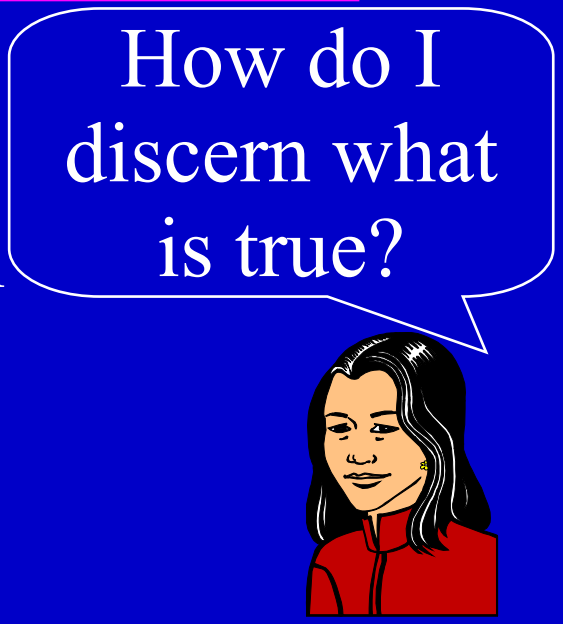
The Trinity
Class 6: Resources for Discernment and Harmony (Frame's Square)

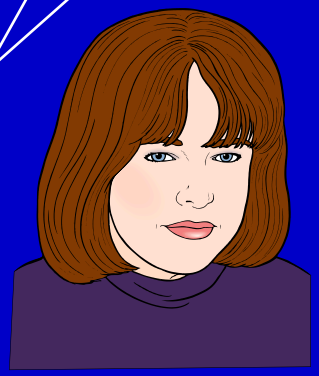
Vern S. Poythress
Lansdale Presbyterian Church



©CC BY-SA 4.0
Bible quotations are from the ESV

How Much Can I Know about God?

Isn't God mysterious, so that I can't really know him?



God in the Bible gives us true knowledge, fitting for our finiteness.



Holy, Holy, Holy

1

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.

Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy

2

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,

casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;

cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,

who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, Holy, Holy

3

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,

though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,

only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,

perfect in pow’r, in love, and purity.

Holy, Holy, Holy

4

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

All thy works shall praise thy name in earth, and sky and sea.

Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

A. Application

Child of God: Gal. 4:4-6

4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

- Gal. 4:1-7; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:5; John 1:12-13.

B. Basic Formulation

Character of the One True God

God is Transcendent (supreme, exalted)

God is Immanent (near, present)

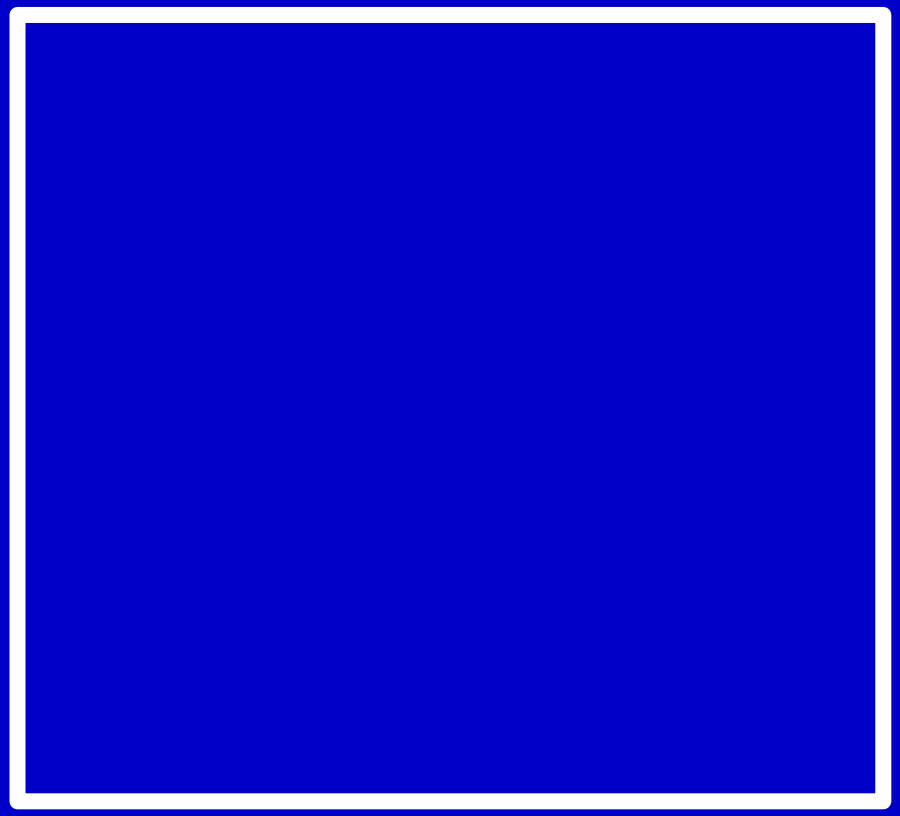
- The Bible teaches us about this God
- John Frame has helpfully summarized biblical teaching in a diagram

John Frame's Square: Principles

- God is both transcendent (supreme) and
- Immanent (present in the world)
- These two aspects are in harmony, and imply each other
- Non-Christians foul up, corrupting both transcendence and immanence in their thinking and in their response to God
- The foul-up affects the doctrine of the Trinity and all thinking about God

