

Divine Impassibility

God is not acted upon, and cannot be acted upon, by anything, either from within himself or outside of himself.

Lesson One: *Impassibility and Scripture*

1. The Bible describes God in the language of human experience and emotion. (Genesis 6:6-7; Deuteronomy 9:7-8; 1 Samuel 15:11; Jonah 3:10)
 2. The Bible denies that those very experiences are in God. (Numbers 23:19-20; 1 Samuel 15:29; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17)
 3. The Bible describes God in a way that makes it impossible for him to undergo anything or be acted upon. (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; John 4:24; Acts 14:15)
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1. The Bible uses the being and nature of God to qualify, control, and protect its own language.
 2. The Bible uses the physical features and emotional experiences of mankind to describe God. But we must not equate the human language used to describe God with God himself.
 3. Creature language is suited to our understanding, but it is not false. (1 Kings 8:27-29)
 4. We need to distinguish between our eternal God in himself, and the outworking of his decree in time and space.

Lesson Two: *Impassibility and Humanity*

1. The Parts (body and soul) and Faculties of Man (mind & will)
2. Affections and passions are actions of the will towards what we think is good and away from what we think is bad. For example: (love & hate), (desire & repulsion), (joy & sadness), (hope & despair), (confidence & fear), (mercy & wrath). (Ephesians 2:1-3; Titus 3:3; Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:10; Galatians 5:24-25; Colossians 3:2)

Lesson Three: *Impassibility and Deity*

God is (1) simple, (2) infinite, (3) eternal, (4) immutable, (5) impassible. (Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 57:15; James 1:17; Malachi 3:6)

(2LCF 2.1) God is “*most* holy, *most* wise, *most* free, *most* absolute...*most* righteous...*most* loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth...*most* just and terrible in his judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.”

1. Love

Man does good to those whom he perceives as good.

God, who is good in and of himself, pouring goodness on his creatures.

2. Mercy

Man helps those with whom he suffers.

God, who is good in and of himself, helps the helpless.

3. Anger

Man takes vengeance on those that provoke him.

God, who is good in and of himself, punishes the wicked.

1. Look for a divine perfection.

2. Look for a corresponding action.

Lesson Four: *Impassibility and Reality*

1. Personal applications

The unchanging perfections of God are the foundation of your persevering trust in God's promises. (Exodus 3:13-15; Lamentations 3:21-24; Psalm 73:22-26; 1 John 4:16)

2. Pastoral implications

Without any doubt or deviation, God will punish the wicked. (Romans 3:19-20)

Without any doubt or deviation, God will justify the righteous. (John 3:16-18; Romans 10:9-13; 1 John 5:11-13)