

## **Systematic Theology Elective: Trinity COURSE NOTES**

BICF Seminary 'Equipping Center' Course  
Pastor Mark Blair – October – December 2014

Overview:

- I. Old Testament Anticipation
- II. Jesus - The Son of God
- III. The Spirit of God
- IV. The Triune God of the New Testament
- V. Historical Survey of the Doctrine
- VI. Definitions of Trinitarian Words and Concepts
- VII. Making the Triune God Known through our Ministries

Introduction

1. This is a very MISUNDERSTOOD doctrine
  - a. Often leads to RIDICULE by unbelievers, esp. Muslims
  - b. Resulting in EMBARRASSMENT of uninstructed Christians also results in CONFUSION, sometimes DESPAIR
  - c. Preachers find it TOO COMPLEX so they avoid it
2. This is a very IMPORTANT doctrine
  - a. Any Biblical truth is by definition important; cf. Matt 5.19; Gal 3.10; Jam 2.10
  - b. Especially a teaching so CENTRAL to the character of GOD HIMSELF, this is WHO HE IS  
cf. Ex 20.3,4; Isa 45.5; 1 Cor 8.4,5; 2 Cor 11.4

### I. Old Testament Anticipation

- A. Strict MONOTHEISM - Israel's Fundamental Concept of God
  1. Abram, a polytheist, left his gods of Mesopotamia to COVENANT with the Lord God ALONE  
Gen 12.1-3; Josh 24.2,3,14; Acts 7.2-8
  2. This ONE GOD became the Lord of the NATION at Sinai Ex 20.3,4; Deut 7.6-16; 9.4-6
  3. The "SHEMA" was Israel's unique CREED - Deut 6.4
  4. Covenant PROPHETS later rebuked Israel for unfaithfulness Isa 1.2-4; 44.6-8; 45.5
  5. OT records NOT a DEVELOPMENT TO monotheism (despite the assertions of critical scholars) but a DIGRESSION FROM monotheism into apostasy, idolatry and practical atheism

## B. The DIVINE PLURAL, the royal "WE"

1. The Hebrew word for God "ELOHIM" is in the PLURAL Gen 1.26; 3.22; 11.7; Isa 6.8
  - a. The PRIMARY meaning of the plural is FULLNESS
  - b. Exegesis will not allow forcing a fully developed doctrine of trinity into these OT texts.
  - c. Yet in the light of NT these texts can be seen as part of DEVELOPMENT of the doctrine.
2. "THE LORD OF HOSTS" also a PLURAL description of God
  - a. God is NOT ALONE in Heaven; 1 Kings 22.19; Psa 89.5-8, Psa 103.20,21; Isa 6.2,3
  - b. God among the gods; Job 1.6; Psa 29.1; 82.1,6
3. The CREATOR - divine name in the plural (translated in singular in most English versions)
 

Job 35.10; Psa 149.2; Eccl 12.1; Isa 54.5

## C. DIVINE APPEARANCES

### 1. Genesis 18 - Abraham's Visitor(s?)

- v. 2 - three men
- v. 3 - "my lord" (reflecting Semitic respect?)
- v. 9 - "they said"
- v. 10 "the Lord said"
- v. 14 "God speaking"
- v. 16 "the men" set out"
- v. 17 "the Lord said"
- v. 22 "stood before the Lord"

### 2. The ANGEL OF THE LORD

- a. Sometimes clearly referred to as a CREATED BEING Haggai 1.13; Mai 2.7; 3.1 - lit. def. "messenger"
- b. Other references associate the angel with God Himself Gen 16.7,13; Ex 3.2,6; Judg 2.1; 6.12-24; 13.3,6,18,22
- c. Angel does the WORK OF GOD:

	CLOUD	FIRE/Egypt
God:	Ex 13.21	Ex 14.24
Angel:	Ex 14. 19	Num 20. 16

- d. SEPARATE from God at same time UNITED to God Ex 23.20,21; 33.2,3; Num 22.31

### 3. THE WORD - "God's Almighty SPEECH"

- a. Hebrew concept of "WORD" is an active, dynamic, almost a concrete "thing"

- b. For example, once Isaac gave out his blessing, it was irrevocable, Genesis 27.35
  - c. The Word is OBJECTIVE PRINCIPLE of God's creation Gen 1.2; Psa 29.3,4
  - d. Word Holds INDEPENDENT, POWERFUL AUTHORITY Ex 4.15,16; 7.1; Jer 15.19
  - e. HEALING word - Psa 107.20
  - f. Word "runs" and "melts ice" - Psa 147.15,18
  - g. Word "lands on Israel" - Isa 9.8
  - h. Word cannot be called back - Isa 31.2; 45.23
  - i. Word ACCOMPLISHES GOD'S PURPOSES - Isa 55.11
  - j. Word cannot be held inside - Jer 20.9
  - k. Word like FIRE, and a HAMMER - Jer 23.29
  - l. Word CAN BE EATEN - Ezek 2.8-3.3; Rev 10.8-11
  - m. Triadic Structure of the WORD
    - 1) Creative Word - Gen 1.3, Ps 33.6
    - 2) Redemptive Word - Isa 55. 11
    - 3) Commissioning Word - Jer 1.4ff.
4. The SPIRIT - "God's Almighty BREATH" Job 32.8; 33.4
- a. DIVINE PRESENCE and POWER; THREE-fold:
    - 1) animating - Ps 33.6
    - 2) activating - Ezek 36.26ff, 37.1-10
    - 3) equipping - Jgs 3.10, 1 Sam 10.16,10, Isa 42.1
  - b. Spirit is OMNIPRESENT - Psa 139.7
  - c. Spirit is SOVEREIGN - Isa 40.13; 61.1
  - d. Spirit is INDEPENDENT - Isa 63.7-14
  - e. PERSONAL ACTIVITIES and MOODS of SPIRIT - Gen 6.3, 2 Sam 23.2, Neh 9.20, Isa 34.16, 63.10
  - f. SPIRIT JOINED IN MINISTRY:
    - 1) with WORD in CREATION - Gen 1.2; Psa 33.6; 104.30; Isa 40.7,8
    - 2) with WISDOM - Isa 11.2, cf. John 1.32

## 5. The WISDOM of God

- a. PERSONIFIED AGENT of Creation - Prov 3.19; 8.22-31; Jer 10. 12; 51. 15
- b. To be PRIZED (worshipped?) Prov 2.10; 8.11; 16.16
- c. Concept developed by NT writers to develop the pre-existence, mediatorship, and revelatory work of Jesus: 1 Cor 1.24, Col 2.3, Matt 11.19, 12.42

## 6. The NAME of the Lord

- a. Three-fold BLESSING - Num 6.22-27 // 2 Cor 13.13
- b. Name IS the person - Lev 24.11; Prov 18.10; Isa 30.27
- c. Name is the person REVEALED IN FULLNESS Ex 3.13;.Psa 22.22 (John 17.6; Acts 9.15)
  - 1) God's RIGHTEOUSNESS - Psa 89.15,16
  - 2) God's FAITHFULNESS - Psa 89.24
  - 3) God's SALVATION - Psa 96.2
  - 4) God's HOLINESS - Psa 99.3
  - 5) God's GOODNESS - Psa 100.4,5
  - 6) God's MERCY - Psa 109.21
  - 7) God's LOVE - Psa 119.55
  - 8) God's TRUTH - Psa 138.2
  - 9) God's GLORY - Psa 148.13

## 7. The GLORY of the Lord - lit. def. "weight" or "worth"

- a. Revealed God's BEING, NATURE, and PRESENCE to mankind
- b. Seen by Moses on Sinai - Ex 24. 15-18
- c. FILLED the Tabernacle - Ex 40.34,35; Lev 9.6,23
- d. LOCATED in the Temple - 1 King 8. 11; 2 Chron 7. 1-3
- e. SEEN in Ezekiel's VISIONS - Ezek 1.28
- f. SPIRITUALIZED DOCTRINE - Isa 40.4,5; 60.1-3

## 8. The FACE of God - symbolized God's PRESENCE, Gen 4.16

- a. "bread of the FACE" Ex 25.30;35. 13; 39.36; 1 Sam 21.6
- b. Sometimes HIDDEN - Deut 31. 17; Psa 13. 1; Dan 9. 17
- c. Could NOT BE SEEN - Gen 32.30; Ex 33.20,23

d. Moses spoke to God "face to face" Ex 33.11;Deut 34.10

#### D. SUMMARY of Old Testament Teachings

##### 1. Something MORE COMPLEX about God's Person is REVEALED

- a. The careful student of the OT must have wondered about these passages which STRETCHED their VIEW OF GOD
- b. Such passages produce a hospitable atmosphere for NT recognition of distinct persons in God.
- c. These concepts are all ways of expressing the immanence of a transcendent God.
- d. At the same time, STRICT MONOTHEISM remained a fundamental article of OT faith.
- e. Any COMPLETE doctrine of the TRINITY remains UNREVEALED and UNDEVELOPED until the New Testament

##### 2. Three Categories of Old Testament Passages

- a. Passages which Christians can see as foreshadowing a CLEAR REFERENCE to the Trinity; many of these cause some PUZZLEMENT to honest Jewish scholars.
- b. Passages which caused no suspicion to Jews but now in the light of FULLER NT revelation POINT to Trinity.
- c. Passages on which Christians today try to WRONGLY IMPOSE a developed doctrine of the Trinity; EISEGESIS

