

The Doctrine of the Trinity

- I.) Preliminary considerations:
 - A.) Definition: There is only one and true God, but in the Unity of the Godhead there are three co-eternal and coequal persons. The same in substance or essence but distinct in existence.
 - B.) By the trinity we mean there are three eternal distinctions in the one divine essence known respectively as the God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
 - C.) The doctrine of the trinity is a mystery but it has been revealed in the text of Scripture.
 - D.) Scripture documents the unity and distinctions of the Godhead by associating the three Persons and uniting them under a singular name. Matt. 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,..."
- II.) The unity of God.
 - A.) The unity of God means there is but one God and that the Divine substance or essence is undivided and indivisible.
 - B.) His essence underlies His Divine attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, immutability, etc.).
 - C.) Divine essence includes:
 - 1.) Spirituality: God is not a material substance (John 4:24).
 - 2.) Self-existence: God is not dependent upon anything outside Himself for His existence (Ex. 3:14).
 - 3.) Immensity: God's infinity in relation to space. He is not limited by space. In fact all space is dependant on Him. (1 Kings 8:27, Isa. 66:1, Jer. 23:24).
 - 4.) Eternity: God's infinity in relation to time. He is the cause of time and is eternal. He is without beginning or end (Psa. 102:27, Isa. 57:15).
 - D.) Even the polytheist is not content to rest in the belief of many gods. The Greeks believed in some "supreme Fate" that ruled both gods and men.
 - E.) The existence of one true God is demonstrated in the OT (Deut. 6:4, I Kings 8:60).
 - F.) The unity of God is also seen in the N.T. (John 17:3, James 2:19, 1 Tim. 2:5)
- III.) Triunity of God
 - A.) The term "trinity", in its Greek form, *Trias*, is generally thought to have been employed by Theophilus of Antioch (d. 181 AD) and its Latin cognate, *Trinitas*, by Tertullian (d. Ca. 220 AD). However, the belief in the Trinity is much older than these dates.
 - B.) Although, the word "trinity" does not occur in the Bible, it is a legitimate descriptive aid for the reality of God.
 - C.) God is one in essence but consists of three personalities. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
 - D.) Judaism, Mohammedism, Unitarianism and modern cults fail to make this distinction.
- IV.) The Trinity in the OT:
 - A.) Plural nouns and pronouns are applied to God:

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- 1.) Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "*Let Us make* man in Our image, according to *Our likeness*; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."
 - 2.) Isaiah 48:16 "Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit."
- B.) Passages that distinguish persons within the Godhead
- 1.) The Lord is distinguished from the Lord (Psa. 110:1, Hosea 1:7).
 - 2.) The Redeemer, who must be divine, is distinguished from the Lord (Isa.59:20).
 - 3.) The Spirit is distinguished from the Lord: Isa. 48:16; 59:21; 63:9-10).
- C.) These passages clearly illustrate personal distinctions within the Godhead.
- V.) The Trinity in the NT:
- A.) God the Father is recognized as God (John 6:27, Col. 1:12, 1 Peter 1:2).
- B.) Jesus Christ is recognized as God. He claimed attributes and qualities only God possesses:
- 1.) Omnipotence (Matt. 28:18).
 - 2.) Omnipresence (Matt. 28:20).
 - 3.) All things came in to being through Him (John 1:3).
 - 4.) The ability to forgive sin (Mark 2:1-12).
- C.) The Holy Spirit is recognized as God (Acts 5:3-4).
- 1.) He regenerates people (John 3:5-6,8)
 - 2.) He possesses the attribute of omniscience (1 Cor. 2:10).
- D.) These three persons are united in one essence: Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,"
- VI.) Conclusion:
- 1.) While the word trinity or the doctrine of the Trinity is not specifically mentioned in Scripture, it is clearly revealed in the OT and the NT.
 - 2.) Even though the Trinity is a mystery, based on Scripture, we have a perfect God who is one in essence but consisting in three persons, co-equal and co-eternal (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19, 2 Cor.13:14, 1 Pet. 1:2).

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