

Understanding God
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Christian Life, Faith, and Ministry

Recommended resources:

God of the Possible, Gregory A. Boyd, Baker Books, 2000.

Is God to Blame? Beyond Pat Answers to the Problem of Suffering, Gregory A. Boyd, InterVarsity Press, 2003.

1. Our mental picture of God, the most important aspect of faith.
2. The blueprint worldview/model of divine providence
“The view of the world rooted in the assumption that behind every specific event there is a specific divine reason as to why it was ordained or at least allowed to take place.” Boyd, *Satan and the Problem of Evil*. InterVarsity Press, 2001, p.418.
 - a. contributes to confusion of who He is
 - b. contributes to passivity
 - c. mitigates against believing that there are multiple possibilities for that with which God is pleased
3. Classical Western philosophic tradition
 - a. Emotional vulnerability is a weakness, so God must have the attribute of “impassability” (above suffering).
 - b. Variability is thought to be an imperfection, so God must be “immutable” (above any sort of change).
 - c. Lack of control is an imperfection, so God meticulously controls everything.
4. Christianity claims that God looks like Jesus. Hebrews 1:2
5. The centrality of Christ’s death
 - a. “... the central way Christ functions as the perfect image and exact imprint of God is by dying on the cross.” *Is God to Blame?* p.34
 - b. In this regard His sacrifice does not appease God’s wrath, it reveals God’s love.
 - c. On the cross we see God’s greatness revealed in His suffering.
6. Jesus spent His ministry freeing people from evil and misery. This is what God seeks to do. *Is God to Blame?* p.16
7. Jesus is for us, not against us. Romans 8:31-32
8. Jesus is not a religious fatalist. He says His followers will possess the earth, inherit the earth, reign – in Christ fashion. Mt. 5:5; Gen. 22:17; Is. 14:2; 57:13; Rev. 20:4-5; 1:5-6; Eph. 2:6
9. Understanding predestination corporately. Ephesians 1; Rom. 8:29; I Peter 1:1-2
Exhaustively definite foreknowledge is, “The classical understanding of foreknowledge that affirms that God eternally knows the future as exhaustively definite. The entire future is eternally and meticulously defined as definitely one way, and therefore as definitely not any other way.” Boyd, *Satan and the Problem of Evil*, p. 421.

10. The sovereignty of love versus the sovereignty of control. “Absolute control” demeans the sovereignty of God.
11. The exciting freedom in determining God’s will. Rom. 12:2
12. There is much we do not know about the broken creation. “Why?” questions about this brokenness are unanswerable. We do know about God and who He is; we see God in the Person of Jesus Christ.