

## INTRODUCTION

The Lord Jesus Christ has shown Himself to be amazingly patient, longsuffering with us when we were ignorant, unbelieving sinners. A day is coming when He shall come again, and judge the world, and send unbelieving sinners off to the lake of fire to receive what they deserve for their rebellion. But He has waited thousands of years so far, which is salvation for us, who during His long wait have received mercy from God through Him in that we have heard His gospel, and turned from our sins, believing in Him.

While we wait for that glorious day when He will come again, we live here on earth in the fellowship of His church, the household of God. While we wait, and as we live in this household, what are we to do? How are we to act? Last time, we considered this together:

**When we think of how Christ Jesus our Lord has been merciful to us, and longsuffering, in bringing us, ignorant unbelievers, to faith and eternal life, we give honor and glory to God the King eternal!**

Today we add to that understanding: **as we give honor and glory to God, we do so pondering His perfections: that He is immortal, invisible, God only wise!**

## TEXT

1 Timothy 1:17 Now to the King eternal, **immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise**, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

## BODY

**As we give honor and glory to God, we do so pondering His perfections: that He is immortal, invisible, God only wise!**

## I. Immortal

- A. G862 *aphthartos* lit. undecaying; unruined
- B. Literally “incorruptible” used to convey “immortal,” not so much in the sense of not subject to death, but in the sense of without end
- C. 1 Peter 1:22-25 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, (23) having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, (24) because "ALL FLESH IS AS GRASS, AND ALL THE GLORY OF MAN AS THE FLOWER OF THE GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND ITS FLOWER FALLS AWAY, (25) BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.
- D. 1689.2.1 The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of himself, infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, **who only hath immortality**,
- E. See how mankind in sin acts toward the incorruptible, immortal God
  1. Romans 1:21-23 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (23) And changed the glory of the **incorruptible [G862 *aphthartos*] [ESV immortal]** God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
- F. See how God the incorruptible, immortal God has dealt with us sinners in mercy
  1. 1 Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) To an inheritance **incorruptible [G862 *aphthartos*]**, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, (5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- G. See how that incorruptible reward is our motivation during this life

1. 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. (25) And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an **incorruptible [G862 *aphthartos*]**.

H. See how the Lord Jesus will bring us into the incorruptible, immortal state with Him at the last day

1. 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised **incorruptible [G862 *aphthartos*]**, and we shall be changed. (53) For this **corruptible [G5349 *phthartos*]** must put on **incorruption [G861 *aphtharsia*]**, and this **mortal [G2349 *thnetos*]** must put on **immortality [G110 *athanasia*]**. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

I. Honor and Glory

1. if He is the incorruptible being, the immortal being, the let all of us, who are corruptible and mortal, but who stand to be made incorruptible, immortal by Him give Him all honor and glory
2. let nothing that is corruptible or mortal be an object of worship to you

## II. Invisible

A. all translations “invisible”

B. In our confession

1. 1689.2.1 Of God and of the Holy Trinity

2. The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of himself, infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; a most pure spirit, **invisible**, without body, parts, or passions

C. In other places in the scriptures

1. 1 Timothy 6:15-16 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; (16) Who only hath immortality, **dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see:** to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

2. 1 John 4:12 **No man hath seen God at any time.** If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

3. Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

4. John 6:44-46 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (46) Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

5. Exodus 33:18-23 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. (19) And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. (20) And he said, **Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.** (21) And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: (22) And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: (23) And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

- a) The human being wants to see God, his Creator.
- b) God is invisible to the eyes of the creature.
- c) The creature can't see God.
- d) The creature could not bear to see God even if he could.
- e) (The creature cannot deal with God directly.)
- f) God places the human being in Christ
- g) In Christ the creature can see the goodness of God.
- h) In Christ the name of God is proclaimed.
- i) In Christ the sovereign grace and mercy of God can be seen.

#### D. Honor and Glory

1. if He is the being whom no man can see and live, then let us all lay ourselves prostrate at His feet and give him all honor and glory
2. do not seek to represent Him with something visible as if that would better enable you to worship Him; God being invisible, do not give honor and glory to something visible to represent Him

### III. God Only Wise

#### A. Translations

1. Geneva, Bishops' from the 1560s - God only wise
2. KJV - the only wise God
3. NKJV - God who alone is wise
4. I am using "God only wise" because of its familiarity from the hymn

#### B. We see this another place, Romans 16:27

1. KJV To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.
2. NKJV to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever.  
Amen.
3. ESV to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ!  
Amen.

