



A Course

In

**BIBLE
DOCTRINES I,
STUDIES IN**

Prepared by the
Committee on Religious Education
of the
American Bible College

Pineland, Florida 33945

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INTRODUCTION

BIBLE DOCTRINES I and II are topical studies of compiled Bible verses dealing with specific Bible subjects and resulting in an analytical analysis as presented by the late Dr. William Evans and Dr. S. Maxwell Coder in the Book THE GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE.

By enlarge, Bible Doctrines I is the first half of this Moody Press book as authored by William Evans, with few additional notes made by the compiler and noted in brackets, []. The author's references to other Bible versions are left in tact in honor to them. However, this

should not be construed to be a correction of the Bible. The A.B.C. maintains the K.J.V. is the preserved Word of God.

The American Bible College uses this textbook with much appreciation to Moody Press and Dr. S. Maxwell Coder for their gracious permission. We would encourage the student to purchase this book, THE GREAT DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE, and to consider other fine books from Moody Press.

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ACNOWLEDGEMENT

The American Bible College wishes to thank Moody Press and Dr. S Maxwell Coder for their gracious permission to reproduce this book which is still in print. Moody Press has been gracious in granting permission to reproduce other textbooks in order to save our students financially. We encourage our students to consider purchasing other Moody Press publications.

FOREWORD.

The demand for this book has come from the students in the class room who have listened to these lectures on the Great Doctrines of the Bible, and have desired and requested that they be put into permanent form for the purpose of further study and reference. This volume is prepared, therefore, primarily, but not exclusively, for the student, and with his needs in mind.

The doctrines herein treated are dealt with from the standpoint of Biblical rather than Dogmatic theology. This is evident from the plan which is followed in the work, namely, to gather together all the Scripture passages dealing with the subject under consideration, and from them choose a required number that may be called representative; then seek to understand the meaning of these references by the study of the text itself as well as its context and parallel passages; and finally, from the selected proof-texts, formulate the doctrinal teaching, and place such results under appropriate headings.

The doctrines of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are more fully dealt with than the doctrines which follow. This is especially true of the doctrine of God. The reason for this is to set forth the method pursued in these studies, and to give a pattern for the study of the doctrines to follow.

It is intended that the doctrines of this book should be studied side by side with the open Bible. It is for this reason that many of the Scripture references are indicated by chapter and verse only. There must be constant reference to the Scriptures themselves.

This volume is in such form as to be of great service in the instruction given in Bible classes. There is probably no greater need in the Christian church today than that its membership should be made acquainted with the fundamental facts and doctrines of the Christian faith. The Christian layman, therefore, who desires a deeper knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian faith may find all the help he needs in this book. It is hoped that while it is prepared for the student, it is nevertheless not too deep for the average layman.

The special indebtedness of the writer is hereby expressed to the following works: "What the Bible Teaches," by R. A. Torrey, D. D. To this work the writer owes much with regard to the method and plan of this book. "Systematic Theology," by A. H. Strong, D. D., has provided some rich expositions of the sacred text. "Christian Doctrine," by Dr. F. L. Patton, has been found very helpful, especially in connection with the subject of the "Proofs for the Existence of God." Further recognition of indebtedness is also due to the following: "The Problem of the Old Testament," and "The Christian View of God and the World," by Dr. James Orr; "Studies in Christian Doctrine," by George Knapp; "Jesus and the Gospel," and "The Death of Christ," by Prof. James Denny; "The Person and Work of Jesus," by Nathan E. Wood, D. D.

There are doubtless others to whom credit is due of whom the author is not at this time conscious, for, after all, we are "part of all that we have seen, and met, and read." To those unknown authors, therefore, our indebtedness is hereby acknowledged.

Chicago._ WILLIAM EVANS.

