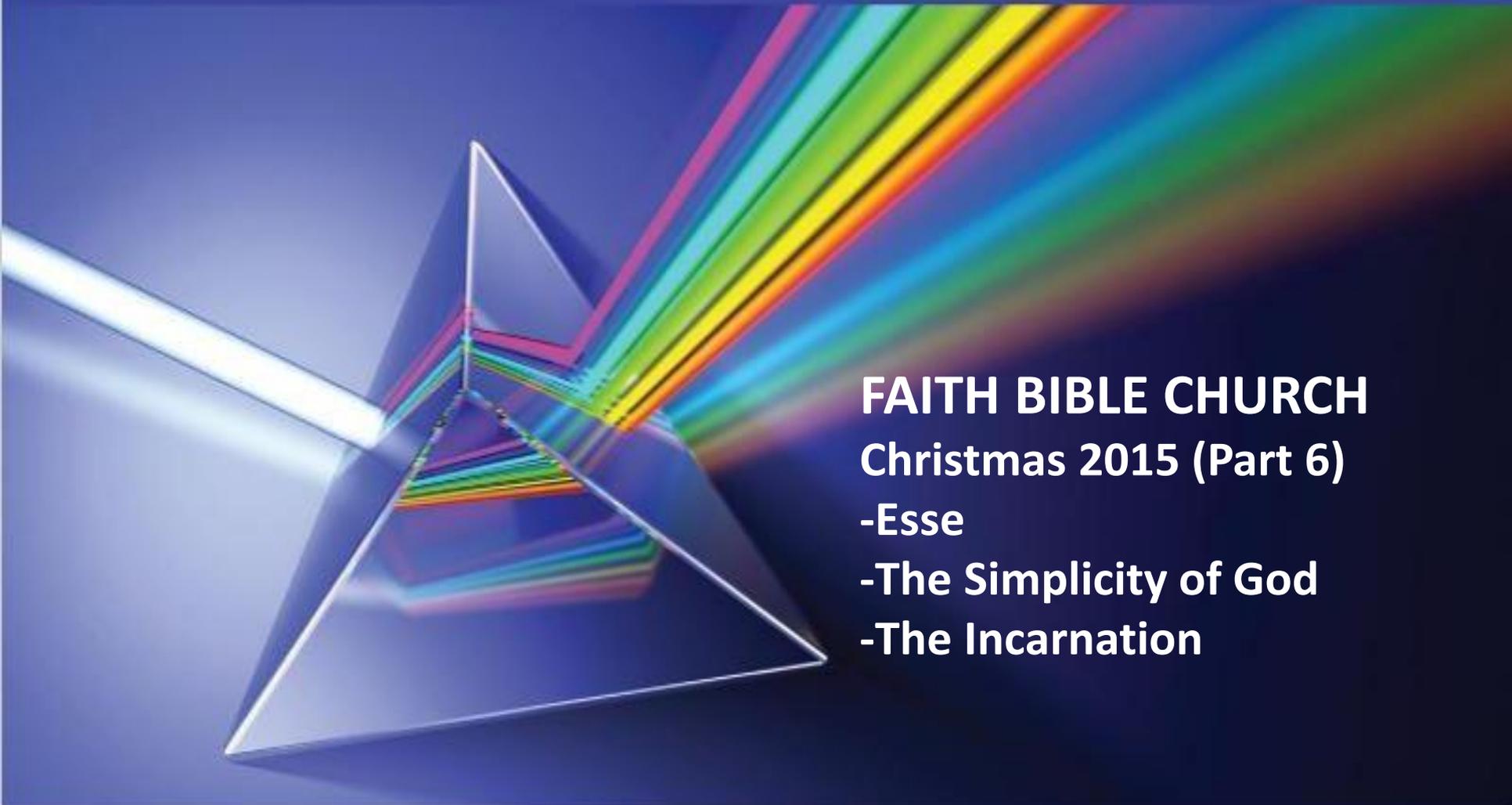


God without Parts

Divine Simplicity and the Metaphysics of God's Absoluteness



FAITH BIBLE CHURCH

Christmas 2015 (Part 6)

-Esse

-The Simplicity of God

-The Incarnation

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

T/G/B

- Eschatology
- Thanatology
- Ecclesiology
- Israelology
- Dispensationalism
- Doxology
- Hodology
- Soteriology
- Hamartiology
- Natural Law
- Anthropology
- Angelology
- Pneumatology
- Christology
- Paterology
- Trinitarianism
- Cosmology
- Theology Proper
- Bibliology
- Natural Theology

The transcendent life, Psalm 73:24-25; Rom. 11:36.