## II. Jesus - The Son of God

### A. UNITY / "Oneness" of God in the New Testament

1. OT View is MAINTAINED, Mark 12.29-32; James 2.19
2. Jesus is INCLUDED in the oneness, John 10.30; 17.3; 1 Cor 8.4-6; 1 Tim 2.5
3. The PLURALITY of "one"
  - a. Heb. word "YACHEED" means "one and only one", this word is never used in OT to describe God.
  - b. Instead the Heb. word "ECHAD" meaning "compound unity" is used by the OT authors, for example:
    - 1) Gen 2.24 - "one flesh"
    - 2) Gen 11.6 - "one people"
  - c. Similar idea of "COMPOUND UNITY" carried into the NT:
    - 1) John 17.22,23 - "one even as we are one"
    - 2) 1 Cor 3.6-8 -he who plants, he who waters are "one"
    - 3) 1 Cor 12.13 - "baptized into one body"
  - d. Biblical concept of "one" is a COMPOUND UNITY, not a monolithic unit, different from Islamic "monotheism"

### B. Jesus is GOD

#### 1. Divine Attributes ascribed to Jesus

- a. Jesus is ETERNAL – existing forever, no beginning and no end
  - 1) John 1.15 - lived BEFORE John the Baptist
  - 2) John 8.58 - "before Abraham was, I AM"
  - 3) John 17.5,24 - "BEFORE the foundation of the world"
  - 4) Heb 1.8 - "thy throne O God, is for ever and ever"
  - 5) Rev 1.8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega"
- b. Jesus is OMNIPRESENT – everywhere at the same time
  - 1) John 3.13 - in HEAVEN while on the EARTH
  - 2) Matt 18.20; 28.20 - on EARTH while in HEAVEN
- c. Jesus is OMNISCIENT – knows all things
  - 1) John 16.30 - "we know that you know all things"

- 2) John 21.17 - "Lord, you know everything"
- 3) John 2.25 "he himself knew what was in man"; Ex. John 1.49; 4.29; Lk 6.8; 11.17
- 4) Matt 16.21 Jesus knew TIME & MANNER of His own death; cf. John 12.33; 13.1

d. Jesus is OMNIPOTENT – all powerful

- 1) Rev 19.6 - "the Lord our God the ALMIGHTY"
- 2) John 5.19 - Son does all things, as does the Father
- 3) Heb 1.3 - "upholding the universe by his word"
- 4) Matt 28.18 - "all authority...given to me"
- 5) Mark 5.6-13 - power over DEMONS
- 6) Luke 4.38-41 - power over DISEASES
- 7) John 10.17,18 - power over DEATH; cf. Matt 9.25; Luke 7.14; John 11.43

e. Jesus is IMMUTABLE (in his plans, promises, & person) – unable to change, constant

- 1) Heb 1.12 - "thou art the same"
- 2) Heb 13.8 - "the same yesterday, today, and forever"

2. Jesus Holds the OFFICES (unique rights and responsibilities) of Deity

a. Jesus is the CREATOR of the World

- 1) John 1.3 - "all things were made through him"
- 2) Coloss 1.16 - "for in him all things were created"
- 3) Heb 1.2 - "through whom also he created the world"
- 4) Heb 1.10 - maker of HEAVEN and EARTH

b. Jesus is the SUSTAINER of the World.

- 1) Col 1.17 - "in Him all things hold together"
- 2) Heb 1.3 - "upholding the universe"

3. Jesus has the PREROGATIVES (rights) of Deity

a. Jesus has the right to FORGIVE SIN

- 1) Matt 9.6 - "Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins", cf. Mark 2.7
- 2) Luke 7.47 - the sinful woman forgiven

b. Jesus RAISES THE DEAD

- 1) John 6.39 - "raise it up at the last day"

2) John 10.18 - "I have the power to take it back"

3) John 11.25 - "I am the resurrection and the life"

c. Jesus is the JUDGE of ALL MANKIND

1) Matt 25.31 ff. - all the nations before His throne

2) John 5.22 - "given all judgment to the Son"

3) 2 Cor 5.10 - "all before..judgement seat of Christ"

4. Jesus is Identified with YHWH (Jehovah) of the Old Testament

a. God the CREATOR - Psa 102.24-27 // Heb 1.10-12

b. Seen by Isaiah - Isa 6.1 // John 12.41

c. Announced by Forerunner - Isa 40.3 // Matt 3.3

d. Among God's People - Num 21.6,7 // 1 Cor 10.9

e. Sanctified - Isa 8.13 // 1 Pet 3.15

f. Leads captivity - Psa 68.18 // Eph 4.7,8

5. Jesus has names which are ascribed to Deity

a. "I AM" - John 6.41, 8.12,58, 10.9,11, 11.25, 14.6, 15.1, 18.6

b. Alpha and Omega - Rev 22.13

c. Emmanuel - Isa 7.14 // Matt 1.22,23

d. LOGOS - John 1.1-5, Rev 19.13

e. Son of Man, does the work of God:

1) Matt 9.6 - forgives sins

2) Matt 12.8 - interprets the law of God

3) John 5.27 - executes judgment

4) Matt 20.28 - gives life as a ransom

5) Matt 13.41 - sends out angels

6) Matt 19.28, 25.31 - sits on a throne

7) Matt 24.44,26.64 - coming again

.Note: Some believe "Son of Man" refers to the humanity of Jesus whereas the "Son of God" refers to His deity. Yet the Scriptures emphasize just the OPPOSITE. Most often Jesus uses the title "Son of Man" from the context of Daniel 7.13,14, the apocalyptic God-man who receives authority from the "Ancient of Days".

#### f. SON OF GOD

- 1) Sometimes used in Scripture to describe angels, Adam, Israel, kings, and all children of God
- 2) Some texts clearly denote deity - John 5.18; 10.33,36
- 3) "Only BEGOTTEN" (unique, one and only) - John 1.18, 3.16,18
- 4) Executes Judgment - John 5.22
- 5) Has Life in Himself - John 5.21,26
- 6) Gives Eternal Life - John 10.10
- 7) Honored - John 5.23

#### g. LORD

- 1) Sometimes spoken to men as sign of RESPECT, also was used as a title for LANDHOLDERS
- 2) "Kurios" was DIVINE title of Roman Caesar's, widely used by Nero and Domitian
- 3) Different NT texts refer to either meaning: Matt 7.21,22; 22.43,44, Lk 1.43; 2.11, Jn 20.28, Acts 16.31, Rom 10.9, 1 Cor 12.3, Phil 2.11

#### h. GOD - explicit references to the deity of Jesus:

- 1) John 1.1,14 "Word was God...Word became flesh"
- 2) John 1.18 "the only begotten God"
- 3) John 20.28 "my Lord and my God"
- 4) Rom 9.5 "Christ, who is God over all"
- 5) Tit 2.13 "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"
- 6) Heb 1.8 "of the Son. ..Thy throne, O God"
- 7) 2 Pet 1. 1 "our God and Savior Jesus Christ"

#### 6. Certain RELATIONS of Jesus Prove His Deity

- a. Jesus is NAMED with the Father in CLOSE ASSOCIATION: Matt 28.19, Acts 2.38, Rom 6.3, 2 Cor 13.14
- b. Heb 1.3 -Jesus "REFLECTS the glory of God and BEARS the very STAMP of His nature"
- c. Col 1. 15 - Jesus "is the IMAGE of the invisible God"
- d. Col 2.9 - in Jesus "the WHOLE FULLNESS OF DEITY dwells"
- e. Jesus ACTS with the Father: John 14.23, 2 Thes 2.16,17

f. Christians SAME RELATION TO God & Christ: Eph 5.5, Rev 20.6

g. Father and Son have MUTUAL OWNERSHIP: John 16.15,17.10

#### 7. WORSHIP is GIVEN TO and ACCEPTED BY Jesus

a. Jesus says "worship the LORD your GOD and him ONLY," Matt 4.10, Ex 20.1,2

b. Worship is REFUSED by mere men and angels: Acts 10.25,26, Rev 19.10, 22.8,9

c. Worship is RECEIVED by Jesus: Mt 14.33, 15.25, 28.9, Lk 5.8, 1 Cor 1.2

d. Worship of Jesus is God's COMMAND TO ALL PEOPLE: John 5.23, Heb 1.6

#### 8. Jesus Himself CLAIMED TO BE GOD

a. Lk 2.49,50 - God is "His Father"

b. Mt 3.17 - "This is my beloved Son"

c. Mt 5.21,22,27,28 - "But I say to you" DIVINE AUTHORITY

d. Mt 10.1,8, Lk 10.9,19 - He EMPOWERED His disciples

e. John 8.58, 17.5 - asserted His PRE-EXISTENCE

f. John 16.23,24 - invited PRAYER IN HIS NAME

g. John 5.18, 10.30, 14.9, 17.11 - claims to His own deity, so CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD evoked STRONG REACTIONS

### C. Jesus and the Father

#### 1. Jesus is DISTINGUISHED FROM the Father

a. ONE GOD, the Father, and ONE LORD JESUS - 1 Cor 8.6

b. Grace and Peace from Father AND Son - 1 Cor 1.3

c. God the Father "on the throne" - Rev 4.2

d. Jesus is: "in the bosom of the Father" John 1.18, "at the right hand of God" Heb 10.12, "at his side" 1 Pet 3.22

