

Trinity

- This is the most uniquely Christian belief and unfortunately neglected by many.
- We believe in one Triune God who eternally exists in three persons.
- We must avoid believing in three gods, or in one God with three masks.
- The Trinity is deeply biblical, but we need to do theology in order to understand it.
- Trying to understand and explain the Trinity is like navigating a minefield and the ecumenical creeds are maps of the safe way through.
- We ignore the creeds at our own peril

Non-Essential

- There is very little about the Trinity that is non-essential.
- We do not have to understand all of the intricacies of the Trinity.
- We must understand we worship One God in three persons.
- But we must believe it and not change it to fit our own views.

Essential

- The Triune God has one substance, but three distinct persons.
- Each person must have the same attributes and nature.
- Each person is worthy of the same obedience and worship.
- No person in the Trinity is subordinate to another in role or eternity.
- The Nicene and Athanasian Creed declare the essentials of the Trinity.
- What was God doing before creation?
- He was a Father loving His son through the giving of the Holy Spirit.

Eternally Begotten

- It is essential to believe the Jesus and the Holy Spirit were not created.
- Because they are truly God, they must have always been God.
- If there was ever a moment they did not exist, then they are creatures.
- This is why we speak of them being “eternally begotten.”
- There is not a moment where they were not begotten or preceding.

Trinitarian Heresies

- Affirming the Trinity protects us from heresy and false religions.
- Others will claim to be Christian while rejecting the Trinity.
- Jehovah’s Witnesses deny the Trinity and believe Jesus was the first created being.
- Mormons believe Jesus was created and the Trinity is three distinct beings who are united in purpose.
- Modalism believes God appears in three different modes (Oneness Pentecostals).
- Partialism believes Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are parts of One God.

Eternal Functional Subordination

- Arianism is an old heresy that Christ is a created being.
- There are some who teach that Christ is functionally subordinate to the Father.
- Each person is equal in divinity, but they are subordinate in role and authority.
- It comes from a desire to defend complementarianism, but is misguided.
- This unintentionally places the Trinity in a hierarchy.

Gospel of Trinity

- This is how the Trinity is foundational to the gospel.
- Every member of the Trinity is instrumental in the plan of salvation.
- The Father is the author of salvation, the Son is the actor of salvation, and the Spirit the applier of salvation.
- The Father is love, the Son is love revealed, and the Spirit is love possessed.

Takeaways

- The Trinity is logically consistent and worth our time to study.
- Once you understand the Trinity, you can see them working all throughout the Bible.
- Resources for further study: The creeds, systematic theologies, statements of faith, *Delighting in the Trinity* by Michael Reeves.