



June 26, 2011

**Love God,  
Love each other,  
Serve the world.**

## **“A Lofty View of God's Power”**

### ***Psalm 139 (selected verses) (ESV)***

*<sup>1</sup>O LORD, you have searched me and known me! <sup>2</sup>You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.*

*<sup>3</sup>You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup>Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. <sup>5</sup>You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. <sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it...*

*<sup>13</sup>For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup>I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.*

*<sup>15</sup>My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. <sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. <sup>17</sup>How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup>If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.*

### ***Matthew 10:29-31 (NIV)***

*<sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. <sup>30</sup>And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*

# Introduction

- How big are your “filters”?
- How big is your God?
- The typical American view of God from a secular perspective
- The typical American conservative Christian view of God
- The Biblical / Reformed view of God

The Old Testament view of God

UNFILTERED (*Psalms 139*)

Jesus' view of God

UNFILTERED (*Matthew 10:29-30*)

## The BIGGEST DILEMMA OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

A = the SOVEREIGNTY of God over ALL things

B = the “freedom” of man who makes choices

## PROPOSED SOLUTIONS:

“Majority View”      Affirm \_\_\_ and deny \_\_\_      (Arminianism)

“Minority View”      Affirm \_\_\_ and deny \_\_\_      (Hyper-Calvinism)

“Reformed View”      Affirm \_\_\_ and \_\_\_      (Calvinism)

## The WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH (3 qualifications)

3.1 God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

Biblical Exam: Which is it, “A” or “B” (*Matthew 11:27-30; John 6:41-44; Philippians 2:12-13*)

## **Revelation 5 (ESV)**

*Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. <sup>2</sup>And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" <sup>3</sup>And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, <sup>4</sup>and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. <sup>5</sup>And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." <sup>6</sup>And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. <sup>7</sup>And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. <sup>8</sup>And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup>And they sang a new song, saying,*

*"Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, <sup>10</sup>and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."*

*<sup>11</sup>Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup>saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" <sup>13</sup>And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"*  
(see also Revelation 4:9-11 – what to do with your crown)

**A Puritan Prayer from *The Valley of Vision*  
The Divine Will**

O LORD,

I hang on thee; I see, believe, live,  
when thy will, not mine, is done;

I can plead nothing in myself  
in regard of any worthiness and grace,  
in regard of thy providence and promises,  
but only thy good pleasure.

If thy mercy make me poor and vile, blessed be thou!  
Prayers arising from my needs are preparations for future mercies;  
Help me to honour thee by believing before I feel,  
for great is the sin if I make feeling a cause of faith.

Show me what sins hide thee from me  
and eclipse thy love;

Help me to humble myself for past evils,  
to be resolved to walk with more care,

For if I do not walk holily before thee,  
how can I be assured of my salvation?

It is the meek and humble who are shown thy covenant,  
know thy will, are pardoned and healed,  
who by faith depend and rest upon grace,  
who are sanctified and quickened,  
who evidence thy love.

Help me to pray in faith and so find thy will,  
by leaning hard on thy rich free mercy,  
by believing thou wilt give what thou hast promised;

Strengthen me to pray with the conviction  
that whatever I receive is thy gift,  
so that I may pray until prayer be granted;

Teach me to believe that all degrees of mercy arise  
from several degrees of prayer,  
that when faith is begun it is imperfect and must grow,  
as chapped ground opens wider and wider until rain comes.

So shall I wait thy will, pray for it to be done,  
and by thy grace become fully obedient.