Frame's Square

	Christian	Non-Christian
Transcendence:	1	3
Immanence:	2	4



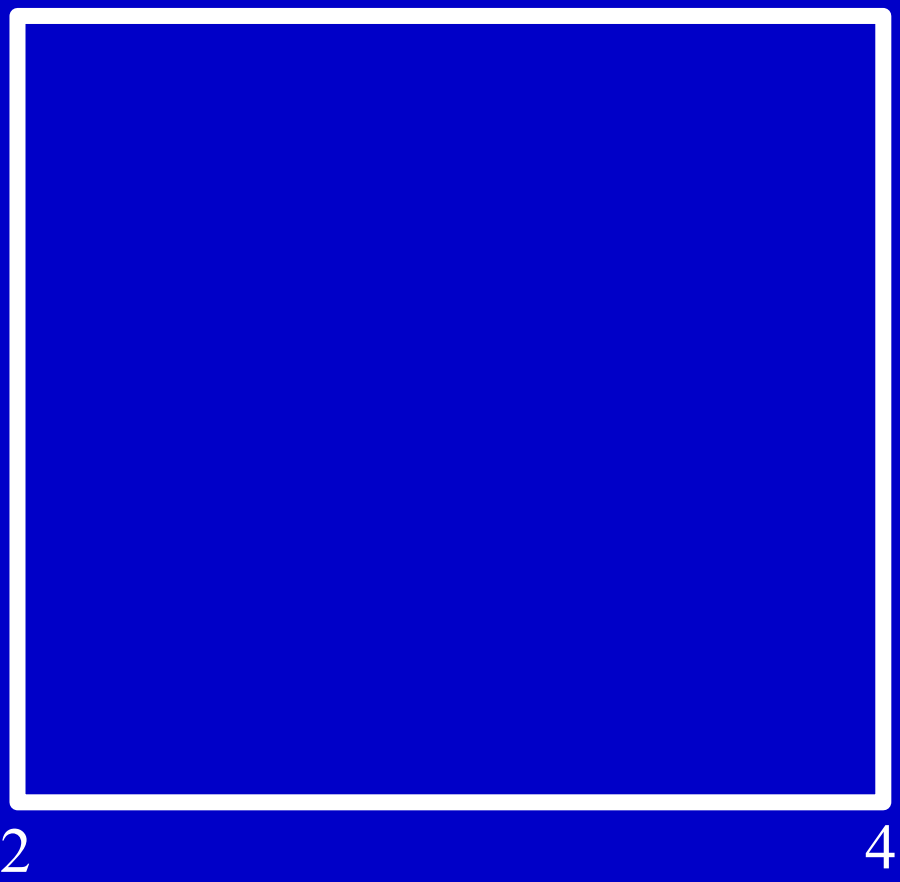
Frame's Square: Christian Position

Christian

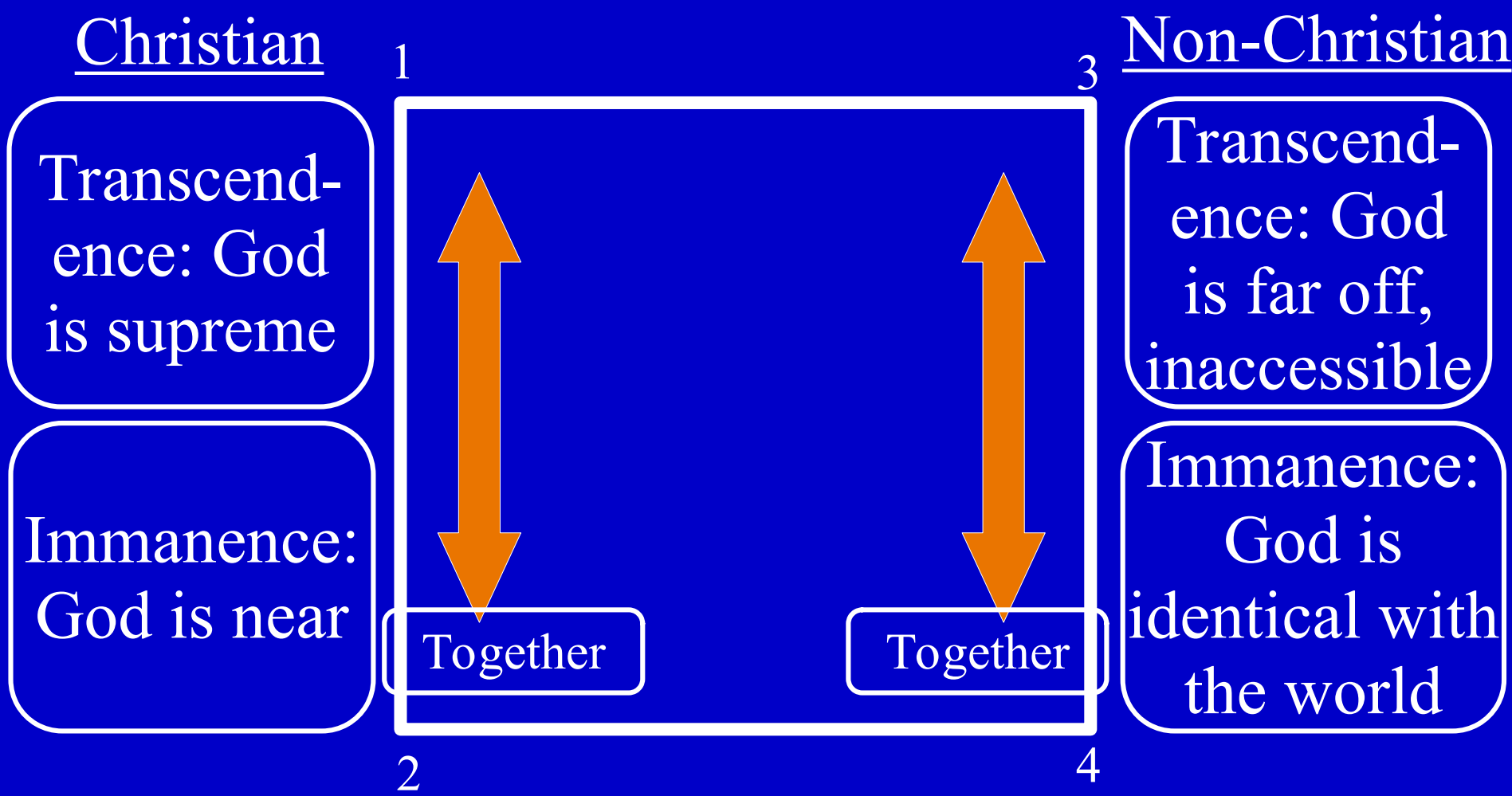
Non-Christian

Transcend-ence: God is supreme

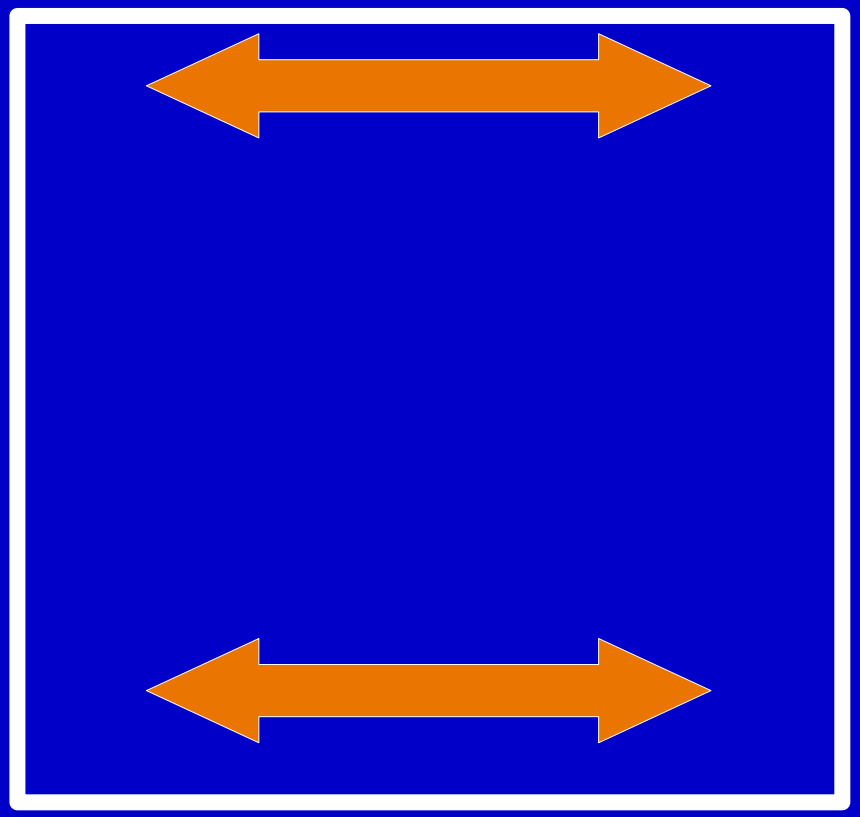
Immanence: God is near



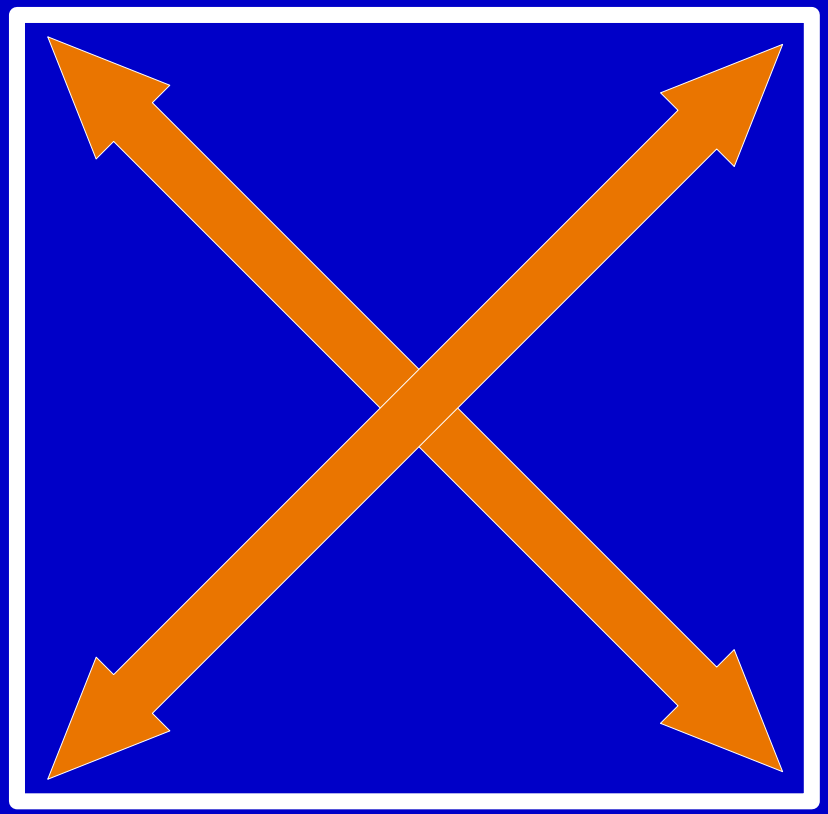
Frame's Square: Non-Christian Position



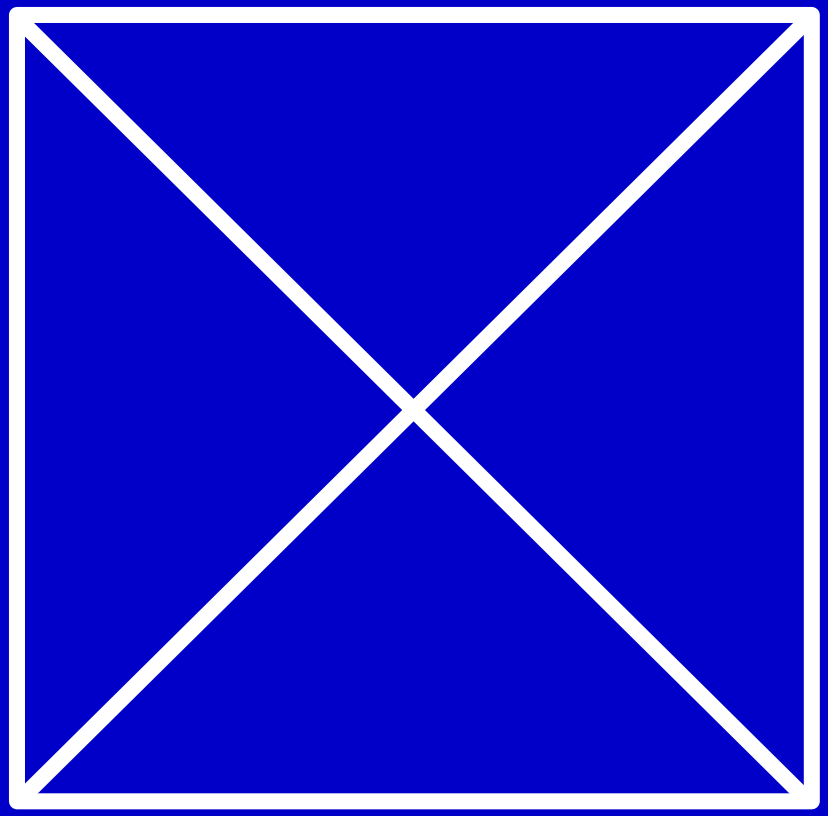
Frame's Square: Sounding Similar

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
Transcend-ence: God is supreme		Transcend-ence: God is far off, inaccessible
Immanence: God is near		Immanence: God is identical with the world
2		4

