

A Study on the Trinity

a. Theological Definition

The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith states, “The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of himself, infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself... In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, the Father, the Word or Son, and Holy Spirit, of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, yet the essence undivided: the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son; all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on him.”

b. Biblical Foundation

Even though the word “Trinity” is not found in the Bible yet the doctrine of the Trinity is found throughout the Bible. In Genesis 1:26 God says, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” Notice the word “Us” which refers to more than one person in the Godhead. Another instance of the word “Us” is in Genesis 11:7 and Isaiah 6:8. Isaiah 48:16 has a prophecy about the coming Christ. Notice the Trinity in this verse: The Son is speaking saying, “Come near to **Me**, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And

now the **Lord God** and **His Spirit** Have sent Me.” Notice all three members of the Trinity is mentioned.

The doctrine of the Trinity is clearly seen in the baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:16. The Son is being baptized; the Father giving His approval; and the Spirit descending upon Christ. In the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19, Jesus said that we are to be baptized “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Peter said we are “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:1-2). Paul say’s in His benediction, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.” (2 Cor. 13:14).

[“What is the doctrine of the Trinity?”](#) by Matt Perman of Desiring God ministries is a very excellent article on the Trinity. I recommend everyone to read it. It is found on this link: <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity>. It is very easy to read yet very profound in explaining the doctrine. The article says:

1. The Trinity is not belief in three gods. There is only one God, and we must never stray from this.
2. This one God exists as three Persons.
3. The three Persons are not each part of God, but are each fully God and equally God. Within God's one undivided being there is an unfolding into three interpersonal relationships such that there are three Persons. The distinctions within the Godhead are not distinctions of His essence and neither are they something added on to His essence, but they are the unfolding of God's one, undivided being into three interpersonal relationships such that there are three real Persons.
4. God is not one person who took three consecutive roles. That is the heresy of modalism. The Father did not become the Son and then the Holy Spirit. Instead, there have always been and always will be three distinct persons in the Godhead.
5. The Trinity is not a contradiction because God is not three in the same way that He is one. God is one in essence, three in Person.

In the article “The Deity of Christ” by Dr. Elmer Towns, Elmer states, “Everything that is true about God is true of every member of the Trinity of God. Since God has existed from eternity past (Psa. 90:2), than every member of the Trinity has existed equally as long.”

c. Practical Application

What does the doctrine of the Trinity mean to me? It is of great comfort. It means I have the three persons of the Godhead with me. I have the Father who loves me (John 3:16); I have the Son who died for me (John 3:16) and who prays for me (Heb. 7:25); and I have the Holy Spirit who empowers me (Acts 1:8) and abides with me (John 14:16).