#### 2. God as a Father

a. To the NATION OF ISRAEL - Deut 32.6, Isa 63.16

b. To the NEW ISRAEL in Christ - Matt 6.4, Rom 8.15

#### 3. God as THE Father of Jesus

a. PRIMARY NT ref. to "Father" is to Father of Jesus

b. Jesus is WITH HIS FATHER FROM ETERNITY: John 1.1,2,14, 8.38, 17.5,24, Phil 2.6

- c. Father LOVES the Son: John 5.19,20, 10.17, 17.24
- d. Jesus maintains SPECIAL RELATION to His Father: Mt 11.25-27, Lk 22.29,  
Jn 2.16, 5.17, 20.17
- e. Believers relation to Father is DERIVED FROM Jesus' John 14.6-13, 17.26, 20.17,  
Eph 3.9-14
- f. Father's love for believers is THROUGH THE SON: John 16.27, 17.26

#### 4. "Eternal Generation" / EMANATION of Son from Eternity

- a. Ps 2.7 "You are my Son, TODAY I have begotten you", refers to UNIVERSAL  
PRESENT, God's EVERLASTING NOW
- b. Micah 5.2 "whose ORIGIN is from of old, from ANCIENT DAYS
- c. John 5.26 "the Son also has LIFE IN HIMSELF" possesses ETERNAL  
COMMUNICATION of life as a RIGHT
- d. John 1.18, 3.16 "BEGOTTEN" refers to Jesus UNIQUENESS special Son of God from all  
eternity, ONE AND ONLY

#### D. Jesus and the Spirit

1. OT HOPE was the coming of "MESSIAH" (THE anointed one) Isaiah 11.2, 42.1, 61.1
2. During the inter-testamental 400 years, the faithful longed for a fresh Word from God; they  
experienced only the the echo of God's voice (Heb. "bath quol")
3. Coming of Messiah - THE AGE OF THE SPIRIT
  - a. The Spirit HAS COME: Luke 1.15,35,41,67, 2.25,27
  - b. The Christ HAS COME: Luke 1.35, 2.11
4. Jesus is GOD INCARNATE
  - a. Fully MAN: 1 Tim 2.5, 1 John 4.2
  - b. Phil 2.7 He SET ASIDE his DIVINE PRIVILEGES/RIGHTS, while REMAINING fully  
God (cf. John 10.18)
  - c. Jesus CONTINUES a MAN in Heaven: Heb 4.14, 5.10
5. Jesus - MINISTRY IN THE SPIRIT - Acts 10.38
  - a. Baptism - Luke 3.22,2.3
    - 1) Christ-child: Luke 2.11
    - 2) Christ commissioned: Luke 3.22,23
    - 3) Christ exalted: Acts 2.33,36

- b. Temptation - Luke 4.1,14
- c. Teaching - Luke 4.18
- d. Healing - Matt 12.28 (cf. Lk 11.20 "finger"//Spirit?)
- e. Death - Heb 9.14
- f. Resurrection - 1 Tim 3.16
- g. Post-resurrection Ministry - Acts 1.2

#### 6. Jesus SUBMISSION in His Earthly Humiliation

- a. to the Spirit - Matt 12.31,32
- b. to the Father - Matt 24.36 (knowledge in Heavenly Exaltation: Act 1.7,Rev 22.16,20)

#### E. The Spirit and Jesus

1. Risen Jesus, obedient servant, wins the prize/Spirit: Isa 44.1-3, Acts 2.33,36, Eph 4.4-10
2. Expectation of the disciples:

- a. "God with us"; Matthew's theme of EMMANUEL: Matt 1.23, 18.20, 25.40, 28.20
- b. "I will come to you"- John 14.16-23, 16.16

#### 3. Pentecost - The Coming of JESUS

- a. "life-giving Spirit" - 1 Cor 15.45
- b. "now the Lord is the Spirit" - 2 Cor 3.17,18 (cf. 1 Cor 8.6)

#### 4. Union with Christ

- a. Rom 8.9-11 - indwelt by the triune God
- b. Gal 2.20 - "Christ who lives in me"
- c. Coloss 1.27 - "Christ in you, the hope of glory"

Note: The texts of the NT focus much more on the ECONOMIC trinity (what God DOES), than on the ONTOLOGICAL (who God IS).

### III. The Spirit of God

#### A. The Spirit is a PERSON

##### 1. He has the CHARACTERISTICS of Personality:

- a. Intellect - Rom 8.27, 1 Cor 2.13
- b. Emotions (sensibility) - Rom 15.30
- c. Will - 1 Cor 12.11, Acts 16.6-11

##### 2. He performs the ACTIONS of Personality:

- a. Teaches - John 14.26
- b. Witnesses/Testifies - John 15.26, Rom 8.16
- c. Guides - John 16.13, Rom 8.14
- d. Convicts - John 16.7,8
- e. Restrains - Genesis 6.3
- f. Performs Miracles - Acts 8.39
- g. Calls for Service - Acts 13.2
- h. Sends into Service - Acts 13.4
- i. Guides in Service - Acts 8.29
- j. Prays/Intercedes - Rom 8.26

##### 3. He is TREATED as a Person

- a. Obeyed - Acts 10.19-21
- b. Lied to - Acts 5.3
- c. Resisted - Acts 7.51
- d. Grieved - Eph 4.30
- e. Blasphemed - Matt 12.31
- f. Insulted - Heb 10.29

##### 4. He is DESCRIBED as a Person

- a. He has a NAME - "Paraclete" (meaning "come alongside")

This name described the friends of the accused who offered a testimony in support of his character before the trial Judge; e.g. Advocate/Counselor/Comforter  
John 14.16,26, 15.26, 16.7, 1 John 2.1

b. He is described with PERSONAL PRONOUNS; John 14.17, 16.13 -  
 (John joins PNEUMA (neuter) with a MASCULINE PRONOUN - "he" & "him")-  
 John uses BAD GRAMMAR, to teach GOOD THEOLOGY.

5. He is ASSOCIATED WITH persons: (the Father and the Son)

a. Baptism - Matt 28.19

b. Benediction - 2 Cor 13.14

c. Administration of the Church - 1 Cor 12.4-6

B. The Spirit is GOD

1. The Spirit has DIVINE NAMES

a. Spirit of God - 1 Cor 6.11, Acts 5.3,4

b. Spirit of Jesus - Acts 16.7

c. Spirit of adoption - Rom 8.15

d. "another" Paraclete - John 14.16 (Gk. "ALLOS"),  
 meaning "one just like me" (contra Gk. "HETEROS")

2. The Spirit has DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

a. The Spirit is OMNISCIENT - 1 Cor 2.11,12

b. The Spirit is OMNIPRESENT - Psa 139.7

c. The Spirit is OMNIPOTENT - Job 33.4, Zech 4.6

d. The Spirit is TRUTH - 1 John 5.6b (cf. John 14.6)

e. The Spirit is HOLY - Luke 11.13

f. The Spirit GIVES LIFE - Rom 8.2,11

g. The Spirit of WISDOM - Isaiah 40.13

3. The Spirit performs DIVINE ACTIONS

a. Creation - Gen 1.2, Job 26.13, 27.3, Psa 33.6, 104.30

b. Inspiration - 2 Pet 1.21, 2 Tim 3.16

c. Incarnation - Luke 1.35

d. Regeneration - John 3.5,6

e. Sanctification - 2 Thess 2.13

f. Resurrection - Rom 8.11, 1 Tim 3.16

4. The Spirit has DIVINE ASSOCIATIONS(the Father & the Son)

a. Baptism - Matt 28.19 ("Name" is singular)

b. Benediction - 2 Cor 13.14

C. PROCESSION of the Spirit, from the Father and the Son

1. The Spirit has been in ETERNAL PROCESSION from eternity, John 15.26  
"who proceeds from the Father"

2. Pentecost was the HISTORICAL EVENT of His procession

John 7.39 "the Spirit had NOT BEEN GIVEN, because Jesus was not yet glorified"

Acts 2.33 "promise of the Holy Spirit, he has POURED OUT this which you see and hear"

3. Regeneration is the PERSONAL EXPERIENCE/APPLICATION of His procession

Rom 8.9 "the Spirit of God DWELLS in you"

Gal 4.6 "God HAS SENT the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying 'Abba! Father!'"

