

THESIS

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the principal currents of thought that shaped the development of trinitarianism in light of the holy scriptures. Currents examined include: why trinitarianism was developed; principal trinitarian concepts from Philo to the Council of Chalcedon; and a scriptural interpretation of the relationships of members of the Godhead.

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WHY TRINITARIANISM WAS DEVELOPED?

Influence of the Mystery Religions

Jesus, the incarnate word of God, was born into a world in which the mystery religions of Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome had gripped the minds and hearts of the populace for centuries. The mystery religions were polytheistic. It was thought that the gods controlled all phenomena. Thus, the gods of the mystery religions had to be appeased in order for a person to obtain and maintain health, wealth and happiness.

Jesus proclaimed that he had come to reveal the Father which no man had ever seen or heard. This man also said that he was God. Jesus as the incarnate word of God stripped the mystery from religion. The mystery religions, the various Jewish sects and philosophic school were all threatened by Jesus' message. Jesus said "I am the truth, the way and the light." His message was simple and straightforward. He offered all peoples true freedom, "you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). The apostle Paul wrote of the simplicity that was in Christ and warned the Colossians to be wary of vain philosophic ideas. But philosophers and theologians have continued to shroud in mystery the simplicity of the gospel.

Civil rulers used the mystery religions as a means of controlling the masses. Both biblical and secular literature abound with accounts of alliances between politics and religion.

Most of the people were ignorant, illiterate and superstitious. They lived in fear of the gods who mysteriously controlled their destiny. This made them easy prey for the religious leaders who claimed to have special influence with the gods.

The structure of Egyptian mystery religion is confirmed by the biblical account of the Israelites' deliverance out of Egypt. God through the prophet Moses confronted Pharaoh and his magicians (religious leaders). Pharaoh's magicians attempted to out perform Moses. But the God of Israel demonstrated his supremacy. The first nine plagues that were sent on Egypt demonstrated that the God of Israel (Yahweh) had power over the various Egyptian gods. The tenth plague demonstrated that Yahweh has the power and authority to save and destroy life.

There are other biblical accounts that affirm God's supremacy over the unholy alliance of secular rulers and pagan priests. Yahweh triumphed over Jezebel's priests on Mount Carmel after Elijah said a simple prayer. The prophet Daniel was able to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream after the Chaldeans had failed. Scripture reveals Yahweh confronting and defeating the pagan rulers and priests on numerous occasions.

Yahweh claimed to be the one and only God. Yet, Christians claimed that God had been made flesh and died for their sins. How could God be made flesh and die? And how could Christians claim that they prayed to the Father through the holy spirit in the name of the Son and at the same time believe in one God? The early church fathers attempted to answer these and other questions. Some of their ideas led to the development of the doctrines of the trinity.

Influence of Greek Philosophy

Plato's philosophy is strikingly spiritual and eminently theistic ("Platonism" 89). In

"Republic" (716H), Plato states that "God is the beginning, middle and end of all things" (89). Plato continually attributed all good to the divine mind. Furthermore, perfection is unified and God is unified and perfect. "The doctrine of the Logos and the trinity received their shape from Greek Fathers, who, if not trained in the schools, were much influenced, directly or indirectly by Platonic philosophy..." ("Platonism" 91). Thus, it is not difficult to discern the influence of Platonism on the development of trinitarianism.

Neo-platonism influenced several of the church fathers who attempted to explain the unity of the Father, Son and holy spirit. The neo-platonists attempted to know the ineffable One, the source of all feeling (Gonzalez 210). "Neo-platonism affirmed there was only one principle and that all reality was derived from it through a series of emanations" (210). As the emanations moved away from the "one principle" they became more and more inferior. All things good and evil sprung from the same source. Augustine borrowed the neo-platonist model in explaining the origin of evil. Thus God, or for Augustine the trinity, was the one principle, the source of infinite goodness and all things. Evil was not a thing but a direction away from God (Gonzalez 211).

Greek philosophy developed the concept of a pervasive universal spirit to which was attributed the creation. According to Rusch, the stoics developed the idea "of a completely immanent spirit within creation and the continuing use of spirit as a synonym for deity" (Rusch 6). Several theologians employed the immanent spirit concept of the Godhead in explaining the idea of essential trinitarianism.

Influence of Gnosticism

Gnosticism also contributed to the development of trinitarianism concepts because of its strict adherence to dualism. Gnostic dualism divided the creation into two spheres

spiritual and physical. Gnostics viewed the spiritual world as good and the physical world as evil. Since God is spirit and good he could not be the creator of the physical world they reasoned. The Gnostics claimed that bands of light or lesser spirit beings emanated from God. As these bands of lights moved away from God, eventually all light was lost. Finally, emerging from the darkness is the Demiurge, the prince of darkness, who is responsible for the evil physical creation.

