judge. His administration of justice, which includes punishing wrong, must be seen alongside his work of redemption. He is the just Judge who has also provided an absolutely fair redemption. Paul asserts that God's justice is *vindicated*²³ and human helplessness is overcome through his actions in Christ. He is both "just and the one who justifies" (Rom 3:21–30). Jesus will return to judge the world and bring God's work of salvation and restoration to its intended goal or consummation. This is "the blessed hope" of which the New Testament speaks.

(18) In "Theology Proper"—that is, the study of God himself—students go into far more detail about what can be known about God. They use an ever-expanding vocabulary to try to convey what can be known about him. What we have said here gives only a brief introduction. Yet it provides a starting point for further studies about the one whom biblical writers called "the Lord of hosts," the one humans can never fully know.

¹² goes

¹³ guarantee, certainty

¹⁴ attacks, torture, hostility toward or oppression of groups because of their beliefs

¹⁵ disloyalty, betrayal, faithlessness

¹⁶ results

¹⁷ serious, important

¹⁸ extremely, severely, totally, thoroughly

¹⁹ dimension, area

²⁰ bring back, return

²¹ to determine or choose beforehand, see p. 260

²² carry out that plan, start to do what he planned to do

²³ upheld, proved to be a reality

► Understanding the Reading

The previous reading introduces four important roles of God, or ways in which we see God at work.

1. Look back at the reading and locate these key roles. List the four roles below. Using your own words, write a definition for each role.

2. Paragraph 4 introduces and defines the word *providence*. Explain the meaning of this term in your own words. How does it relate to God's role as Sustainer?

Who is God?

► Pre-Reading

1. What is the title of this section? Are there any subheadings?

2. Read the first and last paragraphs below. What do you think this reading passage is going to be about?

3. Skim the entire reading. List the important theological words or terms that you see.

► Reading

Read the following article:

- You may refer to the definitions on the right, but do not use a dictionary.
- Underline the main ideas and most important words or terms.
- You may write comments and questions in the margin.

(1) The question, “Who is God?,” looks at God’s **personal identity**. Not only does the Bible portray God as the Supreme Being but also as one who is a personal being. Even though other *monotheistic*¹ religions, such as Judaism and Islam, share this belief, Christians maintain that the Bible portrays the **one** God as three *distinct*² persons. The *orthodox*³ teaching of the church is that the one God is revealed in Scripture as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

¹ believing that there is one God

(2) The words *trinity* and *triune* are not found in the Bible. These terms came into use toward the end of the second century after Jesus’ *earthly sojourn*⁴ as his followers tried to understand and express the teaching of Scripture, which shows the “oneness” and “threeness” of God. The early church believed that the Bible, especially the New Testament, teaches the existence, personality, full deity, and unity of God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

² particular, specific

³ official, the traditional view accepted by most Christians

(3) Within the context of Greek philosophy and *thought-forms*,⁵ these early Christians sought to express this truth in understandable terms. Many of these endeavors did not *do justice to*⁶ the teaching of Scripture. One attempt, called *modalism*, tried to explain the Trinity by suggesting that the one God acts in three different roles. It *likened him to*⁷ one person who is, for example, a son, a father, and also a shopkeeper.

⁴ time he lived on earth

⁵ characteristic ways of expressing thought

⁶ adequately present or describe

(4) The church, however, came to see that this and various other efforts *fell short of*⁸ what the New Testament teaches. Debates and councils worked through the *controversies*.⁹ At the Council of Constantinople in AD 381, the church was finally able to state the doctrine of the Trinity in a way that protected it from the dangers that had *plagued*¹⁰ it in the past (Fig. 3.1). This effort has essentially taken form in what is popularly known as the Nicene Creed. It protected the unity of God, the deity, equality, and eternity of each of the three members, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

⁷ described him as

⁸ could not explain completely and accurately

⁹ disagreements

(5) Christians confess the one and only God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19). This describes the **unity** of one God. At the same time, the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father. The Holy Spirit is not the Father and the Father is not the Holy Spirit. The Son is not the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not the Son.

¹⁰ troubled, disturbed

¹¹ limited

¹² comforting, encouraging

(6) As *finite*¹¹ human beings we are unable to comprehend the Trinity. It is *reassuring*¹² to recall the observation of A. W. Tozer, “Since we cannot understand the fall of the leaf by the roadside or the *hatching of a robin’s egg*¹³ in the nest *yonder*,¹⁴ why should the Trinity be a problem to us?” (1961, 27).

¹³ the baby bird coming out of the egg

¹⁴ over there (not commonly used today)

17 Why must we worship God as a triune God? Because we believe that he is our Father who is in heaven. Because we believe that he is our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son. And because we believe that he is the Holy Spirit who is present within the believer.

The Creed of Constantinople (AD 381)
(Also known as the Nicene Creed)

We believe in one God, the Father All Governing [*pantokratora*], creator [*poiētēn*] of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all time [*pro pantōn tōn aiōnōn*], Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not created [*poiēthenta*], of the same essence [reality] as the Father [*homoousion tō patrī*], through Whom all things came into being, Who for us men and because of our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became human [*enanthrōpēsanta*]. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and ascended to heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His Kingdom shall have no end [*telos*].