#### C. Meaning

1. among all things that people worship as a god, He is the only one that is wise
  - a) in the statue of Artemis or Diana in the great temple in Ephesus, there is no wisdom
  - b) in the little silver statues that the silver smiths of Ephesus made, there is no wisdom
  - c) God only is wise
2. among all beings who have wisdom, He is the only one
  - a) who has all wisdom, who is all wise
  - b) in whom wisdom is original, not derived

#### D. Honor and Glory:

1. let the foolishness of the scholars who reject God appear exceedingly foolish
2. If he is God only wise, then let us who have no wisdom of our own, but receive wisdom from Him, give Him all honor and glory

### CONCLUSION

**When we think of how Christ Jesus our Lord has been merciful to us, and longsuffering, in bringing us, ignorant unbelievers, to faith and eternal life, we give honor and glory to God the King eternal, pondering His perfections: that He is immortal, invisible, God only wise!**

**immortal** G862 *aphthartos* lit. undecaying; unruined  
see Romans 1:23

RV, YLT incorruptible

Vulgate: inmortalis

Literally “incorruptible” with implication “immortal”

### **See how this is expressed in our confession**

1689.2.1 The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of himself, infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, **who only hath immortality**,

-not meaning He has only one thing, immortality

-but meaning He is the only being who has immortality in and of Himself

### **See the passage where that comes from right in 1 Timothy**

1 Timothy 6:13-16 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; (14) That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: (15) Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; (16) Who only hath **immortality** [**G110 *athanasia***], dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

### **See how mankind in sin acts toward the incorruptible, immortal God**

Romans 1:21-23 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (23) And changed the glory of the **incorruptible** [**G862 *aphthartos***] [**ESV immortal**] God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

### **See how God the incorruptible, immortal God has dealt with us sinners in mercy**

1 Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) To an inheritance **incorruptible** [**G862 *aphthartos***], and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, (5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

### **See how that incorruptible reward is our motivation during this life**



1 Corinthians 9:24-25 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. (25) And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an **incorruptible [G862 *aphthartos*]**.

**See how the Lord Jesus will bring us into the incorruptible, immortal state with Him at the last day**

1 Corinthians 15:51-54 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised **incorruptible [G862 *aphthartos*]**, and we shall be changed. (53) For this **corruptible [G5349 *phthartos*]** must put on **incorruption [G861 *aphtharsia*]**, and this **mortal [G2349 *thnetos*]** must put on **immortality [G110 *athanasia*]**. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

## **invisible**

see Colossians 1:15

1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, **invisible**, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

-all translations “invisible”

-G517 *aoratos* invisible from G3707 *horatos* visible

“Theology Proper” or “Doctrine of God”

## THIS ATTRIBUTE’S PLACE IN OUR CONFESSION

1689.2.1 Of God and of the Holy Trinity

The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of himself, infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; a most pure spirit, **invisible**, without body, parts, or passions

## THE MOST APPLICABLE SCRIPTURES

1 Timothy 6:15-16 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; (16) Who only hath immortality, **dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see:** to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

1 John 4:12 **No man hath seen God at any time.** If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Exodus 33:18-23 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. (19) And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. (20) And he said, **Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.** (21) And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: (22) And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: (23) And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

## MY SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF THIS

Moses asks to be allowed to see God

Exodus 33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

God grants that He will show something of Himself to Moses: it will be His goodness, His grace, His mercy

Exodus 33:19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

God will not grant Moses to see God Himself. This he will not do, for Moses is not able to see God, who is invisible, nor could he bear it were he able.

Exodus 33:20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

God will cover Moses with His hand, so that His face shall not be seen.

Exodus 33:22c and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by

Exodus 33:23c but my face shall not be seen

God will put Moses in a clift of the rock; from there God will allow Moses to see His back parts or His train.

Exodus 33:22b I will put thee in a clift of the rock

Exodus 33:23b thou shalt see my back parts

Explained:

The human being wants to see God, his Creator.

God is invisible to the eyes of the creature.

The creature can't see God.

The creature could not bear to see God even if he could.

(The creature cannot deal with God directly.)

God places the human being in Christ

In Christ the creature can see the goodness of God.

In Christ the name of God is proclaimed.

In Christ the sovereign grace and mercy of God can be seen.

SOME BETTER COMMENTS ON THIS

**Exodus 33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.**

Spurgeon:

I believe that Moses knew that "God is Spirit." I think he must have been sensible that the mind of man can never conceive an adequate idea of the incomprehensible Jehovah. He must have learned that the God of Mount Sinai,

the King whose feet glowed like a furnace and made the mountain smoke, could never be grasped by the sense of a mortal.

