

God of the Bible vs. god of Philosophy

Lecture 20

What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?



Tertullian (ca. 160 AC)

God used Greek and Hebrew

- Now one of the things we HAVE to understand is that like it or not God the Holy Spirit chose the Greek Language to have the New Testament written.
- And as long as the NT was written in Greek, the language of the Greeks is now with us forever.
- Now that doesn't mean that we interrupt the NT Greek in light of strictly Greek philosophy...we have to understand that even though the language was Greek, the concepts came from the Hebrew world...and they were simply communicated through the tool of the Greek Language

God as Incomprehensible

- The principles found in Systematic Theology is the Doctrine of the “Incomprehensibility of God”
-Which means that none of us will now or ever have a totally exhaustive understanding or knowledge of God....not even in heaven, since we are finite and are creatures and by the virtue of our creatureliness our understanding of God is thereby limited.

How do you get from “god” to “God”?

Anthony Flew’s “Explorer in the Jungle” Illustration.....

Two explorers came upon a clearing in the jungle. In the clearing were growing many flowers and many weeds. One explorer says, "Some gardener must tend this plot." The other disagrees, "There is no gardener." So they pitch their tents and set a watch. No gardener is ever seen. "But perhaps he is an invisible gardener." So they set up a barbed-wire fence. They electrify it. They patrol with bloodhounds. (For they remember how H.G. Well's The Invisible Man could be both smelt and touched though he could not be seen). But no shrieks ever suggest that some intruder ever received a shock. No movements of the wire ever betray an invisible climber. The bloodhounds never give cry. Yet still the believer is not convinced. "But there is a gardener, invisible, intangible, insensible to electric shocks, a gardener who has no scent and makes no sound, a gardener who comes secretly to look after the garden he loves." At last the Skeptic despairs. "But what remains of the original assertion? Just how does what you call an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener or even from no gardener at all?"

--Anthony Flew "Philosophy and Falsification," 1950