

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Views of the Trinity****Views of the Trinity - posted by Thommy2 (), on: 2008/6/18 14:19**

The First Five listed are the Five Largest Churches in America.

WE BELIEVE...in one God who exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to this earth as Savior of the world. — Joel Osteen
http://joelosteen.lakewood.cc/site/PageServer?pagename=JOM_whatwebelieve

... As the Bible teaches, there is one God, eternally existing in three persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — each possessing all the attributes of Deity.- Willow Creek
http://www.willowcreek.org/what_we_believe.asp

There is one God. He is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He eternally exists in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and one. He is perfect in His many attributes of holiness, love, power, knowledge, justice, and mercy. — Ed Young Sr
http://www.second.org/global/our_beliefs.aspx

ABOUT GOD

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1,26,27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14 — SaddleBack Church
<http://saddleback.com/flash/believe2.html>

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and are one God. — Life Church
<http://www.lifechurch.tv/believe>

Bishop Eddie Long has the 13th biggest church in America. I cannot find a doctrinal statement on his website. I do know you don't need to agree with anything to become a member http://www.bellministries.org/docs/FH_Application.pdf
<http://www.newbirth.org/faqs.asp>

God Is Triune

There is one God: infinite, eternal, almighty, and perfect in holiness, truth, and love. In the unity of the godhead there are three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-existent, co-equal, co-eternal. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Spirit, yet each is truly Deity. One God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — is the foundation of Christian faith and life. — Sovereign Grace Ministries

<http://www.sovereigngraceministries.org/About/StatementOfFaith/Overview.aspx>

God - There is one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in three manifestations: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. — T.D. Jakes (10th Largest Church in America)
<http://www.thepottershouse.org/v2/content/view/18/32/>

Kenneth Copeland had no particulars on the Trinity
http://www.kcm.org/about/index.php?p=what_we_believe

You have to read a book for John MacArthur
http://www.gracechurch.org/home/doclib.asp?ministry_id=1&dcat=Doctrinal+Statement

Creflo Dollar has no doctrinal statement (at least I could not find one) I know in Milwaukee last year (August 2007) Creflo absolutely taught modalism. Saying, like He (Creflo) is a teacher, father, and husband God — "manifests" Himself as Father, Son, and Spirit.
<http://www.creflodollarministries.org/Public/AboutUs/Frequently-Asked-Questions.aspx>

I also could find no doctrinal statement for Benny Hinn

<http://www.bennyhinn.org/default.cfm>

We believe there is one living and true God who has revealed Himself in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, infinitely perfect and eternal in existence and equal in glory, majesty and power (Matt 28:19; Luke 3:21 -22): - Fresh Fire Ministries (Todd Bentley)

<http://www.freshfire.ca/index.php?id=106&pid=8>

We believe there is one God who lives forever in three persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19) — Toronto Blessing Folks

<http://www.tacf.org/tacforhome/howeare/ourvalues/tabid/115/Default.aspx>

Rob Bell's Church says notta on the Trinity

<http://www.marshall.org/believe/>

the Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—co-eternal in being, co-eternal in nature, co-equal in power and glory, having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14) — Marc Driscoll

<http://www.marshallchurch.org/content/DoctrinalStatement>

We believe that there is one God who is the loving Creator of all that exists, both seen and unseen. God is eternal and completely good, knowing all things, having all power and majesty. We believe God exists eternally in perfect co-equal community as three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:26-27; Deuteronomy 6:4; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:8, 2 Corinthians 13:14) — Dan Kimball; Vintage Faith Church

<http://www.vintagechurch.org/about/theology/core-beliefs/beliefs#god>

John Hagee's church mentions the Trinity, but does not have a bullet point on the Triune nature of God.

http://www.sacornestone.com/faq_what_we_believe.asp

This web-site will lead you to THE BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

<http://www.vor.org/truth/1689/1689bc02.html>

We believe that Scripture teaches that there is only one true and living God who has chosen to reveal Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22). — Rod Parsley

<http://whc.rodparsley.com/WeBelieve.aspx>

The Largest Church in the World is "Yoido Full Gospel Church" with 830,000 members. I could not find information on the Trinity.