These eyes are but organs to convey to me the knowledge of material substances—they cannot discern spirits! It is not their duty—it is beyond their province.

**Exodus 33:22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:**

Carroll:

Now, the idea is that God, Elohim, is as a consuming fire out of Christ; man cannot see him and live. Hence Moses was placed in a refuge, while God's hand closed the aperture as Elohim passed by. But after Elohim passed, Moses might safely see Jehovah Elohim, that is, God revealed as a Saviour. The hymn is Toplady's "Rock of Ages." The idea is just the same when the children of Israel were placed behind the blood sprinkled door as the angel of death passed by.

**Exodus 33:23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.**

JFB:

The face, hand, back parts, are to be understood figuratively.

Henry:

Note, God's goodness is his glory; and he will have us to know him by the glory of his mercy more than by the glory of his majesty

When we see what God has done in his works, observe the goings of our God, our King, we see (as it were) his back-parts. The best thus know but in part, and we cannot order our speech concerning God, by reason of darkness, any more than we can describe a man whose face we never saw.

Gill:

it denotes the imperfect knowledge of God in the present state, even as revealed in Christ, in whom there are the clearest and brightest displays of his glory; yet

this, in comparison of the beatific sight of him, is but like seeing a man that is gone by, whose back is only to be seen:

Spurgeon:

All that we can ever see of God is what He called His “back parts.” The words, I think, signify “regal train.” You have seen kings with regal trains trailing behind them—and all we can ever see of God is His train that floats behind Him.

I cannot conceive what God Himself is! All I can ever learn, all that the thunder ever spoke, all that the boisterous ocean ever could teach me, all that the heaven above, or the earth beneath, can ever open to my mind is nothing but the “back parts” of God. I can never see Him, nor can fully understand what He is.

#### SOME VERY HELPFUL THEOLOGICAL EXPLANATION OF THIS

Ussher:

#### **How then can he be known of us, being Incomprehensible?**

Though his Substance be past finding out of Man or Angels, yet may he be known by his Properties and Actions (Amos 4:13), and we may conceive of him by his Name (Exodus 33:19 and 34:5-6, Psalm 145:1-2), expressing what an one he is to us; though we are not able to know him according to the excellency of his Glorious Nature, only known unto himself (Judges 13:18), therefore he said to Moses, Exodus 33:20, My Face, that is the Glory of my Majesty (he does not say, thou might not, or thou shalt not, but), thou *canst* not see; for there shall no Man see me, and live. But thou shalt see my back parts (verse 23), that is, some small measure of my Glory, so far as thou art able to comprehend it.

And even as Princes have their Secrets, whereunto all their Subjects are not made privy, neither is it lawful for them to search into them; and yet do they so far forth publish their Commandments as is profitable for them to know: So the Prince of all Princes hath his Secrets, unto which we are not privy, and into which we may not search; yet he hath so far revealed himself unto us (by his Works and Word) as is necessary and profitable for us to know, Deut 29:29.

#### **How many things conceive you of God, when you say that he is a Spirit?**

Six things.

1. That he is a Living Substance
2. That he is Incorruptible
3. That he is Incorporeal; without Body, Flesh, Blood, or Bones. For a Spirit hath not such Matther, Luke 24:39
4. **That he is Invisible**, i.e. he hath not bee seen with any mortal eye, neither can any Man possibly see him.
5. That he is Intangible, not felt.
6. That he is Indivisible, i.e. he cannot be divided

**Objection: We read that God appeared to Abraham; and that he showed himself to the Israelites.**

God gave them indeed some outward sights, whereby they might be certain of his Presence; and therefore it is said that the Lord appeared unto them, but his Substance or Essence they saw not. For to know God perfectly, is proper to God only, John 6:46.

John 6:44-46 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (46) Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

**Objection: We read that Man was made according to the Image of God. It would seem therefore that God is Corporeal and Visible, as Man is.**

The Image of God consisteth not in the Shape and Figure of the Body, but in the Mind and Integrity of Nature, or (as the Scripture saith) in Wisdom, Righteousness and Holiness, Col 3:10, Eph 4:24

Colossians 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Ephesians 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

**Objection: Why then does the Scripture attribute unto him Hands, Feet, etc.**

The Scripture so speaketh of him as we are able to conceive: And therefore in these and such-like Speeches, humbleth it self to our Capacity, attributing Members unto God to signify the like Actions in him.

