

Exhaustive Technical Glossary from the Doctrine of God Study

PART 1 — Essence / Being (Ontology)

(All technical + simple definitions extracted and merged from the full PDF)

Technical Terms

1. Ontology / Being

Technical: The study of being-as-being; in theology, what God is in Himself—His fundamental reality, independent of creation.

Simple: What something *really is* at the deepest level; what makes God “God.”

2. Essence (Ousia)

Technical: God’s simple, indivisible, eternal being—His fundamental “Godness” shared fully by Father, Son, and Spirit.

Simple: God’s core reality—what He is in Himself.

3. Divine Simplicity

Technical: God is not composed of parts; His essence is identical with His attributes. Everything in God *is* God.

Simple: God isn’t made of pieces—He is perfectly one.

4. Aseity

Technical: God’s self-existence and independence—He exists “from Himself” (*a se*), uncaused and dependent on nothing.

Simple: God needs nothing and no one to exist.

5. Immutability

Technical: God is unchangeable in essence, perfections, knowledge, will, and purposes.

Simple: God never changes.

6. Impassibility

Technical: God is not subject to involuntary suffering or emotional fluctuation; He has true affections without instability.

Simple: God feels, but never has mood swings.

7. Incomprehensibility

Technical: God is truly knowable but cannot be fully or exhaustively known by finite creatures.

Simple: You can know God truly, but never fully.

8. Infinity

Technical: God possesses limitless being, perfection, power, and knowledge—without boundaries or finitude.

Simple: God has no limits.

9. Eternity

Technical: God exists outside time, without beginning, succession, or end.

Simple: God has always existed.

10. Immensity

Technical: God transcends all spatial limitations; His being fills and exceeds all space.

Simple: God is beyond everywhere.

11. Spirituality (God Is Spirit)

Technical: God is immaterial, incorporeal, without physical composition.

Simple: God isn’t physical.

12. Invisibility

Technical: God cannot be seen by creaturely eyes unless He chooses to reveal Himself.

Simple: God is unseen.

13. Beatitude (Blessedness)

Technical: God’s perfect, self-sufficient happiness; the fullness of joy within the divine life.

Simple: God is perfectly happy in Himself.

14. Transcendence

Technical: God’s absolute otherness: infinitely exalted above creation.

Simple: God is far above everything.

15. Immanence

Technical: God's nearness and active presence within creation.

Simple: God is right here with us.

16. Incommunicable Attributes

Technical: Divine perfections possessed by God alone (e.g., aseity, immutability, omnipresence).

Simple: Qualities only God has.

17. Communicable Attributes

Technical: Divine perfections reflected in creatures in finite analogies (e.g., love, wisdom, justice).

Simple: Qualities God shares with us a little.

18. Knowability of God

Technical: God can be known truly through His revelation, though never comprehended fully.

Simple: God lets us know Him—but not completely.

19. Infinity / Limitlessness

Technical: God's being is without limit in perfection, knowledge, and power.

Simple: God has no boundaries.

20. Unsearchable / Inscrutable

Technical: God's ways and essence cannot be fully explored or comprehended by the creaturely mind.

Simple: God is too deep for us to fully figure out.

PART 2 — THE NATURE & ESSENCE OF GOD

SECTION A — ESSENCE & ONTOLOGY OF GOD

1. Aseity

Technical: God's self-existence and independence; He exists from Himself (a se) and depends on nothing outside Himself for being, will, or blessedness.

Simple: God needs nothing and no one to exist—He simply *is*.

2. Divine Simplicity

Technical: God is not composed of parts. His essence is identical with His attributes; His perfections are one undivided whole.

Simple: God isn't made of pieces—everything in Him is perfectly one.

3. Divine Essence (Ousia)

Technical: The one, indivisible, eternal "being" of God shared fully by Father, Son, and Spirit.

Simple: God's core "God-ness."

4. Ontology / Ontological

Technical: Concerning being or existence; in theology, what God is in Himself.

Simple: About what God truly is deep down.

5. Immutability

Technical: God cannot change in being, will, purpose, or character; He is incapable of increase, decrease, growth, or deterioration.

Simple: God never changes.

6. Impassibility

Technical: God is not subject to involuntary emotional fluctuation or suffering; His affections are real but perfectly stable and sovereign.

Simple: God has true feelings, but they never control Him or change Him.

7. Infinity

Technical: God's boundlessness in being, perfections, knowledge, and power; without limit or measure.

Simple: God has no limits.

8. Eternity

Technical: God exists outside of time, without beginning, succession, or end.

Simple: God always was and always will be.

9. Immensity

Technical: God transcends space and is not contained by spatial dimensions.

Simple: God is bigger than everywhere.

10. Spirituality (God is Spirit)

Technical: God is immaterial, incorporeal, and non-physical.

Simple: God isn't made of matter.

11. Invisibility

Technical: God cannot be seen by creaturely eyes in His essence.

Simple: No one can see God as He truly is.

12. Incomprehensibility

Technical: God can be known truly but never exhaustively; finite minds cannot fully grasp the infinite God.

Simple: We can know God, but never completely understand Him.

13. Beatitude (Blessedness of God)

Technical: God's perfect, self-sufficient happiness and delight in His own infinite perfection.

Simple: God is perfectly joyful in Himself.