Prayer: Fellowship is all about walking in the light, 1 Jn. 1:7; Rom. 8:5-6.

3 Parts to Bible Class:

Part I: The basics: Understanding the essential/universal/metaphysical meanings of love, joy, peace.

Part II: Philosophical foundations. POL: Saussure’s Cave

Part III: Doctrinal development: Christmas Special 6- Simplicity of God and the Incarnation.

Part I: Basics: Spiritual foundations: the metaphysics of love, joy, and peace (1 Cor. 13; Gal 5:13-15; 22-23).

1. Though we, and the Bible, often speak of love, joy, and peace, as good in themselves with no need of qualification, metaphysically speaking they occur on different levels and can be either licit and illicit.
 - a) Proverbs 1:22 "How long, you simple ones, will you love (אָהַב) simplicity? For scorners delight (תִּמְדָּה) in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge.
 - b) Revelation 11:10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice (χαίρω) over them, make merry (εὐφραίνω), and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.
2. Recall the 3 categories of love: sensed, intellective, and spiritual. Each category can be licit or illicit.
3. Recall the 3 categories of joy: sensed, intellective, and spiritual. Each category can be licit or illicit.
4. There are also 3 categories of peace.
 - a. On a sensed level: the peace of satisfaction from getting and enjoying what one loves, like a piece of pie.
 - b. On an intellective level: the peace of satisfaction from getting and enjoying what one loves, Truth.
 - c. On a spiritual level: the peace of satisfaction one enjoys from obtaining and enjoying God and His grace.
5. While on a metaphysical level it is possible to enjoy a some measure of impure love, joy, and peace, apart from the transcendent level, these will lead to disaster in the life.
 - a. Demas’ and Judas’ love for the world, 2 Tim. 4:10.
 - b. The joy of unbelievers in the tribulation, Rev. 11:10.
 - c. The peace of the wicked, Psa. 69:22.
6. Note that it is impossible to get these universal definitions by means of the original languages. There are no linguistic qualifiers when the words love, joy, and peace are used. Meaning does not come from these words, they come from the context and the context is always about the Real. We attained universal definitions by abstraction.
7. Moreover, note how human beings use love, joy, and peace in the same way that is reflected in the Word of God. Note how influences of Saussure and Heidegger have kept us in the cave regarding key biblical words.
8. Note that the will is the single most important factor in love, joy, and peace.
9. Note that only spiritual love, joy, and peace take one to the transcendent, supernatural realm.
10. All Bible study should be seen as an extension of your spiritual life. It really is all about the will. The Socratic view of knowledge and virtue is fallacious.

