

AMBrewster's Short Explanation of the Trinity

I believe in the one true and living God eternally existing in three self-existent, uncreated persons of one and the same essence, equal in divine attributes, yet distinct in personality (Deuteronomy 6:4; Jeremiah 10:10; II Corinthians 13:14; John 4:21-23; Genesis 1:2; John 5:23; Isaiah 43:10; Mark 12:29-30). He exists wholly and indivisibly, simultaneously and eternally in three persons: Father (Ephesians 4:6), Son (Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:14), and Holy Spirit (John 14:26; Matthew 28:19). There was never a time He did not exist nor a time He existed in any other form than that in which He currently and eternally exists.

Though He is three persons in one God, it is impossible to separate the persons into disconnected entities. These three persons exist in one divine essence, are identical in nature, having the same attributes and perfections are equal in power and glory, and are worthy of all honor, worship, and adoration (Genesis 1:26; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 1:7; Hebrews 1:8). And yet they exist as three distinct personalities. Though the Bible does not explicitly state that God exists in three persons, there is significant evidence for it since the Bible refers to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three distinct persons (Matthew 3:16-17; John 14:26; Acts 10:37-38), and yet they are also each identified as God (John 6:27; Romans 1:7; John 1:1, 14; Romans 9:5; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 3:16).

The Trinity of God maintains an economic arrangement for purpose of function and accomplishing the Divine decree. Within the economic arrangement the Father functions as the Head with the Son and Spirit in submission to Him (John 14:26; I Corinthians 11:3). The Father eternally generates the Son (John 5:26) and the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 15:26).

I also believe that any physical metaphor or illustration used to explain the Trinity fails in significant, heresy-injecting ways. The Trinity is a mystery that inhabits a plain of reality completely incomprehensible by human beings. Man's attempts to create a physical representation of the Trinity fail as miserably as a child trying to exemplify the theoretical intricacies of emotional perception using only dried noodles and paste. Some trinitarian examples illustrate a theism very different from biblical monotheism. For example, teaching that the Trinity is like an egg, triangle, or three-leaf clover denies the unity of God as each part of the object does not share the same nature as the other parts. Other illustrations inadvertently teach modalism. Describing the trinity using water, ice, and vapor implies that God is not three distinct, coexisting persons. Comparing the trinity to a man who is simultaneously a father, son, and husband confuses the explanation as this man is merely changing roles yet remains the same person. Using the illustration of the sun treads into Arianism in that it insinuates that Jesus and the Holy Spirit were created by the Father as the sun's rays and warmth were created by the sun itself.

To appreciate the doctrine of the Trinity, one must steep himself in the whole of Scriptures, and even then — after a lifetime of dogged research and passionate intimacy with God Himself — the man will come away with no final comprehension. He will be only amazed, perplexed, and thoroughly enamored by the genius and grandeur and glory of the one, true God — the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.