Frame's Square: Opposition

Christian		Non-Christian
1 Transcend-ence: God is supreme		3 Transcend-ence: God is far off, inaccessible
2 Immanence: God is near		4 Immanence: God is identical with the world

Frame's Square: Opposition

Christian		Non-Christian
1 Transcend-ence: God is supreme		3 Transcend-ence: God is far off, inaccessible
2 Immanence: God is near		4 Immanence: God is identical with the world

C. Biblical Support

God Is Exalted and Near: Isa. 57:15

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up,
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
"I dwell in the high and holy place, T
and also with him who is of a contrite and
lowly spirit, I
to revive the spirit of the lowly,
and to revive the heart of the contrite.

God Is Exalted and Near: Ps. 103:19

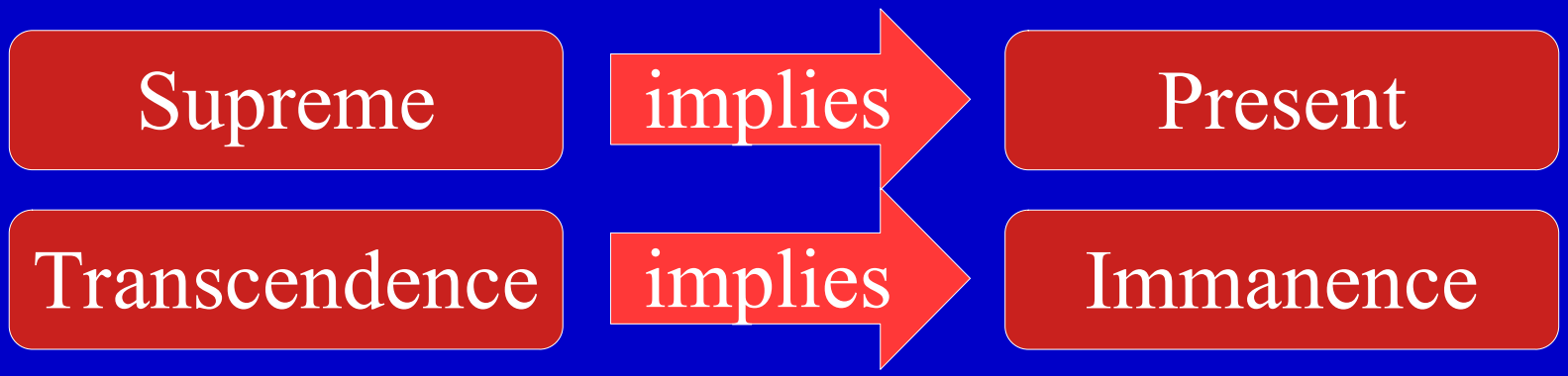
The LORD has established his throne
in the heavens, T
and his kingdom rules over all. I

God Is Exalted and Near: Jer. 23:22-24

But if they had stood in my council, T
then they would have proclaimed my words
to my people,
and they would have turned them
from their evil way,
and from the evil of their deeds.
Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not
a God far away? Can a man hide himself in
secret places so that I cannot see him? T I
declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and
earth? declares the LORD. I

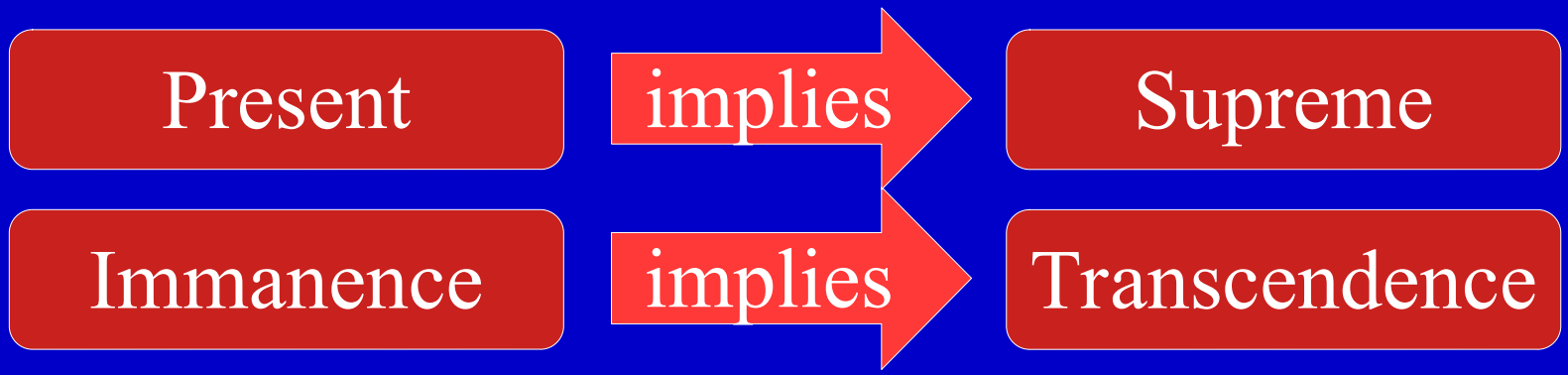
Transcendence Implies Immanence

- Being supreme (T) includes
  - being supreme over all places (I)
  - and all events in all places (I)
- Hence, being present in all times and places

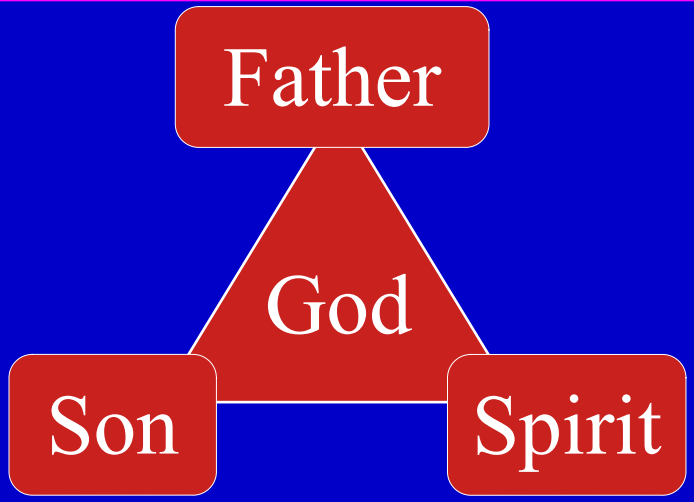


Immanence Implies Transcendence

- Being present (I) includes
  - being thoroughly present
  - in all attributes,
  - including supremacy (T)
- Hence, being present implies supreme



Harmony in T and I



Is

Supreme

Present

Transcendent

Immanent

In Harmony

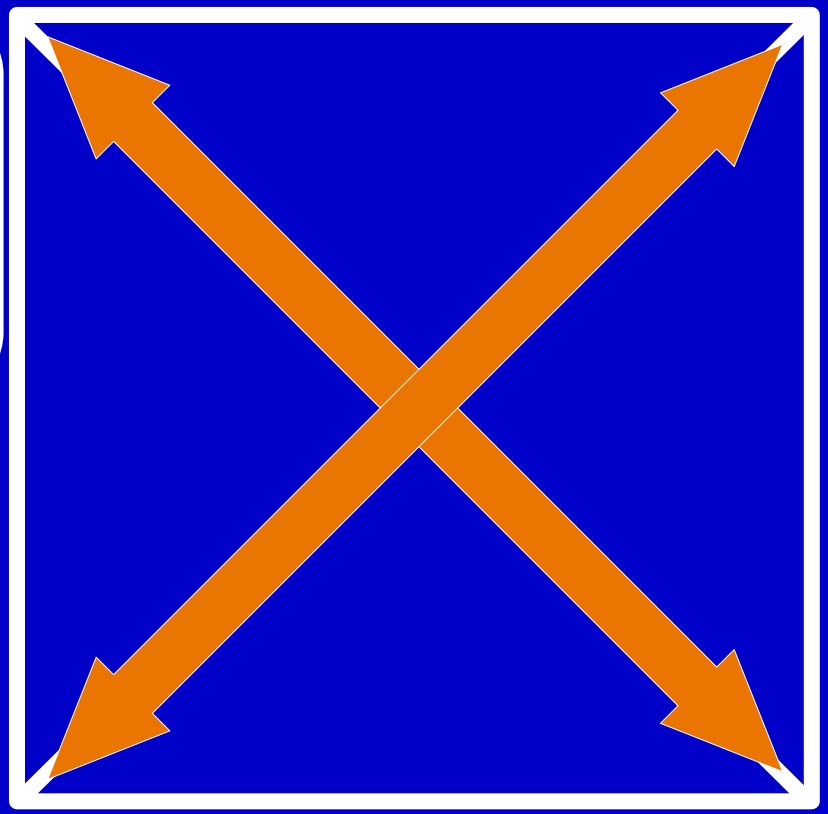
Harmony in T and I in Ex. 20:1-3

And God spoke all these words, saying,
"I am the LORD your God, who brought I
you out of the land of Egypt, out of the
house of slavery.
"You shall have no other gods before me. T

