



God:- Three in one!!

One of the great mysteries of the Christian faith is the reality that God is revealed in Scripture as both one and three. Christians believe that God is :- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These are not separate entities, different masks of God, or three Gods, but this is who the one true God is. So a simple breakdown of this idea is to say it this way. 1) God is three persons. 2) Each person is fully God. 3) There is One God! Although different pictures or illustrations can be used to make this idea simpler, it is still a difficult reality to understand. With the idea of personhood and individuality that we have in our culture today, the idea of three in one – one in three, is a concept not compatible with our worldview. However this truth is one of those deep mysteries that Scripture teaches and therefore should be accepted by faith, based upon the revealed truth of the Word of God.

Discuss - (In group / or small groups)

- Q1)** If God is a greater Being than ourselves, whose ways are not our ways what do you think this tells us about God ?
- Q2)** How do you think we can move to a place of security on the things we don't understand about our faith?
- Q3)** There is a real mystery about the reality of God, why do you think many feel uncomfortable with mystery?

Fact 1 – Both the Old and the New Testament teach there is ONLY one God.

In both the Old and New Testaments, God is revealed and understood as being one. There is no other God except the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is the creator and sustainer of all things, He reigns over all and in Him all things hold together. To worship any other thing, even if you call it god, is to worship that which is created. This is seen as idol worship and this is an abomination to God. In the New Testament we see that the early Christians believed in the threeness of God and yet declare that their understanding is of one God, the God of the Jewish scriptures, revealed as One. Deuteronomy 6 v 4-5, Isaiah 45 v 5 – 7, 1 Timothy 2 v 5-6, James 2 v 19

Fact 2 – Both the Old Testament and New teach that there is a plurality in God.

Right from the beginning of the Old Testament, God reveals Himself as a complex Being that is in plural form. Genesis 1 v 26 declares that when making man, God said, “ Let US make man in OUR own image. Some people have tried to say that God is just using the idea of a royal “we”, However in the Hebrew there is no such concept as this. Although there is no number given of what this US means, it is clear that the One True God declares a plurality about who He is. This is followed through in various verses in the Old Testament and is more fully developed in the New. From, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God..” - to the baptism of Jesus. From Jesus, teaching on going to the Father and sending the Holy Spirit – to the commission where He says baptise in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, God is revealed as 3 persons. Genesis 1 v 26, Ch 3 v 22, Ch 11 v 6-7, Isaiah 6 v 8, Psalm 110 v 1 (David has an understanding of the plurality in the One True God.) John 1 v 1 – 18, Matthew 3 v 13– 17, Matthew 28 v 18 – 20, 1 Corinthians 2 v10 – 16, 2 Corinthians 13 v 14, Ephesians 4 v 4 –6, 1 Peter 1 v 2, Jude 20 – 21

Fact 3 – The persons of the trinity eternally existed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Because Scripture declares that God is an unchanging God, we see that the persons of the trinity have, are and always will be that which they reveal themselves as. Therefore God the Father has always eternally existed as God the Father, both in revelation and function. God the Son has always eternally existed as God the Son and is revealed in that function and God the Holy Spirit is defined in the same way. Therefore the Father never becomes the Son or takes on the role of the Son in regard to humanity. He is always the Father and relates to humanity in regard to the function that He has. What we see here is that which Wayne Grudem says, “ Therefore the different functions that we see the Father, Son and Holy Spirit performing are simply outworkings of an eternal relationship between the three persons. One that has always existed and will always exist for eternity. God has always existed as three distinct persons; Father , Son and Holy Spirit. These distinctions are essential to the very nature of God Himself and they could not be otherwise”

Fact 4 – Mysteries taught by the Word need to be accepted by faith.

There are many truths that are taught by the Word of God that we do not fully understand. This is a result of the fact that limited, mortal beings are trying to grasp hold of an All powerful, All knowing, All present and eternally existing God and creator, who is beyond our minds and understanding. It is just a simple fact that there are many things that we will not understand about God and His ways. In times like this we need to be humble, recognise what a mighty God we have, and accept by faith what is taught to us in the Word of God. We accept the idea of the trinity because it is taught in scripture, (although the word trinity is not found in Scripture.) We believe it through faith because it is how God has, is and will reveal Himself to humanity. Yes we must wrestle to understand it, but in doing so, we must humbly accept that some mysteries of God are beyond our full understanding. Hebrews 11 v 1, 1 Corinthians 13 v 12, Isaiah 55 v 8 – 9