#### IV. The Triune God of the New Testament

- A. NT Texts where DELIBERATE TRINITARIAN FORMULA is used
1. Matt 28.19 - Baptism; 3 persons, 1 name
  2. 2 Cor 13.14 - Benediction
  3. Rev 1.4,5 - Greeting
- B. NT Texts structured in a TRIADIC FORM, implicit trinity
1. 1 Cor 12.3-6 - gifts of the Church
  2. Eph 1.3-14 - praise to Father, Son, and Spirit
  3. Eph 3.14-19 - prayer to the Godhead
  4. Eph 4.4-6 - unity in the Church
  5. 2 Thess 2.13,14 - Godhead in the salvation process
  6. 1 Pet 1.2 - new life through Triune God
  7. Tit 3.4-6 - three-fold work of salvation
  8. Jude 20,21 - true faith in the triune God
- C. Three Persons MENTIONED TOGETHER, without triadic structure
1. Matt 12.28
  2. Mark 1.10,11
  3. Luke 1.35, 3.22
  4. John 1.33,34, 20.21,22
  5. Acts 2.33,38,39
  6. Rom 8.11, 15.16,30
  7. 2 Cor 1.21,22
  8. Gal 4.6
  9. Eph 2.18
  10. 1 John 4.13,14
- D. RELATIONS BETWEEN the three persons of the Trinity
1. John 14.16 - Son prays to the Father who sends the Spirit
  2. John 14.26 - Spirit sent by Father in Son's name, Spirit reminds apostles of Son's words
  3. John 15.26 - Spirit sent by the Son from the Father, proceeds from the Father, witnesses to Son

4. John 16. 15 - Son has all Father has, declared by Spirit

E. God Remains the Same, in Scripture and throughout Eternity

1. IMMUTABLE (unchanging), Num 23.19; Mai 3.6; Jam 1.17

a. PROGRESSIVE REVELATION tells us more and more about God and His works, who He is and what He does

b. Change is not IN God Himself, but in OUR UNDERSTANDING

2. INDIVISIBLE (one in essence), Ex 3.14; John 8.58; Heb 13.8

a. FULLNESS of deity is in each "person" of the Trinity

b. Father, Son, and Spirit are each FULLY GOD, YET ONE

3. INFINITE (unlimited), 1 Kings 8.27; Psa 90.2

a. God is BOTH TRANSCENDENT and IMMANENT - Jer 23.23,24

b. INCARNATION is NOT LIMITATION to God the Son

F. Summary of Biblical Material

1. The revelation of a divine Son and divine Spirit forced the concept of Trinity upon the Church.

2. NT writers declared the doctrine openly and saw little need to defend it or elaborate upon it; God the Father, Revealed in Christ, Present in the Holy Spirit.

3. The doctrine is not optional, it is central to being a disciple of the living God; this is who He is.

4. NT emphasizes function of each member, rather than their relationships or their "being"; focusing especially on Jesus' soteriological and eschatological work.

5. The NT picture of Christ combines a multifaceted difference within a broad unity, not rival Christologies.

6. The doctrine is best understood relationally or experientially, this is the God with whom we have to do; the Father who loves, the Son who redeems, the Spirit who sanctifies

## V. Historical Survey of the Doctrine of the Trinity

### A. Early Church to Nicea (325)

1. Earliest writings merely employed three-fold language without much detailed elaboration or explanation. Occasional confusion in expression; (Ex. of the status of Son and Spirit in "The Shepherd of Hermas")
2. Earliest Defenses - 2nd century Apologists
  - a. ATHENAGORAS - defends the doctrine as an ESSENTIAL part of the Church's faith ("Supplication", ca. 177)
  - b. JUSTIN MARTYR - argued that worship of Jesus Christ is CONSISTENT with MONOTHEISM ("Dialogue with Trypho" after 151), yet he suspiciously calls the LOGOS (identified w/Jesus) "a second God in number"
  - c. THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH - called God, Logos, and Sophia (wisdom) as a "TRIAD" ("To Autolycus" after 180)
3. TERTULLIAN (fl.ca. 196-212)
  - a. Followed Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus
  - b. Fixed Latin (Western) Trinitarian vocabulary; e.g. "one trinity", "one substance", "three persons"
  - c. Refuted MONIST heresies ("Against Praxeas")
    - 1) Directed against 2nd cent. MONARCHIANISM - e.g. Stated that God was exactly one person only, a kingdom has only one monarch, one divine person
    - 2) PATRIPASSIANISM - e.g. the Father suffers in the flesh as Jesus Christ
    - 3) T. describes a "delegated rule" of the Trinity
  - d. Emphasized ECONOMIC Trinity, formulations set within the works of creation and redemption; reflects the Latin world's practicality and functional thinking
4. Developments in ALEXANDRIA (Eastern Church), great center of intellectualism, famous Library, University, philology
  - a. CLEMENT of Alexandria (ca. 150-215), brilliant philosopher, converted, became leading Churchman
    - 1) Sympathetic use of Greek philosophy, speculative, deliberate lack of a theological system
    - 2) Use of allegory, Christians are "true Gnostics"
    - 3) Frequent use of Trinitarian formula, without a clear definition of the nature of Trinity

- 4) DOCETIC (def. "appears", "seems") elements in his Christology, Jesus was not a REAL HUMAN, as we are

b. ORIGEN (ca. 185-254) exegete, Churchman, philosopher

- 1) Ideas were a mix of Christianity & Platonism
- 2) His thoughts were the fount of Greek (Eastern) concepts of the Trinity, brilliant thinker
- 3) Credited as the source for BOTH orthodox & Arians
- 4) Unity and goodness of God, freedom of his creatures
- 5) Son is co-eternal; eternally generated by Father; who is union of LOGOS and a human body
- 6) Son is dependent and subordinate to the Father
- 7) Relation of Holy Spirit to Son and Father unclear

c. DIONYSIUS the Great (d. 264/5)

- 1) Opponent of MODALISM (Sabellianism); e.g. that the ONE GOD is also ONE PERSON who appeared in 3 modes at different times; first Father, then Son, lastly as the Holy Spirit; God as "single monad"
- 2) Yet his correction lead to an OVER-EMPHASIS on the DISTINCTION of the persons at the expense of unity
- 3) Credited with the famous descriptive terms of SON: HOMOIOUSION - SAME substance (as the Father) HOMOIOUSION - SIMILAR substance (as the Father)

d. ARIUS (ca. 250-336) eloquent Presbyter in Alexandria

- 1) Dismissed by his Bishop (Alexander d. 328) for false teaching, e.g. "Son has not always existed"
- 2) Had many followers, even Bishops outside Egypt, incl. EUSEBIUS of Nicomedia (d.ca.342)
- 3) Emphasized absolute uniqueness and distinctness of God, "alone unbegun, ingenerate, everlasting.."
- 4) God could not possibly communicate His essence to another, great gulf between Creator/creature
- 5) Supreme Being is God the Father, not the Triune
- 6) Son was a being created by Father's will & power, created especially as servant in work of creation
- 7) As a creature, Son was liable to change & sin, though- He resisted all temptations, thus God gave Him special honor above all other creatures.

8) Despite being banned at Nicea (325) Arianism survived and even flourished (esp 350-378).

e. ATHANASIUS (ca. 297-373) devoted deacon, champion of "orthodoxy", then Bp. of Alexandria for 46 years, (17 of the years in 5 different exiles)

- 1) Central to his theology was the INCARNATION of Jesus e.g. "On the Incarnation" ca. 318
- 2) Wrote "Against the Arians" seeing their doctrines as a serious threat to the very life of the church
- 3) Interaction with Arianism forced him to develop his understanding of the TRINITY.
- 4) Believed concept of HOMOIOUSION (the Son is "one substance" with the Father) was a "pointer" or a "precise declaration" to better understanding the Godhead; if the Son were NOT FULLY GOD, to him it followed that HE COULD NOT SAVE US.
- 5) His "Letters Concerning the Holy Spirit" develop more fully the members of the Godhead in their relations to each other and to the world.

#### 5. The First Council of Nicea (325)

- a. Called by Emperor Constantine to end theological schism which caused DISUNITY IN THE EMPIRE
- b. State funded meeting of 300 widely representative Bps.
- c. ARIUS made an eloquent presentation of his position which INCREASED the NUMBER OF HIS SUPPORTERS
- d. ALEXANDER and ATHANASIUS strongly refuted Arius
- e. Results of Nicea
  - 1) Formal Rejection of Arianism; Son is NOT SUBORDINATE; both Father & Son are immutable and eternal
  - 2) Creedal affirmation was AMBIGUOUS; generally anti-Arian; yet each side later claimed a victory due to INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION, mutual misunderstanding
    - a. Son: "..very God of very God, begotten not made"
    - b. Son was said to be HOMOIOUSIOS with the Father
    - c. Use of this term increased the controversy, did same substance also mean same being? e.g. modalism
    - d. "Nicene Creed" is NICENO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN Creed; edited and enlarged at Constantinople (381), (some scholars doubt this tradition/explanation)

3) Church ACCEPTS the PARADOX of 3 and 1 in Godhead

4) Role of Philosophy in Theology

a. Denial of philosophical concept of God

b. Language and concepts of philosophy are retained and used for theological understanding

c. Can words be used w/out philosophical overtones?