Trinitarian Transcendence and Immanence

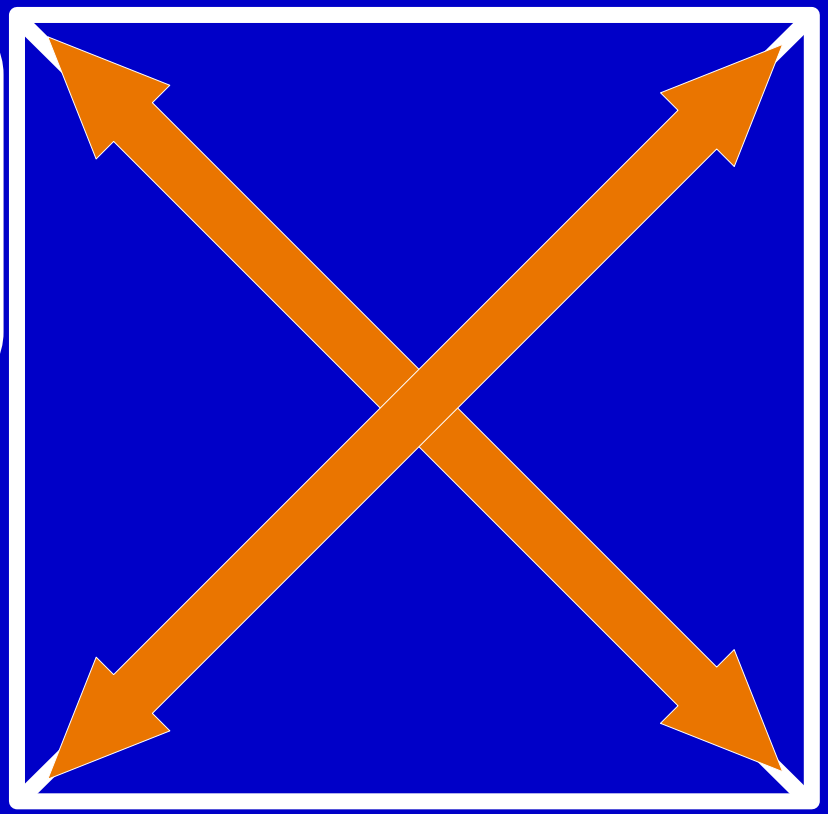
- God as Trinity is supreme
- God as Trinity is present

Frame's Square: Knowledge

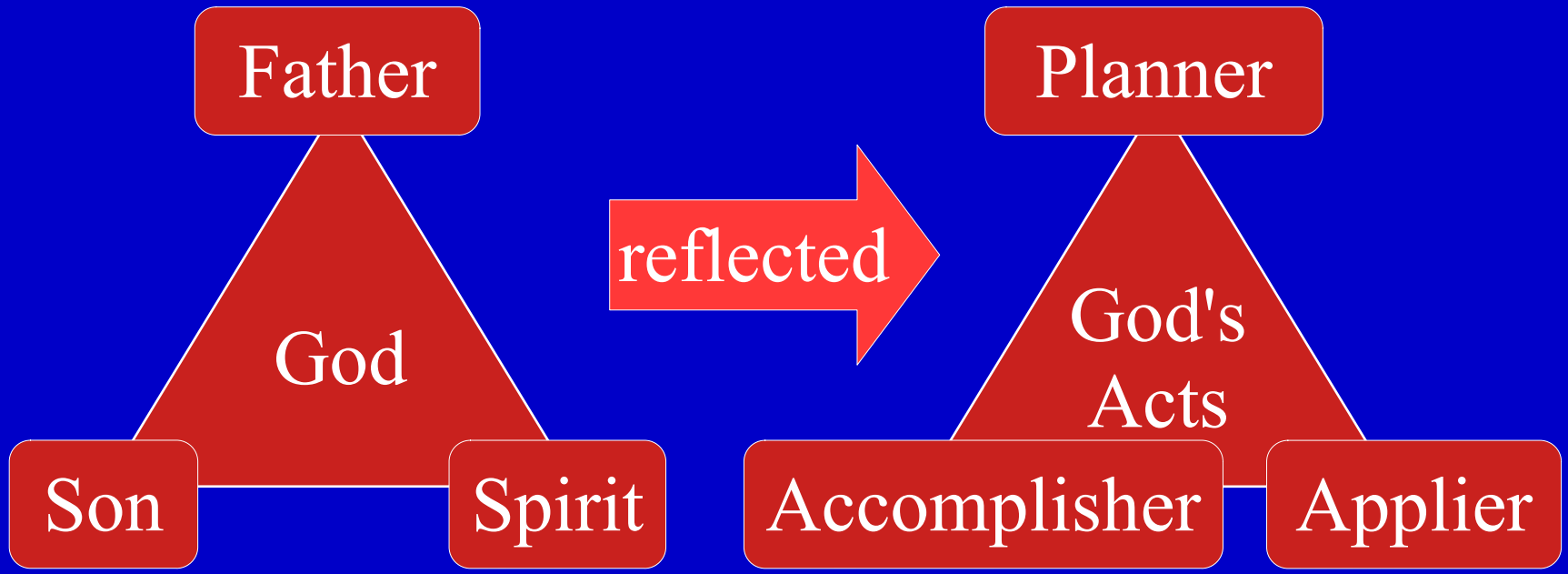
Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God is standard for knowledge		T God is unknowable
I God makes himself known		I Humans are standard for knowledge
2		4

Frame's Square: Knowledge of Trinity

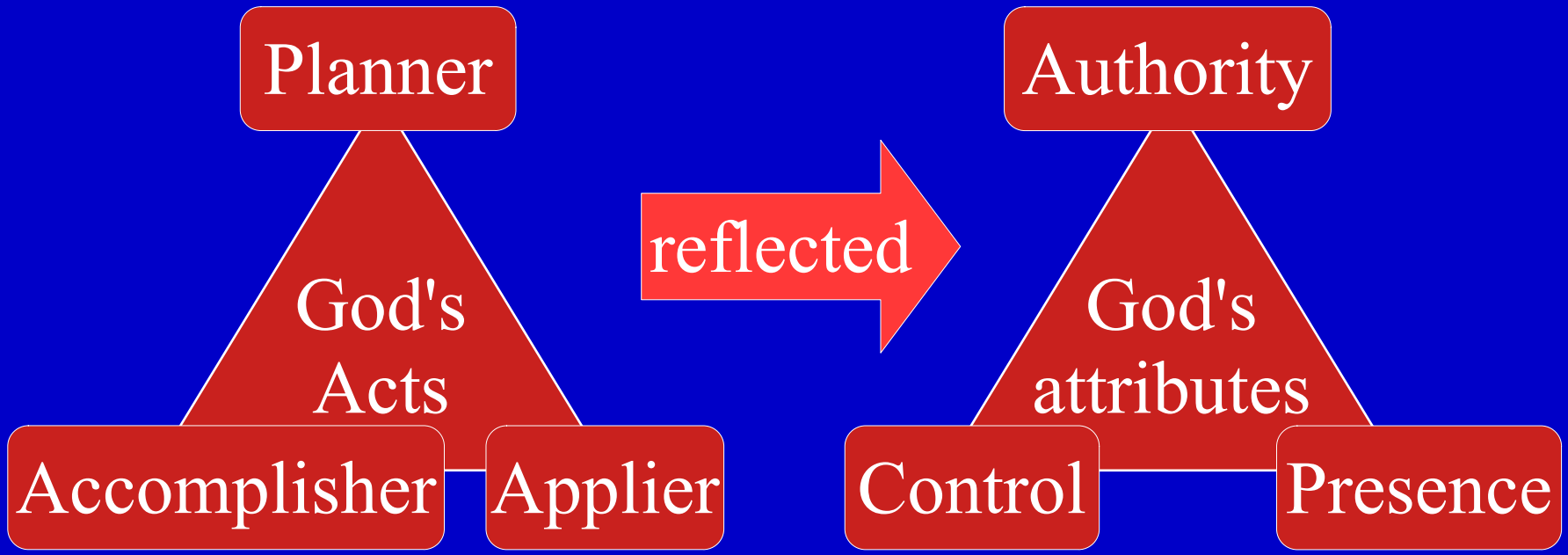
Christian	1	3	Non-Christian
T God is Trinity (incompre-hensible)			T God is unknowable
I God says he is Trinity			I Human idea: Trinity makes no sense
	2	4	



