

d. Seven views of God's relationship to time

- (1) Time is nonexistent for God, and is thus totally meaningless to Him. He has no conception of duration or sequence, and thus no conception of events as past, as presently in progress, or as future. Everything is always "now" for God, and there is no "now" before this "now", or "now" after this "now".

In this view God is often described as existing above time, in a timeless necessity of existence, an eternal present, above all limitations of time.

This view is the classic view of Greek philosophy; and it represents the views of many philosophers and theologians down to the present day.

So Herman Bavinck speaks of time and God:

But one should distinguish between "extrinsic time" and "intrinsic time". By extrinsic time we mean the standard employed to measure motion. In a certain sense this standard is casual and arbitrary. We derive it from the motion of the heavenly bodies, which is constant and universally known, Gen. 1:14 ff. Time, in this sense, shall cease, Rev. 10:6; 21:23 ff. But intrinsic time is something else. It is that mode of creaturely existence by virtue of which beings have a past, present, and future, as so many parts or divisions which can be measured and counted. Now, whatever can be measured and counted is subject to measure and number, and limited thereby, for there always remains a measure and a number which is greater than that which was measured or numbered. Accordingly, the essence of time is not that it is without beginning or end but that it contains a succession of moments; that it is past, present, or future. From this it follows that time -- intrinsic time -- is a mode of existence of all created and finite beings. He who says "time" says motion, change, 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 direction. 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 of as an eternal present, without past or future. "With God all is present. Thy to-day is eternity. Eternity itself is the substance of God, to which pertains nothing that is mutable." Boethius said concerning