5) Neither theological, nor political, unity resulted

f. Issues which were left unresolved by Nicea:

1) The personhood and deity of the HOLY SPIRIT

2) RELATION of the divine persons to each other

3) Image of Jesus in the Gospels, i.e. the "God-man"

## B. Fourth and Fifth Century Trinitarianism

1. Major focus: Who is Jesus Christ?

a. How was the Son of God pre-existent, incarnate, then returned to the Father's glory?

b. VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS: Johannine, Neo-Platonic, etc.

c. Son is SIMPLY GOD HIMSELF; not a part of God, or a second deity, FULLNESS OF DEITY DWELLS IN HIM

2. DEITY of the HOLY SPIRIT DEFENDED

a. "PNEUMATOMACHIANS" ("Spirit-fighters"), MACEDONIANS (Macedonius, Bp of Constantinople, 342-360), and EUSEBIUS of CAESAREA (ca. 265-339) said Spirit was "THIRD RANK", created first by Father & Son; THESE ALL DENIED DEITY.

b. Defended by Athanasius; and three CAPPADOCIAN FATHERS

1) BASIL of CAESAREA (ca. 329-379) whose carefully worded "On the Holy Spirit" indirectly affirms deity but not dogmatically, fearing political opposition

2) GREGORY of NAZIANZUS (ca. 329-390) makes bolder statement that Spirit is GOD and CONSUBSTANTIAL with the Father, He PROCEEDS ("Theological Orations" 380)

3) GREGORY of NYSSA (ca. 335-395), brother of Basil, countered TRITHEISM (three gods) by emphasizing BOTH the UNITY (common "ousia") and DISTINCTIVENESS (of the three "hypostaseis"), sought to express BALANCE ("That We Should Not Think of Saying There Are Three Gods")

3. AUGUSTINE'S (354-430) Definitive Formulation; greatest of Latin theologians, Bp. of Hippo, North Africa, esp. his "On the Trinity" (399-419) longest (greatest?) of period
  - a. Wrote as a quest of faith, no pressure of controversy
  - b. God is one nature or essence ("the thing itself that God is") exemplified by the one trinity
  - c. A unity of will, "society of love", each is living
  - d. Distinguished according to GENERATION & PROCESSION
  - e. Used NEO-PLATONIC ideas to give ANALOGIES; e.g. soul, mind, and will united in one person
  - f. Trinity is meeting pt. of THEOLOGY, WORSHIP, HOLINESS
4. Development of Western (Latin) & Eastern (Greek.) Ideas
  - a. DIFFERENCES in emphasis and expression
    - 1) PROBLEM: Greeks saw the divine threeness as a given, and the oneness was a problem or mystery, Latins looked at it the other way around
    - 2) ANALOGIES: Greeks preferred social analogies, Latins favored psychological analogies
    - 3) INFLUENCES: Eastern theories (esp. Cappadocians) show less monist-tending pressure from Neo-Platonic doctrine of simplicity
  - b. MAJOR SIMILARITIES (contrary to HARNACK's analysis)
    - 1) Both countered the same basic heresies; MONISM (e.g. Modalism or Sabellianism) and PLURALISM (e.g. Arianism, became standard tritheist heresy)
    - 2) Although terminology varied greatly (due to languages, cultures, and philosophies) most agreed that ONE GOD is UNDIVIDEDLY PRESENT IN THREE
  - c. Importance of BALANCED TEACHING; (diagram)
5. Ecumenical Councils
  - a. The First Council of Constantinople (381)
    - 1) Arius was defeated and deposed at Nicea (325), but his ideas were not; Arius had popular support, the weight of traditional ideas, and Bible proof-texts
      - a) Constantine sought a COMPROMISE with Arius (332)
      - b) Arianism then had the almost unbroken support of the Empire until 381, Athanasius often exiled
    - 2) Many Church leaders saw Holy Spirit as SUBORDINATE
    - 3) 186 Bps. of the EAST met to RESTATE faith of NICEA

4) 150 AFFIRMED ORTHODOXY, led by Athanasius & Cappadocians

5) Tradition says that revised "Nicene Creed" was result, creed affirmed by other councils & church today

6) Arian believers were EXILED to ARABIA and ASIA, i.e. NESTORIANS

b. Council of Ephesus (431)

1) Condemned the Christology of Bp. NESTORIUS (d. 451) who was Patriarch of Constantinople, yet question of his "unorthodoxy" has long persisted

2) Condemnation was result of vindictiveness of CYRIL (375-444) of Alexandria, distinguished theologian

3) Council decreed that Creed of Nicea should never be changed, ending the "age of creed writing"

c. The Council of Chalcedon (451)

1) Condemned the Christology of EUTYCHES (ca. 378-454)

2) Council's DEFINITION perhaps the most significant Christological statement in the history of Church, Jesus Christ ONE DIVINE PERSON, TWO NATURES

3) Churches of Egypt & Syria rejected this and the MONOPHYSITE (ONE NATURE) schism resulted

6. ATHANASIAN CREED ("Quicumque vult" whosoever will)

a. Ascribed to Athanasius for its' ORTHODOX AFFIRMATIONS

b. Written by UNKNOWN author in Southern Gaul, mid-5th C. a follower of AUGUSTINE, as it reflecting his writings

c. Clear, concise statement of doct. of Trinity, detailed THEOLOGICAL EXPOSITION in the form of a CANTICLE

d. Received by Western Church, Rejected by Eastern Church

e. States that REJECTION of orthodox view of Trinity is DAMNABLE HERESY; making it UNPOPULAR among LIBERALS.

f. Doctrine of TRINITY same as Nicene & Constantinopolitan creeds, yet DEVELOPED MORE and EXPANDED FURTHER

g. Anglican Book of Common Prayer requires this Creed by read 13 times annually in worship services of Anglican Churches

C. Medieval Theories of the Trinity

1. AFFIRMATION of AUGUSTINE's teaching by WESTERN CHURCH

- a. BOETHIUS (ca. 480-524) statesman, Christian philosopher compressed Augustine's views; ONENESS is determined by God's SIMPLICITY, DISTINCTIONS are RELATIVE. The names Father, Son, Spirit are SELF-REVELATIONS of the DIVINE ESSENCE ("thing") ("De sancta trinitate")
- b. Council of TOLEDO (Constantinople III, 680) shows Augustine's influence on the FILIOQUE controversy; Father is LOVER, Son HIS BELOVED, Spirit THEIR LOVE
- c. 12th & 13th C. apex of West's Augustinian Trinitarianism
  - 1) Great 12th C. fascination with idea of MYSTICAL LOVE, (cf. Bernhard of Clairvaux)
  - 2) RICHARD OF ST. VICTOR (ca. 1123-1173) expanded the love analogy, "In order for charity to be true, it demands a plurality of persons; in order for charity to be perfected, it requires a trinity of persons" ("De trinitate") INCOMMUNICABLE EXISTENCES of ONE DIVINE ESSENCE

## 2. THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274) Dominican theologian/philosopher

- a. Most INFLUENTIAL theologian of the MEDIEVAL Church
- b. Emphasized DIVINE ONENESS, trinitarian distinctions as SELF-RELATIONAL; e.g. the SIMPLICITY of God's being
- c. Saw 3 SUBSISTENCES (or persons) in God, relationally distinguished by 2 movements, GENERATION & PROCESSION, explained by him as divine acts of understanding and willing, or of Word and Love
- d. Influenced FOURTH LATERAN COUNCIL (1215): "in God there is ONE highest, incomprehensible and ineffable thing" and "each of the 3 Persons is the thing"
- e. Best known of his many works: "Summa Theologica"

## D. Modern Trinitarianism

### 1. The REFORMATION

- a. BASIC AGREEMENT with the orthodox (Western) position as it had been handed down by Councils, Creeds
- b. JOHN CALVIN (1509-1564) Greatest theologian of Reformation
  - 1) Criticized the WIDE USE of TECHNICAL TERMS by medieval theologians, yet used both "trinity" & "person"
  - 2) Followed ANSELM's (1033-1109) stress on explaining the WORK of the VARIOUS MEMBERS of the Trinity, e.g. the Son's ATONEMENT; Reformers work's explored in great depth Work of Son, Spirit; FRESH INSIGHTS
- c. Reformation CONFESSIONS OF FAITH; e.g. Heidelberg, Dordt, Westminster, AFFIRM ORTHODOX TEACHINGS

## 2. The ENLIGHTENMENT

- a. Great emphasis on HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, INSIGHTS; e.g. DEISM, SOCINIANISM, EMPIRICISM, RATIONALISM
- b. Little TOLERANCE of doctrines (like Trinity) based solely on AUTHORITARIAN Biblical revelation as taught by councils of the Church
- c. No apparent value/application to PRACTICAL LIVING, Ethics
- d. Rise of UNITARIANISM (stress oneness of God and deny divinity of Jesus and the Spirit), MODERN ARIANISM

## 3. Modern TRINITARIAN REDUCTIONISM (19th Century)

- a. Rise of BIBLICAL CRITICISM, lost Scriptural authority
- b. Influence of Immanuel KANT (1724-1804), Prof. of LOGIC
  - 1) Ideas united two dominant philosophical traditions, British EMPIRICISM & Continental RATIONALISM
  - 2) Believed it IMPOSSIBLE to KNOW THINGS IN THEMSELVES
  - 3) Even (especially?) GOD IS UNKNOWABLE, at best we may study MAN'S RELIGIOUS STATES/EXPRESSION
- c. SCHLIERMACHER (1768-1834), founder of LIBERAL Protestantism
  - 1) Greatly influenced by Kant and PLATO
  - 2) Piety began with "FEELING OF ABSOLUTE DEPENDENCE"
  - 3) In his "The Christian Faith", TRINITY is put in an APPENDIX, saying all talk of distinctions in God is "speculation divorced from piety"
  - 4) Theology can only be EMPIRICAL "non-deductive;" so studied "the immediate utterances of the religious self-consciousness" rather than BIBLE PROPOSITIONS
  - 5) Was great INFLUENCE on German liberal Protestants: Strauss, Ritschl, Harnack, Herrmann, Haring; and British/American UNITARIANISM & MODALISM: Channing, Brown, Martineau, Bushnell, Clarke
  - 6) Criticized strongly by Barth; revival of his ideas and influence today, esp. in Germany

