

God's Transcendence

Tozer: "We must not think of God as highest in an ascending order of beings, starting with the single cell and going on up from the fish to the bird to the animal to the man to angel to cherub to God. This would be to grant God eminence, even pre-eminence, but that is not enough; we must grant Him *transcendence* in the fullest meaning of that word" (*The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 70).

Infinite

In space: omnipresent

- 1 Kgs 8:27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you!"
- Ps 139:7-10 "Wherever we go, God is there!"
- Jer 23:24 "Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD."

In time: eternal

- Ps 90:2 "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."
- Isa 57:15 "God 'inhabits eternity'"
- Isa 44:6 "I am the first and I am the last"

In power: omnipotent

- Jer 32:17 "Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you."

In knowledge and wisdom: omniscient

- Heb 4:13 "all [creatures] are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."
- Prov 15:3 "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good."
- Ps 147:5 "Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure."

WCF 2.2: In His sight all things are open and manifest; His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent, or uncertain.

In short, God is not limited by anything that creatures are (remember the "creator-creature distinction"!)

God is impassible – he does not suffer

- God's unchangeability [remember last time] shows us another part of his transcendence: he is never changed *by someone or something*.
- For this reason we speak of God as "impassible": he cannot experience pain, and more broadly, he is never moved, changed, or affected by anything.
- He is always "above the fray":
 - Ps 62.6 "He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken."
 - He is not a needy God
- Yet in his condescension he is also passionately involved in the fray:
 - Jer 31:20 [God speaking] "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the LORD."
 - Cf. these pathos-laden passages: Luke 13:34; 15:20; Jer 9:10; 12:8; 44:4