<http://english.fgtv.com/>

Hey Y'all!

I believe that a "confessional" Christianity is very very important. If you were to look at web-sites and see a church's belief statement and read them like some of the statements above(or lack there of), you may know if you would/wouldn't go to a service if you were in town. Also when you read some, they sound good, but we know that a statement can be deceiving (Joel Osteen has a good definition of the Trinity). Okay here's my question for today

How does our view of the Trinity affect our salvation? Does the effectual calling of our Saviour bring us a more clear view of the mysteries of the Godhead, so that we'll eventually have a more biblical view? Is it possible to be a Christian for 30 (x amount of) years, die holding a view like "modalism", and actually have been a Christian?

I personally find these to be difficult questions. Sometimes you meet very zealous (and I know the empirical is not always proof — see Jonathan Edwards "Faith without feelings") Christians and their view of the Trinity may be very hazy, or even down right heretical! And also to define what I mean by "hazy"; it is not so much as "Please perfectly define the Trinity for me" but is more of a "Please be able to tell me what the Trinity is not/Please be able to discern false teaching on the Trinity when you hear it (I think of when Creflo Dollar heretically defined the Trinity people "ooed and aahed" and applauded his definition!)

Let me know what you think about this

Thom
:-)

Re: Views of the Trinity - posted by Ruach34 (), on: 2008/6/18 15:11

Hey, this is a good post and obviously you have done some homework to prepare.

Has not the Deity of Christ been the most contested issue on the face of the earth since His first coming?

This has also been for me the area of most struggle, doctrinally, how to understand etc...

I had a meeting with a local pastor about four years ago. This pastor was church of God and did not consider Jesus to be divine. His arguments messed me up for about eight months, I finally recieved some peace on the issue. Lately, I had a discussion with a dear brother, young in the Lord, who believes that one must pray to all three, and have a relationship with all three.

See, how contested this issue is and yet, I feel the same as you, that a 'correct' doctrinal belief on this is vital to salvation. Not necessarily the doctrinal statement, but an accurate and right standing with God, in relationship.

So, is your intent to discover what others believe and their thoughts on this, or if there can be a correct and undeniable doctrine about this?

Should we begin by stating the facts:

God is Spirit. He is God and above Him there is no other. He is Father (ABBA). (John 20:17)

Jesus is flesh and has retained His perfected, resurrected body and sits on the right hand of the throne of God. (Col 2:9, 1 Tim 2:5) Jesus Christ bore witness of the Father and came from the Father, in fact before Abraham was, He was. And all things were created through Him.

Holy Spirit has been poured out and is among us. (Acts 2:17-18) The World knows Him not because they do not see Him or know Him (John 14:17)

Agreed?

Re: - posted by Tommy2 (), on: 2008/6/18 16:14

"So, is your intent to discover what others believe and their thoughts on this, or if there can be a correct and undeniable doctrine about this? " - Rauch34

I guess one my intents is to get a communal Trinitarian Creed that we could agree would be an orthodox view of our Lord...and a way to effectively/constructively converse with brothers on not only their error (which is many times easier to point out than for us to define a Biblical view) and the importance of good doctrine, but on how a proper view of God is life changing. I read a little bit of Richard Phillips "what's so great about the doctrines of grace" and he said something really cool. (Now if you are arminian forget that this is a calvinistic book :-)) He said that many christians feel like they have been born again AGAIN when they saw the sovereignty of God for the first time (a paraphrase by the way). I think that's a really important aspect of our faith...A proper view of the Triune Lord WILL change every aspect of your christian walk in a positive way.

so my intents are not as precise as our theology should be and this thread is open to more than my points/opinions, but I do hope that we all can see the Triune nature of God in a clearer more biblical way

Tommy

Re: Views of the Trinity - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2008/6/18 16:42

Creflo's church is (<http://www.worldchangers.org>) World Changers Church International

The doctrinal statement there seems to imply that he is a trinitarian, although he isn't explicit (not surprising). Do you know for sure that he is Sabellian?

I have been to one of his services and seen some his stuff online, and he preaches the wealth/greed/"all about the Benjamins"/Jesus wants you to be rich trash and is generally VERY sloppy with the word of God apparently to his own end.