## 4. Modern Day REVIVAL of TRINITARIANISM

- a. Karl BARTH (1886-1968) great NEO-ORTHODOX theologian
  - 1) Strong OPPONENT of 19th C. EMPIRICISM as "man curved in on himself," emphasized GOD IN JESUS CHRIST

- 2) TRINITY was central core of his massive work, "Church Dogmatics"; God as Creator, Reconciler, & Redeemer; Revealer, revelation, revealedness
- 3) Believed the WORD OF GOD was PRINCIPLE of theology
- 4) Criticized term "person" preferred "modes of being"
- 5) Accused of MONISM saying God is "the one who is not only I but also I and Thou" in relation to self
- 6) Major trinitarian theorist of 20th cent

b. Other 20th C. Presentations

- 1) Restatement of the doctrine in DIFFERENT WAYS
  - a) Roman Catholic - Karl RAHNER, Bernard LONERGAN
  - b) Protestant - Jurgen MOLTSMANN, Eberhard JUNGEL
  - c) Orthodox - Vladimir LOSSKY, Dumitru STANILOAE
- 2) Other important 20th C. Theories
  - a) TRANSCENDENTAL THOMISM (K. Rahner)
  - b) PROCESS THOUGHT (N. Pittenger, J. Bracken)
  - c) Theology of SUFFERING LOVE (E. Jungel, J.M. Lochman, H. Muhlen, J.L. Segundo)
  - d) ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY (D. Brown)
- 3) Recent theories can be group around MONIST-tending (like Barth who had difficulty with the threeness) or TRITHEIST-tending (social-trinitarianism which has difficulty with the oneness); emphasis as old as AUGUSTINE and the CAPPADOCIANS
- 4) Revival of FILIOQUE discussions, esp.in ECUMINISM

E. SUMMARY: Historical Development of Doctrine of the Trinity

1. BIBLICAL Basis of the Doctrine's DEVELOPMENT

- a. DEBATABLE as to HOW FULLY the doctrine is developed by the writers of the N.T.; extent of their understanding
- b. Yet Scripture is always the BASIS OF APPEAL, for all the different viewpoints; seen as the RULE OF FAITH; whether it is interpreted correctly or not is debated
- c. Thus Good Theologians are NOT INITIATORS but EXEGETES

2. Charges and Counter-Charges: Orthodoxy and Heresy

- a. GOOD INTENTIONS are NOT ENOUGH

- 1) Most "heretics" were/are WELL MEANING; sincerely trying to understand and present "the truth"
- 2) Theologians examined BIBLICAL FIDELITY of the TEACHINGS of people; not their character, life
- 3) Even respected leaders who PROMOTED ERROR were considered HERETICS e.g. "deliberate denial of revealed truth, coupled with acceptance of error"
- 4) IMPRECISE FORMULATIONS are found even in the works of early church "heroes" e.g. Martyr, Origen & others

b. RIGHT DOCTRINE ("orthodoxy") is NOT ENOUGH

- 1) Our God is a God of TRUTH AND LOVE; Eph 4. 15
- 2) SCHISM e.g. "lack of love, factious spirit, division" is as DISPLEASING to God as heresy, 1 Cor 13.2
- 3) Often an OPEN, LOVING HEART is joined with a TEACHABLE SPIRIT, such a person "walks in the truth" Ex. Acts 18.24-28;(in Scripture "truth" is more than correct facts, it is RIGHTEOUS LIVING, 1 John 2.4,3.18)

c. LIFE or DEATH issue concerning ALL OF SOCIETY

- 1) Arian/Athanasian debates were MAJOR TOPICS in many- areas, esp. city of Alexandria, among COMMON PEOPLE
- 2) Several Councils had the BACKING OF THE EMPIRE
- 3) ORTHODOXY was seen as the "ONLY WAY OF SALVATION"
  - a) Heresy Charges implied ETERNAL DAMNATION
  - b) ATHANASIAN CREED invoked damnation on opponents
  - c) Some impenitent heretics were executed

3. EMERGING CONSENSUS of COMMON UNDERSTANDING of the Trinity

a. Despite DIFFERENCES of language, culture, philosophy, denomination, etc. ORTHODOX AGREEMENT prevailed after several centuries of STRUGGLE

b. ONE GOD, THREE PERSONS gained widespread affirmation

c. Reasons for this agreement:

- 1) POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY - no doubt the pressure of exile and military force forged at least some kind of agreement, at least externally, for some time
- 2) FORCEFUL TEACHING - most students imitate teachers, so what is in fashion is passed on to others

3) WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - FAITH CONVICTON that the God of Scripture is also the God of History, as He REVEALED the truth, He also PRESERVES the truth

## VI. Definitions of Trinitarian Words and Concepts

### A. Use of EXTRA-BIBLICAL words in Theology

1. OPPOSED by some groups, e.g. Arians, Anabaptists, Arminians, & Jehovah's Witnesses
2. Scripture is NOT to be PARROTED, but its truths DIGESTED in our own minds and EXPRESSED in our OWN WORDS
3. Jesus & Apostles quoted O.T. exactly but also added their own REASONING and CONCLUSIONS based upon these words.
4. Bible is not theology text, but the SOURCE BOOK of theology 5. Theology provides a BRIDGE between the written Scriptures and the contemporary world, so that the truth of Bible may be clearly & relevantly taught and defended.

### B. Definitions of the Trinity

1. The Thirty-Nine Articles, 1571 - I. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

2. Westminster Confession of Faith, 1646, Chapter II, Of God, and of the Holy Trinity

I. There is but one only, living, and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; and withal, most just, and terrible in His judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

II. God has all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He has made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them. He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; and has most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever Himself pleases. In His sight all things are open and manifest, His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent, or uncertain. He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works, and in all His commands. To Him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience He is pleased to require of them.

III. In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.

### 3. Heidelberg Catechism, 1563

Question 24. How are these articles divided?

Answer: Into three parts; the first is of God the Father, and our creation; the second of God the Son, and our redemption; the third of God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification.

Question 25. Since there is but one only divine essence, (a) why speakest thou of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

Answer: Because God has so revealed himself in his word, (b) that these three distinct persons are the one only true and eternal God.

### C. Key Trinitarian Words / Definitions

#### 1. Area of Great Difficulty in Explaining the Doctrine

##### a. Different Languages

- 1) Lack of EXACT SYNONYMS between any two languages
- 2) Grey areas of language "OVER-LAP"

Ex: Gk. wd. "upostaseis" may mean; supports, ambush, sediment, duration, origin, plan, foundation, confidence, or wealth.

##### 3) "Orthodox" Definition of Trinity

- a) English: one substance, three persons
- b) Greek: one reality, three substances

##### b. Different Philosophies

- 1) PLATO - believed there were THREE SUPREME PRINCIPLES (but these did NOT form a single being)
- 2) "the one and the many"; problem of UNITY & DIVERSITY Plato spoke of the one mind, with many ideas
- 3) Augustine was influenced by NEO-PLATONISM

##### c. Different Theologies

- 1) JEROME translated Gk. wd. "metanoeo" (repentance); "do penance" in the Latin Vulgate.
- 2) Arius said, Jesus is "God" and "Son of God" AND that he "was created" and "had a beginning"
- 3) Quran states: "They are unbelievers who say 'God is the third of three'; No God is there but one God" (Sura 5.78)
- 4) Problem of MEANING and USE OF LANGUAGE in theology

## 2. "Person"

### a. Terms

- 1) Greek - "upostasis"
- 2) Latin - "persona"

### b. Reasons for Using the Term: "Person"

- 1) East - contradicts Sabellian, modalistic concepts
- 2) West - contradicts Arian notion of different substances, thus God's distinction is in His persons and not His nature.

### c. Weaknesses of the Use of the Term: "Person"

- 1) Denotes separate rational & moral individual, (Latin word means MASK used by an actor in the theatre)
- 2) Suggests INDEPENDENCE of will, actions, & feelings
- 3) May imply that God is "split into three"

### d. INTENTION of the Use of Term: "Person"

- 1) DISTINCTIONS - God has three personal self-distinctions with the one divine essence, not three completely independent persons
- 2) INTER-DEPENDENCE - Each person is self-conscious and self-directing but never acts independently or in opposition to one another
- 3) God is a three-fold center of life.

## 3. "Substance"

### a. Terms

- 1) Greek - "ousia"
- 2) Latin - "essentia", "esse", or "substantia"
- 3) English - "being", "reality", or "essence"

### b. REASONS for Use of the Term: "Substance"

- 1) Need to emphasize the ONENESS of the Godhead in the context of three "persons", emphasizing the self-existence of each
- 2) West - "Substantia" sounded more familiar to Latins
- 3) East - "ousia" means "being" but was used (esp. by Origen, Athanasius, & Gregory of Nyssa) as the three persons of that being.

c. WEAKNESSES of Use of the Term: "Substance"

- 1) Suggests a material conception of God who is Spirit
- 2) Latin "substantia" indicates that which exists in itself and is the bearer of the attributes, but in God BEING AND ATTRIBUTES ARE ONE

d. INTENTION of the Use of the Term: "Substance"

- 1) Provides "definition" of who God REALLY IS; God's various attributes constitute His definition
- 2) So it is more correct to speak of "the Being who is God" and not "the being of God," His attributes reveal who he REALLY IS
- 3) Safeguards the ESSENTIAL UNITY of the Godhead
- 4) The divine essence is NOT DIVIDED into three, but fully present in each of the three Persons.

