

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

1 Peter 1:2

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...”

INTRODUCTION

-The word Trinity is not in the Bible, but the doctrine is.

-Here is indeed unfathomable depth: the Father-God, the Son-God, and the Spirit-God, not three Gods but only one, yet three persons. This is a divine mystery where one makes three and three makes one. Truly our narrow minds can no more comprehend the Trinity in Unity than a nutshell can hold all the water in the sea.

-The word “Trinity” is derived from the Latin, *Trinitas*, from the adjective *Trinus* meaning “threefold,” or “three in one.” Doubtless the terms arose from the need of a word to express the doctrine concisely. So it properly means “threefoldedness,” that is, God’s threefold manifestation. It is not, as sometimes taught, an abbreviation of *Tri-unity* which is a term belonging to the realm of metaphysics.

1. THE THREE PERSONS ARE EQUAL BUT OF ONE ESSENCE (John 14:11; 15:26; 2 Cor.3:17; Gal.4:6).

Attempts have been made to find analogies to the Trinity. Man, for example, is a threefold being, composed of spirit, soul and body (1 Thess.5:23), and then there is the hard boiled egg with the shell, soft white, and yolk. These comparisons are weak because it is impossible to describe by means of material things the profound truth concerning three persons being one God.

2. OLD TESTAMENT EVIDENCE

This doctrine is a scriptural revelation, being taught exclusively in the bible. A basis for the Trinity has been sought in the laws of thought and science, and being, but it is to the bible alone that we are indebted for the revelation of the Godhead as consisting of:

The Father, the Great Upholder and Purpose of all things.

The Son, the One and Only Redeemer of Mankind.

The Holy Spirit, the Indispensible Sanctifier and Enlightener.

-Each Person of the Godhead has His own distinct sphere of operation, yet they are found acting together in perfect unison.

-Although the mystery of the Trinity is not fully revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures, it certainly underlies the teaching of the Old Testament. The gradual unfolding of this doctrine is an example of progressive revelation.

Elohim. The divine term used at the beginning of the bible (Gen.1:1), is a plural noun used some 500 times by Moses and some 5,000 times in the NT, accompanied continually by a verb in the singular. This is a term revealing the oneness of Deity and

the plurality of the Persons of the Godhead. Further this proper noun is in the plural number, meaning more than one, and is associated with creation (Gen.1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa.6:8; Psa.2:7,12; Prov.30:4; Ez.21:10; Psa.89:27).

3. NEW TESTAMENT UNFOLDING

What is suggested by the Old Testament prophets, is revealed with greater clarity and emphasis by our Lord and His apostles.

(a) **The Deity of the Godhead.**

The names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are used both separately and together. There is also the declaration that the Father is God, that the Son is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God (John 8:54; John 1:1; Acts 5:3,4).

(b) **The Trinity in Paul's Epistles** (2 cor.13:14; 1 Thess.1:2-5; 2 Thess.2:13-14; Titus 3:4-6).

Summarizing, then, the repeated expressions of the Trinity in the bible, the Father, Son, and Spirit are set forth as one in nature, purpose, and attributes, while maintaining their separate personalities-

The Father is the first in mode of operation, the original Source of all things. "In the beginning God" (Gen.1:1). He is the Fountain Head of grace. He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph.3:14); and the loving Father of all those redeemed by the blood of His Son (1 Cor.6:17-18; 8:6; Eph.4:6; Luke 12:30, 32).

The Son is second in the process of manifestation, and the Medium of all things, even judgment (John 5:22). He came as grace personified. He appeared and died as the redeemer of mankind. It was through Him that God manifested Himself outwardly to all men (Acts 5:31; 13:38-39).

The Spirit is third, seeing His is the last revealed personality, and the One who came as the Agent transferring the blessings of the Father and the Son upon the redeemed (Eph.2:18). He shares the attributes ascribed to God and Christ (Psa.139:7; 1 Cor.2:10-11; Isa.40:13-14), and is especially the Helper and Sanctifier of the saved (1Cor.6:11; Gal.5:16). As the Channel, the Spirit communicates, applies, and seals.

The order of divine performance appears to be – *From the Father; Through the Son; By the Spirit.*

APPLICATION

1. Do you recognize the role of each member of the Trinity in your salvation (1 Pet.1:2)?
2. Have you recently loved, thanked, and worshipped the Trinity for their roles in your sanctification?

This outline was prepared by Pastor Joe Jacowitz
For more information go to www.christbiblechurch.org
Reference: Dr. Herbert Lockyer