Didn't also know he was a modalist. Do you have other sources?

Re: - posted by Thommy2 (), on: 2008/6/18 16:57

Quote:

BeYeDoers wrote:
Creflo's church is (<http://www.worldchangers.org>) World Changers Church International

The doctrinal statement there seems to imply that he is a trinitarian, although he isn't explicit (not surprising). Do you know for sure that he is Sabellian?

I have been to one of his services and seen some his stuff online, and he preaches the wealth/greed/"all about the Benjamins"/Jesus wants you to be rich trash and is generally VERY sloppy with the word of God apparently to his own end.

Didn't also know he was a modalist. Do you have other sources?

If I missed his belief statement I apologize for misrepresenting his "ministry". The only thing I have was hearing him last year. I am sure you could get a tape/recording of his sermon from the Great Lakes Conference 2007. I think he preached two services...the one I was at started with about Ten minutes of screaming "tongues". So I am sure it could be found somewhere on line

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/6/18 18:36

The Athanasian Creed is a good, orthodox statement of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. It probably wouldn't be a bad idea for modern churches to use it in their doctrinal statements.

(<http://www.ccel.org/creeds/athanasian.creed.html>) Athanasian Creed

You'll notice in the first line how the writer viewed its importance.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/18 18:50

Creflo is probably confessionally trinitarian in doctrine (I can't imagine Trinity Broadcasting Network would let him on if he were not). However, Creflo's error is a rather simple and common one... examples given to explain the doctrine of the Trinity do not match up with the actual Trinitarian doctrine. While I think his comment does wreak of modalism, it's just as modalistic as common Sunday school examples given to explain the Trinity. Such as the melting ice cube, or an egg. Yet if you were to ask your Sunday school teacher if they were sure they were Trinitarian after given such an example, I'm sure they'd defend it until they were blue in the face. Sometimes, in my opinion, people just don't think things through :-)

Re: - posted by Thommy2 (), on: 2008/6/19 9:27

Hey King Jimmy

I think that's a huge problem though. If you are "sitting in a seat of authority" as Creflo was you need to know what you are going to say...especially when it comes to the essentials of our faith. Also the crowd erupted in applause to his definition...that's why I hope a thread like this could help us as brothers and sisters to discern error and only "applaud" truth

Re: - posted by Thommy2 (), on: 2008/6/19 9:31

Quote:

TaylorOtwell wrote:
The Athanasian Creed is a good, orthodox statement of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. It probably wouldn't be a bad idea for modern churches to use it in their doctrinal statements.

(<http://www.ccel.org/creeds/athanasian.creed.html>) Athanasian Creed

You'll notice in the first line how the writer viewed its importance.

I LOVE this!!! I've read this before and thought that this should be put into a song and sang at youth groups...seriously it has a great flow and even better theology!

If you are a youth group leader do something about this :-x :-P

Re: the TRINITY - posted by Ruach34 (), on: 2008/6/19 13:31

So...how have each one of you come to personally understand and appropriate the trinity? It is one thing to comment on what others have written and point and say that is good, but what about you personally. I think that is what this post is about.

So, is it enough to just adhere to the

(<http://www.ccel.org/creeds/athanasian.creed.html>) Athanasian Creed

only and that is enough? Or, must we appropriate accurately and assimilate it fully into our minds? Of course this kind of understanding can only be given from above, for a natural man would only make fun at a doctrine like this.

But what is to happen from this information in things such as the athansian creed and others? Is it merely what we say or what it has become in us. This doctrine, of the Trinity is not separate from the gospel, or the works of the Holy Spirit or any other doctrine contained within the Bible; it is all one and the same. Proceeding from one Father, Lord of all, and may only come from a drawing nigh unto Him and knowing Him.

Am I mumbly jumbly ... ?