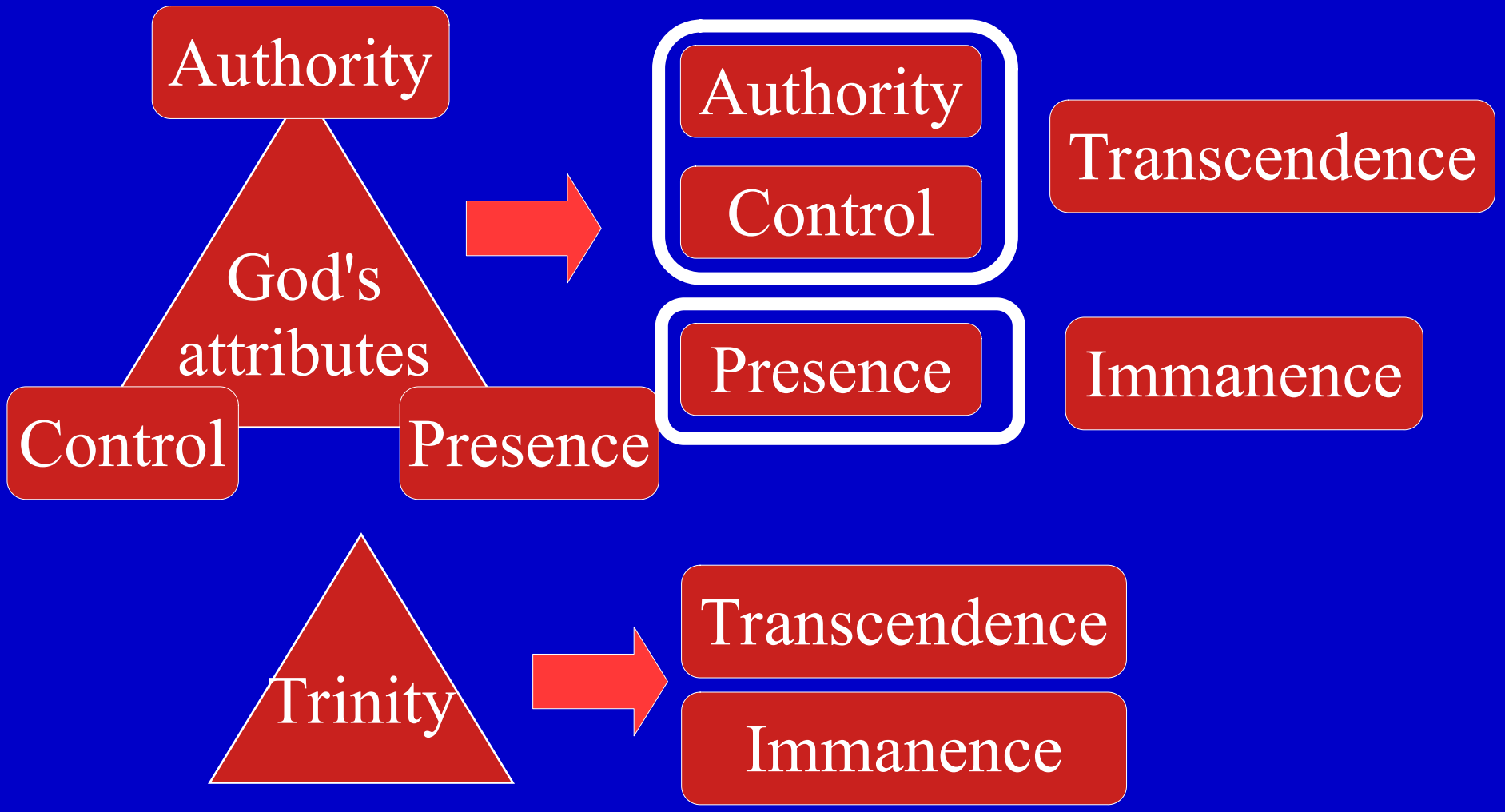
Trinity Reflected (1)



Trinity Reflected (2)



Trinity Reflected in T and I



Harmony in Ex. 20:1-3

And God spoke all these words, saying,
"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
"You shall have no other gods before me.

Authority

Presence

Control

In Harmony

Harmony in John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Authority

Control

Presence

In Harmony

The Trinity Implies T and I

God is Transcendent (supreme)
and Immanent (present)
<u>because</u>
he is Trinity

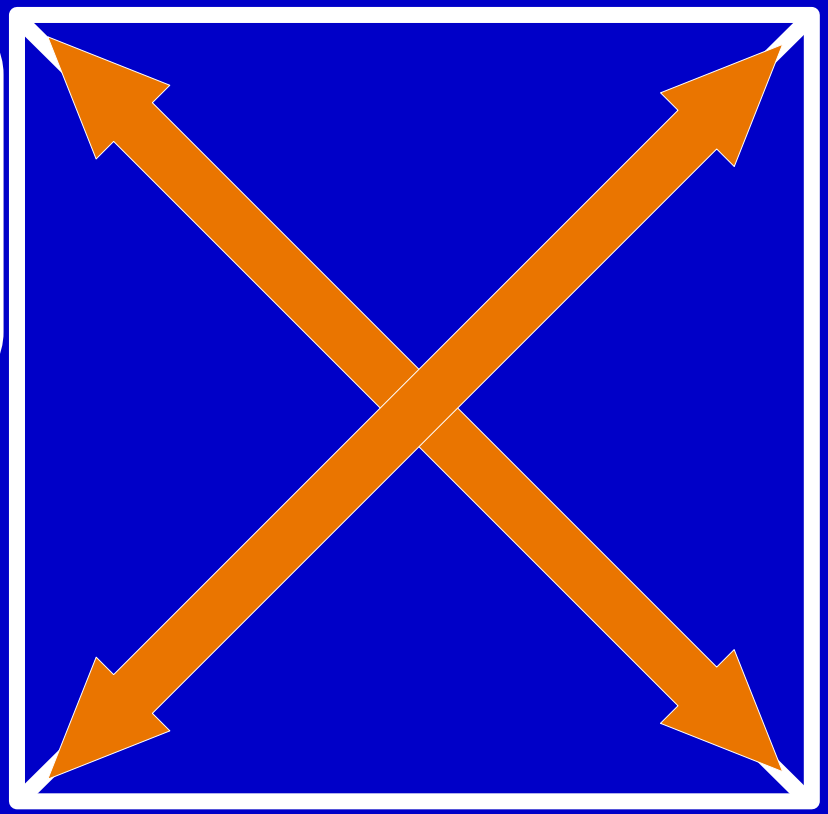
D. Applications

You Are a Child of God: Gal. 4:4-6

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

- Gal. 4:1-7; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:5; John 1:12-13.

Frame's Square: Applied to Adoption

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God adopts you		T God is far off, inaccessible
I God is Father		I God is just like a human father
2		4

You Are a Child of God: Gal. 4:4-6

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Authority

Control

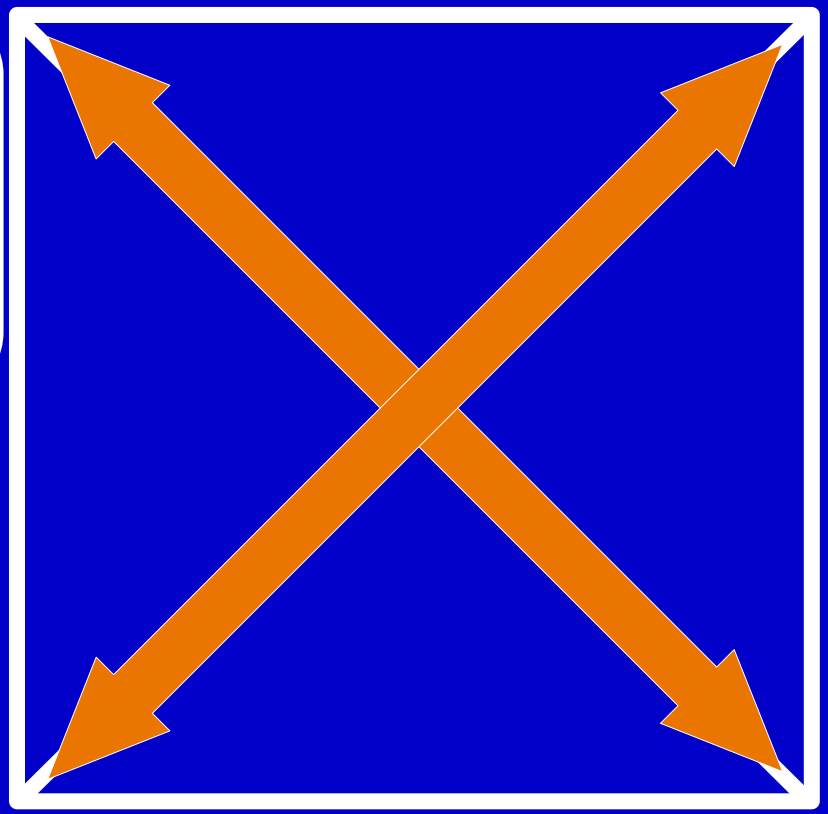
Presence

You Hear God: John 17:8

For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

- John 1:1; 15:26; 16:12-15; Heb. 1:1-2.

