Athanasius was a Prolific Writer

- Apologetic Writings:
  - Against the Heathens
  - On The Incarnation of the Word
- Defenses of His Actions Against the Arians:
  - Apology Against the Arians
  - Apology to the Emperor Constantius
  - Apology for His Flight
  - History of the Arians
Additional Works of Athanasius

- Doctrinal Works:
  - Three Orations Against the Arians
  - The Fourth is not authentic
  - Defense of the Nicene Council (De Decretis)
  - On the Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia (De Synodis)
  - Letters Concerning the Holy Spirit (Ad Serapionem)
  - Letters to various bishops in Africa
  - Letters to Epictetus and Adelphius
On the Hierarchy

- When fixing Easter, the Council Father Wrote, “it seems good..”
  - It was done out of expediency and for the common good
- When writing about the Faith, the Council wrote, “Thus believes the Catholic Church”.
  - Their sentiments were not novel, but were Apostolic.
  - This was no discovery of theirs, but was the same as taught by the Apostles
- From: Letters on the Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia
On Knowing God
(From: Against the Heathen, Ch. 34)

- The soul is made in the image and likeness of God.
- When the soul is purified, it becomes the image of the Father, and accordingly the Word as well.
- Even if the soul is precluded from seeing the existence of God because of externalities, reason can still learn about God.
- Creation proclaims in a loud voice, due its order and harmony, of the existence of God.
On Knowing God
(Against the Heathen, Ch. 35)

- God gave order to the universe
- He did this for several reasons
  - Since He is invisible and incomprehensible, mankind might have missed knowing about his existence.
  - Order shows the mankind the existence of God.
- A very Platonic argument
  - See the “Cave”
On the Existence of God
(In Defense of the Nicene Definition, Ch. 11)

- God does not create as does man.
- God calls things into existence.
- Men are enclosed in the Word
- God is not enclosed by anything.
- Men are composed of parts.
- God does not have parts
- The Father generates the Son without parts.
- There is only one Son
On Creation
(Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word, Ch. 2)

- Plato says God needed material previously and without creation to make the world.
- Christian teaching says this is absolutely foolish.
- God is not weak. He generated the universe from nothingness.
- He created the world through the Word.
On Adam and Eve
(Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word, Ch. 5)

- God made man out of nothing.
- He gave man a “life in correspondence with God”.
- Man became the cause of his own corruption.
- Man was by nature corruptible, but because of the Word was dwelling with them, death could not approach man.
On Original Sin
(Four Discourses Against the Arians)

- The first man failed.
- The Second Man, the New Adam, Jesus did not fail.
- As Adam’s fall reached to all of us, the salvation of Jesus also reached to all of us.
- By taking on Flesh, the Word was able to condemn sin.
On Adam and Eve
(Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word, Ch. 4)

- Man rejected God.
- As a result, he was punished with death.
- Death had mastery over man.
- Man looks for corruption into nothingness
On Justification
(Four Discourses Against the Arians)

- God is not only Creator He is Father to His Creation.
- Those who receive the Word become sons of God.
- This is only possible because of receiving the true Spirit of the Son.
- The Word took on Flesh that he “might man capable of Godhead”.

The Fall of Man
On Holy Orders
(Defense against the Arians)

- Athanasius is accused of breaking a sacred chalice
- He is investigated by an alleged presbyter.
- However, they received their ordinations from someone who pretended to the Episcopate.
- Bishops ordain priests
- There must be valid Apostolic Succession
- Councils have authority.
Defense of Origen  
(Discourses Against the Arians)

- Origen was a famous exegete from the Alexandrian School.
- Defends Origen by calling him the “most admirable and assiduous Origen”
- Origen was condemned later on for certain of his viewpoints.
  - Pope Benedict called him a doctor of the church.
- Socrates, writes as follows: “Those therefore who load Origen with opprobrium, overlook the fact that their maledictions fall on Athanasius himself. So much for Origen”.
  - In short, if it was good enough for Athanasius, it is good enough for you.
On Martyrdom
(Apology for Flight)

- A time honored question. Should a Christian flee if he is being picked up in a persecution?
- The rule is to attempt to flee. If caught, then martyrdom is permissible.
- Athanasius refutes the accusation his flight from Alexandria was due to cowardice.
- He justifies himself with OT and NT Scriptures.
On the Antichrist

- IN De Synodis, Arianism is the forerunner of the Antichrist.
- IN Apology to Constantine (357), Athanasius shows great respect for the Emperor.
- In this book, Athanasius (358) calls the Emperor the “patron of impiety and Emperor of heresy”.
- He doesn’t stop there: “Godless, unholy, without natural affection.”
- Well, consistency is the hobgoblin of a small mind, I suppose.
On the Holy Spirit
(Letter to Serapion)

- The Holy Spirit did not receive much attention during the Arian controversy, but it was natural that it should spread to discussion of the Holy Spirit.
- One group says the Holy Spirit is simply a ministering spirit, and differs from the angels only in degree.
- Athanasius condemns this view as controverting the True Faith.
  - It is just Arianism in another Form.
  - Athanasius is a true Trinitarian.