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2008/6/19 14:09

I believe who God says He is. "I AM"

Re: - posted by Thommy2 (), on: 2008/6/19 15:17

I believe who God says He is. "I AM" - Miccah

Jesus said I AM in John 8 and the Holy Spirit says nothing (audibly)...but if you lie to the Holy Spirit you are lying to God (Acts 5)...so if you believe in the God who says I AM, who are you refering to? One God? Three Seperate people Gods ? Some manifesting magician who prays to Himself in the garden....even though He is right there with Himself? Your confession of God is on the even cultists (Mormons, JW's, United Pentecostals, etc) would all say. I believe in I AM !!

So although we see God revealing Himself as "I AM" we see him using his chosen people to express a Godhead, where we see The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All equal, all one, all seperate/distinguished, but not seperated.... sayin g "I worship I AM" will come up short while discussing with people of other religions.

Rock and roll my fellow Wisconsinite and I hope you are drying out
Thommy

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2008/6/19 17:15

Thommy2 wrote:

Quote:

Jesus said I AM in John 8 and the Holy Spirit says nothing (audibly)...but if you lie to the Holy Spirit you are lying to God (Acts 5)...so if you believe in the God who says I AM, who are you referring to? One God? Three separate people Gods? Some manifesting magician who prays to Himself in the garden....even though He is right there with Himself?
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So although we see God revealing Himself as "I AM" we see him using his chosen people to express a Godhead, where we see The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All equal, all one, all separate/distinguished, but not separated.... saying "I worship I AM" will come up short while discussing with people of other religions.
Rock and roll my fellow Wisconsinite and I hope you are drying out
Thommy

After reading your posting I have come to a conclusion...You must be from Madison :-)

Other than that, just because these cultists have hijacked "I AM" doesn't make my statement any less truthful. All we can do is proclaim the truth, the rest is the Lords, and the truth is "I AM" IS.

Try to grasp this. No amount of explanation from man on the face of this earth will ever fully explain the trinity of God in His wholeness. In your attempts to come up with a clear and defined definition of the trinity, you will only serve to lead yourself, and others, down a rabbit hole that is difficult to climb back out of.

Why is this? Because our human minds cannot begin to comprehend the vastness of this question and the glory behind the answer. We can only understand the trinity in part, never fully grasping it. I believe that someday the answer will be revealed to us. But until that day comes, I will believe what the Lord says. To say that more is needed is not only wrong, it is dangerous.

Jehovah is Lord.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/19 17:46

I think that's a huge problem though. If you are "sitting in a seat of authority" as Creflo was you need to know what you are going to say...especially when it comes to the essentials of our faith.

I agree, but, I think it is simply the reality of how many Christians, even orthodox ministers, have a misunderstanding of various doctrines... or at least have thought these things through. Frankly, I think ANY illustration one gives of the Trinity enters into some sort of theological error. For, there is nothing else in all this world that can be compared to the Godhead. There exists nothing else in this world that is triune (even us).

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2008/6/19 19:20

"EVEN US"?

Are we not Spirit, Soul and Body. Tripartite man.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Ro 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Ro 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Who is righteousness? 1 Corinthians 1:29-31 That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Who are we in? Who is in us?

Colossians 1:27-28 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Our Spirit is Christ; Ro 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Ro 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Ro 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Ro 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

First part of the tripartite man. Spirit.

Second part; Soul-mind, where we learn, which is the center of our learning; This is where the Holy Spirit works that we might know; 1 John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Who is the Spirit of truth? John 14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Satan is the spirit of error, who used to control our soul-minds.

So we are delivered in Spirit by the Spirit of Christ that is in us. We are being delivered by the Holy Spirit of truth in our minds-souls. We will be delivered in Body by the resurrection power of the whole God Head, The Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit, by whom we are sealed into this glorious salvation unto the manifestation of the son's of God.

Hence learn, that the almighty power of God sometimes works beyond all creature expectations, beyond all human probabilities, beyond all rational conjectures, to help and deliver his people in hopeless and helpless trouble.

What is the greatest of deliverance?

The Law kills us just like the ravenous beasts Paul faced and was delivered in Spirit, and "doth", is delivering us in our soul-mind, and will be "Yet" delivered in our body which is already quickened to contain the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit of Truth our Teacher of this truth.

In Christ, our Spirit and life: Phillip

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2008/6/19 21:19

Hey I'm new to posting anything but I've decided to give it a try.

