

**Doctrines of the Bible**  
**J. L. Hall**  
**and**  
**David K. Bernard**  
**Editors**

# Doctrines of the Bible

Editors J. L. Hall and David K. Bernard

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Hazelwood, MO 63042-2299

Reprint History: 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2010

Cover Design by Ben Meydam

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Printed in United States of America



WORD AFLAME PRESS

8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042

[www.pentecostalpublishing.com](http://www.pentecostalpublishing.com)

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## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Doctrines of the Bible/J. L. Hall and David K. Bernard, editors.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

Contents: God/David K. Bernard—The Bible/Marvin Treece—Angels/Ralph V. Reynolds—Humanity/David F. Gray—Jesus Christ/David K. Bernard—Salvation/J. L. Hall—The Church/Ken Gurley—The Last Things/Jonathan Urshan.

ISBN 0-932581-71-4

I. Theology, Doctrinal. I. Hall, J. L. (Jimmy Louis), 1933-

II. Bernard, David K., 1956-

BT75.2.D63 1990

230 - dc20

90-36711

CIP

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# Contents

GOD	
- <i>David K. Bernard</i> . . . . .	<b>5</b>
THE BIBLE	
- <i>Marvin D. Treece</i> . . . . .	<b>41</b>
ANGELS	
- <i>Ralph V. Reynolds</i> . . . . .	<b>83</b>
HUMANITY	
- <i>David F. Gray</i> . . . . .	<b>107</b>
JESUS CHRIST	
- <i>David K. Bernard</i> . . . . .	<b>139</b>
SALVATION	
- <i>J. L. Hall</i> . . . . .	<b>175</b>
THE CHURCH	
- <i>Ken Gurley</i> . . . . .	<b>209</b>
THE LAST THINGS	
- <i>Jonathan Urshan</i> . . . . .	<b>249</b>
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	<b>291</b>

# GOD

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by David K. Bernard

*David K. Bernard is general superintendent of the United Pentecostal Church International, which has about three million constituents in thirty thousand churches in one hundred ninety nations. He founded New Life United Pentecostal Church of Austin, Texas, out of which sixteen additional churches were started under his leadership. He is also the founding president of Urshan Graduate School of Theology. He earned a doctor of jurisprudence with honors from the University of Texas, a master of theology from the University of South Africa (where he is also completing his doctoral dissertation), and a bachelor of arts magna cum laude in mathematical sciences and managerial studies from Rice University. The author of thirty books with over seven hundred fifty thousand copies in print, he has been published in thirty-six languages and has ministered in forty-six countries on six continents. He and his wife, Connie, have three children—Daniel, Lindsey, Jonathan and his wife, Sara—and one grandson, Elijah.*

# GOD

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- I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD
- II. THE NATURE OF GOD
  - A. Nonmoral attributes
  - B. Moral attributes
- III. THE ONENESS OF GOD
- IV. FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT
- V. THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST
- VI. THE NAME OF GOD
- VII. SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES EXPLAINED
  - A. Old Testament
  - B. New Testament
- VIII. CONCLUSION

## I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The first verse of the Bible introduces God as the Creator of the universe and everything in it. The Bible does not try to prove that God exists; it assumes His existence as fundamental. Through observation and reflection, we can discover many logical reasons that compel us to believe in God.

- *Argument from cause* (cosmology). Creation itself bears witness that there is an intelligent, omnipotent, loving Creator (Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:20). There can be only one of three explanations for the existence of the universe: (1) it has always existed (eternal universe); (2) it came into existence by its own power (self-creating universe), or (3) God created it. Accepting any of these requires a faith that transcends scientific proof. It is more plausible to believe in an intelligent, eternal, omnipotent Creator than in the eternity or self-creative ability of non-rational matter.

- *Argument from design* (teleology). The orderliness and design of the universe require the existence of a Designer. The incredible complexity of even the simplest forms of life shows that life did not begin by accident or blind chance.

The force of this argument is illustrated by the visit of Robert Ingersoll, a noted agnostic, to the New York Planetarium. There he saw a scale model of the solar system with all the planets moving in orbit around the sun. Ingersoll marveled at the craftsmanship and asked who made the model. The head of the planetarium responded that no one had made it; it had suddenly appeared in the room one day by chance. The absurdity of this answer

was apparent; how then can anyone believe that the universe came into existence by chance when it is immeasurably more complex than the small model?

- *Argument from being* (ontology). How could the finite human mind even conceive of an infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, and perfect God unless God imparted that concept? Every society in history has expressed belief in a supreme Being, and modern anthropological studies show that the earliest and most fundamental religious belief is not polytheism but monotheism.

- *Argument from morality*. Every human child develops a conscience, and every human society has a sense of morality (Romans 2:15). Our moral nature reveals that we are more than intelligent animals; we were created in the image of a rational, spiritual, moral Being.

- *Argument from congruity*. Critics may attack the preceding arguments and propose alternative explanations for each, but the cumulative effect of them is overwhelming. Taken together they are compelling. The existence of God is the best (and only) explanation that fits all the facts.

Clearly, atheism—the belief that there is no God—is erroneous. Agnosticism—the belief that it is impossible to know whether God exists or not—is also untenable. Reason tells us that God exists (Psalm 14:1; 53:1).

Most important, the testimony of the Scriptures and the confirmation of personal experience assure us that God indeed lives and communicates with humanity. Ultimately, we accept the truth of His existence by faith (Hebrews 11:6).

## II. THE NATURE OF GOD

While human reasoning can deduce that God exists, it cannot fully ascertain the nature of God or the will of God. For humanity to know God, He must reveal Himself.

God has revealed Himself to humanity in a general way through nature, history, and conscience, but by themselves these means are incomplete. God has also revealed Himself in special, specific ways through miracles, prophecy, the man Jesus Christ, the Scriptures, and personal experience.

The Bible (the Scriptures) is the written Word of God, and it reveals the way of salvation (II Timothy 3:14-17). The Bible is the sole authority for doctrine and instruction in salvation and Christian living. It provides the most complete revelation of the nature and will of God to the world today.

Consequently, we will examine what the Bible reveals about the nature of God. First we will discuss His fundamental essence apart from His moral nature; then we will discuss His moral nature. The two lists of attributes are not necessarily exhaustive, but they outline the major themes of Scripture relative to the nature of God.

### A. Nonmoral attributes

- *Life*. God is not an abstraction or a principle, nor is He an inanimate object. He is a living being and the source of all life (John 1:4; I John 1:1-2).

- *Individuality*. God is an individual being with a unique, definite identity and personality (Genesis 1:1-3, 26-27). Pantheism—the belief that God is nature or the laws, forces, and manifestations of the universe—is wrong.