5: Hermeneutics

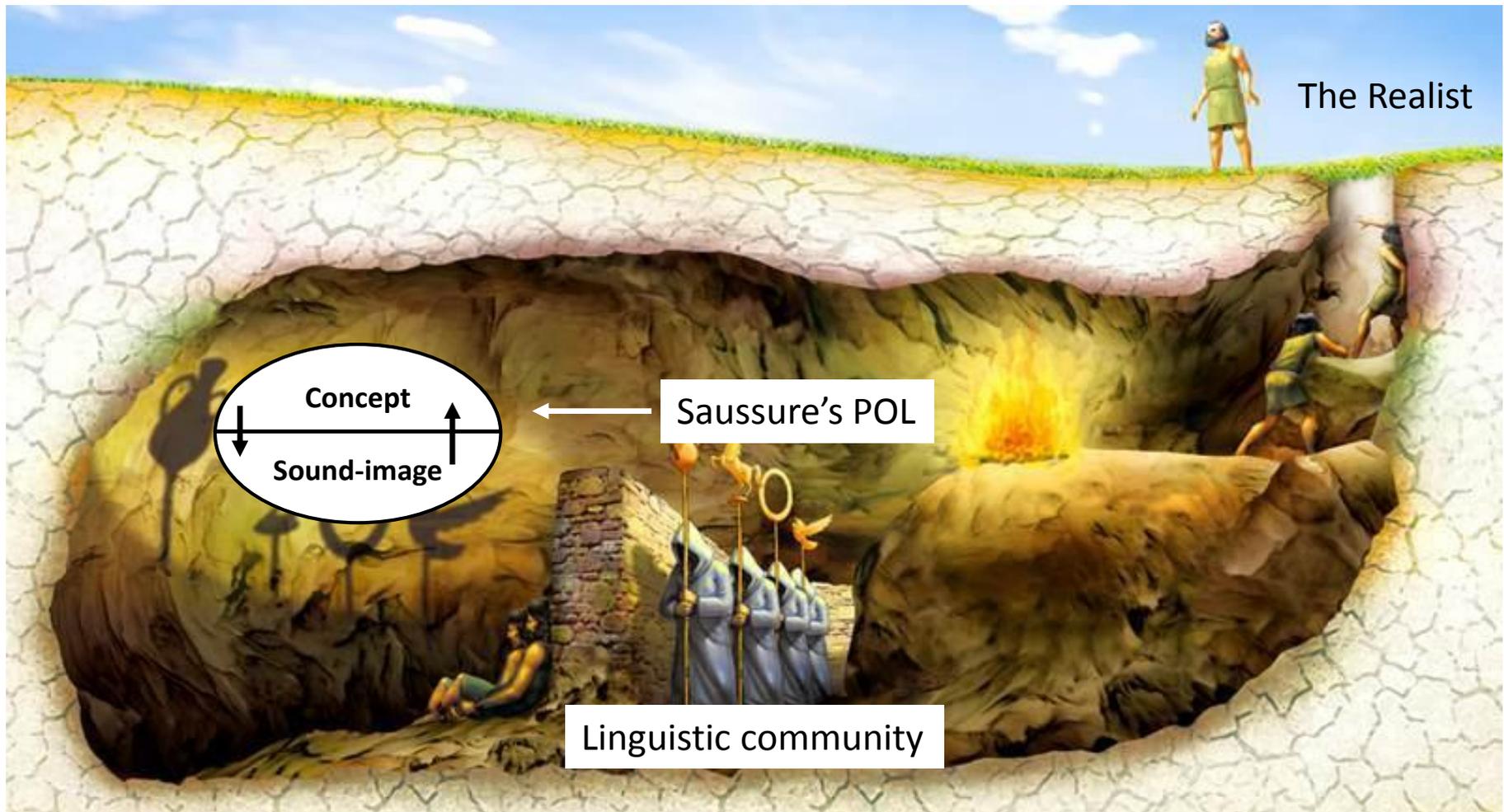
4: Language-79

3: Epistemology 32
 - Existence 50
 - History 50

2:Metaphysics 32
 - Trans. 50

1: Reality
 - Logic 32,
 - Truth 32

Saussure's anti-metaphysical cave: In his cave the signifier and the signified collapse into one without direct reference to reality as such. Meaning is determined by the language community (Saussure, Heidegger, Osborne). This is all due to the modern mindset (Descartes, Locke, Kant), which teaches that man has no direct access to things in themselves (*das Ding an sich*)—as there are no essences out there. To deny believers of the metaphysics of realism is to keep them in the cave with language games perpetuated by the exegetes.



Part 2: Philosophy of Language (79)

Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ Plato's *Cratylus*
 - Hermogenes
 - Cratylus
 - Socrates
- ✓ Aristotle (384-322 BC)
- ✓ Transition to modern philosophy of language

1. Who is responsible for putting the soul in the mind and making the mind the object of reality?
2. Who put Forms in the transcendent realm?
3. Who virtually destroyed all confidence in proving the existence of God and continues to influence Christians more than Jesus Christ in areas of fideism and anti-intellectualism?
4. Who was the first to put forms in the immanent realm?
5. Who was the first to discover and develop logic and metaphysics as a natural scientist?
6. Who was the first to really develop the difference between essence and existence?
7. Who used Kantian epistemology for his philosophy of language?

Ferdinand de Saussure
(1857-1913)

Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Bertrand Russell
(1872-1970)

Ludwig Wittgenstein
(1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger
(1889-1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

Meaningful God-talk.

Analytic Philosophy

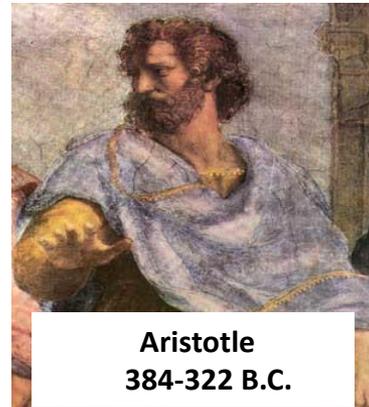
Conclusion.

Analogy.

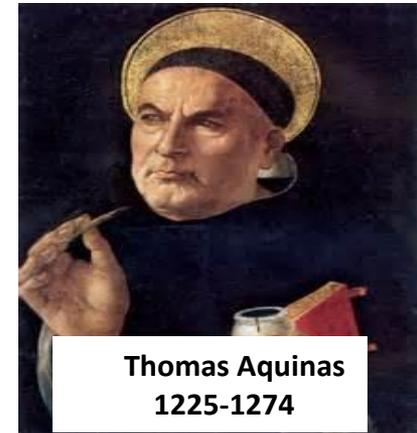
Metaphysical analogy.



