

Theology Proper — The Self-Sufficiency of God

I. SCRIPTURAL — *Examining a relevant passage of Scripture.*

“God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” (Acts 17:24-25)

A. GOD DOES NOT NEED (OR BENEFIT FROM) THE CREATED WORLD.

B. GOD DOES NOT NEED (OR BENEFIT FROM) HIS CREATURES.

II. DOCTRINAL — *Summarizing the teaching of Scripture as a whole.*

A. GOD’S SELF-SUFFICIENCY (aka ASEITY) IS THE UTTER INDEPENDENCE OF HIS ESSENCE, SUCH THAT HE NEITHER NEEDS NOR BENEFITS FROM ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF HIMSELF.

B. GOD’S SELF-SUFFICIENCY APPLIES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO HIS:

1. BEING / EXISTENCE

2. GLORY

3. KNOWLEDGE

4. BLESSEDNESS

5. PERFECTION / COMPLETENESS

6. LORDSHIP / OWNERSHIP

III. POLEMICAL — *Addressing relevant questions and controversies.*

A. DOES THE SCRIPTURAL COMMAND TO “GLORIFY GOD” IMPLY THAT GOD’S CREATURES ARE ABLE TO INCREASE (OR DECREASE) HIS ESSENTIAL GLORY? (We Deny.)

B. DOES THE SCRIPTURAL NOTION OF GOD’S “PLEASURE” IN RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPLY THAT GOD’S CREATURES ARE ABLE TO INCREASE (OR DECREASE) HIS ESSENTIAL BLESSEDNESS? (We Deny.)

C. DOES THE SCRIPTURAL TEACHING THAT CHRIST WAS “PERFECTED” CONTRADICT THE DOCTRINE OF GOD’S SELF-SUFFICIENCY? (We Distinguish.)

D. IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY ‘GOD OF HIMSELF’ AND ‘VERY GOD OF VERY GOD,’ i.e. ETERNALLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER? (We Affirm.)

E. IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY VITAL TO A PROPER GRASP AND DEFENSE OF GOD’S SELF-SUFFICIENCY? (We Affirm.)

F. DOES GOD’S SELF-SUFFICIENCY SERVE TO VINDICATE HIS ETERNAL DECREE (election, reprobation) AGAINST THE CHARGE OF INJUSTICE? (We Affirm.)

G. DOES THE DOCTRINE OF GOD’S SELF-SUFFICIENCY UNDERMINE THE DOCTRINE OF HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY? (We Deny.)

IV. PRACTICAL — *Applying the teaching of Scripture to our lives.*

A. LET US MARVEL AT GOD’S INFINITELY FREE GRACE AND GOODNESS!

1. CREATION

2. PROVIDENCE

3. REDEMPTION

B. LET US HUMBLE OURSELVES AS UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS, CONFESSING THAT GOD DOES NOT *ULTIMATELY* NEED US TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSES!

C. LET US FIND GOOD REASON FOR HOPE IN A DARK DAY OF DECLENSION!

D. LET US RESIST ALL PRAGMATIC ARGUMENTS TEMPTING US TO COMPROMISE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES IN ORDER TO IMPROVE OUR OUTWARD SITUATION!