SECTION B — GOD & LANGUAGE: HOW GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN

14. Analogical God-Talk

Technical: Human words applied to God correspond to real divine truths without being identical (not univocal or equivocal).

Simple: Our words point to God, but don't fully match Him.

15. Anthropomorphism

Technical: Using human physical terms to describe God's actions (e.g., "hand," "arm," "eyes").

Simple: Talking about God as if He had a body.

16. Anthropopathism

Technical: Using human emotional terms for God to convey His relational posture (e.g., "grieved," "relented").

Simple: Talking about God as if He had human emotions.

17. Divine Accommodation

Technical: God reveals Himself in forms suited to human limitations without compromising truth.

Simple: God speaks to us in ways we can understand.

18. Revelatory

Technical: Pertaining to divine self-disclosure through Word, deed, covenant, and presence.

Simple: About God showing something of Himself.

SECTION C — COMMUNICABLE & INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

19. Incommunicable Attributes

Technical: Divine perfections belonging to God alone (e.g., aseity, infinity, immutability).

Simple: Traits only God has.

20. Communicable Attributes

Technical: Divine perfections that have creaturely analogues (e.g., love, wisdom, mercy).

Simple: God's qualities that we can reflect in small ways.

21. Omnipotence

Technical: God's unlimited power to accomplish His will; He can do all things consistent with His nature.

Simple: God can do anything He wants.

22. Omniscience

Technical: God knows all things—actual, possible, past, present, and future—simultaneously and exhaustively.

Simple: God knows everything.

23. Omnipresence

Technical: God is present in all places while remaining fully Himself; not bound by spatial limits.

Simple: God is everywhere.

24. Holiness

Technical: God's absolute moral purity and separateness from creation.

Simple: God is perfectly pure and set apart.

25. Righteousness

Technical: God's conformity to His own perfect moral standard and His commitment to act rightly.

Simple: God always does what is right.

26. Justice

Technical: God's perfect moral rectitude expressed in judgment.

Simple: God judges fairly.

27. Wrath

Technical: God's holy, settled opposition to sin.

Simple: God's righteous anger against evil.

28. Grace

Technical: God's unmerited favor and blessing toward the undeserving.

Simple: God gives good things we don't deserve.

29. Mercy

Technical: God's withholding of deserved punishment.

Simple: God doesn't give us the punishment we deserve.

30. Goodness

Technical: God is the absolute standard and source of all good.

Simple: Everything good comes from God.

31. Faithfulness

Technical: God's unwavering reliability to His covenant and promises.

Simple: God always keeps His word.

32. Truth / Veracity

Technical: God is truth itself; He cannot lie or deceive.

Simple: God always tells the truth.

33. Beauty (*Pulchritudo Dei*)

Technical: The harmonious, attractive splendor of God's perfections.

Simple: God is beautiful in every way.

SECTION D — MORAL CHARACTER & RELATIONAL EXPRESSION

34. Character (vs. Attributes)

Technical: The moral-relational outworking of God's attributes in covenant history.

Simple: How God acts because of who He is.

35. Chesed (*Steadfast Love*)

Technical: God's covenant loyalty, steadfast love, and faithful commitment toward His people.

Simple: God's loyal love that never quits.

36. Compassion

Technical: God's holy affection toward the suffering and His inclination to relieve misery.

Simple: God cares deeply and helps.

37. Longsuffering / Patience

Technical: God's restraint in delaying judgment to allow space for repentance.

Simple: God waits patiently.

38. Jealousy

Technical: God's holy zeal for His glory and covenant loyalty.

Simple: God protects what is His.

39. Holy Love

Technical: Love ordered by holiness, righteousness, and covenant fidelity.

Simple: God's love never ignores sin.

40. Cheap Grace

Technical: A distortion of grace that removes repentance, holiness, and obedience.

Simple: Fake grace that costs nothing.

41. Antinomianism

Technical: Rejecting God's moral law while claiming divine grace.

Simple: Acting like obedience doesn't matter.

42. Marcionism

Technical: The heresy separating the "God of the OT" from the "God of the NT."

Simple: Pretending the OT God is different from the NT God.

SECTION E — PERSONHOOD OF GOD

43. Personhood of God

Technical: God as a personal, self-aware Being with intellect, will, and affections.

Simple: God is a real Someone, not a force.

44. Divine Affections

Technical: God's holy, perfect expressions of love, wrath, compassion, joy, etc., without change or instability.

Simple: God truly feels—but never in a broken, human way.

SECTION F — THE TRINITY (AD INTRA & AD EXTRA)

45. Godhead

Technical: The one divine essence shared fully by Father, Son, and Spirit.

Simple: The one God.

46. Trinity

Technical: One divine essence in three co-equal, co-eternal Persons.

Simple: One God in three Persons.

47. Ontological Trinity

Technical: Who God is eternally in Himself—Father, Son, Spirit in essential relations of origin.

Simple: The Trinity as God is forever.

48. Economic Trinity

Technical: How the Persons act distinctly in creation, redemption, and history.

Simple: What the Father, Son, and Spirit do in the world.

49. Processions

Technical: Eternal relations of origin: the Son begotten of the Father; the Spirit proceeds from the Father (and the Son, in Western theology).

Simple: How the Persons relate inside God.