Plato
428-348 B. C.



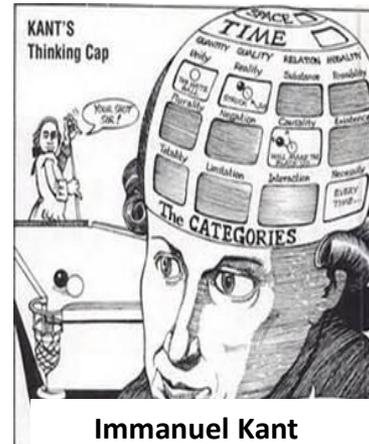
Aristotle
384-322 B.C.



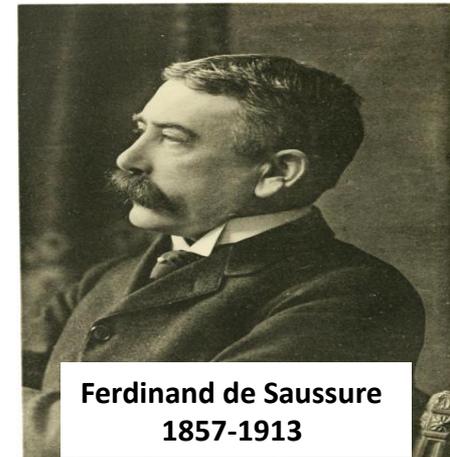
Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274



Rene Descartes
1596-1650



Immanuel Kant
1724-1804



Ferdinand de Saussure
1857-1913

1. There are many false views of God that have infected modern Christianity. A wrong view of God leads to serious consequences.

Gradation of views of God

“spirit”
 Pantheism
 The Force
 Higher Power
 Karma
 Nature

Deism
 God is not involved and does not care
 Reductionism
 Naturalism
 Rejection of metaphysics & miracles

Neo-Deism
 God cares but not that involved in all things
 Orientation of Naturalism
 Suspicious about miracles
 Rejection of classical metaphysics

Neo-Theism
 Open theism
 Prosperity cults
 Conflict in attributes
 God is mainly Problem Solver
 God is Person
 Tent-revivalism
 Rejection of God-centered theology
 Rejection of classical metaphysics

Classical Theism
 Exodus 3:14
 ‘Ehyeh/Esse
 Aseity
 Pure Act
 Simple
 Eternal
 Immutable
 Historic God of the Church through the Reformation
 Ultimate Being
 Robust grasp of classical metaphysics

2. Note some of the pernicious effects of neo-theism.
 - a. God is viewed as a person. This leads to heresies of modalism and tritheism.
 - b. God is viewed as Infinite Man, a Zeus-like ultimate humanoid.
 - c. The psychologizing of God and making Him into the giant problem solver.
 - d. Prosperity heresy: God becomes the means of gaining more of American Dream.
 - e. Loss of metaphysics.
 - 1) Anti-intellectual regarding proofs for the existence of God.
 - 2) Blindness regarding God's causal glory suffused through creation.
 - 3) Intellectual sympathy for Hume's arguments against miracles and V.B.
 - 4) Loss of simplicity of God
 - 5) Difficulty reconciling "opposing" attributes of God.
 - f. Loss of understanding God.
 - 1) God is viewed anthropopathically and anthropomorphically.
 - 2) God is created in one's own image, likable according to one's predilection.
 - 3) Heresy, demonism, and occultism as per the Word of Faith Movement.
 - g. Loss of God's absolute holy-otherness leads to loss of transcendence.
 - 1) Loss of transcendence leads to Mammonism.
 - 2) Loss of transcendence leads to using God for earthly kingdom.
 - 3) Loss of transcendence leads to apathy regarding rewards in the Kingdom.
 - 4) Loss of transcendence leads to agnosticism and fideism.
 - 5) Loss of transcendence leads to lack of orientation to God's authority.
 - 6) Loss of transcendent disables believer's ability to worship God as the unique I AM, for who and what He is, instead of what He does for us.

3. Review of passages on the classical view of God as the metaphysical necessity for all existence.
 - a. Heb. 2:10. “for whom are all things, and through whom are all things”
 - b. Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power
 - c. Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory
 - d. Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard.
 - e. Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together
 - f. Acts 17:28 "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said
 - g. Isaiah 6:3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts; The whole earth *is* full of His glory!"
 - h. Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,
 - i. Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 *There is* no speech nor language *Where* their voice is not heard.

