How do we describe God?

Howard Culbertson
Southern Nazarene University
Classical proofs for God

- Ontological argument
- Cosmological argument
- Teleological argument
- Moral argument
Ontological argument

• Implanted in human beings mind is the idea that God exists
• Anselm (1033-1109)
• Rene Descartes (1596-1650)
Cosmological argument

• Creation’s majesty, order and wonder
• There must be a cause adequate to account for the universe
• Plato
• Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)
Teleological argument

- Appearance of developing purpose in the universe
- Newton
Moral argument

- The voice in the heart of human beings calling them to do right
- Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)
The “omni” attributes

- Omniscient
- Omnipotent
- Omnipresence
Do the “omni” attributes distort our understanding of God?

- They “owe their existence to abstract analysis and deductive logic about what God ‘must be in order to be God.’ . . . Is such a God a philosophical construction, the idealistic invention of human minds rather than the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?”

  – Michael Lodahl
If the Incarnation is true, then . . .

• “Divine power is not a ruling fist, but an open, bleeding hand” -- Michael Lodahl
Alan Tippett describes God

- Methodist missionary and anthropologist
- “I had not been very long on the mission field before I saw that . . . over-intellectualized religion had to go.” (1984)
- Tippett described God in ways other than with the “omni” doctrines. He says . . .
I believe in . . .

- God
- a living God
- a saving God
- a communicating God
  - a God who knows and can be known
- a providing God
  - a God who makes life meaningful
How do we describe God?

Howard Culbertson
Southern Nazarene University
This PowerPoint presentation is available along with related materials and other PowerPoint presentations at [http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/ppt.htm](http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/ppt.htm)