

# A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY

Dr JOHN GILL D.D.

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## CHAPTER 1: ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

In embarking upon this endeavour to compose a System of Theology, or a comprehensive Body of Doctrinal Divinity, it is fitting to begin with God, the very foundation of all theological discourse. Theology, in its essence, is the study or discourse about God—His nature, attributes, names, persons, purposes, providence, ways, works, and Word. Thus, it is proper to commence with the Being of God and the proofs and evidences for His existence. This doctrine forms the bedrock of all religion, for if there is no God, then religion becomes futile, and there is no ultimate accountability for belief or conduct.

Some contend that the existence of God should not be a matter for debate, arguing that it is a self-evident truth, an axiom beyond dispute. However, given the malice of Satan, who sows seeds of doubt in human minds, the wickedness of some who embrace such doubts, and even the struggles of devout individuals who may occasionally wrestle with uncertainty, it is not inappropriate to provide reasons and arguments to fortify belief in God's existence.

### 1. Universal Consent

The first argument arises from the general consent of humanity throughout history and across nations, affirming belief in a divine Being. This near-universal conviction is unlikely to have persisted so strongly if it were false. Aristotle observed that “all men have a persuasion of Deity,” and Cicero noted that no nation, no matter how barbaric, is devoid of some notion of divine power. Even though there are misconceptions about the divine, the innate belief remains. Plutarch remarked that one may find cities without walls or letters, but never a city without temples or gods. These testimonies, even amidst widespread idolatry and ignorance of the true God, reveal a deeply ingrained sense of Deity in humanity.

In the earliest ages, true worship of God prevailed among Adam, his descendants, and their posterity until the flood. Idolatry appears to have emerged later, perhaps around the time of Babel or in the days of Serug.

Remote settlements, separated from the centres of true worship, gradually turned to natural objects such as the sun and moon, initiating the decline into idolatry. Despite such corruptions, this universal inclination toward worship reflects an inherent awareness of God.

Objections to this argument include claims that some individuals or societies have denied God's existence. However, upon closer examination, many so-called "atheists" merely ridiculed the gods of their cultures or rejected divine providence rather than denying the existence of any deity. Furthermore, claims that entire nations, such as certain tribes in Africa or America, have no notion of Deity often rely on unreliable accounts. Careful observation frequently reveals traces of belief, whether expressed through rituals, prayers, or a sense of the divine in nature.

## **2. The Law and Light of Nature**

The second argument is drawn from the natural law and innate sense of Deity impressed upon the human mind. From the earliest exercise of reason, individuals instinctively perceive and acknowledge God's existence. Cicero asserted that the universal agreement among nations on the divine is evidence of natural law. Scripture supports this, stating that the Gentiles, though lacking the Mosaic Law, have the law written on their hearts (Romans 2:15). This internal testimony of God's existence leads individuals to seek Him, albeit imperfectly.

Moreover, human longing for ultimate happiness—unfulfilled by worldly possessions or pleasures—points to a higher source of satisfaction. Such desires are not implanted in vain; they direct the soul toward God, the ultimate end of all things (Psalm 73:25).

## **3. Creation's Testimony**

The third argument derives from the works of creation, as described in Romans 1:20, where "the invisible things of God are clearly seen" through the created order. The heavens, with their vast expanse, the orderly revolutions of celestial bodies, and the sun's life-sustaining role, testify to an all-wise Creator. The earth, with its rich resources and intricate ecosystems, similarly declares His handiwork. Even the smallest elements of nature—seashells, blades of grass, or flowers—bear witness to God's existence.

The human body, with its marvellous design and functionality, further

**3** reveals the Creator’s wisdom and power. The faculties of the soul—reason, will, memory, and conscience—elevate this testimony, as they reflect the image of God in man. The psalmist rightly exclaims, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14).

#### **4. Sustaining and Governing the World**

The fourth argument arises from God’s ongoing providence in sustaining and governing the world. The universe continues to exist, not by chance, but through His sustaining power. The provision of food, medicine, and resources for humanity demonstrates His care. Moreover, the restraint of natural and human violence highlights His protective hand. Without such divine governance, the world would descend into chaos.

#### **5. Miracles and Extraordinary Acts**

The fifth argument considers miraculous events and extraordinary human achievements. Scripture recounts many such instances, including the deliverance of Israel and the miracles performed by Christ and His apostles. Even historical records of heroic actions, prodigies, and unexplained phenomena point to a divine influence beyond human capability.

#### **6. Prophecy**

The sixth argument is based on the fulfilment of prophecy. Only an omniscient Being could predict future events with precision, as seen in both Scripture and the broader traditions of divination and oracles. Such foresight underscores the reality of a supreme God who ordains all things.

#### **7. Fear and Conscience**

The seventh argument considers the fears and anxieties of humanity, particularly the unease of a guilty conscience and the dread of divine judgment. Even those who deny God experience moments of terror, especially in the face of natural disasters or death. This innate fear reflects an awareness of accountability to a higher power.

#### **8. Judgments in the World**

Finally, the eighth argument is drawn from divine judgments. Historical and contemporary accounts of calamities, such as plagues, earthquakes, and the downfall of wicked individuals, serve as reminders of God’s justice and power. These events leave an indelible impression of His existence and

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authority.











