

“This We Believe”

#2 – THE TRINITY – THREE REASONS FOR THANKSGIVING

One of the great debates in early church history helped to formulate doctrine of the TRINITY.

1. MONOTHEISM: God is one (Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 44:6, 1 Corinthians 8:6; James 2 :19) (Judaism supports this)
2. TRITHEISM: God is actually 3 distinct Gods.
3. MODALISM: the belief attributed to Sabellius that God first acts as a Father (O.T.) then as a Son (N.T.) and finally as the Holy Spirit (church era).
(HERESY – since the third century.)
4. SUBORDINATION: begun by Arius A.D. 320, the Father is the only one who is eternal, the Son and the Spirit were created as a subordinate kinds of divinity.
(HERESY – picked up by Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormon cults.)

Debate on the Trinity settled at the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325).

“We worship one God in trinity and trinity is unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.”

Fig. 1

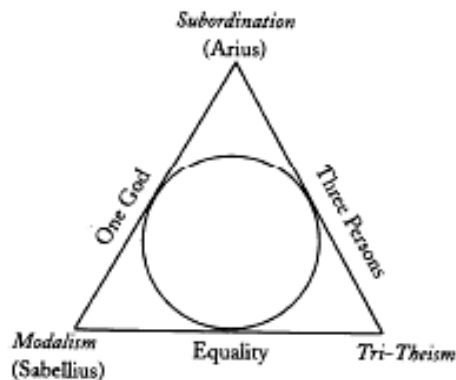
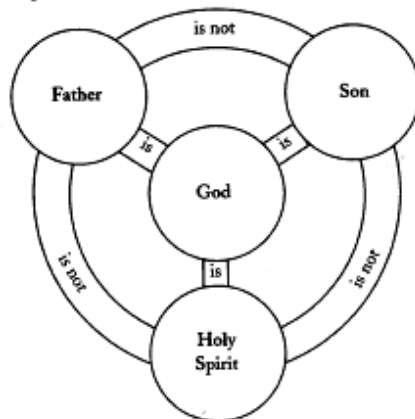


Fig. 2



In support of TRINITY

Old Testament

- Elohim – one of the Hebrew names of God is a plural noun
See Genesis 1:1, 1:26; Isaiah 6:8, 54:5
- The blessings formula
See Genesis 48:15,16; Numbers 6:24-26; Isaiah 6:3
- 3 persons are called God
See Genesis 19:24; Isaiah 9:6, 48:16,17

New Testament

- Confirmed at Jesus’ baptism
See Matthew 3:16,17
- Acknowledged by Jesus himself
See John 14:16-18
- Recognized by the early church
See 2 Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 28:19
Hebrews 9:14

THREE REASONS FOR THANKSGIVING

1. The **RELATIONSHIP** experienced in the Trinity

At the centre of the universe is a community.

- Human relationships can mirror the Trinity
- When relationships go sour all life goes sour
- loneliness, brokenness, relationships, death - painful

2. The **BALANCE** experienced in the Trinity

- God is Father – for us
 - God is Son – with us
 - God is Holy Spirit – in us
- } secret of the Christian life

3. The **FULNESS** experienced in the Trinity

- Baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Drenched into the...
Love and life of the Father - **ACCEPTANCE**
Grace and truth of the Son – **FREEDOM, FORGIVENESS**
Power and purity of the Spirit – **TRANSFORMATION**

Recommended reading: “Experiencing the Trinity” *Darrell W. Johnson*
“The Shack” *Wm Paul Young*