### **the only God**

see

Romans 16:27

John 5:44

John 17:3

### **wise**

KJV 1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, **the only [G3441 monos] wise [G4680 sophos] God [G2316 theos]**, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

NKJV Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

ESV To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.



## TEXTUAL VARIATION:

-the only wise God; God who alone is wise OR

-the only God

We don't know whether *sophia* was added or omitted; it was long, long ago; there is only speculation.

## ANOTHER PLACE IN PAUL'S LETTERS

Romans 16:27

KJV To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

NKJV to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

ASV to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.

ESV to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

RWP: (*monōi sophōi theōi*). Better, "to God alone wise." See note on 1Ti\_1:17 without *sophōi*.

## A STATEMENT IN JOHN

John 17:3

KJV And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

NIV, NKJV, ESV, others the only true God

WYC, GEN "very" instead of "true"

## A VERY HELPFUL PARALLEL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Question: Isaiah 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,  
Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure?  
Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?

Answer: only God 1689.2.1 "immense"

Question: Isaiah 40:13-14 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has taught Him? (14) With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him, And taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, And showed Him the way of understanding?

Answer: no one 1689.2.1 “most wise”

Question: Isaiah 40:15-18 Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales; Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing. (16) And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering. (17) All nations before Him are as nothing, And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless. (18) To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him?

Answer: no one; nothing 1689.2.1 “whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself”

Question: Isaiah 40:19-25 The workman molds an image, The goldsmith overspreads it with gold, And the silversmith casts silver chains. (20) Whoever is too impoverished for such a contribution Chooses a tree that will not rot; He seeks for himself a skillful workman To prepare a carved image that will not totter. (21) Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

Answer: yes, we have; yes, it has; yes, we have

Question: Isaiah 40:22-25 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. (23) He brings the princes to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth useless. (24) Scarcely shall they be planted, Scarcely shall they be sown, Scarcely shall their stock take root in the earth, When He will also blow on them, And they will wither, And the whirlwind will take them away like stubble. (25) "To whom then will you liken Me, Or to whom shall I be equal?" says the Holy One.

Answer: no one, nothing

1689.2.2 to him is due from angels and men, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, as creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them.

KJV 1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, **the only [G3441 monos] wise [G4680 sophos] God [G2316 theos]**, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

RWP:

*monoi theoi* Romans 16:27; John 5:44; John 17:3

Calvin:

the Only Wise, because he renders foolish, and condemns as vanity, all the wisdom of men.

Poole:

Only wise, primitively and originally, and eminently, from whom all wisdom is derived.

Gill:

he is "the only God", so the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions, read; not to the exclusion of the Father or Spirit, but in opposition to all false deities, or those who are not by nature God: and he is the only wise God; who is wisdom itself, and of himself; and is the fountain of wisdom, both natural and spiritual, unto others; wherefore to him be

Clarke:

The word σοφῶν wise, is omitted by AD\*FG, Syriac, Erpen's Arabic, Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala. Some of the Greek fathers quote it sometimes, and omit it at others; which shows that it was an unsettled reading, probably borrowed from Rom\_16:27 (note). Griesbach leaves it out of the text. Without it the reading is very strong and appropriate: To the only God; nothing visible or invisible being worthy of adoration but himself.

Barnes:

The word "wise" is missing in many mss., and in some editions of the New Testament. It is omitted by Griesbach; marked as doubtful by Tittman, and rejected in the valuable edition of Hahn. Erasmus conjectures that it was added against the Arians, who maintained that the Father only was God, and that as he

is here mentioned as such, the word wise was interpolated to denote merely that the attribute of perfect wisdom belonged only to him. Wetstein regards the reading as genuine, and suspects that in some of the early manuscripts where it is missing it was omitted by the transcriber, because it was regarded as inelegant for two adjectives to be united in this manner. It is not easy to determine as to the genuineness of the reading. The sense is not materially affected, whichever view be adopted. It is true that Yahweh is the only God; it is also true that he is the only wise God. The gods of the pagan are “vanity and a lie,” and they are wholly destitute of wisdom; see Psa\_115:3-8; Psa\_135:15-18; Isa\_40:18-20; Isa\_44:10-17.

Fairbairn:

(the received text has also σοφ<sup>ω</sup>), but against the best authorities)

Ellicott:

The only wise God.—The only God, the most ancient authorities omitting “wise.” “Only,” as in 1Ti\_6:15 : “the blessed and only potentate.” “The only God,” a contrast to the multitude of created spirits, angels, principalities, powers, &c. (See 1Co\_8:5-6.)