D. Mutual Relations of the Persons of the Trinity

1. "SUBORDINATION" (of the Son to the Father, of Spirit to Father and Son)

a. NEGATIONS - What the term is NOT intended to mean

- 1) NOT INFERIORITY - all three persons of the Trinity share the same divine essence, with all of its' infinite perfections
- 2) NOT POSTERIORITY - the divine essence of all three persons is SELF-EXISTENT and ETERNAL

b. What the Use of the Term IS Intended to Mean

- 1) Refers to the ROLE or FUNCTION of the Son & Spirit, different role does not imply inferiority; 1 Cor 11.3
- 2) The Father operates through the Son; John 4.34,6.38, 17.4, Heb 10.5-7
- 3) Father & Son operate through the Spirit; John 14.26, 15.26, 16.13-15, 1 Cor 2.10-12

2. "Characteristics" (Distinguishing Properties)

- a. PATERNITY - First person is characterized as FATHER in relation to the Second person
- b. FILIATION - Second person is characterized as SON in relation to the First person
- c. PROCESSION - Third person is characterized as SPIRIT in relation to First and Second persons
- d. These relations are NOT EXPLAINED in creeds, but are affirmed as the teachings of Scripture

### 3. "Intimate Union"

#### a. Terms

- 1) Greek - "perichorhsis"
- 2) Latin - "inexistentia", "inhabitatio", "intercommunio"

#### b. DEFINITION

- 1) The three persons of the Godhead have a common intelligence, will, and power; e.g. ONE MIND & WILL
- 2) Thus God does NOT have three wills, three intelligences, and three efficiencies (powers).

#### c. Biblical Assertions regarding Intimate Union

- 1) Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son John 10.38; 14.10,11; 17.21; Matt 11.27
- 2) Where the Father is, there the Son and Spirit are; John 14.23; 1 Jn 2.24; Jude 20,21; Rev 1.4,5
- 3) Joint operation of all three persons in creation and redemption; Eph 1.3-14; 2 Thes 2.13; 1 Pet 1.2

#### d. IMPLICATIONS of their Intimate Union

- 1) We may address the Triune God as A Person
- 2) We may also address EACH of the three persons separately, the three persons are one God

### 4. "Eternal Generation"

- a. Def. "It is that eternal and necessary act of the first person in the Trinity, whereby He, within the divine Being, is the ground of a second personal subsistence like His own, and puts this second person in possession of the whole divine essence, without any division, alienation, or change." L. Berkhof
- b. The PERSON, not the divine essence of the Son is generated, thereby the Father also communicates to the Son the divine essence in its entirety, so that the Son has "life in Himself" John 5.26
- c. This generation is SPIRITUAL and divine, not physical and creaturely; analogy of thinking/speaking - LOGOS
- d. The generation is ETERNAL, a timeless act in the eternal present, always continuing and ever completed
- e. It is a NECESSARY act of God, not willed by Father, a natural act which brings delight to the Father

## 5. PROCESSION of the Spirit

- a. Def. "It is that eternal and necessary act of the first and second persons of the Trinity whereby they, within the Divine Being, become the ground of the personal subsistence of the Holy Spirit, and put the third person in possession of the whole divine essence, without any division, alienation or change." L. Berkhof
- b. It is the work of BOTH the Father and Son, Jn 15.26
- c. There is NO INFERIORITY of the Spirit to Father or Son, different work does not imply inferior status.
- d. The four points (4b-e) above also apply to the Spirit

## E. Incomprehensibility

### 1. Definition

- a. Latin - "immensus" means unmeasurable
- b. English
  - 1) Loosely - "hard to understand"
  - 2) Technically - "impossible to understand", unknowable
- c. Suggested - God is incomprehensible because man as creature and sinner cannot fully know Him or His unrevealed truths. Yet we can know God as far as He reveals Himself in Scripture. Deut 29.29

### 2. Application

- a. God encourages men to seek Him because He can be known through His Word; Jer 29.13, John 5.39
- b. When we have gone as far in our knowledge of God as Scripture allows, we praise Him as incomprehensible; Isa 55.6-9, Matt 11.25,26, Rom 11.33-36

## F. Important Aspects of any Definition

- 1. The true unity, indivisibility, and simplicity of God.
- 2. A three-fold personal distinction, each with the properties of separate personalities (while remaining compatible with true unity) such as intelligence, active principles, will, and action.
- 3. Identical substance, so that the whole Godhead is truly in each person, without confusion or division, and the essence belongs alike to all three persons.
- 4. The distinction of the three persons, each by property, incommunicable from one person to another, and thus the existence of eternal relations between them.

## VII. Making the Triune God Known in our Ministry

### A. Theological Faithfulness and Precision

1. Doctrine of Trinity was developed with great care.
  - a. Three centuries of complex, vigorous debate
  - b. Many volumes of technical, precise writing
2. We must exercise similar care as we make this faith known.
  - a. The **MINISTRY OF THE WORD** is a **SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITY** Mark 9.42; 1 Tim 4.16; 2 Tim 1.13,14; James 3.1
  - b. The **PERSPICUITY** (clear meaning) of the Scriptures
    - 1) Scripture contains many complex ideas, yet its **CENTRAL MESSAGE**, of God and His Salvation, is made **OBVIOUS** to the simple reader; 2 Tim 3.15-17; 1 Cor 13.12; Matt 11.25-27; 1 John 5.13
    - 2) Different theologians may have **DIFFERENT EMPHASIS**, but the **STANDARD OF JUDGEMENT** is their **FAITHFULNESS** to the **SCRIPTURES**; 1 Tim 1.3-11; 4.1-5; 6.3-5; 2 Tim 2.24-26; 4.1-5; 2 Pet 1.12-2.22; Jude 3,4
  - c. We must **NOT SAY TOO MUCH, NOR TOO LITTLE**; Acts 20.27
  - d. It is **IMPOSSIBLE** to **EXHAUSTIVELY EXPLAIN** any of the truths of God's Word; He is God, we are sinful creatures
  - e. After **AUGUSTINE'S** extensive writings to faithfully set forth the Biblical teaching of the Trinity he said, "We use these terms, not that we may express it, but that it may not remain altogether unexpressed"

### B. The Use of Illustrations to Explain the Trinity

1. They must **NOT** be used as "**PROOF**" of the Doctrine
  - a. Trinity is given by **REVELATION** from God in His Word
  - b. Revelation is ultimately **RECEIVED BY FAITH**
2. Illustrations can show that in **OTHER AREAS** of life we recognize a kind of **TRIPPLICITY IN UNITY**
3. So concept of Trinity is **NOT ILLOGICAL**, but **TRANS-LOGICAL**
4. Various Examples of Triplicity in Unity:
  - a. **SUN** - light, heat, radiance
  - b. **FOUNTAIN** - various jets of water
  - c. **PLANT** - root, stem, flower

- d. SOUL - mind, will, emotions
- e. WATER - liquid, ice, steam
- f. MAN - husband, father, brother

5. DANGERS risked by the use of illustrations.

- a. Purpose of the ministry of the Word may become confused; Scriptures were written so that we might believe unto Salvation, not merely be intellectually convinced; it is possible to know the facts & be lost.
- b. No FINITE example can adequately express INFINITE God.
- c. CARELESS use may depreciate Trinity to TRIVIALITY.
- d. Goal of the ministry may become reversed; man is not to judge God and His Word; We PROCLAIM GOD who will JUDGE BY HIS WORD; all mankind will face the Triune God.
- e. Responsibility of the Christian witness is to PROCLAIM the Biblical message, trusting that God will CONVINCe

C. Trinity is the BASIS of God's Relationship With Man

1. Fellowship and Love

- a. Within the Trinity itself is an ETERNAL EXPRESSION of fellowship and love.
- b. Their relation is COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT of creation
- c. God is the TRULY LIVING ONE, never stagnant or passive
- d. God is the SOURCE of FULLNESS OF LIFE within Himself
- e. This life is REFLECTED even in fallen human societies: unity and diversity seen in family, society, & Church
- f. SALVATION is unto an eternal, abundant LIFE; entering into the perfect love and fellowship of the Trinity for all eternity.
- g. BAPTISM is into this Triune Name; symbol of life.

