

A Definition of the Trinity

"There is only one and true God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three co-eternal and co-equal Persons, the same in substance but distinct in subsistence."

[B. B. Warfield]

Why the Trinity is Important

- The Trinity establishes the uniqueness and transcendence of God.
- The Trinity establishes the deity of all the members of the Trinity.
- The Trinity is intrinsically connected to the gospel and our spiritual life.

Why the Trinity is Important

"[Remember] that when his disciples were about to have the world collapse in on them, our Lord spent so much time in the Upper Room speaking to them about the mystery of the Trinity. If anything could underline the necessity of Trinitarianism for practical Christianity, that must surely be it!"

[Sinclair Ferguson]

The Key Aspects of the Trinity

- God is one in essence
 - Dt. 6:4; 1 Tim. 2:5; Ex. 20:2-3; 1 Cor. 8:4; Jn. 5:19, 36; 6:37ff, 57; 10:17ff, 30ff; 15:26; 17:21ff; 20:17ff.
 - All three Persons of the Trinity possess fully all the divine attributes but the essence of God remains undivided.
 - The three Persons of the Trinity do not act independently of one another.

The Key Aspects of the Trinity

- God is three in Person.
 - God does not exist in three different ways or modes, but He exists in three distinct Persons that are unified as one God.
 - Is. 48:16; cf. also Is. 61:1; **Mt. 28:19**

"In God there are not three individuals alongside of, and separate from, one another, but only personal self-distinctions within the Divine essence." [Louis Berkhof.]

The Key Aspects of the Trinity

- The three Persons have distinct relationships.
 - The Father is not begotten nor does He proceed from any person; the Son is eternally begotten from the Father; and the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son (John 1:18; 3:16, 18; 14:26; 16:7; 1 John 4:9).
 - The terms *generation* and *procession* denote relationship within the Trinity but do not suggest inferiority in any way.
 - What does it mean that the Son is eternally begotten from the Father (Jn. 3:16; Col. 1:15)?

The Key Aspects of the Trinity

- The three Persons are equal in authority.
 - Because Scripture affirms that the Father is deity (Eph. 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6), the Son is deity (Jn. 1:1ff; Jn. 8:58; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 1:15-18), and the Spirit is deity (Acts 5:3-5; 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 9:14), they all have the same authority.
 - While the three members have equal authority, they have differing roles in the Godhead.

The Key Aspects of the Trinity

"Everything God does he does as the triune God. Each Person of the Trinity is involved in every action of God. Yet at the same time each Person has a special role to fulfill in that work...There is no good that we receive from God but it is brought to us and wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. Nor is there in us any good towards God, any faith, love, obedience to his will, but what we are enabled to do so by the Holy Spirit." [John Owen]

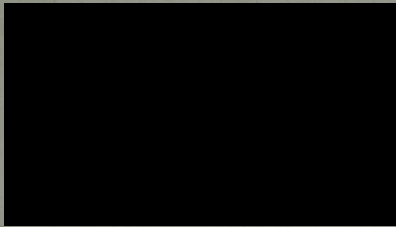
The Key Aspects of the Trinity

- The three Persons are all active in the great acts of God in history and redemption.
 - Creation (Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:16; Ps. 104:30)
 - Incarnation (Lk. 1:35)
 - Christ's baptism (Mt. 3:16-17)
 - Atonement (Heb. 9:14)
 - Resurrection (Acts 2:32; Jn. 10:17-18; Rom. 1:4)
 - Salvation (1 Pt. 1:2)

The Key Aspects of the Trinity



Common Errors Related to the Trinity



Common Errors Related to the Trinity

- Tri-theism — the 3 persons of the godhead are all God, but that they are not one God.
- Modalism (Sabellianism) — there is one God, but He exists in three different modes or manifestations — not three distinct persons (e.g., T. D. Jakes).
- Arianism — the Son is subordinate to the Father (they are not co-equal), leading to a denial of the deity of Christ by Arias who said that Jesus was created by the Father (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses, Gwen Shamblin).

Why Does the Trinity Matter?

- The Trinity matters for creation.
- The Trinity matters for evangelism and cultural engagement.
- The Trinity matters for relationships.

Summary of the Trinity

- The truths of the Trinity combine to produce a picture of God wherein all the members of the Godhead work together, each in their own divine roles, to produce a people that are justified and sanctified to forever glorify the Son.
- The truth of the Trinity is not fully comprehensible to man's finite mind, yet it is important because in the Trinity the uniqueness and wonder of His immensity begins to be revealed.