Many oneness will try to say that we trinitarians can't explain the trinity and accuse us of believing in 3 Gods. But the oneness people can't explain their position either without making Jesus the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost when the scriptures say plainly that Jesus is a separate person from the Father and yet is also one with the Father.

The bible does not fully explain the trinity neither does it explain oneness.

I thought I would give just a few scriptures even though there are many more than these:

Joh 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

1Co 8:4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

1Co 8:5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

1Co 8:6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

Joh 10:30 I and my Father are one.

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

1Co 3:23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

1Co 11:3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

Php 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Php 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

Php 2:11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We clearly must know from the bible that Jesus is the only way to God (The Father). No other name among heaven whereby we must be saved.

The bible clearly says that the Father is the one true God. It also says that the son and the Holy Ghost proceed from the Father.

We receive the Holy Spirit because of the son, we receive the son from the Father.

We know that the word came from the Father and the Holy Spirit came from the Father but the Father derives from none.

The Father is 1st, the son is 2nd, the Holy Ghost is 3rd in that order (all are deity, this we must agree)

I will stop for now. Thanks to all responsible for S!!!

Re:, on: 2008/6/19 22:44

I'm very excited that someone is asking questions like this. I hope this is helpful to the discussion and not too much like a mini-sermon.

The language of the trinity doctrine(s) seems sterile to me.

"Substance"? "Persons"? "Essence"?

It reminds me of politics. I would very much like to discuss this. But even more - I want to experience and have fellowship with God - NOT just talk about Him like He's not listening.

These foundational trinitarian words: "Person" "Substance" "Essence" "Being", I don't trust using these words to talk about God.

The word "Person" I find the least troublesome since Jesus is a man and the image of the invisible God. God may be more of "a person" than any of us are. He's definitely more of a Father than I am.

"Substance" sounds offensive to me. God will correct me if I am wrong - It just sounds blasphemous. God is spirit, right? Spiritual substance? Paul talks about spiritual bodies but God knows if they are made of anything. Even the things we consider to have substance are sustained by God's will and not by some quality they have. Rocks don't exist because of how hard they are. "Sub"- "Stance" sounds like something that definitely does not apply to God. As if God is "made of" a substance or has some kind of intangible foundation - spiritual or not.

The words "Essence" or "Being" I ran into reading about the Nicene creed and the so-called Arian controversy. "Essence" sounds like a totally made up word and concept. "Being" is almost ridiculous. The more I think about it the less likely I am to ever use it in a sentence as a noun.

Jesus talks about His unity with the Father. It's so beautiful. He talks about the unity of the ones God gave him. Think of the unity of the Lamb and His wife. "The two will become one flesh"! What's going to happen?! The love the Father and the Son have for each other is a stronger bond of unity than pathetic words like "Being" and philosophical concepts like "essence".

I don't mean to offend anyone in here who uses these words but I imagine encountering the glory of God - like Daniel before the Lord (daniel ch. 10) and it's so powerful he falls asleep and the Lord touches him - Daniel's on his hands and knees, the love of God is being poured over him and he's trembling in weakness. What I don't imagine is experiencing God like that and having a reaction like "Wow... God is so... wow... Triune."

Personally, I wouldn't mind if I never heard the words "trinity" or "triune" ever again.

Love is a perfect bond of unity. When Jesus says that he and the Father are one I'm humbled by his child-like trust in his Father and his loving obedience. Jesus only said what the Father gave him to say. What was it like for that man Jesus when God made it known that He wanted him to say such a thing? What was the disciple whom Jesus loved thinking about when he wrote about "in the beginning was the word.."? I'm almost afraid to ask.

Re: benjoseph - posted by rbanks, on: 2008/6/20 0:10

Brother I appreciate your post and the beauty of language in expressing your love for God. I don't have much time but I would like to add another thought.

Jesus never acted independent of his Father. His love for the Father was supreme. He made the statement -He that hath seen me hath seen the Father - but He never said -I am the Father

He also said the Father was in Him and was doing the works and He that recieved me recieved the Father.

I have not found a scripture in the bible where it says to worship the trinity nor the oneness.