50. Missions

Technical: Historical sendings: Father sends Son; Father and Son send Spirit.

Simple: How God enters history.

51. Inseparable Operations

Technical: All divine works toward creation are the unified act of the one God, though fittingly attributed to different Persons.

Simple: The Trinity always works together.

52. Appropriations

Technical: Fittingly associating certain works with specific Persons without dividing the divine action.

Simple: Highlighting which Person a work especially reveals.

SECTION G — WORKS OF GOD (AD EXTRA)

53. Ad Intra

Technical: God's internal eternal life—His essence, attributes, and tri-personal relations.

Simple: God as He is within Himself.

54. Ad Extra

Technical: God's external actions toward creation: decrees, providence, redemption, judgment.

Simple: What God does outside Himself.

55. Decrees of God

Technical: God's eternal, unchangeable plan embracing all that comes to pass.

Simple: God's master plan.

56. Providence

Technical: God's preserving, concurring, and governing of all things.

Simple: God running the universe.

57. Preservation

Technical: God sustaining creation in existence at every moment.

Simple: God keeps everything from disappearing.

58. Concurrence

Technical: God working through creaturely actions without violating their agency.

Simple: God works with our choices.

59. Governance

Technical: God directing all things toward His purposes.

Simple: God guides history.

60. Sovereignty

Technical: God's supreme authority and control over all things.

Simple: God rules everything.

61. Hiddenness

Technical: God's withholding of felt presence, though remaining fully present.

Simple: Times when God feels distant.

62. Lament

Technical: Faith-filled sorrow expressed before God in suffering.

Simple: Honest crying out to God.

SECTION H — REVELATION, NAMES, & APPEARANCES

63. Theophany

Technical: A visible manifestation of God in the Old Testament.

Simple: God appearing visibly.

64. Christophany

Technical: A pre-incarnate appearance of the Son.

Simple: Jesus showing up before Bethlehem.

65. Names of God

Technical: Revelatory identifiers expressing God's character and essence.

Simple: God's titles that show who He is.

66. Covenant

Technical: God's binding relational commitment with promises and obligations.

Simple: God's formal promise-relationship.

67. Fear of the LORD

Technical: Covenant awe combining reverence, obedience, and love.

Simple: Taking God seriously.

SECTION I — PARADOX & COVENANTAL LOGIC

68. Biblical Paradox

Technical: Two truths that appear in tension but harmonize in the fullness of God's revelation.

Simple: Two ideas that seem opposite but both are true.

69. Dialectical (Covenantal) Pairs

Technical: Complementary biblical truths held together without contradiction.

Simple: Two angles on one truth.

70. Transcendence

Technical: God's "otherness"—His absolute distinction from creation.

Simple: God is above everything.

71. Immanence

Technical: God's nearness and active involvement in creation.

Simple: God is close.

SECTION J — KINGDOM & ESCHATOLOGY

72. Missio Dei

Technical: God's overarching mission to redeem and restore creation through the sending of Son and Spirit.

Simple: God's big plan to save the world.

73. Inaugurated Eschatology

Technical: The kingdom is already present through Christ, but not yet fully consummated.

Simple: God's kingdom has begun but isn't finished.

Part 3 — Biblical studies, Hebrew/Greek terms, and doctrinal systems

A. Biblical Studies & Methods (Interpretive tools, text history, and critical approaches)

- **Exegesis / Exegetical Method**

Technical: The disciplined practice of drawing out the intended meaning of a biblical text by

analyzing its language, grammar, historical/cultural context, genre, and authorial intent.

Simple: Careful, systematic Bible study that asks, “What did this passage mean to its original readers?”

- **Hermeneutics**

Technical: The theory and principles governing interpretation (how interpretive rules are constructed and applied), including philosophical assumptions about meaning, authorial intent, and readers’ contexts.

Simple: The rules and philosophy you use to read and understand the Bible.

- **Textual Criticism**

Technical: The scholarly discipline of reconstructing the earliest attainable form of a text by comparing manuscript variants, evaluating scribal errors, and assessing transmission history.

Simple: Comparing old copies to figure out what the Bible originally said.

- **Canon / Canonization**

Technical: The historical process and normative criteria by which certain writings were recognized as Scripture (authoritativeness, apostolicity, orthodoxy, catholicity) and formed the closed corpus of the Bible.

Simple: How the church decided which books belong in the Bible.

- **Septuagint (LXX)**

Technical: The ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (3rd–1st centuries BCE), widely used in the Hellenistic Jewish world and quoted in the New Testament; important for textual and interpretive history.

Simple: The Greek Old Testament used by early Christians.

- **Masoretic Text (MT)**

Technical: The authoritative medieval Hebrew text of the Old Testament preserved with vowel pointing and masoretic notes by Jewish scribes (Masoretes); central to modern Hebrew Bible editions.

Simple: The carefully preserved Hebrew Bible text used by Jewish scholars.

- **Form Criticism**

Technical: A method that classifies units of Scripture by literary form (e.g., hymn, proverb, parable) and attempts to reconstruct their pre-literary Sitz im Leben (life-setting) in the community.

Simple: Figuring out what kind of short piece a passage is (like a song or a proverb) and where it came from in daily life.

