

measurableness, finiteness, limitedness, that which can be numbered, created being. Time is the measure of creaturely existence. "Time is the measure of motion in the movable object." Hence in God there is no time. He is what he is from eternity to eternity. There is in him "no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning." God is not an "eternally-becoming" being, but he is eternal essence. He is without beginning and end, and also without succession of moments: he cannot be measured or counted in his duration. A thousand years are with the Lord as one day. He is the eternal "I Am," John 8:58. Hence, God's eternity should rather be conceived as an eternal present, without past or future. "With God all is present. Thy today is eternity. Eternity itself is the substance of God, to which pertains nothing that is mutable." Boethius said concerning God's eternity that "God comprehends and at the same time possesses a complete fulness of interminable life," while Thomas Aquinas described this eternity as "a complete and at the same time a full possession of interminable life." With this agree all the theologians, not only the R. C. but the Lutheran and Reformed as well.^5

Well, there you have it! It would appear that the entire conservative theological world is agreed on God's timelessness! Shall we throw in the towel? Or shall we, like Athanasius, stand against the world? Let me report a personal conviction. After 26 years of graduate-level teaching, I have become more suspicious than ever of theological concepts that have germinated and grown up out of the arid soil of Greek philosophy rather than out of the good rich soil of Scripture! And these two concepts -- the denial of becoming and the denial of time to God -- seem to be more and more like cactus plants with sharp needles all over them and less and less like large leafy trees which provide nesting places for birds and cool shade for weary travelers.

But now we must become less botanical and more theological, as we examine these concepts critically. But before we do this, we must relate this concept of the denial of the category of time to the doctrine of the Incarnation. What is the problem specifically? Briefly stated, it is this: If there is no time with God, not even in the sense of succession of moments,