CHAPTER I

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

- I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD: (Vs. Atheism).
 - A. ASSUMED BY THE SCRIPTURES.
 - B. PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.
 - 1. Universal belief in the Existence of God.
 - 2. Cosmological:--Argument from Cause.
 - 2. Teleological:--Argument from Design.
 - 4. Ontological:--Argument from Being.
 - 5. Anthropological:--Moral Argument.
 - 6. Argument from Congruity.
 - 7. Argument from Scripture.
- II. THE NATURE OF GOD: (Vs. Agnosticism)
 - A THE SPIRITUALITY OF GOD: (VS. MATERIALISM).
 - B THE PERSONALITY OF GOD: (VS. PANTHEISM).
 - C THE UNITY OF GOD: (VS. POLYTHEISM).
 - D THE TRINITY: (VS. UNITARIANISM).
- III. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.
 - A THE NATURAL ATTRIBUTES:
 - 1. Omniscience.
 - 2. Omnipotence.
 - 3. Omnipresence.
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 - B THE MORAL ATTRIBUTES:
 - 1. Holiness.
 - 2. Righteousness.
 - 3. Faithfulness.
 - 4. Mercy and Loving-kindness.
 - 5. Love.

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The Book and Its Author

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

I. HIS EXISTENCE

A. TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY THE SCRIPTURE WRITERS:

It does not seem to have occurred to any of the writers of either the Old or the New Testaments to attempt to prove or to argue for the existence of God. Everywhere and at all times it is a fact taken for granted. "A God capable of proof would be no God at all" (Jacobi). He is the self-existent One (Exod. 3:14) and the Source of all life (John 5:26).

The sublime opening of the Scriptures announces the fact of God and His existence: "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1). Nor is the rise or dawn of the idea of God in the mind of man depicted. Psa. 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart. There is no God," indicates not a disbelief in the existence, but rather in the active interest of God in the affairs of men—He seemed to hide Himself from the affairs of men (See Job 22:12-14).

The Scriptures further recognize that men not only know of the existence of God, but have also a certain circle of ideas as to who and what He is (Rom. 1:18-19).

No one but a "fool" will deny the fact of God. "What! no God? A watch, and no key for it? A watch with a main-spring broken, and no jeweler to fix it? A watch, and no repair shop? A time-card and a train, and nobody to run it? A star lit, and nobody to pour oil in to keep the wick burning? A garden, and no gardener? Flowers, and no florist? Conditions, and no conditioner?" He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at such absurd atheism.

B. THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.¹

¹ [Footnote: A fuller and complete presentation of these arguments for the Existence of God may

These arguments may not prove conclusively that God is, but they do show that in order to the existence of any knowledge, thought, reason, conscience in man, we must assume that God is (Strong). It is said of the beautiful, "It may be shown, but not proved." So we say of the existence of God. These arguments are probable, not demonstrative. For this reason they supplement each other, and constitute a series of evidences which is cumulative in its nature. Though taken singly, none of them can be considered absolutely decisive, they together furnish a corroboration of our primitive conviction of God's existence, which is of great practical value, and is in itself sufficient to bind the moral actions of men. A bundle of rods may not be broken even though each one separately may; the strength of the bundle is the strength of the whole. If in practical affairs we were to hesitate to act until we have absolute and demonstrable certainty, we should never begin to move at all.

Instead of doubting everything that can be doubted, let us rather doubt nothing until we are compelled to doubt. Dr. Orr, of Glasgow, says: What we mean by the proof of God's existence is simply that there are necessary acts of thought by which we rise from the finite to the infinite, from the caused to the uncaused, from the contingent to the necessary, from the reason involved in the structure of the universe to a universal and eternal reason, which is the ground of all, from morality in conscience to a moral Lawgiver and Judge. In this connection the theoretical proofs constitute an inseparable unity—'constitute together,' as Dr. Stirling declares, "but the undulations of a single wave, which wave is but a natural rise and ascent to God, on the part of man's own thought, with man's own experience and consciousness as the object before him."

Religion was not produced by proofs of God's existence, and will not be destroyed by its insufficiency to some minds. Religion existed before argument; in fact, it is the preciousness of religion that leads to the seeking for all possible confirmations of the reality of God.