- **Source Criticism**

Technical: Investigation into the documentary origins of a biblical book (e.g., J/E/P/D in Pentateuch studies), seeking earlier sources or documents behind the received text.

Simple: Looking for earlier written pieces that were combined to make a book of the Bible.

- **Redaction Criticism**

Technical: The study of how an editor or redactor shaped, ordered, and theologically reworked source materials to produce the final canonical text and its message.

Simple: Seeing how biblical writers edited older material to teach new emphases.

- **Historical-Critical Method**

Technical: An umbrella approach combining historiography, philology, archaeology, and literary/historical analysis to situate texts in their original historical contexts and evaluate claims about origin and development.

Simple: Investigating what happened, who wrote it, and why—using history and language tools.

- **Narrative Criticism / Literary Criticism**

Technical: Approaches that analyze plot, characterization, narrator perspective, and rhetorical devices to interpret biblical books as coherent literary wholes or narratives.

Simple: Reading the Bible like literature—paying attention to story, characters, and structure.

- **Reception History (Wirkungsgeschichte)**

Technical: The study of how a biblical text has been understood, used, and adapted through history—in worship, art, theology, and culture—affecting subsequent readings.

Simple: Tracing what people through history have made of a Bible passage.

- **Typology / Typological Interpretation**

Technical: A hermeneutical method that sees persons, events, or institutions in the Old Testament as prefigurations (types) whose ultimate fulfillment (antitypes) occurs in Christ and New Testament realities.

Simple: Seeing Old Testament events or people as previews of Jesus or his work.

- **Redemptive-Historical (R-H) Reading**
Technical: An interpretive stance that reads Scripture as a single, unfolding story of God's saving action (creation → fall → redemption → consummation), prioritizing Christ-centered fulfillment.
Simple: Reading the Bible as one big rescue story that leads to Jesus.
 - **Canon Criticism**
Technical: The study of the formation and theological significance of the biblical canon—how the final shape of Scripture influences interpretation and theology.
Simple: Thinking about how the Bible's final lineup of books affects what it means.
 - **Intertextuality**
Technical: The study of relationships between biblical texts (quotation, allusion, echo) and how earlier passages inform later ones' meaning.
Simple: Noting where one Bible passage talks to or quotes another.
 - **Sitz im Leben**
Technical: (German) "Setting in life"—the socio-religious context in which a literary unit originally functioned, often used in form-critical reconstruction.
Simple: The real-life situation that gave birth to a Psalm, parable, or hymn.
 - **Historical Reliability / Historicity**
Technical: The assessment of textual claims against external evidence (archaeology, contemporaneous inscriptions, non-biblical sources) and internal coherence to judge whether events described occurred historically.
Simple: Checking whether Bible stories match what other historical evidence says.
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B. Hebrew & Greek Terms (Key original-language words & theological technical terms)

- **Ehyeh / Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh (אֶהְיֶה / אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה)**
Technical: Hebrew verbal form usually translated "I AM" or "I WILL BE," used by God at the burning bush (Exod 3:14) to denote self-existent, sovereign, covenantal being.
Simple: God's self-name meaning "I am" or "I will be"—expressing his eternal, dependable existence.
- **Tetragrammaton (יהוה — YHWH)**
Technical: The four-letter divine covenant name in Hebrew (YHWH), vocally uncertain in antiquity; rendered LORD in many English translations and central to Israelite worship and theology.
Simple: The special four-letter name for God often printed as "LORD" in English Bibles.
- **Chesed / Hesed (חֶסֶד)**
Technical: A semantically rich Hebrew term often glossed "steadfast loving-kindness" or "covenant loyalty"—denotes God's covenantal commitment involving loyalty, mercy, and faithful action.
Simple: God's loyal, never-giving-up love for his people.
- **Rûah (רוּחַ)**
Technical: Hebrew for "spirit," "breath," or "wind"; used for the Spirit of God, human spirit, or wind—contextually polyvalent and conceptually foundational for pneumatology.
Simple: The Hebrew word for "spirit" or "breath," used of God's Spirit and human spirit.
- **Pneuma (πνεῦμα)**
Technical: Greek equivalent of "spirit" (breath, wind)—used in the New Testament for the Holy Spirit, human spirit, and metaphorical breath or life; central to Trinitarian and anthropological theology.
Simple: The Greek word for "spirit" (like the Holy Spirit or a person's spirit).
- **Logos (λόγος)**
Technical: In John 1:1 the term denotes the pre-existent divine Word—God's self-expression and agent of creation and revelation; rooted in Hellenistic philosophic categories and Jewish Wisdom traditions.
Simple: The "Word" — God's self-communication and active reason, revealed in Christ.
- **Monogenēs (μονογενής)**
Technical: Literally "one-of-a-kind" or "unique/only begotten"; used of the Son to denote unique filial relationship to the Father and ontological uniqueness (John 1, 3:16).
Simple: The unique, one-and-only Son—Jesus in a unique way is God's Son.

