

# The Trinity of God

Theology I  
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# Trinity

- Definition
  - God is One and yet is manifested in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are the same in substance but distinct in subsistence.
- Corollary truths
  - There is not three Gods, but one God
  - Each person in the Trinity exists as a separate personality with emotions, will, and intellect
  - Each person in the Trinity exists in perfect harmony with the other two

# The Oneness of God

- God asserts in many passages there is no other God except Him - Exodus 20:2-3, Deuteronomy 6:4, James 2:19, 1 Timothy 2:5-6
- God's name, Elohim, is plural yet used in a singular sense - Genesis 11:7, Isaiah 6:8
- The word "echad", used in Genesis 2:4 is the same as in Deuteronomy 6:4

# The Deity of Three

- Throughout the Old Testament the Father is seen as God - there is little question about the Father's Deity
- Christ is worshipped as God, given God's names, proclaimed Himself God (John 8), and is said to be God by God Himself (Hebrews 1) and is even said to be of the same substance as God (Philippians 2)
- The Holy Spirit is said to be God - Acts 5

# 3 in 1

- Although the concept of One God, Three Persons, is contradictory in our mind - it is clearly what the Bible teaches.

# Why The Names?

- The names of each member of the Trinity are accomodational terms - they help us understand the relationship of each member in the drama of redemption.
- In no way do the names imply some superiority/inferiority relationship between the members of the Trinity.

# More Corollary Truths

- No one member of the Trinity is any “better,” “stronger,” or “greater” than the other two
- The relationship between the Trinity is eternal in nature - it always was, it always will be
- Any apparent subordination between the Trinity is to be seen as a function of Their role in redemption, and not founded in any eternal hierarchy or competition between the members of the Trinity

# Heresies: Economic View

- Advanced by Tertullian and Hippolytus
- The one God is seen in three distinct manifestations of a single substance - each manifestation can be seen and counted, but each is merely a part of the one God
- In this view, God's reason, or the Word, is inseparably linked with Himself



# Subordinationism

- One or more members of the Trinity are “inferior” to the others.
- Most often seen as the Father sending the Son - implying the Son is subordinate to the Father
- The Bible teaches that each member of the Trinity is 100% equal with the other two - only in the drama of redemption do we see a subordinate relationship.

# Heresies: Dynamic Monarchianism

- Monarchianism means “sole sovereignty”
- Basic idea is that God was dynamically present in the life of Jesus - a mere man
- This means that Jesus is not God, rather he was somehow imbued with the presence and power of God at his baptism

# Heresies: Modalistic Monarchianism

- Also known as Sabellianism, from Sabellius who wrote in the third century
- God appears in the Old Testament as the Father, in the New Testament as the Son, and in the church age as the Spirit - these are merely three manifestations of the same person
- A good metaphor is a boy, man, and father - it is the same person, seen from different perspectives at different times

# Heresies: Tritheism

- This view teaches there are three Gods, one in purpose, but distinct in being, substance, and essence
- Clearly this is an heretical and unorthodox view which cannot be reconciled with Scriptures



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