



# God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism

*Bruce A. Ware*

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Christians throughout history have been strengthened by their confidence that God knows everything about the future. But consider this: What if it simply is not true? What if God can only rely on His best guess about tomorrow--just as you and I do? Would it not affect your trust in Him, your confidence in facing the future, your worship, and your motivation to leave everything in His hands? And yet this is the consequence that has to be faced if you trust what a number of leading voices in evangelicalism are proposing under the doctrine of open theism.

In its redefinition of the nature of divine providence, open theism adjusts the entire picture of God's sovereignty and involvement in our lives. Bruce Ware carefully summarizes and critiques this dangerous doctrine from a thoroughly biblical perspective, providing an excellent treatment of both the classical and openness views. He explores their implications and faithfully pinpoints the subtle ways that open theism undermines our trust in God and lessens His glory in our lives.

Open theism offers a God who, like us, does not know the future. Its sponsors see this humanizing of God as logical and devotional gain. Bruce Ware sees it as a way of misreading Scripture and impoverishing the life of faith, and he makes a compelling case for his view. I heartily commend this thorough and insightful book.

--**J.I. Packer**, Professor of Theology, Regent College

Open theism, which denies that God can foreknow free human choices, dishonors God, distorts Scripture, damages faith, and would, if left unchecked, destroy churches and lives. Its errors are not peripheral but central. Therefore, I thank God for Bruce Ware's loving, informed, penetrating, devastating critique of this profoundly injurious teaching. I pray that God would use this book to sharpen the discernment of leaders and prepare the people of God to recognize toxic teaching when they taste it. O how precious is the truth of God's all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful care over our fragile lives. For your name's sake, O Lord, and for the good of the suffering church who rest in your all-knowing providence, prosper the message of this beautiful book and shorten the ruinous life of open theism.

--**John Piper**, Senior Pastor, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis

Evangelical theology faces a crisis of unprecedented magnitude. The denial and redefinition of God's perfections will lead evangelical theology into disintegration and doctrinal catastrophe. The very identity and reality of the God of the Bible is at stake. The real question comes down to this--does God really know all things, past, present, and future? Or, is God often surprised like all the rest of us? The Bible reveals that God is all-knowing and all-powerful. Bruce Ware sets out the issues carefully in *God's Lesser Glory*. This book is a much-needed antidote to contemporary confusion, and it is a powerful testimony to the truth of God set forth in Scripture. I can only hope that Christians will read it and rejoice in the knowledge of the true and living God.

--**R. Albert Mohler, Jr.**, President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

At once businesslike and practical, Bruce Ware's restatement of classical Christianity in the face of contemporary challenges to it within evangelicalism is bold and bracing. Driven by the pastoral and practical importance of God's greatness, Ware's approach keeps his defense from bogging down in pedantic rhetoric. This book clearly demonstrates that the historic Christian view, against centuries of antecedents to "open theism," has been favored for so long for one reason: It is so evidently biblical.

--**Michael Horton**, Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Westminster Theological Seminary in California

Not even God knows whether you will decide to buy this book or read it, at least according to "open theism." But Bruce Ware shows that this position, which is seeping into evangelical churches, is contrary to Scripture, intentionally contradictory, and destructive to our Christian lives. This is a clear, fair, well-reasoned, and Bible-centered critique of a doctrinal error so far-reaching that it ultimately portrays a different God than the God of the Bible.

--**Wayne Grudem**, Chairman, Department of Biblical and Systematic Theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

The movement known as open theism claims to be a more biblical and more practical alternative to the traditional view. Bruce Ware systematically refutes both of these claims, showing that the traditional view better handles the biblical evidence and the issues of Christian living while better preserving the glory

of God. His examination of the biblical material is especially strong.

--**Millard J. Erickson**, Distinguished Professor of Theology, George W. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University

While I (basically a traditional Arminian) do not agree with all of Ware's answers, I applaud his keen discernment of the questions and issues raised by openness theology. He clearly sets forth the key differences between this view and traditional views of God, both Arminian and Calvinist; and he perceptively identifies its major weaknesses. I benefited especially from Ware's treatment of the biblical teaching on God's foreknowledge.

--**Jack W. Cottrell**, Professor of Theology, Cincinnati Bible Seminary

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