- **Paraklētos / Paraclete (παράκλητος)**
Technical: “One called alongside” — a New Testament term for the Holy Spirit as Advocate, Comforter, or Counselor (John 14–16), functioning as helper, defender, and interpreter.
Simple: The Helper or Advocate—the Holy Spirit who comes alongside believers.
- **Ousia (οὐσία)**
Technical: Greek philosophical term meaning “essence” or “substance”; adopted in Trinitarian theology to denote the one divine essence shared by the three Persons.
Simple: The divine “whatness” or essence that makes God God.
- **Hypostasis / Hypostases (ὑπόστασις / ὑποστάσεις)**
Technical: Originally “substantial reality”; in Trinitarian usage denotes the three personal subsistences (Persons) who share one ousia—Father, Son, Spirit.
Simple: The three Persons of the Trinity—the “who’s” inside the one God.
- **Egō eimi (ἐγώ εἰμι)**
Technical: Greek “I am”; Christological self-identification in John’s Gospel often echoing Exodus 3:14 and used to assert divine identity and authority.
Simple: Jesus’ “I am” statements that point back to God’s name—claiming divine identity.
- **Logos / Memra / Shekinah (comparative terms)**
Technical: Jewish and Christian concepts describing God’s self-communication or manifest presence—Logos (Greek philosophy/John), Memra (Aramaic rabbinic motif), Shekinah (Hebrew/late antique concept of divine dwelling/presence).
Simple: Different ways Jewish and Christian writers speak of God “showing up” or speaking—Word (Logos), Word-presence (Memra), manifest dwelling (Shekinah).
- **Telos (τέλος)**
Technical: Greek for “end,” “goal,” or “purpose”; used in theology for final purpose or consummation (eschatology).
Simple: The end-goal or ultimate purpose—God’s end-game for creation.
- **Protoevangelium**
Technical: Literally “first gospel” (Gen 3:15)—traditionally understood as the earliest promise of redemption in the Bible, prefiguring Christ’s victory over evil.
Simple: The Bible’s first hint or promise that God will defeat sin—an early preview of Jesus.
- **Paraklētos (see Paraclete), Logos, Ousia (already listed)**

(If you want, I can produce a printable two-column card set of these Greek/Hebrew words with transliteration and key references.)

C. Doctrinal Systems, Traditions & Theological Errors (Major schools, positions, and heterodox alternatives)

- **Patristic (Patristics)**
Technical: The theological and exegetical corpus from the Church Fathers (1st–8th centuries), foundational for developments in Christology, Trinity, and creedal formulations.
Simple: What the early church leaders taught—important for shaping classical doctrine.
- **Reformed / Reformed Theology**
Technical: A theological tradition shaped by the Protestant Reformation (Calvin, Zwingli) emphasizing God’s sovereignty, covenant theology, justification by faith, and the regulative principle of worship.
Simple: A Protestant system stressing God’s control, covenant promises, and salvation by grace through faith.
- **Calvinism (Reformed system)**
Technical: A framework emphasizing God’s sovereignty in salvation (often summarized by TULIP), divine election, particular redemption, and the perseverance of the saints.
Simple: The view that God chooses and keeps his people—emphasizes divine control in salvation.
- **Arminianism**
Technical: A theological tradition deriving from Jacobus Arminius that stresses conditional election, prevenient grace enabling free response, and the real possibility of falling from grace (varies by subtradition).
Simple: Emphasizes human freely-willed response to God’s offer—God enables but people choose.

- Wesleyan (Methodist) Theology**
Technical: A stream emphasizing prevenient and sanctifying grace, the possibility of entire sanctification (Christian perfection), and the role of holiness in Christian life.
Simple: A tradition focusing strongly on holiness and God's transforming grace that makes us more like Jesus.
- Dispensationalism**
Technical: A hermeneutical and theological system that divides redemptive history into distinct dispensations or economies and typically maintains a firm distinction between Israel and the Church and a futurist eschatology.
Simple: A way of reading the Bible that sees different eras with different rules and keeps Israel and the church separate in God's plan.
- Covenantal / Covenant Theology**
Technical: A framework that interprets Scripture through the unfolding of covenants (e.g., Covenant of Works, Covenant of Grace), emphasizing continuity between Israel and the Church and a unified redemptive plan.
Simple: Reading the Bible as one covenant story—God's promises unfold from Adam to Christ and his church.
- Supralapsarianism / Infralapsarianism**
Technical: Two orders of logical priority in Reformed soteriology concerning the divine decrees—supralapsarianism places decree of election logically before decree to permit the Fall; infralapsarianism places it after the decree permitting the Fall.
Simple: Two technical ways Reformed theologians arrange God's eternal decisions—did God plan election before or after permitting the Fall (logically speaking)?
- Pelagianism / Semi-Pelagianism**
Technical: Pelagianism denies original sin and affirms human ability to initiate salvation without prevenient grace; Semi-Pelagianism grants some role to prevenient grace but still emphasizes human initiation. Both are considered problematic by orthodox tradition.
Simple: Views that make human will the starting point of salvation rather than God's grace.
- Open Theism**
Technical: A contemporary theological position claiming that God knows the future as partly open (contingent on creaturely decisions), limiting exhaustive divine foreknowledge and some aspects of divine immutability. Rejected by classical theism.
Simple: The idea that God doesn't know the future exhaustively because people's free choices are not yet decided.
- Marcionism / Marcionite Error**
Technical: A 2nd-century heresy that rejected the Old Testament and posited a radical separation between a legalistic creator god and the loving Father revealed in Christ.
Simple: The wrong idea that the OT God and NT God are two different gods.
- Modalism (Sabellianism)**
Technical: Trinitarian error that claims the Father, Son, and Spirit are modes or roles of one Person rather than three distinct Persons—denies real personal distinctions.
Simple: Saying God just plays three different roles instead of being three Persons—heretical because it collapses personal distinction.
- Tritheism**
Technical: Error that treats the three Persons as three separate gods instead of one ousia—divides divine essence into three.
Simple: Mistakenly saying there are three gods, not one God in three Persons.
- Universalism**
Technical: The doctrine that all persons will ultimately be saved (apokatastasis), sometimes argued from God's universal love or certain readings of Scripture; debated and usually rejected in classical evangelicalism.
Simple: The belief that everyone eventually ends up saved—controversial and rejected by many orthodox traditions.
- Annihilationism**
Technical: The soteriological/eschatological view that the wicked will be finally destroyed rather than subjected to eternal conscious torment; debated within evangelicalism.
Simple: The idea that the unsaved are ultimately destroyed instead of suffering forever.
- Liberation Theology**
Technical: A movement (Latin America origin) that emphasizes social, political, and economic liberation for the oppressed as integral to the gospel—often critiques structural sin and may

