

S T U D Y G U I D E



Questions about God

by R.C. Sproul



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Can God Die?

INTRODUCTION

At one time or another, we have all faced the reality of our mortality and the subsequent questions about the significance of our lives. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul explains how God's aseity gives meaning to our lives by the power of His creating and sustaining hands.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To consider the nature of God's existence as revealed in Scripture
2. To answer the questions "Who made God?" and "Can God die?"

SCRIPTURE READING

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

—Psalm 90:2

The LORD is an everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

—Isaiah 40:28

LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. God uses the significant events of our lives to shape our understanding of Him.
 1. Dr. Sproul experienced bewilderment, frustration, and a sense of utter helplessness at his father's funeral.
 2. Dr. Sproul's perception of the finality of death prepared him to become a Christian: "I had to know who God was."

- B. God's revelation of Himself to Moses forever changed the course of Moses' life.
1. Moses' life demonstrates how God uses significant circumstances to change our lives and ultimately reveal Himself to us.
 - a. While Moses was an infant, God rescued him from slavery and death, elevating him to the status of a prince in the house of Pharaoh.
 - b. Moses' life of royal privilege was turned upside down when, outraged by the treatment of a Hebrew slave, he murdered an Egyptian guard.
 - c. Moses fled and resigned himself to life in the wilderness out of fear for his life, content with a seminomadic life of insignificance.
 2. God brought Moses from a life of insignificance to one of historic prominence.
 - a. God interjected Himself into Moses' life by revealing Himself to Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:1–6).
 - b. God revealed Himself as "I AM," calling Moses to a life of significance, to stand against Pharaoh for the sake of God's people.
- C. The revelation of God's name as "I AM" reveals the divine attribute of God's aseity.
1. The aseity of God refers to His self-existence.
 - a. *Aseity* means that God has no beginning, that He was not created, and that He exists in Himself.
 - b. The alternatives to self-existence are creation by something else or self-creation.
 - c. God is not a creature; He was not created by something else.
 - d. Self-creation, or spontaneous generation, is a concept that violates fundamental principles of logic.
 2. Aseity is a foreign concept to us because of the infinite gulf between God and man and the absolute distinction between Creator and creature.
 - a. Human beings are differentiated from the Supreme Being in that humans are dependent, contingent, mortal, and finite.
 - b. Human beings come into being and then, one day, die; they do not have the power of being within themselves.
 - c. God is the Supreme Being, and as such, He has no beginning: He is eternal, the great "I AM."
 - d. God is self-existent and cannot die; He has the power of being within Himself.
 3. The existence of all things is dependent upon the aseity of God.
 - a. If God did not have necessary being, then no being could have ever come into being.
 - b. God is the One who keeps and sustains being, holding the keys of life and death, and subsequently is our confidence and resurrection hope.

STUDY QUESTIONS

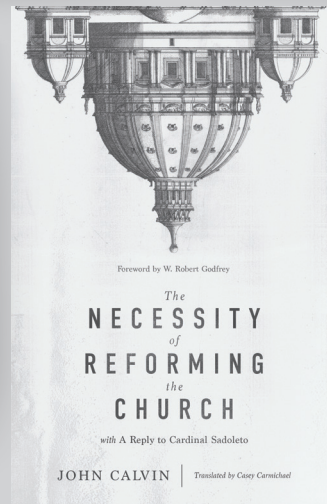
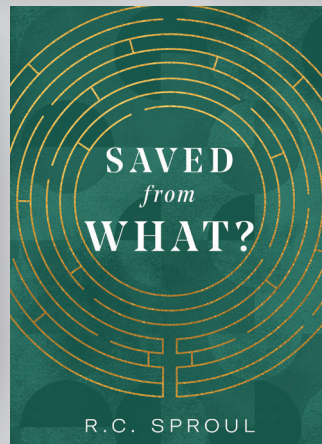
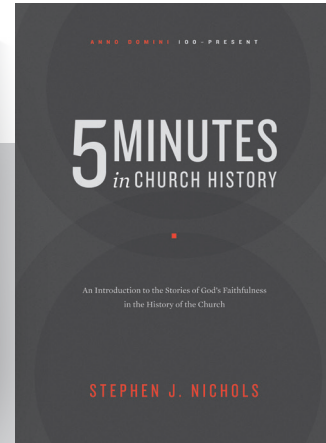
1. Which attribute of God is revealed in the name “I AM WHO I AM”?
 - a. God’s aseity
 - b. God’s holiness
 - c. God’s omnipotence
 - d. God’s omnipresence
2. Which theophany best pictures the self-existence of God?
 - a. The smoking fire pot and flaming torch
 - b. The pillar of cloud and fire
 - c. The angel of the Lord
 - d. The burning bush
3. What type of condition is God’s self-existence for the existence of man?
 - a. A sufficient condition
 - b. A necessary condition
 - c. A dependent condition
 - d. A contributory condition
4. Self-existence is a concept that created beings can easily comprehend because being is something that they share with God.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. Why is self-creation or spontaneous generation an illogical concept?
 - a. It falls short of more sophisticated scientific theories of generation.
 - b. It cannot prove how there is something rather than nothing.
 - c. It would require that something has to be before it is.
 - d. It attempts to answer the question of why we exist.
6. What rule of logic does the concept of spontaneous generation violate?
 - a. The law of insufficient reason
 - b. The law of common sense
 - c. The law of contradiction
 - d. The law of probability

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Dr. Sproul recounted an experience he had at his father’s funeral that set in motion a desire to know God. What circumstances prepared you to become a Christian?

2. Why is aseity a central attribute of God? Considering the indispensability of all God's attributes, could you depend on God's various attributes if He did not possess aseity? Why or why not?
3. How is God's existence different from human existence? If God exists independently and has no need for anything, why did He create us? What does that say about us?
4. Can your understanding of God's aseity assist you in sharing your faith with non-believers? What are the ways in which it might assist you?

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