

If extended, He would be capable of division and separation; and part of God would be here, and part elsewhere. Nor is this omnipresence to be understood as a mere presence in knowledge and power. It is an omnipresence of the divine essence. Otherwise the essence of God would be limited. The doctrine, therefore, taught by the older Socinians that the essence of God is confined to heaven (wherever that may be), and that He is elsewhere only as to his knowledge and efficiency, is inconsistent with the divine perfections and with the representations of Scripture. . . . Everywhere in the Old and in the New Testament, God is represented as a spiritual Being, without form, invisible, whom no man hath seen or can see; dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, and full of glory; as not only the creator, and preserver, but as the governor of all things; as everywhere present, and everywhere imparting life, and securing order; present in every blade of grass, yet guiding Arcturus in his course, marshalling the stars as a host, calling them by their names; present also in every human soul, giving it understanding, endowing it with gifts, working in it both to will and to do. The human heart is in his hands; and He turneth it even as the rivers of water are turned. Wherever, throughout the universe, there is evidence of mind in material causes, there, according to the Scriptures, is God, controlling and guiding those causes to the accomplishment of his wise designs. He is in all, and over all things; yet essentially different from all, being over all, independent, and infinitely exalted. This immensity and omnipresence of God, therefore, is the ubiquity of the divine essence, and consequently of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness. As the birds in the air and the fish in the sea, so also are we always surrounded and sustained by God. It is thus that He is infinite in his being, without absorbing all created beings into his own essence, but sustaining all in their individual subsistence, and in the exercise of their own powers.¹

Classical theism has always held that, in relating God to the created universe, the following assertions must be made:

(a) With respect to essence, God is different from, or transcendent to, created universe.

(b) With respect to identity, God is other than or transcendent to the created universe.

(c) With respect to location, God is present or immanent in the created universe, while at the same time transcending its limitations.

This formulation serves to preserve the vital distinctions between theism and deism on the one hand, and theism and pantheism on the other.