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and Son, Who spoke through the prophets; and in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. We confess one baptism for the remission of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen. (Leith 1982, 33)

Figure 3.1: The Creed of Constantinople, AD 381 (also known as the Nicene Creed)

► Understanding the Reading

1. What do we mean by the term *Trinity*?

2. What was modalism? Was this an adequate view of the Trinity?

3. What do you think is the meaning of the quote in paragraph 6?

4. If a friend asked you to explain the Creed of Constantinople, what would you say?

PART III: Grammar and Vocabulary

Grammar: Adjective Clauses

Theological writing often uses long, complex sentences that contain several clauses (groups of words with both a subject and a verb). When you can recognize different types of clauses, it will be easier for you to understand individual sentences and you will also be able to comprehend the meaning of each paragraph more quickly. This section will help you identify one of the most common types of clauses—the **adjective clause**.

Adjective clauses consist of groups of words that describe or modify nouns. Like single-word adjectives, they always give you more information about the nouns they modify. They are sometimes called *adjectival clauses*, *relative clauses* (because they begin with a relative pronoun), or *dependent clauses* or *subordinate clauses* (because the clauses cannot stand alone as a complete sentence but are always part of a larger sentence).

In theological writing, most adjective clauses begin with one of these relative pronouns: *that*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, or *which*. (These are sometimes called *adjective clause pronouns*.) Still others do not use any of these pronouns to introduce the clause. In this chapter and in Chapter 4 we will examine a variety of types of adjective clauses and you will practice identifying them in sentences.

In the following chart are some examples of adjective clauses. Some modify nouns that come before the main verb in the sentence, while others modify nouns that come after the main verb. Also, instead of a single noun, the adjective clause may modify a compound noun (e.g., soccer player), a pronoun (e.g., one) or a phrase containing a noun (e.g., set of books). Note that the adjective clause tends to come immediately after the word(s) it modifies and it gives you more information about that noun, usually either telling you which person(s) or thing(s) the sentence is about or what kind of person(s) or thing(s) the sentence is about. In the following examples, the adjective clause is in bold and the noun it modifies is in italics.

Relative Pronoun	Sentence with Adjective Clause	Question Answered by Adjective Clause
that	The <i>team that makes the most points</i> wins the game.	Which team wins the game?
who	Julio is a <i>soccer player who practices every day</i> .	What kind of soccer player is Julio?
preposition +) whom	Amir is the <i>boy to whom I'm giving this book</i> . The <i>man whom she loves</i> is named Steve.	Which boy is Amir? Which man is named Steve?
whose	Julie is the <i>girl whose parents write books</i> .	Which girl is Julie?
preposition +) which	The school in Canada is the <i>one to which she wrote</i> . The <i>set of books which he requested</i> is now available.	Which school is in Canada? Which set of books is now available?

Exercise

The following sentences are from this chapter. For each sentence,

- Underline the adjective clause. The sentences with more than one adjective clause are marked for you.
- Double-underline the word (or preposition + word) that begins the adjective clause. Common relative pronouns that might be used are **that**, **which**, **who**, **whom**, **whose**, **where**, and **when**.
- Circle the noun (or compound noun, pronoun, or noun phrase) the adjective clause modifies.

Example: God is the Creator of (all) that exists.

1. He is both "just and the one who justifies."
2. It represents a biblical doctrine which permeates every aspect of God's relationship with his creation.
3. "... nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
4. God has the right to rule over and make requirements of those whom he created.
5. Not only does the Bible portray God as the Supreme Being but also as one who is a personal being.
6. Those who are his people are to reflect his character.
7. Over and over we see concrete ways in which God cares for his creation.
8. There are three attributes of God which are classified under the characteristic of integrity and which refer to the matter of truth. (Note: two adjective clauses.)
9. Providence is the assurance that God is present and active in our lives and that nothing happens simply by chance. (Note: two adjective clauses.)
10. The church was finally able to state the doctrine of the Trinity in a way that protected it from the dangers that had plagued it in the past. (Note: two adjective clauses.)

Distinguishing Adjective Clauses from Other Clauses

Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether clauses beginning with relative pronouns such as *that*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, and *which* are adjective clauses or another type of clause that we will study in Chapter 5, the noun clause.

Look at these examples. They contrast adjective clauses beginning with *that*, *who*, and *which* (middle column) and other clauses beginning with these same words (right column). Note that the adjective clauses always modify a noun (or compound noun, pronoun, or noun phrase) and that the adjective clause comes immediately after the noun it modifies. On the other hand, the clauses in the right column—those that are not adjective clauses—never modify nouns. In both columns, all clauses are in bold; in the adjective clauses, the nouns being modified are in italics.

Relative Pronoun	Adjective Clause	Other Clause
that	The <i>exam</i> that we took was very difficult. I liked the <i>book</i> that you wrote .	That she passed the exam is good. The truth is that she's already married . Jim believes that he will go to Europe .
who	Mary is the <i>lady</i> who works at the hospital . The <i>boys</i> who are playing are brothers.	I don't know who lives in the gray house . I can't remember who she is . They told us who was working today .
(preposition +) which	This is the <i>group</i> to which he belongs . The <i>books</i> which we ordered have arrived.	Could you tell me which one is correct? I don't know which books to buy .

► Exercises

- The following sentences are from this chapter. For each sentence,
 - Underline the clause beginning with **that**, **who**, or (preposition +) **which**.
 - For an adjective clause, circle the noun it modifies.
 - At the right of each item, circle **AC** for adjective clause or **Other** for all other clauses.

Example: He is the just Judge who has also provided an absolutely fair redemption.