Frame's Square: Applied to Hearing

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God speaks authoritatively		T God does not speak
I God speaks clearly to you		I We make religious stories
2		4

You Hear God: John 17:8

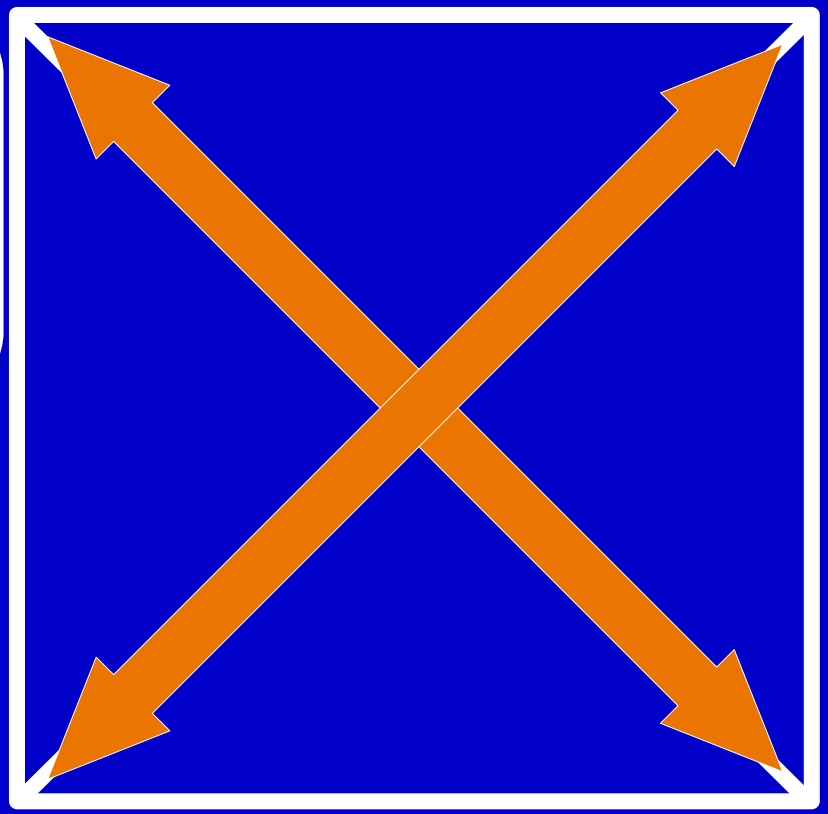
For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

Authority

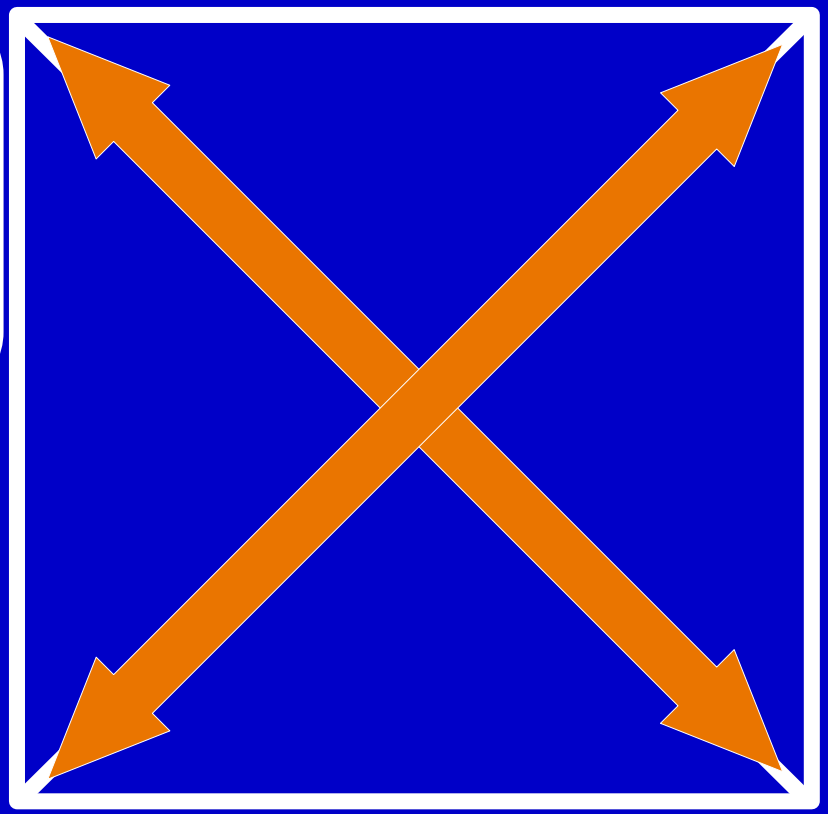
Control

Presence

Frame's Square: Applied to New Age

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God is God, distinct from the world		T God is "mystical" (indescribable)
I God tells us who he is		I God is the world, and we are God
2		4

Frame's Square: Applied to Philosophical Materialism

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God created the world		T The world runs itself (nothing above)
I God is continuously present in the world		I The world created itself
2		4

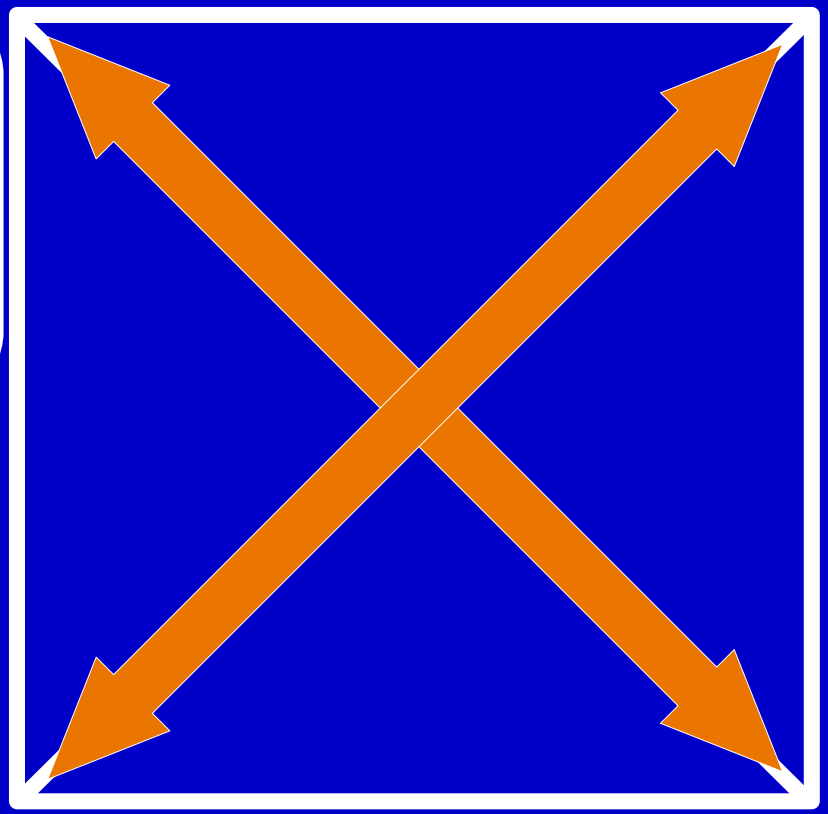
God Speaks for Plants (Gen. 1:11)



© CC BY-SA 4.0
V.S. Poythress

And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so.

Frame's Square: Applied to Plants

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God controls plants		T It's Chance
I God shapes plants		I We cannot allow God's finger in science
2		4

What Is Necessary for Science?

