

The Trinity Class 16: The Trinity Wrap up. 12-8-24

<p>The Nicene Creed, 325 AD</p>	<p>The Nicene Creed, BCP 2019</p>
<p>We believe in one God, the Father All sovereign, maker of all things visible and invisible;</p>	<p>We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, visible and invisible.</p>
<p>And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, By Whom all things were made, things in heaven and things on earth: Who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, and became man, Suffered and rose on the third day, ascended into heaven, and is coming to judge the living and the dead.</p>	<p>We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, The only-begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, Begotten, not made, Of one Being with the Father; Through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven, Was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake He suffered under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end.</p>
<p>And in the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>We believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.</p>
<p>And those that say, "There was when he was not," and "Before he was begotten, he was not," and that "He came into being from what is not," or those that allege, that the Son of God is "of another substance or essence" or "created" or "changeable" or "alterable," these the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes.</p>	

The green highlights were written specifically against Arius' system.

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It is important to remember that the doctrine of the Trinity is not mere speculation. It is derived directly from the revelation of God Himself through His people over time and that revelation is recorded in the Scriptures.

As we saw with the Scriptural evidence, the Trinity is the description that God gives of Himself- One God in Three Persons.

When we come before God the Father, we do so through the ministrations of God the Son as we are empowered by God the Holy Spirit. All Three Persons, acting in unity, work over the centuries to achieve God's purpose to redeem and save His lost Creation, namely, us.

As we discussed last week, Jesus, the Son of God, fully God, is also fully human. Thus, in Himself, He brings together God and Humanity and reconciles God to us and us to God.

As we also discussed last week, Jesus is fully human, which led theologians to coin the phrase "What Jesus does not assume is not redeemed" as a test for orthodoxy in a sea of heresy. What this means is this:

Orthodoxy teaches that Jesus assumes all of what it means to be human- He possessed a physical body with all its hungers and needs. He possessed a human mind. He possessed a human soul. He possessed a human will and emotions and whatever else there is that makes someone fully human. He did this at the same time He was fully God. His Godness did not negate His humanness or destroy it or denigrate it in any way. This is the teaching of orthodox Christianity.

The other axiom that arose out of the debates and fights is that "Grace never destroys nature." This means that God does not destroy human nature in order to save it. He works to save the totality of a person and restore us to that right relationship with Himself that was His intention from before the beginning of Creation.

Many of the heresies, like Arianism, deny that Jesus assumed one aspect or another of what it means to be human. The Arians denied that Jesus possessed a human soul, arguing that the Divine Logos of God replaced it. If the human soul is removed, then Jesus is not fully human- He becomes something else. What He does not assume in Himself is not redeemed and returned to a right relationship with God. Thus, under Arianism, the human soul is not redeemed because it is destroyed according to this false teaching. If this system is right, it means that your soul is never saved.

Other heretics taught that Jesus did not assume different aspects of humanity. For instance, one heresy argued that Jesus did not have a human mind- that it was replaced. So, if that heresy were correct, then your mind cannot be renewed in the knowledge of God, like Paul exhorts in Romans 12:1-2, because Jesus does not save it.

Others taught that Jesus did not have human will or human emotions or, as we saw with Docetism, that Jesus had a human body.

Orthodoxy Christianity teaches that Jesus does assume everything that it means to be a full human being while still existing as a being who is fully God at the same time. The human nature is not lost in the Divine nature, but redeemed and brought into unity with it. The Divine nature is not corrupted by its union with the human nature in Jesus. Thus Orthodoxy maintains that Jesus possess both a human and a divine nature simultaneously in His one person as the Son of God. Neither nature is lost or confused or destroyed by the existence of the other nature within His person.

It is the heretics who would destroy this union of the divine and the human in Jesus so as to preserve their own philosophical beliefs. Every time they do, they lose salvation and ultimately, they lose the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.