The trinity is man's way of trying to explain the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being God in three persons.

The oneness is also man's way of trying to explain God (in three manifestations) which really takes away from the person of the Father and the person of the Son which I think is dangerous!

Thanks again,
rbanks

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/6/20 2:07

Thanks, Thommy2, for yet another worthwhile post. It's a relief after so many Lakeland threads.

This subject came up last night while talking with a brother. He asked, "what's the necessity of teaching 'x-and-y' doctrine if the thief on the cross was still saved in relative ignorance?"

That statement is a little presumptuous. Even the thief on the cross believed some important things: for instance, that Jesus has authority to pardon anyone He chooses after death. That's saying a lot about one's understanding of who Christ is.

My answer was that while some people are saved and sanctified despite their ignorance of certain subjects, others only realize they are not yet saved, or why they are not being sanctified so powerfully, after their ignorance or defiance to truth is exposed by clear, thorough teaching.

People sometimes debate the necessity of teaching the triune nature of God. Must one really grasp that Jesus is equal to the Father in His divinity? Consider: the man who denies the deity of Christ must believe a finite being was able to endure an infinite burden of guilt. Do the awesome math: how long will sinners be in hell? Forever. And that is justice. Yet Christ satisfied God's justice towards the church, removing what would have been an everlasting sentence. He accomplished this by His infinite worth. And who but God deserves to be worshiped? God says, "I will not give my glory to another." One cannot truly worship Jesus without accepting his deity.

These questions have huge ramifications. Have you ever asked the question, "What did the atonement of Christ's death accomplish?" That one question has had the greatest impact on my conversion and sanctification.

Though it is not yet complete, here is my trinitarian statement:

I believe in one almighty God, who exists without time or change, who dwells entirely only in Himself, yet is manifested throughout His creation. God is one essential being eternally comprised of three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Spirit.

The wisdom and purpose of God is summarized in the divine person of the Son, who is called the "Logic of God". Through the Son all things that are made were made, so that God created all things for His glory.

Before the foundation of the world, the Father elected a bride for the Son, a multitude no man can number chosen from amongst fallen sinners. To redeem His Church from the guilt of sin, it was necessary that the Son become an acceptable substitution in their place. In time the Son was conceived in the form of a man, Christ Jesus, by the Spirit's power, fully representing the Godhead bodily. His obedience and love to the Father was accomplished in His atoning, redeeming, propitiating death on the cross. The Father approved of the Son's substitutionary sacrifice on behalf of man, for having come in the true form of man, Jesus was a fitting representative of men; and as divine God, the Son was worthy and able to appease and bear the weight of the Father's wrath.

Christ Jesus was raised from mortal death by the power of the Father, Spirit, and Himself, to immortality. He ascended bodily to the right hand of the Father's presence in heaven and now sends forth the Spirit to convict, regenerate, sanctify, preserve, and empower His elect. The Spirit gives understanding, renewal, revelation, and glorification.

The Spirit glorifies the Father and Son; the Son glorifies the Father and sends forth the Spirit. The Father, Son, and Spirit, together glorify the one only God who alone is worthy of worship forever. Amen.

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2008/6/20 11:42

I'm enjoying the thoughts of others, here is a few more thoughts to add.

1Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

2Ch 15:3 Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

Jer 10:10 But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall

tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

Joh 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

1Th 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

1Th 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Heb 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Col 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

1Jo 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary

1 John 5:20

Â Â Â 20. Summary of our Christian privileges.

Â Â Â is come--is present, having come. "HE IS HERE--all is full of Him--His incarnation, work, and abiding presence, is to us a living fact" .

Â Â Â given us an understanding--Christ's, office is to give the inner spiritual understanding to discern the things of God.

Â Â Â that we may know--Some oldest manuscripts read, "(so) that we know."

Â Â Â him that is true--God, as opposed to every kind of idol or false god (1Jo 5:21). Jesus, by virtue of His oneness with God, is also "He that is true" (Re 3:7).

Â Â Â even--"we are in the true" God, by virtue of being "in His Son Jesus Christ."

Â Â Â This is the true God--"This Jesus Christ (the last-named Person) is the true God" (identifying Him thus with the Father in His attribute, "the only true God," Joh 17:3, primarily attributed to the Father).

