

Smoky Mountain Reflections

April 2009

Let's examine some mysteries of the faith, but first here are a few pre qualifying statements. I can not, nor will I try to prove that God exist, although He most certainly does. What I will humbly here attempt to do is clearly and briefly define God as He reveals Himself to us in His word and His creation. For those who wish to treat this as a bible study I will site biblical references. I will deal with scriptural authority in subsequent issues. If you say "this is circular logic" I would agree, but if archeologist can use geologic layers to date bones and geologist can use bones to date geologic layers, then why can I not use the creator of the universe to site the authority of His word.

It would be folly for me a fallible creation to try to define the creator. However, he reveals himself to us in His word and his creation so what I share with you is His revelation not my wisdom. (*of which you know there is little*) How he reveals Himself in His creation will be the topic of a number of these articles, but in his word it says: **Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.**

Before getting deeper into God 's attributes I thought it would be helpful to first state briefly who or what God is not. Many attempts are made, and many claims are made that sound wise and nice but they are clearly not how God has reveled himself to us. God is not in everything that is called pantheism, while He is evident in all things He is not in and does not reside in all things. God is not indifferent, aloof or apart from His creation that is Deism. God did not create the vast universe and now is just sitting back to see what happens He is daily caring for His creation as a loving Gardener regularly cares for His Garden. He is not one God among many, that is Polytheism He is the one and only, true God. And contrary to the claims of atheist He does exist and contrary to the claims of Agnostics He is knowable, but He is knowable on His terms not ours. There are many other things that God is not, but these are the main false teachings that plague our generation.

Now let's move on to God's attributes. God Is Triune and God is one, that statement seems to contradict itself, but this is a revealed mystery not a logical statement. God's singular nature Deut 6:4 His triune nature Gen 1:1-3, verse 1 God the Father, verse 2 God the Holy Spirit, Verse 3 God the Son, further clarified by going to John 1:1. If God is not, Father, Son, & Holy Spirit then why would He have us baptize in the Name of all three Mat 28:19. The fully divine, separate, coequal and singular nature of all three persons of the Holy Trinity are clearly revealed in his word, while impossible for the rational mind to comprehend. God tells us everything we need to know not everything we want to know.

God is Eternal Psalm 90:2; 102:12, with no beginning or end; with the exception of Christ Human nature it did have a beginning. However, Christ human and divine natures are eternally comingled into His nature and the Trinity's nature. (*I will later provide a further discussion on the nature of Christ*). God's eternal, nature also means that He functions outside of liner time as we understand it. So, when we are confronted with issues of time that confound us we must simply take Him at His word.

God is Everywhere or is omnipresent Psalm 139:7, 8; Jeremiah 23:23, 24, That means that He is with you 24/7 working for the good of those who love Him and patiently waiting for those who reject Him.

God Knows All or is omniscient, 1 Chronicles 28:9; Psalm 139:2, His knowledge of all things past, present and future does not remove our will from the equation, nor does it reduce all things to an issue of destiny. While we can take comfort in our predestine nature with regard to salvation Rom 8:29-30, Eph 5: 1 & 11, we can not take a passive role in our lives and no one is predestined to damnation that contradicts Christ universally sufficient atoning sacrifice. 2 Cor 5:14-15 (*this may also require further discussion in future issues*)

God is all Powerful or omnipotent Isaiah 42:5 Gods Power is unlimited. And all His actions are in keeping with all the rest of his attributes.

God is Unchanging or immutable Psalm 33:11; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8 He never changes and we can take comfort in this as we trust that He will faithfully keep all His promises.

God is Sovereign Job 42:2; Ecclesiastes 7:13-14; Romans 8:28; Psalm 104, His sovereign nature declare His place in His creation as superior to all others.

God is Holy and perfect 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalm 99; Exodus 15:11, Set apart from all that is imperfect and unclean.

God is Love 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; I John 4:7-21; Psalm 106:1; Hebrews 12: 5-13, Love is not a feeling, Love is action that reflects concern and care, God nurtures His creation He is Merciful to it, Good to it, Longsuffering toward it, and gave His only Son to die for it.

This list far from exhaustive but is a clear reflection of the revealed truth contained in His word about some of His attributes. I decided to conclude this Easter review of who God is with His Just and Gracious natures, because it is God's Just nature that led to our need for His Gracious nature.

God is Just and since He is also holy, He cannot be in the presence of sin, **as defined by Him!** Not us or the politically correct police. His desire to spend eternity with us led to our need of his gracious nature.

God is Gracious toward us a wholly undeserving sinful people. While were still sinners He sent His only begotten Son to suffer and die on the cross to satisfy His just nature. Christ who is fully God and Fully man came to take upon himself the sin of all human kind from Adam and Eve to the last child conceived on Judgment day.

And on that first Easter morning He proved He was who He said He was the Son of God!
The Tomb is empty!!! Our Savior Lives!!!

In Christ
Pastor Portier