AC Other

- Christians maintain that the Bible portrays the one God as three distinct persons. AC Other
 - The group realized that they had an answer to their question. AC Other
 - The attributes of God are essential qualities which characterize his nature. AC Other
 - They are permanent qualities that cannot be gained or lost. AC Other
 - They help to define who God is in himself. AC Other
 - God is not the sort of being who can be limited to one location. AC Other
 - Jesus makes it plain that God's goodness extends beyond his own people. AC Other
- Each of the following sentences from this chapter has two or more clauses.
 - Underline the clause(s) containing **that**, **who**, or (preposition +) **which**.
 - For an adjective clause, circle the noun it modifies.
 - In the space above each item, write **AC** for adjective clause; write **Other** for all other clauses.

Example: The most basic aspect of God's greatness is the fact that he is spirit. He is like the wind which moves but cannot be seen.

Other

AC

1. This, his personal name by which he identifies himself regularly in the Old Testament and to which Jesus himself referred, implies that he is the living and true God.
2. The God who is genuinely true and who tells the truth also proves himself to be true by his faithfulness. That God keeps all his promises is shown over and over again in Scripture.
3. The early church believed that the Bible, especially the New Testament, teaches the existence, personality, full deity, and unity of the one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
4. The most fundamental teaching of the Bible is that God exists and that he is the Supreme Being who is ultimately in control of the universe.

See Chapter 4 for the second half of the information about adjective clauses as well as more practice exercises.

Vocabulary: Prefixes

In the grammar section of this chapter we said that theological writing often uses long, complex sentences made up of several clauses. For many students this type of writing is difficult to understand, not only because it deals with new theological concepts and terminology, but also because of long sentences and complex grammatical patterns. In addition, theologians tend to use high-level vocabulary, and this makes reading more difficult.

This section introduces you to a tool to help you build up your theological and general academic vocabulary so that you can read more quickly and with greater understanding. This tool, called *word analysis*, shows you how to break down words into their individual parts. Once you understand the basic word parts, which are the building blocks of the English vocabulary, you will be able to apply this knowledge to a large percentage of English words.

In English there are three basic word parts: the **prefix**, the **root**, and the **suffix**. The root carries the principal meaning of the word. Although words usually have only one root, some may have more than one. In addition, many words have one or more prefixes and/or suffixes. Prefixes occur before the root, and they usually change the meaning of the word. Suffixes are word endings that occur after the root, and they often indicate the part of speech of the entire word, such as whether it is a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb. Each of the words listed in this table is comprised of a prefix, root, and suffix.

Word	Prefix	Root	Suffix	Part of Speech	Meaning of Word
underpayment	under-	pay	-ment	noun	pay less than one should
misgoverned	mis-	govern	-ed	verb	governed wrongly
illogical	il-	logic	-al	adjective	not logical
dishonestly	dis-	honest	-ly	adverb	not honestly

We will not deal with all the prefixes in English. Instead, we will focus only on prefixes that meet two criteria: they are used frequently and they change the meaning of a word in ways which should be obvious to the reader. Chapters 3 and 4 present a number of the most common prefixes that you will encounter in theological writing, including some that you may already know. These chapters also provide practice exercises to help you identify prefixes and determine how they change the meaning of the words that they join. Suffixes and roots will be dealt with in later chapters.

In this chapter, we will focus on seven common prefixes that indicate number followed by ten additional prefixes that give a negative meaning to the words that they join.

► Prefixes of Number

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Definition of Example
semi-	half, occurring halfway through	semicircle semiannual	half a circle occurring every six months or twice a year
uni-	one, single	unicycle unidirectional	cycle with only one wheel one direction
mono-	one	monotone monochrome	one tone one color
bi-	two	biracial biweekly	two races every two weeks
tri-	three	triangle trisection	three angles (three sides) three parts
multi-	many, more than two	multilevel multinational	more than two levels more than two nations
poly-	many, more than two	polysyllabic polycystic	more than two syllables having more than one cyst

Steps for identifying prefixes:

1. Look for a prefix shape (the letters spelling a prefix).
2. Examine the root that the prefix shape joins.
 - a. Look for a word that can stand by itself without a prefix shape before it. Quite often it is a common word you will recognize easily. This makes it easy to identify the prefix (e.g., **biracial**, **triangle**, **multilevel**).
 - b. Some prefixes, however, are not attached to independent words. Sometimes these are much harder to identify. However, as you look at the word in the context of the sentence, you can often see that the first few letters are a prefix you recognize and it has a meaning that you already know (e.g., **triple**, **polygon**, **multitude**).

Some words begin with letters that are the same as those of a prefix, but these words do not have prefixes. For example, *unite*, *bite*, *tribe*, and *trial* do not contain prefixes. For many of these words, you will know immediately that the prefix shape you see is not actually a prefix (e.g., *bite*, *tribe*). However, for some words it is difficult to identify true prefixes. We will continue to work on prefixes in Chapter 4.

► Exercises

1. Some of these words have one of the seven prefixes of number listed on the previous page, while others do not. Underline each prefix. For each word with a prefix, write the meaning of the prefix on the line at the right.