JFB:

The oldest manuscripts omit “wise,” which probably crept in from Rom\_16:27, where it is more appropriate to the context than here (compare Jud\_1:25). “The only Potentate” (1Ti\_6:15; Psa\_86:10; Joh\_5:44).

VWS:

Wise should be omitted. Rend. The only God. Σοφ<sup>ω</sup> wise was interpolated from Rom\_16:27 - the only instance in which Paul applies the term to God. Comp. Jud\_1:4, Jud\_1:25; Luk\_5:21; Joh\_5:44.

#### E. Textual variant - *sophos* included or not included

1. long, long ago *sophos* was added or omitted; we don't know which; there is only speculation.
2. but both are true, and both are stated elsewhere in the bible
  - a) “the only God” e.g. John 17:3

- (1) KJV And this is life eternal, that they might know thee **the only true God**, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.
- (2) NIV, NKJV, ESV, others the only true God
- (3) WYC, GEN “very” instead of “true”

WYC And to the king of worldis, vndeedli and vnvysible God aloone, be onour and glorie in to worldis of worldis. Amen.

BB Nowe, vnto the kyng euerlastyng, immortall, inuisible, vnto God onlye wise [be] honour and glorie for euer and euer, Amen.

GEN Nowe vnto the King euerlasting, immortall, inuisible, vnto God onely wise, be honour and glorie, for euer, and euer, Amen.

KJV Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

RV Now unto the King eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, behonour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

ASV Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, [be] honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

YLT and to the King of the ages, the incorruptible, invisible, only wise God, is honour and glory--to the ages of the ages! Amen.

NASB Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen

*Lit. of the ages Lit. to the ages of the ages*

NKJV Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

ESV To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Clarke:

The word σοφῶν wise, is omitted by AD\*FG, Syriac, Erpen’s Arabic, Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala. Some of the Greek fathers quote it sometimes, and omit it at others; which shows that it was an unsettled reading, probably borrowed from Rom\_16:27 (note). Griesbach leaves it out of the text. Without it the reading is very strong and appropriate: To the only God; nothing visible or invisible being worthy of adoration but himself.

Barnes:

The word “wise” is missing in many mss., and in some editions of the New Testament. It is omitted by Griesbach; marked as doubtful by Tittman, and rejected in the valuable edition of Hahn. Erasmus conjectures that it was added against the Arians, who maintained that the Father only was God, and that as he is here mentioned as such, the word wise was interpolated to denote merely that the attribute of perfect wisdom belonged only to him. Wetstein regards the reading as genuine, and suspects that in some of the early manuscripts where it is missing it was omitted by the transcriber, because it was regarded as inelegant for two adjectives to be united in this manner. It is not easy to determine as to the genuineness of the reading. The sense is not materially affected, whichever view be adopted. It is true that Yahweh is the only God; it is also true that he is the only wise God. The gods of the pagan are “vanity and a lie,” and they are wholly destitute of wisdom

VWS:

Wise should be omitted. Rend. The only God. Σοφ<sup>ω</sup> wise was interpolated from Rom\_16:27 - the only instance in which Paul applies the term to God.

Ellicott:

The only God, the most ancient authorities omitting “wise.” “Only,” as in 1Ti\_6:15 : “the blessed and only potentate.” “The only God,” a contrast to the multitude of created spirits, angels, principalities, powers, &c. (See 1Co\_8:5-6.)

JFB:

The oldest manuscripts omit “wise,” which probably crept in from Rom\_16:27, where it is more appropriate to the context than here



**charge**

G3852 *paraggelia*

GEN, TYN, WYC: commandment

-referring to verses 3, 5



1 Timothy 1:3-5 As I besought you to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that you might **charge** some that they teach no other doctrine, (4) Neither give heed to myths and endless genealogies, which cause questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. (5) Now the end of the **commandment** is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

TYN, GEN having...have put away

BB having...having put away

KJV holding...having put away

RV/ASV holding...having thrust from them

RSV holding...rejecting

NASB keeping...have rejected

NKJV having...having rejected

ESV holding...rejecting

Call to Worship: 1 Chronicles 16:8-11 - Thad  
Scripture Reading: 1 Chronicles 16:12-35 - Dillon  
Sermon: "Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise"  
Lord's Supper - Mark  
Benediction: 1 Chronicles 16:36

Prelude: Grace 105 "Lord, We Come to Hear Your Word" - Dorita  
Trinity 718 "Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" - Dorita  
Trinity 35 "Immortal, Invisible" - Dorita  
Grace 26 "By Grace Alone" (Psalm 130) - Anna  
Trinity 644 "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" - Anna