use Marxist analytical tools.

Simple: A theology that links the Christian message to social justice and the liberation of oppressed peoples.

- **Orthodox / Catholic / Protestant Distinctions**

Technical: Major ecclesial families with differing emphases on sacramental theology, authority (tradition vs. sola scriptura), ecclesiology, and sacramentology.

Simple: The big groups in Christianity with different practices and beliefs—Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.

- **Soteriology (doctrines of salvation)**

Technical: The study of the nature, basis, application, and effects of salvation (justification, sanctification, adoption, glorification), and doctrines like penal substitution, Christus Victor, satisfaction.

Simple: The theology of how God rescues sinners—what Jesus did and how it helps us.

- **Christology (doctrines of Christ)**

Technical: The theological investigation into the person and work of Christ, including the hypostatic union (two natures in one Person), kenosis, and atonement theories.

Simple: The study of who Jesus is (God and man) and what he accomplished.

- **Eschatological Systems (Premillennialism, Postmillennialism, Amillennialism)**

Technical: Competing interpretive frameworks for Revelation and prophetic texts describing the millennium and end times: premillennialism (Christ returns before a literal thousand-year reign), postmillennialism (Christ returns after a golden age), amillennialism (millennium symbolic).

Simple: Different maps of “how the end-time story plays out” — whether Christ returns before, after, or with a symbolic millennium.

PART 4 — Philosophical, Logical, Hermeneutical & Practical-Theological Terms

4.1 – Philosophical & Logical Categories

Axiom

Technical: A foundational principle accepted as true without needing further proof, forming the starting point for all reasoning within a system.

Simple: A basic truth you start with—like the foundation of a house.

Ontology / Ontological

Technical: The philosophical study of being itself; in theology, concerns God’s existence, essence, and mode of being.

Simple: What something really is deep down.

Epistemology / Epistemological

Technical: The discipline concerning the nature, possibility, and limits of knowledge—how we know what we know, especially about God.

Simple: How we know anything—especially how we know God.

Metaphysical

Technical: The study of the fundamental structures of reality—being, causation, time, purpose, and the relation between God and creation.

Simple: What reality is doing behind the scenes.

Dialectical

Technical: The interpretive method of holding two seemingly opposing truths in tension until a fuller synthesis emerges; common in Hebrew thought.

Simple: Balancing both sides of a truth that seem to clash.

Paradox

Technical: Two truths that appear contradictory to finite minds yet are harmoniously unified in God’s reality.

Simple: Two ideas that seem opposite but fit together in God.

Inscrutable

Technical: Unable to be exhaustively explored or comprehended by human intellect due to the infinite depth of its subject.

Simple: Too deep or mysterious for us to figure out fully.

Unsearchable

Technical: Beyond the reach of human investigation; unfathomable because of divine infinitude.

Simple: You can never get to the bottom of it.

4.2 – Hermeneutical & Language Categories

Exegesis / Exegetical

Technical: The disciplined interpretation of Scripture through linguistic, grammatical, historical, and literary analysis to extract the author's intended meaning.

Simple: Carefully discovering what a Bible passage really means.

Typology / Typological

Technical: Interpreting Old Testament persons, objects, or events as divinely intended symbols (types) that find their fulfillment in Christ.

Simple: Old Testament pictures that point to Jesus.

Analogical Language / Analogical God-Talk

Technical: Language that speaks truthfully of God using creaturely words, without those terms being strictly univocal (identical) or equivocal (completely different).

Simple: Human words that point to God's reality, even though He's bigger than the words.

Univocal Language

Technical: Language used with exactly the same meaning in every context; impossible when applied directly to God due to the Creator-creature distinction.

Simple: Words that mean exactly the same for God and humans—which doesn't work.

Anthropomorphism

Technical: Applying human physical terms to God to communicate His actions (e.g., God's "arm," "hand," "eyes").

Simple: Talking about God as if He had a body.

Anthropopathism

Technical: Applying human emotional terms to God to describe His relational posture toward creatures (e.g., "grieved," "relented").

Simple: Describing God with human-like feelings so we understand Him.

Accommodation (Divine)

Technical: God's gracious self-adjustment in revelation so finite humans can understand Him without the truth being compromised.