Example: semiconscious

half

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| 1. trip | _____ | 6. multigroup | _____ |
| 2. unilateral | _____ | 7. polygamy | _____ |
| 3. bifocals | _____ | 8. bid | _____ |
| 4. seminar | _____ | 9. polyglot | _____ |
| 5. monotone | _____ | 10. trioxide | _____ |

2. In each blank below, write the correct prefix.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ cycle | a cycle with one wheel |
| 2. _____ cycle | a cycle with two wheels |
| 3. _____ cycle | a cycle with three wheels |
| 4. _____ syllabic | a word with one syllable |
| 5. _____ syllabic | a word with two syllables |
| 6. _____ syllabic | a word with three syllables |
| 7. _____ syllabic | a word with more than one syllable (2 answers) |
| _____ syllabic | |
| 8. _____ lingual | someone who speaks only one language |
| 9. _____ lingual | someone who speaks two languages |
| 10. _____ lingual | someone who speaks more than two languages |
| 11. _____ theism | belief that there is only one God |
| 12. _____ theism | belief that God is three separate gods |
| 13. _____ theism | belief that there are many gods |

► Negative Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Definition of Example
mis-	wrongly, incorrectly	misquote misidentify	quote incorrectly identify incorrectly
non-	not	nonacademic nonverbal	not academic not verbal
dis-	the opposite of, not	disloyal disqualified	not loyal not qualified
mal-	poorly, wrongly, not	maladjusted malcontented	poorly adjusted not contented
anti-	against	anti-government anti-crime	against the government against crime
un-	not	untrue unlimited	not true not limited

Finally, there is an additional prefix, *in-*, that has two different meanings. One meaning is “in” or “into” (e.g., inside, input, incorporate). In this section we will focus on the second meaning, which is “not.” The negative prefix *in-* is usually attached to an independent word (often a common word you will easily recognize). For example, *incorrect* means “not correct” and *inadequate* means “not adequate.” The negative prefix *in-* changes slightly when it occurs before some specific letters. Look at these examples:

Prefix	Where it Occurs	Example	Definition of Example
im-	before the consonants p, b, m	impure imbalance	not pure not balanced
il-	before the consonant l	illogical illegal	not logical not legal
ir-	before the consonant r	irrational irresponsible	not rational not responsible
in-	before vowels and all other consonants	ineffective incapable	not effective not capable

There are, however, many words that begin with letters that look like prefixes. Words such as these do not have prefixes: *mist*, *display*, *implement*, *illustrate*, *irritate*, *inch*.

Exercises

For each item, write the correct negative prefix: *mis-*, *non-*, *dis-*, *mal-*, *anti-*, *un-*. For some items you can have more than one correct answer.

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. ___ holy | 5. ___ war | 9. ___ believable | 13. ___ likely |
| 2. ___ print | 6. ___ behave | 10. ___ nutrition | 14. ___ agree |
| 3. ___ Christian | 7. ___ advantage | 11. ___ poverty | 15. ___ scientific |
| 4. ___ function | 8. ___ apply | 12. ___ continue | 16. ___ sense |

For each item, write the correct form of the prefix *in-*, meaning "not."

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. ___ mobile | 5. ___ legible | 9. ___ mortal | 13. ___ redeemable |
| 2. ___ sensitive | 6. ___ finite | 10. ___ action | 14. ___ patient |
| 3. ___ regular | 7. ___ moral | 11. ___ fallible | 15. ___ legitimate |
| 4. ___ personal | 8. ___ reverent | 12. ___ resistible | 16. ___ justice |

Match each word on the left with a definition or description on the right. In the blank provided, write the correct letter. Use your knowledge of prefixes to do this exercise, and try to avoid using a dictionary.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. ___ <i>noncredit</i> | a. being against (or hatred of) Jewish people |
| 2. ___ <i>multistory</i> | b. belief that the Bible is without error |
| 3. ___ <i>anti-Semitism</i> | c. a view in philosophy that says there is only one reality |
| 4. ___ <i>Trinity</i> | d. belief that the Bible is trustworthy |
| 5. ___ <i>inerrancy</i> | e. a person who cannot read or write |
| 6. ___ <i>unrighteous</i> | f. to understand or explain incorrectly |
| 7. ___ <i>monism</i> | g. belief that teaches that God is only one person |
| 8. ___ <i>illiterate</i> | h. a building with many floors |
| 9. ___ <i>unitarianism</i> | i. not religious |
| 10. ___ <i>infallibility</i> | j. not for credit |
| 11. ___ <i>irreligious</i> | k. belief in one God in three persons |
| 12. ___ <i>impartial</i> | l. having no favorites |
| 13. ___ <i>misinterpret</i> | m. sinful |

4. Fill in the chart below. For each item,

- Write a word that begins with the prefix listed. (You may use your dictionary.)
- Write a sentence that uses that word.
- Share your sentences with a partner.

Prefix	Word	Sentence
<i>Example: un-</i>	<i>unhappy</i>	<i>The student was unhappy about her grade.</i>
1. un-		
2. non-		
3. multi-		
4. mis-		
5. anti-		
6. in-		
7. il-		
8. dis-		
9. bi-		
10. mono-		
11. im-		
12. tri-		
13. ir-		
14. semi-		
15. poly-		

See Chapter 4 for additional prefixes and exercises.

PART IV: Focused Reading

What is God Like?

► Pre-Reading

What do you know about God's nature? Think about the qualities which describe what God is like. List these qualities below.

Look at the title and quickly skim the reading. What do you think this reading passage is going to be about (the main idea)?

► Reading

Read the following article:

- You may refer to the definitions on the right, but do not use a dictionary.
- Underline the main ideas and most important words or terms.
- You may write comments and questions in the margin.

(1) In the mid-1600s (1643–1649), a group of men were gathered in the Westminster Abbey of London, England. Their purpose was to give clear statements about the Christian faith for the instruction of confessing Christians. On one particular day their task was to describe God. Such responsibility was proving too *formidable*.¹ In the midst of their *dilemma*,² one of the leaders arose to *plead*³ God's help. His prayer began, "O God, who art a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth ..." Afterwards, the group realized that they had an answer to their question.