1. Universality of Belief in the Existence of God.

(a) The fact stated and proven:

Man everywhere believes in the existence of a supreme Being or Beings to whom he is morally

be found in the works of Dr. Augustus H. Strong and Dr. Francis L. Patten, to whom the author is hereindebted.]

responsible and to whom propitiation needs to be made.

Such belief may be crudely, even grotesquely stated and manifested, but the reality of the fact is no more invalidated by such crudeness than the existence of a father is invalidated by the crude attempts of a child to draw a picture of its father.

It has been claimed by some that there are or were tribes in inland Africa that possessed no idea or conception of God. [Robert]Moffat, [David]Livingstone's father-in-law, made such a claim, but Livingstone, after a thorough study of the customs and languages of such tribes, conclusively showed that Moffat was wrong.

Nor should the existence of such few tribes, even if granted, violate the fact we are here considering, any more than the existence of some few men who are blind, lame, deaf, and dumb would make untrue the statement and fact that man is a seeing, hearing, speaking, and walking creature. The fact that some nations do not have the multiplication table does no violence to arithmetic.

Concerning so-called atheists in Christian lands: it may be questioned if there are really any such beings. Hume, known as a famous skeptic, is reported to have said to Ferguson, as together they looked up into the starry sky: "Adam, there is a God." Voltaire, the atheist, prayed to God in a thunderstorm. Ingersoll, when charged with being an atheist, indignantly refuted the charge, saying: "I am not an atheist; I do not say that there is no God; I am an agnostic; I do not know that there is a God." "I thank God that I am an atheist," were the opening words of an argument to disprove the existence of God. A new convert to atheism was once heard to say to a coterie of unbelievers: "I have gotten rid of the idea of a supreme Being, and I thank God for it." [Atheism—denies the existence of God; Agnosticism—denies the know-ability of God; infidelity—having no religious beliefs; skepticism—denies absolute knowledge of God is impossible, hence doubt of the reality.]

(b) Whence comes this universal belief in the existence of God?

(1) *Not from outside sources*, such as reason, tradition, or even the Scriptures.

Not from reason or argument, for many who believe in God have not given any time to reasoning and arguing the question; some, indeed, intellectually, could not. Others who have great powers of intellect, and who have reasoned and argued on the subject are professed disbelievers in God. Belief in God is not the

result of logical arguments, else the Bible would have given us proofs.

Nor did this universal belief come from tradition, for "Tradition," says Dr. Patton, "can perpetuate only what has been originated."

Nor can it be said that this belief came from the Scriptures even, for, as has been well said, unless a man had a knowledge of the God from whom the Scriptures came, the Revelation itself could have no authority for him. The very idea of Scripture as a Revelation, presupposes belief in a God who can make it.—Newman Smith. Revelation must assume the existence of God.

(2) *This universal belief comes from within man.* All the evidence points to the conclusive fact that this universal faith in the existence of God is innate in man, and comes from rational intuition.

(a) The weight and force of this argument.

The fact that all men everywhere believe in the existence of a supreme Being or beings to whom they are morally responsible, is a strong argument in favor of its truth. So universal an effect must have a cause as universal, otherwise we have an effect without any assignable cause. Certain is it that this argument makes the burden of proof to rest upon those who deny the existence of God.

2. The Argument from Cause: Cosmological.

[For every effect there is a cause.] When we see a thing we naturally ask for the cause of that thing. We see this world in which we live, and ask how it came to be. Is it self-originating, or is the cause of its being outside of itself? Is its cause finite or infinite?

That it could not come into being of itself seems obvious; no more than nails, brick, mortar, wood, paints, colors, form into a house or building of themselves; no more than the type composing a book came into order of itself. When Liebig was asked if he believed that the grass and flowers which he saw around him grew by mere chemical forces, he replied: "No; no more than I could believe that the books on botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces." No theory of an "eternal series" can account for this created universe. No matter how long a chain you may have, you must have a staple somewhere from which it depends. An endless perpendicular chain is an impossibility. "Every house is builded by some man," says the Bible; so this world in which we live was built by a designing mind of infinite power and wisdom.