4. The need for classical metaphysics to understand the God of the Bible.
 - a. Recall some of what we have covered: classical logic; nature of truth arguments; MP, MT; rationality as a science in going from premises to necessary conclusions; distinctions in act-potency, essence-existence, substance-accidents, form-matter; properties as abstract objects; accidental vs substantial change; necessity-contingent; Parmenides/Heraclitus/Aristotelean view of natures and change.
 - b. Apart from the above metaphysics I really do not see how anyone living in our naturalistic culture could understand the God of the Bible or any of metaphysical statements of reality- from creation to Ehyeh to Job 38-39 to Matthew 6.
 - c. Much of the Bible simply cannot be apprehended by the modern naturalistic framework.

5. A look at the immanence and transcendence of God in the incarnational texts.
 - a. Ex. 3:3, 14.
 - b. Isa. 6:1-6.
 - c. Isa. 9:2-7
 - d. Col. 1:16-17.
 - e. Philip 2:5-11.
 - f. John 1:1-18.
 - g. Luke 1:78-79.
 - h. Luke 1:26-55; 2:6-35.

6. We have noted that God has no parts. He is simple. He has no composition of essence/existence, essence/accidents, form/matter, act/potency, or any separate attributes that He depends upon. He is radically one and just is those various attributes, which are beings of reason.

7. More development on the lack of composition between God's essence and existence.
 - a. God is totally without parts of any kind. He is radically unique and one in ontology.
 - b. God is unlike anything else, He is not one being among other beings.
 - c. God does not have a separate essence from His existence.
 - d. God's essence is His existence, Exod. 3:14.
 - e. God's pure act of existence means that He does not depend upon an essence or anything else.
 - f. All other creatures are composed of essence and existence. The essences of all things depend upon the power of existence actualized by God.

- g. 'Ehyeh/Esse is the very act of being, which is why Exodus 3:14 gives us the most perfect name of God.
- h. God revealed His most perfect name of 'Ehyeh/Esse to communicate His existential absoluteness.
- i. 'Ehyeh/Esse conveys the fact that God is named after His essence which is but His existence as Pure Act. Only in God is there no composite of essence and existence.
- j. Creatures are radically different from the Creator in that all creatures are named after some separate essence, which is contingent upon the principle of existence derived vertically from 'Ehyeh.

- k. 'Ehyeh/Esse is what actualizes essences/beings—all beings are radically contingency upon Esse.
- l. Without the distinction between essence and existence there is no account for the contingency of creatures.
- m. 'Ehyeh/Esse means that God is BE, self-subsistent BE, in His essence/nature. He is the Being, the totality of Being from which all other beings owe their existence. He is the immeasurable and unbounded ocean of Being.
- n. The description of God as 'Ehyeh is far superior to descriptions of God in His Being than the popular terms of personality, love, fatherhood, and so forth because it encompasses all of God's attributes in an absolute sense. In BE, He is confirmed in all of His perfections.

- o. 'Ehyeh possesses no accidents.
- p. 'Ehyeh is entirely identical with that by which He exists, that is, that God is His own ontological sufficient condition of existence as such.
- q. As Pure Act He is uncaused and unreceived.
- r. God is not a particular being among others, not even the highest one: He is His underived being.
- s. Essences must be actualized by the act of being. This is why God is His own act of existence, which is His essence.
- t. God's esse is not to be compared to other esses as if He is the Existence that is just the biggest existing thing in the world, but the existence who causes anything to exist at all. If God had a separate essence or nature then He would simply be another being among others, like a higher spiritual being or angel.

8. God is most absolute in His unity, His oneness, which points to His simplicity. He is radically different from all creatures.
 - a. Deut. 6:4; 32:39
 - b. Isa 37:16
 - c. Isa 44:8.
 - d. Rom 3:30.
 - e. 1 Cor. 8:6.
 - f. Gal. 3:20.
 - g. 1 Tim. 2:5.

9. God is most absolute in His infinitude, which points to His simplicity.
- a. Job 11:7.
 - b. Psa 145:3.
 - c. 1 Kings 8:27
 - d. Isa 40:13.

10. God is most absolute in His immutability, which points to His simplicity.
 - a. Mal. 3.6
 - b. Isa 14:27
 - c. Heb 1:11-12
 - d. James 1:17

11. God is most absolute in His Eternality, which points to His simplicity. He is radically different from all of creation
 - a. Job 11:7.
 - b. Psa 145:3,
 - c. Isa 40:13