(2) In asking the question, "What is God like?" we are looking at God's *nature*. Answering the question in the way just described is to do so in terms of **attributes**. The attributes of God are essential qualities which characterize his nature. They are permanent qualities that cannot be gained or lost. They help to define who God is in himself. They are qualities of the entire Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attempts to Categorize God's Attributes

(3) In an effort to better understand God, many have tried to *devise*⁴ a system that *classifies*⁵ the attributes of God. This kind of analysis *can be traced back to*⁶ the Fathers of the early church. Following their attempts, John of Damascus (ca. AD 675–749) listed eighteen attributes of God. His list, which has been reworked and added to over the centuries, is still *regarded*⁷ as significant today.

¹ difficult, overwhelming

² problem, difficulty, predicament

³ beg, pray for

⁴ create, design, develop

⁵ organizes, groups, categorizes

⁶ goes back to the origin of

⁷ viewed, considered, thought of

(4) Various categories have been used to classify the individual attributes. Each one has its strengths and weaknesses. In theology books, you might see such classifications as the following. These are not lists of the attributes themselves, but ways in which the attributes have been categorized.

1. Attributes related to Time, Space, Matter, Quality (John of Damascus).
2. Absolute and Relative Attributes of God (Strong 1907).
3. Incommunicable and Communicable Attributes of God (Berkhof 1933).
4. Metaphysical, Intellectual, Ethical, Emotional, Existential, Rational Attributes of God (Elwell 2001).
5. Attributes of Greatness and Attributes of Goodness (Erickson 1988).

In the Theological Vocabulary section (pp. 100–105) we will discuss Erickson’s categorization of the attributes of God.

► **Understanding the Reading**

Paragraph 2 defines the word attributes. Explain the meaning of this term in your own words.

Does it Matter How I Think About God?

► **Pre-Reading**

You may hear some common misconceptions about God from your friends or acquaintances. These incorrect beliefs are often the result of not understanding the character of God.

Work with one or two of your classmates to answer these questions.

1. Describe a common misconception about God (e.g., God is like a heavenly policeman).

2. What effect could this misconception have upon a person’s relationship to God?

Reading

Read the following article:

- You may refer to the definitions on the right, but do not use a dictionary.
- Underline the main ideas and most important words or terms.
- You may write comments and questions in the margin.

(1) Why is it important to have a correct understanding of God? We could cite many reasons, but let's focus on just two. First of all, knowing more about God's character can help you to avoid common misconceptions about the nature of God.

(2) Secondly, throughout its history the Christian church has had to combat **heresy**. Heresy is a belief or teaching that is against what the Bible or correct theology teaches. We have already noted the church's struggle to arrive at an accurate understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. Another major debate has been the relationship between Jesus' humanity and deity while he was here on earth. In these and other issues, the church must continue to seek to *give accurate expression to*¹ the teaching of the Word of God.

(3) Another problematic issue related to the nature of God has to do with God's **immanence** within creation and his transcendence of it. God's **immanence** means that he is present and active within his creation and works in and through *natural processes*.² When Paul spoke on Mars' Hill in Athens, he said of God, "He is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his *offspring*'"³ (Acts 17:27-28). But what might happen if we overemphasize the immanence of God? It may ultimately lead to a form of **pantheism**, meaning "everything is God." God and nature are seen as one reality. This view is not *compatible*⁴ with the Christian view of creation or with the creature-Creator distinction in Scripture.

(4) The **transcendence** of God, on the other hand, expresses the truth that God in himself is distinct, or radically different, from his creation. He is far above and much greater than anything that is created. Consequently, he must reveal himself in order to be known. God's transcendence is described in the following: "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (Is 55:8-9). What problems can arise if we overemphasize the transcendence of God? God appears to be so removed from creation that he cannot be known, nor does he work in the world he created. This has sometimes led to various forms of **deism**. Some deists have compared God's relationship to the world with that of a clockmaker. It is as if he wound up the clock of the world at its beginning once and for all and it now moves through history without the need of his further involvement.

(5) Any view of God that is not in agreement with the biblical presentation leads to a false god and becomes a form of idolatry.

¹ interpret correctly

² laws of nature

³ descendents of God

⁴ consistent

► **Understanding the Reading**

Find each word in the text. Based on the meaning in the text, write a definition for each word. Do not use a dictionary.

1. heresy (¶ 2)

2. immanence (¶ 3)

3. pantheism (¶ 3)

4. transcendence (¶ 4)

5. deism (¶ 4)

PART V: Theological Vocabulary

What Words Have Christians Used to Talk About God?

► **Pre-Reading**

1. Examine Figure 3.2 on the next page. Circle the terms that are new to you.
2. What are five adjectives used in paragraph 1 to describe God's greatness?

3. Scan paragraph 1, p. 103. Which words describe God's goodness?

► Reading

In this section we will examine the major categories of the attributes of God found in *Christian Theology* by Millard Erickson (1988).

Study the following theological vocabulary items:

- Underline the most important information about each theological concept.
- Write the words you need to remember on vocabulary cards or in your vocabulary notebook.
- You may refer to other theological resources to expand your understanding.