So is it when we consider man. Man exists; but he owes his existence to some cause. Is this

cause within or without himself, finite or infinite? Trace our origin back, if you will, to our first parent, Adam; then you must ask, How did he come into being? The doctrine of the eternity of man cannot be supported. Fossil remains extend back but 6,000 years. Man is an effect; he has not always existed. Geology proves this. That the first Cause must have been an intelligent Being is proven by the fact that we are intelligent beings ourselves.

3. The Argument from Design: Teleological.

A watch proves not only a maker, an artificer, but also a designer; a watch is made for a purpose. This is evident in its structure. A thoughtful, designing mind was back of the watch. So is it with the world in which we live. These "ends" in nature are not to be attributed to "natural results," or "natural selection," results which are produced without intelligence, nor are they "the survival of the fittest," instances in which "accident and fortuity have done the work of mind." No, they are the results of a superintending and originating intelligence and will.

4. The Argument from Being: Ontological.

Man has an idea of an infinite and perfect Being. From whence this idea? From finite and imperfect beings like ourselves? Certainly not. Therefore this idea argues for the existence of an infinite and perfect Being: such a Being must exist, as a person, and not a mere thought.

5. The Moral Argument; Anthropological.

Man has an intellectual and a moral nature, hence his Creator must be an intellectual and moral Being, a Judge, and Lawgiver. Man has an emotional nature; only a Being of goodness, power, love, wisdom and holiness could satisfy such a nature, and these things denote the existence of a personal God.

Conscience in man says: "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not," "I ought," and "I ought not." These mandates are not self-imposed. They imply the existence of a Moral Governor to whom we are responsible. Conscience,—there it is in the breast of man, an ideal Moses thundering from an invisible Sinai the Law of a holy Judge. Said Cardinal Newman: "Were it not for the voice speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, when I looked into the world." Some things are wrong, others right: love is right, hatred is wrong. Nor is a thing right because it pleases, or wrong because it displeases. Where did we get this standard of right and wrong? Morality is obligatory, not optional. Who made it obligatory? Who has a

right to command my life? We must believe that there is a God, or believe that the very root of our nature is a lie.

6. The Argument from Congruity.

If we have a key which fits all the wards of the lock, we know that it is the right key. If we have a theory which fits all the facts in the case, we know then that we have the right theory. "Belief in a self-existent, personal God is in harmony with all the facts of our mental and moral nature, as well as with all the phenomena of the natural world. If God exists, a universal belief in his existence is natural enough; the irresistible impulse to ask for a first cause is accounted for; or religious nature has an object; the uniformity of natural law finds an adequate explanation, and human history is vindicated from the charge of being a vast imposture. Atheism leaves all these matters without an explanation, and makes, not history alone, but our moral and intellectual nature itself, an imposture and a lie."—*Patton*.

7. The Argument from Scripture.

A great deal of our knowledge rests upon the testimony of others. Now the Bible is competent testimony. If the testimony of travelers is enough to satisfy us as to the habits, customs, and manners of the peoples of the countries they visit, and which we have never seen, why is not the Bible, if it is authentic history, be enough to satisfy us with its evidence as to the existence of God?

Some facts need more evidence than others, we know. This is true of the fact of the existence of God. But the Bible history is sufficient to satisfy every reasonable demand. The history of the Jews, prophecy, is not explainable minus God. If we cannot believe in the existence of God on the testimony of the Bible we might as well burn our books of history. A man cannot deny the truth of the testimony of the Bible unless he says plainly: "No amount of testimony will convince me of the supernatural."

Scripture does not attempt to prove the existence of God; it asserts, assumes, and declares that the knowledge of God is universal, Rom. 1:19-21, 28, 33; 2:15. It asserts that God has wrought this great truth in the very warp and woof of every man's being, so that nowhere is He without this witness. The preacher may, therefore, safely follow the example of the Scripture in assuming that there is a God. Indeed he must unhesitatingly and explicitly assert it as the Scripture does, believing that "His eternal power and divinity" are things that are clearly seen and perceived through the evidences of His handiwork which abound on every hand.

END OF SAMPLE