Â Â Â and eternal life--predicated of the Son of God; ALFORD wrongly says, He was the life, but not eternal life. The Father is indeed eternal life as its source, but the Son also is that eternal life manifested, as the very passage (1Jo 1:2) which ALFORD quotes, proves against him. Compare also 1Jo 5:11,13. Plainly it is as the Mediator of ETERNAL LIFE to us that Christ is here contemplated. The Greek is, "The true God and eternal life is this" Jesus Christ, that is, In believing in Him we believe in the true God, and have eternal life. The Son is called "He that is TRUE," Re 3:7, as here. This naturally prepares the way for warning against false gods (1Jo 5:21). Jesus Christ is the only "express image of God's person" which is sanctioned, the only true visible manifestation of God. All other representations of God are forbidden as idols. Thus the Epistle closes as it began (1Jo 1:1-2).

The only way one can be in the true God and have the true God living in them is to be in Jesus Christ and have Jesus Christ dwelling in them. One cannot know God apart from Jesus Christ who is the supreme sacrifice for our sins, the image of the invisible God whereby we and all things were created. The WORD is the image of God. In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with God and the WORD was God. All things were created by Him and all must be regenerated by Him in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

In all 27 books in the new testament the apostles had opportunity to explain the Godhead by saying God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost as some trinitarians do, but they never did. Most books start out with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Most of the time they only mention the Father and the Son. They clearly wanted us to understand that the only way to receive God or know God was through and by his Son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God never apart from his Father. One cannot honor or worship God the Father apart from his Son. Jesus said all power in heaven and in earth is given unto me (had to be given by his Father). 1Co 15:27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

1Co 15:28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Jesus Christ is not a son of God, He is the Son of God. No one else holds this title, to love, worship, serve Him is worshipping God the father because they are one. They are united with the same nature, same Spirit. Only the Father is greater than the Son and He gave everything to his Son. He that hath the Son hath everlasting life. One day the Son is going to bring his kingdom and his bride to the Father.

There is no competition, I belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God. Because I'm in the Spirit worshipping God through Jesus Christ it doesn't matter if I say Father (which I love to do because God is My Father) or Lord Jesus (which I love to do because he is my Lord and Savior) or Holy Ghost/Spirit (which I love to do because he is the spirit of Christ -the reality of God living in me), it is the same as giving loyalty to the one true living God.

Thanks again,
rbanks

Re: - posted by Ruach34 (), on: 2008/6/20 11:45

OpenLife: excellent writing. And it sounds very doctrinally sound, but above that and more important, it sounds as if you are pleased and humbled to know Him and seek Him.

And some other excellent comments. The bottom line: are we rightly related to Him and are we in right standing with Him. Not having any merit of our own we ask for and claim the free gift of Christ Jesus and His salvation. Are we rightly related to the Father through Christ as revealed by the Holy Spirit?

My understanding has been this: We worship one God and Father. This is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and revealed through Christ Jesus, the Messiah, through whom all things were created. He is the Great, I AM. He is the eternal Father and Lord and Creator. Without beginning and without end. He is Holy and Highly exalted and the whole earth is filled with His Glory. It was in the rightful order of things that this Christ had to come and die. The one through whom all things were created made reconciliation for all these things.

It is interesting to note that in John, while Jesus is teaching on the Holy Spirit, He says we will come make our abode in you, The Father and the Son.

And the Holy Spirit is the essence of the eternal Father and His begotten Son Jesus. I agree with what one comment said, "The Spirit is Christ."

So with all this said, the trinity can be neglected and avoided to the detriment of many. Or it can be embraced and accepted as the way the Father has completed His work.

The trouble remains when one thinks this idea as three gods and therefore worships the Holy Spirit and searches for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit apart from Christ. This may be the case with the whole 'charismatic' movement. They have put labels on the three parts of the God head therefore separating them into substances, persons etc...

Shema, Israel. Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.

Our God is one with perfect holiness and perfect wisdom in all He has done. Let us humble ourselves under His mighty hand...He does lead us in triumph, in Christ.