Greatness	Goodness
Spirit Life Person Infinitude <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omnipotence • Eternity • Omnipresence • Omniscience Immutability	Moral Purity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiness • Righteousness • Justice Integrity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genuineness • Truth (Veracity) • Faithfulness Love <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benevolence • Grace • Mercy • Persistence

Figure 3.2: The Attributes of God

Category 1: Greatness

(1) The God we worship is a great and awesome God. The psalmists and other biblical writers proclaim his greatness. We recognize his greatness for who he is in himself, as well as in his relationship with his people. Theologians speak of him as *absolute*. By this they mean that he is complete in himself, unlimited, and unrestricted by anything except his own nature. These attributes of God tell us about his greatness.

Spirit

(2) The most basic aspect of God's greatness is the fact that he is spirit. He is like the wind which moves but cannot be seen. When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman beside Jacob's well, he said, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:24). Jesus rejected the notion of the priority of a particular place to worship God because God is not the sort of being who can be limited to one location. Nor does he have the limitations that we have with a physical body.

Life

(3) God's greatness is characterized also by life. When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, he identified himself as "I AM." This, his personal name by which he identified himself regularly in the Old Testament and to which Jesus himself referred, implies that he is the living and true God. Existence is his very nature, and he has always existed. He is also the source of life for all other living beings.

Person

(4) The statement "God is spirit" could leave us with some vague notions of an influence of good, or an impersonal ideal or force.

Therefore, it is important to note that the Bible shows God as a personal being. Not only did he identify himself with a name, but we see him revealed as one who knows, wills, feels, and acts. He is to be treated as a personal being who is to be loved and valued not for what he does for us but for who he is.

Infinitude

(5) God is unlimited or infinite. He is infinite in his being and perfections. All finite objects have a location, are bound by time, and have only limited knowledge and power. In contrast, God is not limited by any of these things. We must note the unlimited nature of God in each of these areas.

(6) **Omnipotence.** We see God’s infinity in his power. He often refers to himself in Scripture as “God Almighty” (Gen 17:1). Jesus declared that “with God all things are possible” (Mt 19:26). God is able to do all that is proper to his nature. This characteristic of God is referred to as the omnipotence of God.

(7) **Eternity.** God is not limited by time. He is the one who always is: he was, he is, he will be. We may, therefore, describe God as eternal. Just as the Old Testament opens, “In the beginning God ...” we find similar wording and ideas in the New Testament. “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God” (Jn 1:1).

(11) God is exalted above all we can know or think. Yet he reveals himself as a personal being capable of fellowship with humans, one whom we can love and worship, and to whom we can pray knowing that he hears and answers.

► **Understanding the Reading**

1. In each blank, write the name of the attribute of God’s greatness that most closely matches the description given.

Example: *God is the source of existence for all other living beings*

Life

1. God does not change.
2. God is all powerful.
3. God does not have a physical body.
4. God is unlimited in all areas and ways.
5. God is everywhere present at the same time.
6. God knows, thinks, feels, and decides.

(8) **Omnipresence.** God is equally present at all times and in all places and with all his creatures. Psalm 139 is an awesome expression of God’s presence everywhere. This characteristic of God gives us comfort, as the words of Hebrews 13:5 express: “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

(9) **Omniscience.** In addition, God is in no way limited in his knowledge, understanding, and judgments. He not only knows all things but sees them in their proper perspective. He is, therefore, omniscient. He is not, however, a mere knowing spectator in human affairs. His omniscience cannot be separated from his omnipotence and omnipresence.

Immutability

(10) According to the testimony of Scripture, God never changes. He is not subject to any process of development. He can neither increase nor decrease. God’s nature does not change because he is already perfect. He is faithful to his promises, and we can entrust our souls to a faithful Creator (1 Pet 4:19). Speaking of Christ, the writer to the Hebrews insists that he is “the same, yesterday, today, and forever” (13:8). The unchanging character of God is often referred to as immutability.

7. God is without beginning or end. _____
8. God knows everything. _____

2. For each item,

- Read the verses listed.
- Using the first letter of the word as a clue, fill in the blank with the attribute of God that is described in the verses. (For most items, the name of the attribute is not used in the Scripture references.)

Example: Psalm 102:26–27; James 1:17

I immortality

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. John 4:24; Acts 17:24 | S _____ |
| 2. Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Psalm 147:5 | O _____ |
| 3. John 5:26; Exodus 3:14 | L _____ |
| 4. Romans 11:33; Hebrews 4:13 | O _____ |
| 5. Jeremiah 23:23–24; Psalm 139:7–12; Matthew 28:19–20 | O _____ |
| 6. Psalm 90:1–2; Revelation 1:8 | E _____ |
| 7. Exodus 3:14; Exodus 20:2 | P _____ |

► Reading (Continued)

Study the following theological vocabulary items:

- Underline the most important information about each theological concept.
- Write the words you need to remember on vocabulary cards or in your vocabulary notebook.
- You may refer to other theological resources to expand your understanding.

Category 2: Goodness

(1) The God of the Bible is not only a God with qualities of greatness but one who is good, one who is loving and can be trusted. We can say that God's goodness is characterized by his moral qualities, by his integrity, and by love.

Moral Purity

(2) When we say that God is characterized by moral purity, we mean that he is absolutely free from anything that is evil or wicked.

(3) Holiness. God is holy and there is none in all creation like him. The song of Moses and the children of Israel asked, "Who is like You—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?" (Ex 15:11). As the holy God, he is perfect, pure, and separate from any kind of defilement. He is the standard for our moral character. To the children of Israel, he said, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy" (Lev 11:45).

