

GOD/INCOMPREHENSIBILITY

No human being has the ability to understand God exhaustively. It has been noted that John Calvin said, “That God speaks to us in a kind of lisping.” As parents engage with their infant children through the means of “baby talk”, so God, in order to communicate with us mortals, must condescend to speak to us in lisps (baby talk).

Even in the most learned theological sophistication, we never rise above a child’s level of understanding the mysterious depths of the character of God. I read where the Swiss theologian Karl Barth was asked by a student during a seminar in the United States, “Dr. Barth, what is the most profound thing you have ever learned in your study of theology?” Barth thought for a moment and then replied, “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” The students giggled at this simplistic answer, but their laughter was of a nervous sort as they slowly realized Barth was serious. He gave a simple answer to a question of profundity (great depth).

What Dr. Barth was doing, was addressing one of the most important doctrines of Christianity. The doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God. How can the finite grasp the infinite?

Don’t let this word incomprehensibility mislead you, as it has for some. For some it suggests that since the finite cannot grasp the infinite, we can know nothing about God. This is by no means the intent of the word. However, it does mean that our knowledge of God is partial, limited, and comes short of a total comprehension; but it does not intend to suggest that we can know nothing of God.

The finite can grasp the infinite, but the finite can never know all there is to know about the infinite (God). We only know what God has revealed to us about Himself through His Word (Bible).

Scripture: King James Version: Job 38:1-41; Psalm 139:1-18; Romans 11:33-36.

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