

The Trinity Class 1, Issues and Background. Truro Anglican Church Sunday School, 8-18-24

One of the most fundamental beliefs of Christianity is that God Almighty exists as One God in Three Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit- not three gods, but One God.

This teaching has been widely challenged and denied by a wide variety of people down through the centuries. Even today, the Jehovah's Witnesses will knock on your door and tell you that the Trinity doesn't exist. Islam denies it. Judaism denies it. Unitarianism denies it. Many other sects deny it. A number of famous heresies deny the Trinity.

Yet, the Bible teaches it and the Christian Church has taught and defended it from the beginning of the church's existence.

As we study the Trinity, it is important to remember several things:

1. There are aspects of God's existence that are incomprehensible to the human mind.
2. The Church wrestled with the teaching of the Scriptures as they debated the nature of the Trinity.
3. There are no analogies from the created order that can fully explain the nature of God, especially the Trinity.
4. Most heresies or deviations from the teaching of Scripture arise from the sinful desires of the human heart.

In addition to these things to remember, we need to realize the issues the Church wrestled with in dealing with the testimony of the Scriptures:

1. Issue 1 is that the Scriptures are adamant from beginning to end that there is only One God.

2. Issue 2 is that the Scriptures are clear that God the Father is God.

3. Issue 3 is that the Scriptures are clear that God the Son is God.

4. Issue 4 is that the Scriptures are clear that God the Holy Spirit is God.

When formulating a doctrine out of the Scriptures, it is vitally important to take into account ALL of the evidence and data found in the Scriptures. You cannot cherry pick just the bits you like. The Trinity is the only theological system that does this- it takes into account all of the evidence in the Bible. Every other “system” of thought denies or distorts or ignores key elements in the Scripture’s teachings in an effort to advance their preferred doctrine.

So, what we see is that the Trinity is the only theological system that is able to assert that there is only One God, in accord with the clear teaching of Scripture, AND affirm each person of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as being fully God within the One God. This is what our class will focus on for the next few weeks.

A couple books I have found helpful:

The Trinity: Evidence and Issues, by Robert Morey. (Xulon Press, 2015) This is a comprehensive overview of the evidence for the Trinity as well as dealing with many of the challenges to it. Unfortunately, the book needs to go through one more editor- there are unfortunately a number of typos throughout the work. But, if you power through, it is an excellent resource.

What the Bible teaches About the Trinity, by Stuart Olyott (EP Books USA; Carlisle, PA, 2011) This is an excellent overview of the Trinity as found in the Scriptures.