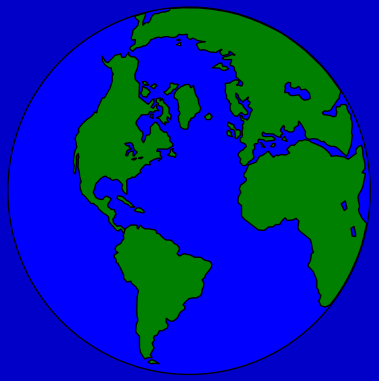
The Trinity Is Necessary

The Pieces

Law

$E = mc^2$

World



Persons



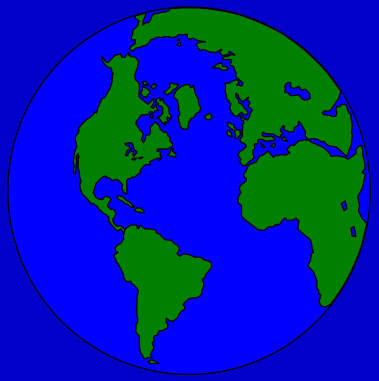
Polytheism

Law

$E = mc^2$

gods in conflict

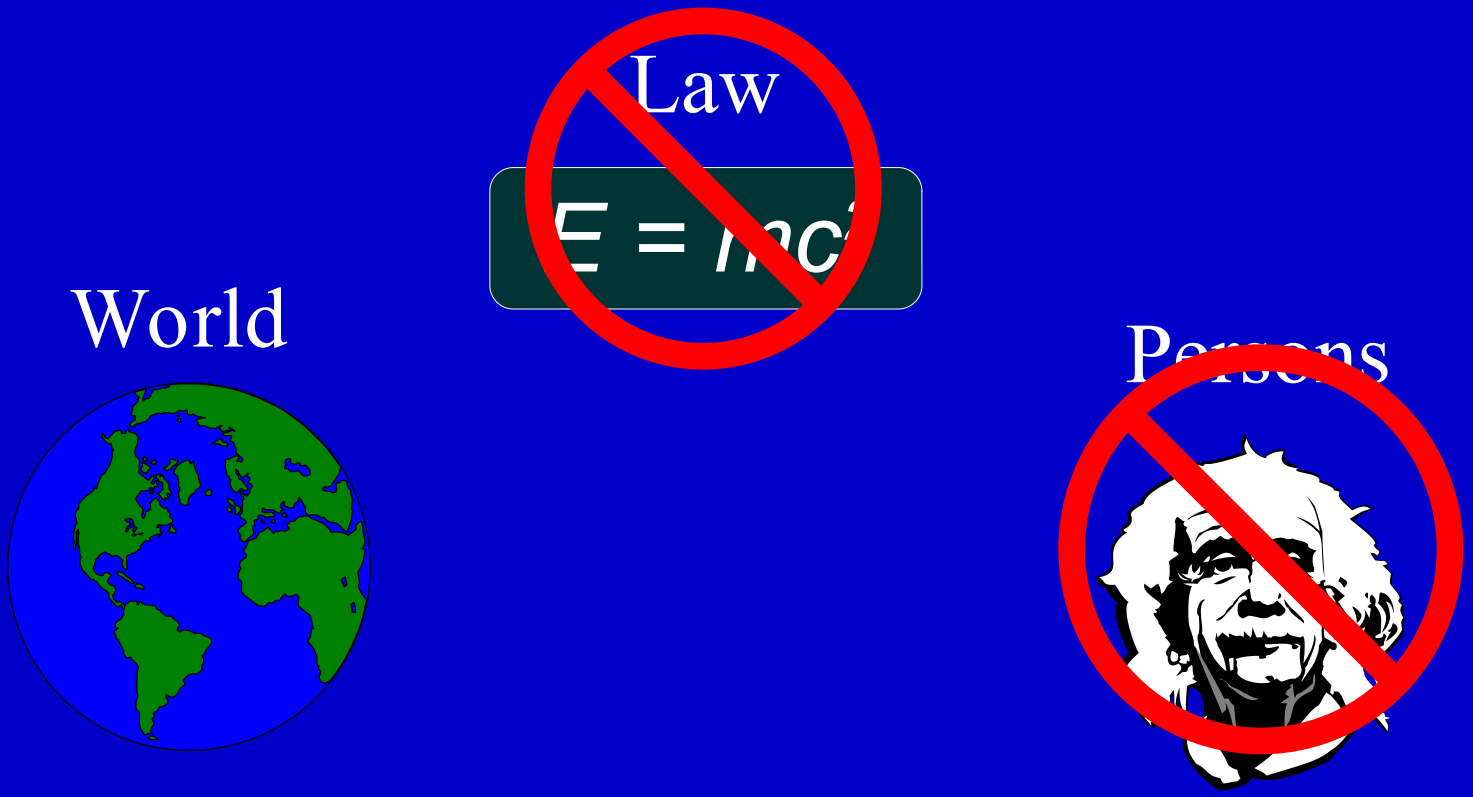
World



Persons

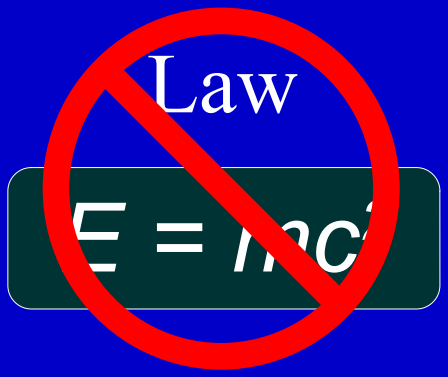


Philosophical Materialism



Postmodern Relativistic Subjectivism





Persons



Rationalism

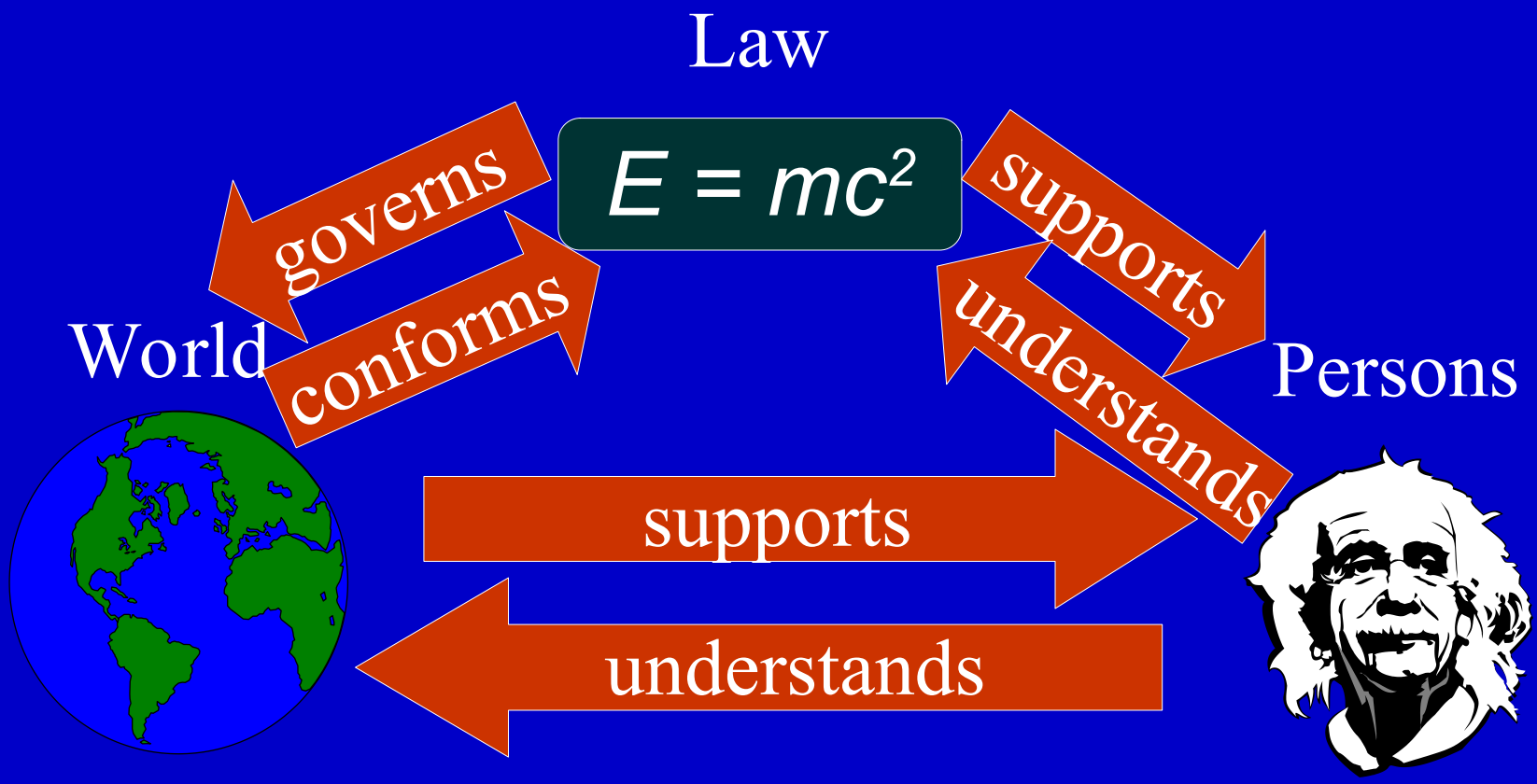
Law

$E = mc^2$

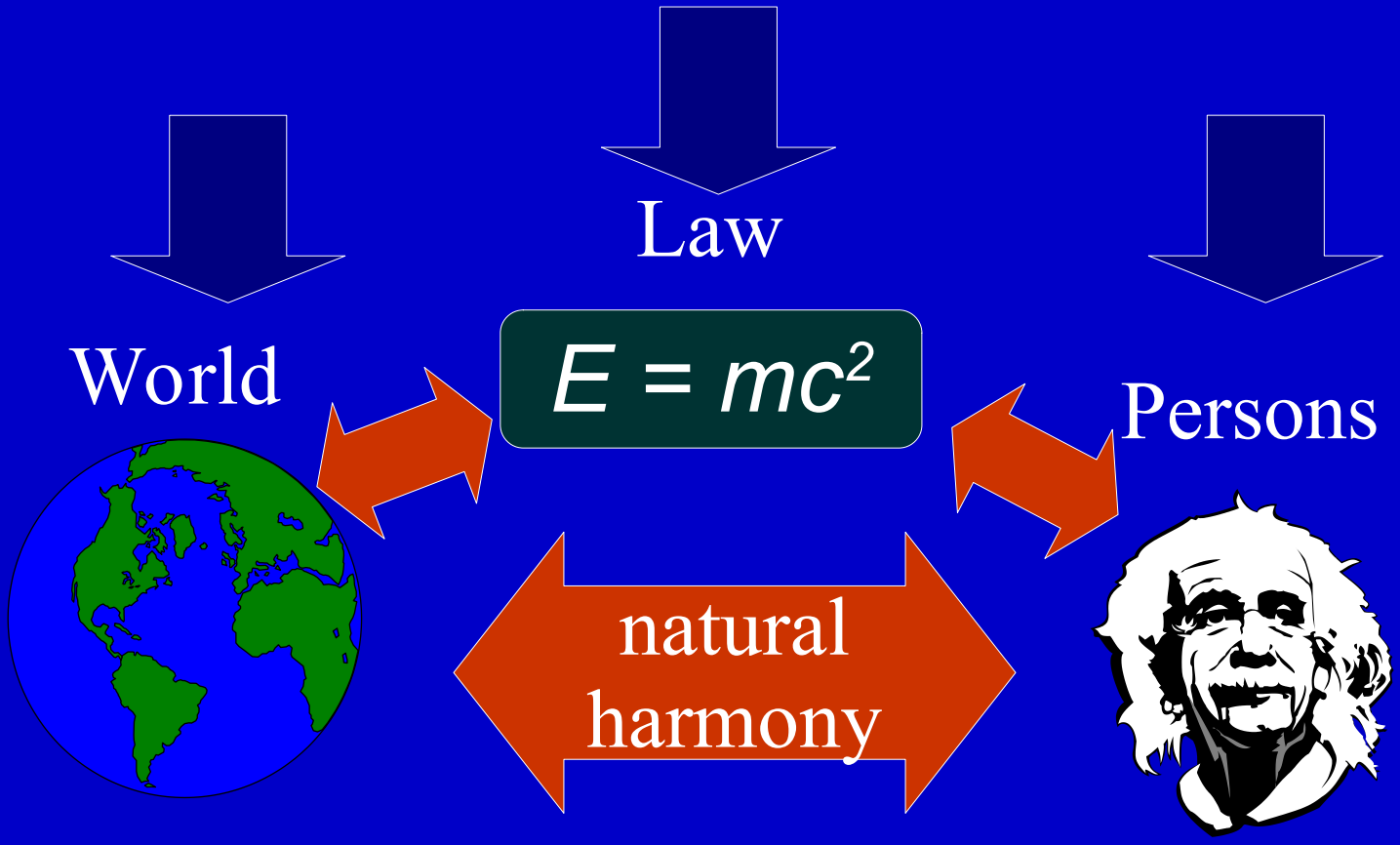




The Mystery of Interaction



Design



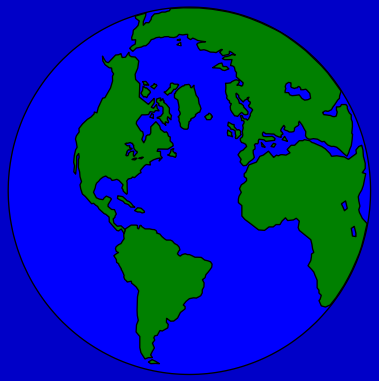
God

powerful

rational

personal

World



Law

$E = mc^2$

Persons



Father wisely plans

GOD

Son powerfully executes

Spirit personally present

powerful

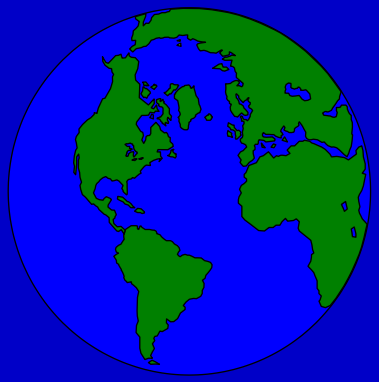
rational

personal

World

Law

Persons



$E = mc^2$



Trinity As Source

Father

Son

Spirit

Authority

Control

Presence

powerful

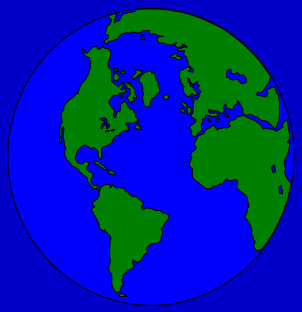
rational

personal

World

Law

Persons



$E = mc^2$



God Rules by Speaking: Ps. 33:6

By the word of the LORD the heavens
were made,
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

Trinity As Source (2)

Father

Son

Spirit

Speaker

The Word

Breath

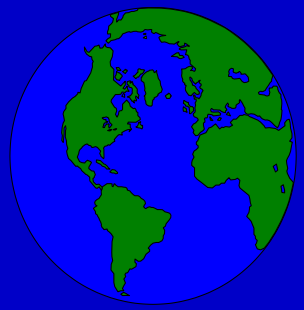
Specific Word for Physics

Specific Breath on the World

Law

World

$E = mc^2$



Trinity As Source (3)

Father

Son

Spirit

Speaker

The Word

Breath

Specific Word for Man

Specific Breath for Man

Persons



Trinity As Source for You

Father

Son

Spirit

Speaker

The Word

Breath

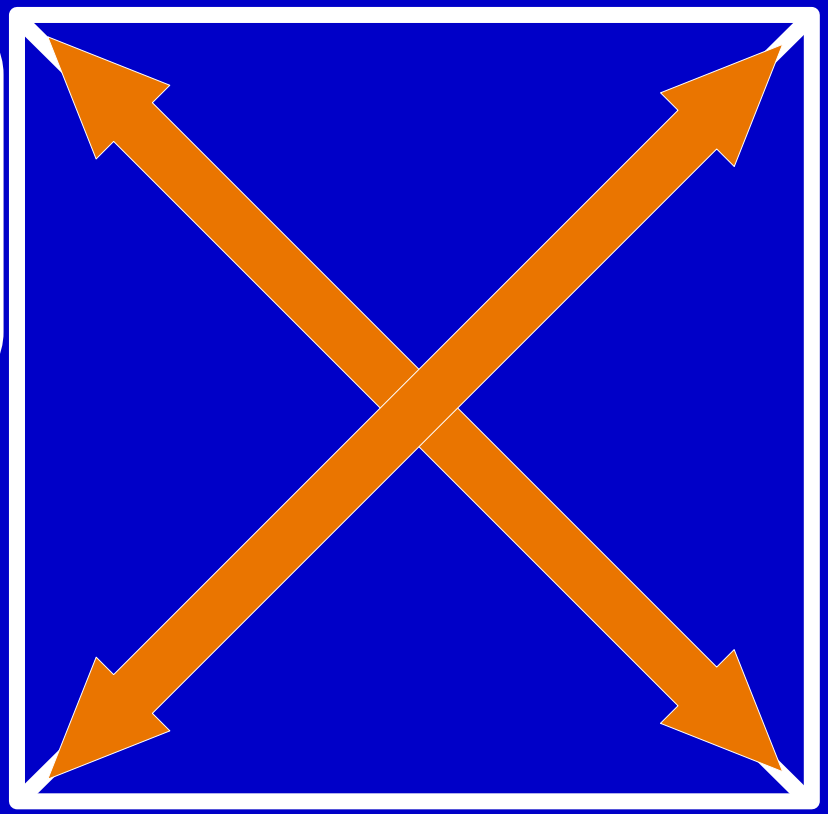
Specific Word to Shape You

Specific Breath Enliven You

© CC0



Frame's Square: Applied to Islam

Christian		Non-Christian
1		3
T God rules the spirits		T God cannot have a Son (remote)