(4) Righteousness. As the God who is holy, he is the source and standard of what is right. His law is a true expression of his

nature and is as perfect as he is. Psalm 19:7–9 implies that God commands only what is right and good for those who follow him. Righteousness involves a way of living and thinking that is in harmony with God's nature and standards.

(5) Justice. Just as God himself acts in conformity with his law, so he administers his kingdom in the same way. Because God controls his universe in accordance with his nature, that which he ordains and permits is fair. In spite of seeming inequalities, the teaching of the Bible is that God is just and will vindicate his dealings with humanity. He does not show partiality or favoritism. And we are to treat others in this same way.

Integrity

16 There are three attributes of God which are classified as integrity and which refer to the matter of truth. Jesus, the Son of God himself, said, “I am ... the truth” (Jn 14:6).

17 **Genuineness.** The God of Israel, in contrast to all the false claimants to deity, is the true God. It was during the exile that Israel was finally cleansed of its attraction to idolatry and took seriously the command to have no other gods. He is the true and only God, and there is no other. And he is what he appears to be. “The LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King” (Jer 10:10).

18 **Truth (Veracity).** The God of Israel is not only the true God; he is truthful. He represents things as they really are. Anything else, lying or any other kind of falsehood, is contrary to his nature. In Titus 1:2 the apostle Paul describes God as the one “who does not lie.” Those who are his people are to reflect his character by being truthful in what they say and even imply.

19 **Faithfulness.** The God who is genuinely true and who tells the truth also proves himself to be true by his faithfulness. That God keeps all his promises is shown throughout Scripture. Even when his people have sinned and he sends punishment, God remains dependable, faithful. It was in just such a situation that the biblical writer said, “Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lam 3:21–23). His people are to reflect the quality of faithfulness in their relations with others.

15 God himself is the source of all goodness. Throughout the Scriptures his goodness is displayed in his nature and actions. 1 John explicitly speaks of God’s love both as a quality of his nature—“God is love” (4:8)—and as manifested in his actions—“This is love ... that [God] loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (4:10). The same qualities of goodness that are in God’s nature are to be reflected in the lives of his people.

Love

10 God’s very nature is defined as love by the apostle John. “Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love ... And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him” (1 Jn 4:8, 16). How is God’s love characterized?

11 **Benevolence.** God is a benevolent God who is concerned for the welfare of those he loves. His benevolence is seen in his care of the whole human race, even of all his creation. It is seen most clearly and supremely in his initiative to provide salvation through Jesus Christ.

12 **Grace.** We see and experience God’s love through his attribute of grace. He deals with his people on the basis of his own goodness and generosity, not on the basis of human merit. Both the Old and New Testaments resound with descriptions of a gracious and merciful God.

13 **Mercy.** God’s mercy is shown in his compassion for those with both physical and spiritual needs, regardless of what they deserve. The word is used to speak of kindness and help given by the stronger to the weaker because of a special relationship. God, the stronger, shows mercy to his people, the weaker, because of the covenant into which he has entered with them to be their God and they his people.

14 **Persistence.** We see God’s love in his persistence. His patience or long-suffering was apparent with Israel and continues to be so with us. For God “is patient ... not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Pet 3:9). The Bible often characterizes this attribute of God by describing him as “slow to anger.” He is willing to postpone deserved judgment.

► Understanding the Reading

1. In each blank, write the name of the attribute of God's goodness that most closely matches the description given.

Example: God does not lie.

truth, veracity

1. God gives his love as a free gift to those who do not deserve it. _____
2. God is the true and only God. _____
3. God is concerned about the well-being of all people. _____
4. God is patient and is willing to postpone deserved judgment. _____
5. God is pure and without sin. _____
6. God keeps his promises. _____
7. God is the standard for right living. _____
8. God treats all people with fairness, according to his perfect law. _____
9. God shows kindness—both physical and spiritual—to those who recognize their need of him. _____

2. For each item,

- Read the verses listed.
- Using the first letter of the word as a clue, fill in the blank with the attribute of God that is described in the verses.

Example: Matthew 5:45; Deuteronomy 7:7–8

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Psalm 7:17; Romans 3:21–22 | B <u>enevolence</u> |
| 2. Jeremiah 3:12; Romans 12:1 | R _____ |
| 3. Psalm 86:15; 2 Peter 3:15 | M _____ |
| 4. Deuteronomy 32:4; Romans 3:25–26 | P _____ |
| 5. Leviticus 11:44–45; 1 Peter 1:15–16 | J _____ |
| 6. Deuteronomy 7:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:24 | H _____ |
| 7. Jeremiah 10:10; John 17:3 | F _____ |
| 8. Psalm 57:10; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:8, 16 | G _____ |
| 9. Exodus 34:6; Ephesians 2:8–9 | L _____ |
| 10. 1 Samuel 15:29; Titus 1:2 | G _____ |
| | V _____ |

PART VI: Review

► Reviewing the Attributes of God

1. In Part V, Theological Vocabulary, we used a noun to describe each of God's characteristics. For most of these nouns, however, there is a corresponding adjective form. For example, *life* is a noun while *living* is an adjective.

For each noun, write the corresponding adjective. If you need to do so, you may use a dictionary.

Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective
1. mercy		11. genuineness	
2. faithfulness		12. omnipotence	
3. justice		13. love	
4. omnipresence		14. holiness	
5. purity		15. grace	
6. truth (veracity)		16. benevolence	
7. righteousness		17. person	
8. infinitude		18. persistence	
9. omniscience		19. eternity	
10. immutability		20. spirit	

2. Using the correct adjective form, write a short sentence for any three of God's attributes.

Attribute	Sentence
<i>Example: merciful</i>	<i>God is merciful to sinners.</i>

Understanding Reading Skills

Review the suggestions for using a vocabulary notebook (Introduction, pp. 12–17). If you have not already done this, do the following:

Make a list of at least 15 important words or phrases to learn from Chapters 1 to 3. (You may want to ask your teacher about which words are most important.) In your vocabulary notebook, divide these words into categories such as general vocabulary, general vocabulary with theological meaning, theological vocabulary.

For each word or phrase, list the page where it appears in this text, copy the example from the text, and then write a short definition. To find the meaning of the word or phrase, you may use the indexes at the back of this book to find other locations where it is used in the text. You may also use one or more dictionaries that give short definitions. For example, you might use an English-language dictionary for general vocabulary and a theological dictionary for theological vocabulary.

Reviewing Adjective Clauses

Review *Adjective Clauses*, pp. 88–91. For each sentence,

- Underline the adjective clause(s).
- Double-underline the word (or preposition + word) that begins the adjective clause. Common words that might be used are **that, which, who, whom, whose, where, and when**.
- Circle the noun (or compound noun, pronoun, or noun phrase) the adjective clause modifies.

Example: The text that he read was Isaiah 46:9–10.

The God whom we worship is great and awesome.

One of the attributes of God which describes his greatness is his infinitude.

Moses is the writer whose song of deliverance is recorded in Exodus 15.

Those attributes that refer to God's goodness are his moral purity, integrity, and love.

Paul is the one to whom God gave the call to go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

The three attributes of God to which he referred in his sermon are God's genuineness, truth, and faithfulness.

Reviewing Word Analysis and Prefixes

Circle TRUE or FALSE for each item below. Then rewrite each false statement to make it true. For some of the items, there is more than one correct way to rewrite the statement.

TRUE FALSE Word analysis shows you how to break a word into its individual parts.

TRUE FALSE Words always have only one root.

TRUE FALSE Prefixes occur before the root.

TRUE FALSE Suffixes occur after the root.

TRUE FALSE Suffixes usually change the meaning of the word.

6. TRUE FALSE The prefix *multi-* refers to more than two.
-
7. TRUE FALSE Some prefixes are not attached to independent words.
-
8. TRUE FALSE The word *tribe* contains the prefix *tri-*.
-
9. TRUE FALSE The prefix *anti-* means "against."
-
10. TRUE FALSE The prefix *in-* has only one meaning, "not."
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► Reviewing Theological Vocabulary

For each statement below, circle the letter of the attribute that best fits the description.

Example: Not only did God identify himself with a name, but we see him revealed as one who knows, wills, feels, and acts.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| a. person | c. spirit |
| b. integrity | d. life |

- The God of Israel is not only the true God; he is truthful.

a. mercy	c. veracity
b. omnipresence	d. omnipotence
- God never changes.

a. eternal	c. infinitude
b. immutability	d. omniscience
- God is equally present at all times and in all places and with all his creatures.

a. omnipotence	c. persistence
b. omniscience	d. omnipresence
- Even when his people have sinned and he sends punishment, God remains dependable.

a. genuineness	c. faithfulness
b. benevolence	d. mercy
- The God of Israel, in contrast to all false claimants to deity, is the true God.

a. genuineness	c. faithfulness
b. veracity	d. persistence
- God's patience and long-suffering were apparent with Israel and continue to be so with us.

a. truth	c. immutability
b. persistence	d. omnipotence

God is in no way limited in his knowledge, understanding, and judgment.

- a. integrity
- b. love
- c. omnipresence
- d. omniscience

We see God's infinity in his power.

- a. omniscience
- b. omnipotence
- c. omnipresence
- d. immutability

The teaching that God takes care of his creation is

- a. predestination
- b. theology proper
- c. grace
- d. benevolence

Pantheism means that

- a. God is present and active in his creation
- b. God is distinct from his creation
- c. God and nature are one reality
- d. God is distant from his creation

The attribute that refers to God's kindness towards the weak is

- a. grace
- b. mercy
- c. faithfulness
- d. benevolence

The attribute of God's purity is

- a. immanence
- b. transcendence
- c. persistence
- d. holiness

Evaluating Your Learning

How successful have you been at applying these learning strategies in Chapter 3? For each strategy, circle 0, 1, or 2.

0 = I didn't use the strategy.

1 = I used the strategy some, but could have used it more.

2 = I used this strategy as often as I could.

I have skimmed a reading passage for the main ideas (see pp. 35–37). 0 1 2

I have paid attention to the adjective clauses to help me understand complex sentences (see pp. 88–91). 0 1 2

I have analyzed prefixes in some words to figure out their meaning (see pp. 91–96). 0 1 2

I have paid attention to organizational markers to understand the meaning of a passage (see pp. 57–61). 0 1 2

I have read the passages at an appropriate pace (see p. 20). 0 1 2

I have looked for the academic vocabulary (p. 77) in a reading passage to understand the meanings based on the context (see p. 5). 0 1 2

I have underlined or highlighted important points in the reading passages (see p. 22). 0 1 2

I have used the reading strategies I listed at the end of Chapters 1 and 2 (see pp. 48, 76). 0 1 2

List two learning strategies that you need to use, or use more frequently, in order to become a better reader.

EXPLORING **THEOLOGICAL** ENGLISH

READING, VOCABULARY,
AND GRAMMAR FOR ESL/EFL

Student Textbook

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