2. Revelation of the Trinity

- a. Within the Godhead there is ETERNAL SELF-COMMUNICATION
- b. Word of self-communication is True, Powerful, Eternal
- c. As God speaks to Himself, He also can REVEAL HIMSELF to man, our God is a SPEAKING GOD.
- d. His message remains true, powerful, & eternal; SPEECH is an ATTRIBUTE of God; Ps 29.3-9; Isa 55.10,11; Mk 13.31

### 3. Prayer and Praise

- a. Through Christ we ENTER INTO the fellowship of the Trinity; Matt 11.27; John 14.23
- b. Being "in Christ" gives POWER & AUTHORITY in prayer; John 16.23,24; Eph 1.19; 2.4-7; Jude 20
- c. This can be a moving, mystical, even frightening experience; Acts 4.31; Eph 3.14-19; Rev 1.17; 15.3,4

### D. Presenting the Trinity to AFRICANS

#### 1. Emphasize BIBLICAL TEACHING

- a. Africans have a great RESPECT for the BIBLE as the Word of God, this is a GREAT ADVANTAGE/OPPORTUNITY
- b. PRIMARY TASK is to show that it is a BIBLICAL DOCTRINE
- c. Trinity is GOD'S UNIVERSAL TRUTH, not the unique view of any one people/culture, not "foreign" to Africans

#### 2. Avoid PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATION and unnecessary ARGUMENTS

- a. Africans are much more concerned about PRACTICAL LIVING most are struggling merely to survive
- b. What difference does the Trinity make in their lives?
- c. Promote harmony and unity, emphasize the positive truth
- d. Many of our "proofs" or "illustrations" are IRRELEVANT

#### 3. Similar Concepts within African Traditional Religion

- a. These can show that the doctrine is not "foreign" and even has some SIMILAR FEATURES with various tribal ideas; reveals God's creation design, Image of God
- b. Yet BASIS for doctrine is BIBLICAL REVELATION not ATR
- c. Several African religions believe in the UNITY of God • who performs a PLURALITY of functions

1)"One who saves, watcher of everything, one with the long ears, central roof-pole, great eye, he who is everywhere, chief, he who bends down even majesties, he who roars so that nations are struck with terror, ruler, one who clears the forest, restorer, one with the very long arms, the unknown, fire-lighter, everlasting one of the forest, thunderer, marvel of marvels, pure king, sky, owner of all things, immovable rock that never dies, protector, winnower, benefactor, wise one, one stronger than an army, educator, insatiable one, one without equal, one who needs nobody, the faithful one, mother chicken, herder, friend in this village, healer, elephant, great mother, and many more such titles" by Charles Nyamiti quoting Fr. A. Shorter

- 2) John Mbiti says the LUGBARA have a concept of God as both TRANSCENDENT and IMMANENT, "one but many"

d. The role of INDIVIDUALS in COMMUNITY

- 1) The African individual is always related to his community; tribe, clan, elders
- 2) John Mbiti: The GANDA say that in beginning there was only God and his 2 sons

e. Concept of the FAMILY in Africa

- 1) Basic family is Father, Mother, child; "real family"
- 2) Can present a HUMAN ILLUSTRATION of divine reality

f. World of Creation and NATURE, African awareness

- 1) TIME - past, present, future
- 2) LIVING THINGS - vegetative, sensitive, rational
- 3) SOLID MATTER - length, breadth, width
- 4) SOUND - intensity, pitch, quality

g. Three Basic Components of ATR: (cf. Richard Gehman)

- 1) the Supreme Being
- 2) mystical powers
- 3) the spirit world

Can these point to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

4. "An African Creed"

We believe in the one High God, who out of love created the beautiful world and everything good in it. He created man and wanted man to be happy in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the earth. We have known this High God in the darkness, and now we know him in the light. God promised in the book of his word, the Bible, that he would save the world •and all the nations and tribes.

We believe that God made good his promise by sending his son, Jesus Christ, a man in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and man, showing that the meaning of religion is love. He was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died. He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from the grave. He ascended to the skies. He is the Lord.

We believe that all of our sins are forgiven through him. All who have faith in him must be sorry for their sins, be baptized in the Holy Spirit of God, live the rules of love and share the bread together in love, to announce the good news to others until Jesus comes again. We are waiting for him. He is alive. He lives. This we believe. Amen.

-written by Fr. Vincent Donovan as he worked among the Masai of Tanzania, found in his book "Rediscovering Christianity" (Orbis)

## E. Sharing the Doctrine of the Trinity with MUSLIMS

1. Trinity is a REVEALED doctrine believed only by FAITH
  - a. Only God Himself can CONVINCED any person
  - b. Yet Christians are called to REASON and UNDERSTAND, not blind, unquestioning submission: Eph 1.18,3.18-20
2. Make clear that we DO NOT BELIEVE in:
  - a. Three Gods; we are also MONOTHEISTS
  - b. A “sexual” Trinity consisting of God - Jesus – Mary
  - c. A God that we can COMPLETELY EXPLAIN and UNDERSTAND
  - d. A doctrine that we believe blindly without using our critical/investigative faculties; rather, we seek to love God with our mind, thinking His thoughts after Him
  - e. These, and other false concepts, are what Muslims hear Christians saying, or said in the past by Christians
3. We believe that GOD IS GREAT!
  - a. We DO NOT KNOW Him in His FULLNESS, exhaustively
  - b. 99 Names only begin to explain how great He is
  - c. Our INTENTION is KNOW Him so that we might submit and follow in the way He leads, not to win arguments
4. Explore what the Quran says about the WORD and the SPIRIT
  - a. 'Isa as WORD in the Quran:
 

"(And remember) when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! Allah giveth thee glad tidings of a WORD from him, whose name is Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary" Q 3.45-48, cf. 3.59, 4.171

    - 1) Traditional Muslim interpretation says that Jesus is the Word in the sense that He was CREATED BY the Word
    - 2) Another Muslim scholar (Razi) says He was the FULFILLMENT of the Word spoken by the Prophets
    - 3) Muslims do NOT interpret title like John 1.1,14; 1 John 1. 1,10, and Rev 19. 13; yet many Muslims have intrigued to consider these texts and their meaning
  - b. 'Isa and the WORD in the Quran
    - 1) He speaks table down from Heaven: Q 5.114/Mk 6.30-44
    - 2) He CREATES a bird from clay, who is CREATOR? Q 3.49
    - 3) He HEALS leper & blind and RAISES the dead: Q 3.49

4) Yet only Allah can forgive sins: Q 3.135

c. The HOLY SPIRIT in the Quran

1) Mentioned three times in the Quran

a) the inspiring agent of the Quran

b) mentioned 2X as the divine power which aided Jesus

2) Muslims confuse Holy Spirit with angel Gabriel

d. Response of St. John of Damascus (De Haeresibus, 7th C)

"Since you say that Christ is the Word of God and the Spirit, how is it that you revile us as Hetairiastai (Associators)? For the Word and the Spirit are not separated from the one in whom they are by nature. If therefore His Word is in God, it is evident that the Word is also God. But if the Word is outside of God, then according to you God is without reason and without life. And so, fearing to provide an Associator for God, you have mutilated Him. It were better for you to say that He has an Associate than to mutilate Him, and to treat Him as stone, or wood, or some insensible thing. Wherefore you speak falsely of us when you call us "Hetairiastai," but we call you "Koptai" (Mutilators) of God."

5. Quran commends the Bible for Muslims to Consider

a. "And if thou art in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto thee, then question those who read the Scripture (that was) before thee. Verily the Truth from thy Lord hath come unto thee. So be not thou of the waverers" Q 10.95 (Pickthall)

b. Other passages commend the Scriptures, cf. 4.163-165, 21.7, 32.23 ff.

c. Possession of the Scriptures by Jews and Christians was a subject of concern:  
2.75,78,113; 3.93,98; 5.43; 10.95

d. Command to believe OT/NT: 2.1-5; 5.46-48,68; 21.7; 62.5

e. Muslims warned not to reject any part of God's Message: 2.89, 136; 4.136, 150-152; 40.70-72 ; word of God cannot be changed: 6.34, 115 ff.; 10.65

f. Quran never says that the OT or NT has been corrupted, the charge is made by Muslims later

g. Muhammed sides with the Christians against the Jews: esp. Sura 2

## 6. PROVIDENCE, POWER, and PRESENCE - eager quest of Muslims:

PROVIDENCE	- maintains creation
(Father)	- superintends history
PRESENCE	- example in his incarnation
(Son)	- leads through suffering and servanthood to hope and new life
POWER	- leads to spiritual victory
(Holy Spirit)	- shows power of God through us as sign of the Kingdom

## F. The Trinity is BEST UNDERSTOOD through PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

### 1. To KNOW God the Father

- a. as CREATOR of all things; Eph 3.14,15
- b. as SUSTAINER, giver of all good gifts; James 1.17
- c. as LAWGIVER & JUDGE; Psa 51; 103.8-13; Isa 1.18
- d. as FATHER of Jesus; Eph 1.3
- e. as our own HEAVENLY FATHER; Luke 11.10-13

### 2. To KNOW God the Son

- a. as ONLY BEGOTTEN of the Father; John 1.18; 20.30,31
- b. as PROPHET, Himself God's Full & Final Word; Heb 1.1-3
- c. as PRIEST, and once for all sacrifice; Heb 9.28; 10.14
- d. as KING, Lord of all our life; Acts 10.36
- e. as EVERYTHING; Phil 1.21; 3.8-11

### 3. To KNOW God the Spirit

- a. as ACCUSER, so we might repent; John 16.8-11
- b. as NEW LIFE, so that we are born again; John 3.3,5
- c. as GUIDE into all truth; John 14.26; 15.26; 16.13-14
- d. as INTERCESSOR on our behalf; Rom 8.26
- e. as RESURRECTION for all eternity; Rom 8. 11

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