Simple: God explains Himself in simple ways so we can grasp Him.

4.3 – Doctrinal Flow & Structural Terms

Essence → Attributes → Character (Cascade)

Technical: A doctrinal sequence showing that God's essence (what He is) grounds His attributes (what He is like), which then express His character (how He acts).

Simple: Who God IS shapes what He is LIKE and how He ACTS.

Perfections (Divine Attributes)

Technical: The infinite excellences of God's being which express His essence without defect.

Simple: God's perfect qualities.

Character (Moral Expression)

Technical: The outward, relational expression of God's attributes in covenant, judgment, mercy, and faithfulness.

Simple: How God behaves toward people.

Works of God (Opera Dei)

Technical: The external acts of God in creation, providence, redemption, and judgment.

Simple: What God does.

Covenantal

Technical: Pertaining to God's binding, relational commitments and the structured form of His dealings with humanity.

Simple: About God's promises and commitments.

4.4 – Practical & Spiritual-Theological Terms

Fear of the LORD

Technical: Covenantal awe—reverence shaped by God’s holiness, authority, and goodness—producing obedience, trust, and worship.

Simple: Taking God seriously with deep respect that changes how you live.

Glory

Technical: The manifested radiance of God’s perfections; the weight of His worth displayed in creation and revelation.

Simple: The “wow-factor” of God—His greatness shining out.

Doxology / Doxological

Technical: The praise of God flowing from theology; worship as the telos and natural end of all doctrinal study.

Simple: When theology turns into worship.

Lament

Technical: Faith-filled, covenantal protest directed to God amid suffering; expressing sorrow without unbelief.

Simple: Crying out to God honestly while still trusting Him.

Hiddenness

Technical: God’s sovereign withholding of felt presence for sanctifying or revelatory purposes.

Simple: Times when God seems silent but isn’t absent.

Idolatry Audit

Technical: A diagnostic discipline evaluating one’s affections, habits, and practices to identify functional idols.

Simple: Checking what you love more than God.

Stewardship Check

Technical: Evaluation of one’s use of time, gifts, and resources under God’s lordship.

Simple: Making sure you use what you have for God’s glory.

Perseverance

Technical: The sustained, Spirit-enabled endurance of believers in faith and obedience until final salvation.

Simple: Sticking with Jesus to the end.

4.5 – Soteriological (Salvation) Categories

Justification

Technical: God’s forensic declaration that a sinner is righteous through Christ’s imputed righteousness received by faith alone.

Simple: God declares you “not guilty” because of Jesus.

Sanctification

Technical: The process of being made holy—both definitively (set apart) and progressively (transformed).

Simple: God making you more like Jesus over time.

Glorification

Technical: The final transformation of believers into perfected resurrection glory at Christ’s return.

Simple: Becoming fully like Jesus forever.

Substitutionary Atonement

Technical: Christ’s death as the sinner’s substitute, satisfying divine wrath and achieving reconciliation.

Simple: Jesus took our place on the cross.

Propitiation

Technical: Christ’s sacrificial work that satisfies God’s righteous anger against sin and restores divine favor.

Simple: Jesus absorbed God’s wrath so we could be forgiven.

4.6 – Theological Systems & Historical Categories

Patristic

Technical: Relating to the theology of the early church fathers (1st–8th centuries).

Simple: What the early Christian teachers wrote.

Reformed

Technical: The theological tradition emphasizing God's sovereignty, covenantal structure, grace, and the authority of Scripture.

Simple: A teaching tradition focused on God's rule and saving grace.

Wesleyan

Technical: A theological tradition stressing holiness, free will, and transformative grace.

Simple: Emphasizes holy living and real human decisions.

Arminian

Technical: The tradition that emphasizes conditional election, resistible grace, and genuine human freedom.

Simple: A view that says people truly choose to accept or reject God.

Dispensational

Technical: A system that divides history into distinct dispensations and distinguishes Israel from the Church.

Simple: A way of reading the Bible in time-period stages.

Open Theism (Error)

Technical: The belief that God does not have exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices.

Simple: The false idea that God does not know the future perfectly.

Marcionism / Marcionite Error

Technical: The heresy claiming the OT God of justice differs from the NT God of love.

Simple: Pretending the God of the Old Testament is a different God.

Modalism

Technical: The heresy that claims God is one Person appearing in three modes rather than three distinct Persons.

Simple: The false idea that God just switches roles (Father, Son, Spirit).

Tritheism

Technical: The heresy teaching that the Trinity consists of three separate gods.

Simple: The false belief that Christians worship three gods.

4.7 – Logical & Teaching Devices

Paradox Cards

Technical: A pedagogical device pairing dialectical truths for theological training.

Simple: Flashcards that help you hold two truths together.

Adore–Align–Ask (Worship Rubric)

Technical: A structured liturgical framework: praise (adore), repentance (align), petition (ask).

Simple: A simple three-step way to pray.

S-I-P (Simplicity–Independence–Perfection)

Technical: A doctrinal triad summarizing the guardrails of divine essence.

Simple: A memory aid for God's core attributes.

P-C-G (Preserve–Concur–Govern)

Technical: A summary of the threefold structure of providence.

Simple: How God runs the universe.