I God sends his Son		I We survive by human ritual
2		4

You Reflect God: 2 Cor. 3:17-18

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and
where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is
freedom. 18 And we all, with unveiled
face, beholding the glory of the Lord,
are being transformed into the same
image from one degree of glory to
another. For this comes from the Lord
who is the Spirit.

- Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Lev. 19:2; Matt. 5:13-17.

You Have New Life: Rom. 8:11

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

- Rom. 6:3-11; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:20; 3:1-4; 1 Pet. 1:3-5

You Pray: Rom. 8:26-27

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. 27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

- Eph. 1:15-17; Heb. 7:23-25; 10:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5.

You Pray: Rom. 8:34

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

- Eph. 1:15-17; Heb. 7:23-25; 10:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5.

You Are Being Saved: Gal. 4:4-5

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

- Eph. 1:15-17; Heb. 7:23-25; 10:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5.

You Are Indwelt: Rom. 8:9-10

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

- John 14:23; 17:21-23; 1 Cor. 6:19.

You Are Under Care: Eph. 1:22

And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,

- Eph. 1:20-23; Heb. 13:20-21; John 10:14-18.

You Serve: Eph. 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- Eph. 4:10-13; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 3:10-13.

God Sustains You: Heb. 1:3

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

- 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Eph. 1:20-23; Rev. 1:18.