Part 5 — Concluding Doctrinal Synthesis

This section gathers the major doctrinal threads from Essence, Attributes, Trinity, Revelation, Providence, Salvation, and Scripture Interpretation into a unified theological summary. Every item continues the same formatting style you requested.

5.1 – The Triadic Structure of All Theology (Being → Act → Aim)

Being → Act → Aim (Theological Triad)

Technical:

A comprehensive doctrinal structure where **God's being (ontology)** grounds **God's acts (economy)**, which together reveal **God's aim (teleology)**. This ensures all theology flows from who God eternally is, through what God does in time, toward what God intends in the end.

Simple:

Who God **is** explains what God **does** and shows what God is **working toward**.

The Creator–Redeemer–Consummator Pattern

Technical:

A biblical-Redemptive-Historical triad describing God's work: **creation (origin)**, **redemption (rescue)**, and **consummation (final completion)**.

Simple:

God made everything, God saves what is broken, and God will finish His plan perfectly.

5.2 – Scripture's Unified Logic: From Revelation → Interpretation → Transformation

Revelation → Interpretation → Transformation

Technical: A doctrinal sequence stressing that God **reveals** (the objective Word), the Church **interprets** (hermeneutics), and the Spirit **transforms** (spiritual formation).

Simple: God speaks → we understand → our lives change.

Authority → Clarity → Necessity → Sufficiency (Attributes of Scripture)

Technical: A Reformed doctrinal grid summarizing Scripture:

- **Authority:** God's Word rules over all belief and practice.
- **Clarity:** Scripture is understandable in its essentials.
- **Necessity:** We cannot know saving truth without it.
- **Sufficiency:** Scripture contains all needed for life and godliness.

Simple: The Bible is in charge, clear enough, needed, and enough.

5.3 – The Essence–Economy Mirror (God in Himself vs. God for Us)

Immanent (Ontological) God → Economic (Revealed) God

Technical: A doctrinal axiom that God's external works correspond to His internal being, though not in a way that collapses Creator into creature. What God is *in Himself* (aseity, simplicity, triune communion) is expressed in His works *toward us* (creation, covenant, salvation).

Simple: Who God is inside shows in what He does outside.

The Rule: "Opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt"

Technical: The classical doctrine that all God's external works are done indivisibly by the Father, Son, and Spirit, even when one Person is especially highlighted.

Simple: The Trinity always works together.

5.4 – The Covenant–Kingdom Integration

Covenant → Kingdom → New Creation

Technical: A schema linking God's relational commitments (covenant) to His royal rule (kingdom), climaxing in the eschatological renewal of all things (new creation).

Simple: God makes promises, God rules as King, and God restores everything.

Law → Gospel → Spirit Empowerment

Technical: A redemptive sequence where God's law reveals righteousness and sin, the Gospel announces Christ's provision, and the Spirit empowers obedience flowing from grace.

Simple: The law shows our need, Jesus saves us, and the Spirit helps us live it out.

5.5 – The Cross as Doctrinal Center

Cruciform Theology (Cross-Shaped Understanding of God)

Technical: The framework that Christ's cross uniquely reveals divine justice, holiness, love, sovereignty, wrath, mercy, and wisdom in perfect harmony. All doctrines converge at Calvary.

Simple: The cross shows exactly what God is like.

Penal Substitution as Doctrinal Integrator

Technical: Christ bears the penalty of sin in the sinner's place, satisfying divine justice and upholding God's holiness and covenant faithfulness. This doctrine connects atonement, justice, love, wrath, holiness, and mercy.

Simple: Jesus took our punishment so God could forgive us and stay perfectly just.

5.6 – The Christian Life as Participation in God’s Mission

Union with Christ

Technical: The soteriological reality by which believers are spiritually united to Christ in His death, resurrection, ascension, and glory, becoming participants in divine life (2 Pet 1:4).

Simple: Christ shares His life with us so we can live in Him.

Sanctification → Service → Suffering → Glory

Technical: A biblical pattern where believers grow in holiness, serve Christ, endure suffering, and are finally glorified—mirroring the path of Christ Himself.

Simple: Grow, serve, endure hard times, and then share Christ’s glory.

The Missio Dei (Mission of God)

Technical: God’s eternal purpose to fill creation with His glory through the redemption and restoration accomplished in Christ and applied by the Spirit.

Simple: God’s big plan to restore everything through Jesus.

5.7 – Eschatological Completion (The End-Guided Beginning)

Already / Not Yet (Inaugurated Eschatology)

Technical: God’s kingdom has been inaugurated by Christ but awaits its consummation; believers live in the tension between present spiritual reality and future fulfillment.

Simple: God’s kingdom has started, but the best is still coming.

The Telos (Divine Purpose)

Technical: The final end for which God created the world: the display of His glory in a redeemed creation under Christ’s lordship.

Simple: God’s end-goal: everything restored under Jesus’ rule.

5.8 – The Whole Doctrine in One Sentence

Doctrinal Super-Summary

Technical: The infinite, simple, triune God reveals Himself covenantally in Scripture, acts sovereignly in creation and redemption, unites believers to Christ by the Spirit, and directs all things toward the consummation of His glory in the new creation.

Simple: The triune God made us, saves us through Jesus, stays with us by His Spirit, and will remake everything for His glory.