According to the Gnostics, humans possess immortal souls that are clothed in evil flesh. The purpose of human existence is to acquire knowledge that will allow their good immortal souls to transverse through the bands of light (levels of knowledge) back to God the source of light and knowledge.

The incarnation of the Logos posed a great problem for the Gnostics because it made God into flesh which they viewed as evil. They attempted to explain away God in the flesh by claiming that Jesus was a phantom in human form. Jesus just seemed (docetism) to be a human being.

The apostle John refuted the teachings of the Gnostics in his account of the life of Jesus and in the epistle of I John. John develops the idea of the incarnation of the Logos who came to reveal the Father. Some scholars note that the synoptic writers did not mention the incarnation, apparently implying that John's writings were influenced by the Greek idea of a universal Logos. John was not an apologist who attempted to reconcile God's inspired revelation of the Logos with Philo's or the Greek's ideas of a universal Logos.

The writings of John present the clearest explanation of the relationship between the Father, Son and holy spirit. John wrote in the late 90's A.D. after gnosticism had made significant inroads into the Christian Church. In his writings, John directly combats the

principal tenants of gnosticism. The synoptic gospels were written before gnosticism became a threat to Christianity.

In an attempt to make Christianity acceptable in intellectual circles and refute the claims of the Greeks and pagans that Christians were atheists, apologists attempted to reconcile the Logos of the Bible with the Logos of Greek philosophy. This led to further studies in Christology which resulted in a more comprehensive doctrine of the Godhead. Trinitarianism eventually came to be the great criterion of orthodoxy.

PRINCIPAL CURRENTS OF TRINITARIAN THOUGHT FROM

PHILO TO THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

Views of Philo

Philo was a precursor of Neo-platonism. He relied heavily on allegorization in interpreting the scriptures ("Neo-platonism" 939). Philo taught that "Divinity and matter are the first two principles existing from eternity" (939). Divinity is pure and unwilling to be in contact with the impure. Thus, divinity employed as instruments for creation "incorporeal potencies of which the highest is the creative one, in scripture he is named God. The second, the ruling one, is called Lord" (940). These two beings are independent and have appeared to men.

The highest of divine ideas is the Logos. The Logos is responsible for making and ruling the world. It serves as the mediator between God and man. Philo's view of divinity and matter is very similar to the gnostics. The cause of creation is different than the gnostics in that he attributed the creation to God, the highest of incorporeal ideas or potencies. Yet dualism is definitely present in this explanation of creation. It is clear that Platonism became linked to Judaism (Philo was a Pharisee) through Philo.

To Philo, God was transcendent and it is unthinkable that he should have any direct contact with the material universe (Sanders 870). Philo's idea of the universe is similar to the Platonic world of ideas. The Logos who is in the image of God serves as the pattern and agent of creation. Numerous titles are assigned to the Logos. He even goes so far as to call the Logos the "first born son" of God (870).

Any speculation that the apostle John borrowed from Philo in articulating his inspired account of the incarnation of the Logos is surely without scriptural support. Philo's Logos is purely a construct of an overactive imagination that attempted to reconcile Platonism with Judaism. It lacks originality, clarity and most importantly verification from the holy scriptures. An excellent summary of Philo's confused doctrine is given by H.A.A. Kennedy:

The Logos-hypothesis itself, as it appears in Philo, is full of confusion. This is no doubt partly due to its composition from heterogeneous elements, Platonic dualism, Stoic monism, and Jewish monotheism, modified by the later belief in hypostases of God, of which the most notable was Wisdom. In part, it depends on the fluctuating boundary in ancient thought between personality and personification, and on Philo's own tendency to glide from what he conceived as truth to symbols of truth. To some extent it results from his failure in constructive power. (Kennedy 162-163).

Justin Martyr's Universal Logos

Justin Martyr attempted to reconcile the stoic idea of the universal Logos with the Johannine doctrine of the Logos. He postulated that every human being possessed the divine spark of reason. This was an attempt to convince the Greeks that the Johannine Logos was the same as the Greeks universal Logos. This attempt to harmonize the universal Logos with the Johannine Logos contradicts the scriptural explanation of man's relationship to God. The scripture reveals the process by which a man can receive the "spark of the divine." In order to receive the gift of the spirit (spark of the divine) one must obey Acts

2:38. If Justin's contention that each person inherently possessed a spark of the divine, humankind would be homoousian with the Logos before repentance. This would also imply that man has two natures, human and divine. Scripture reveals that man must receive the divine nature of God after conversion (Acts 2:38; II Pet. 1:4).

Views of Irenaeus

Irenaeus' view of the relationship of the Father, Son and holy spirit became known as economic trinitarianism (Rusch 7). The Father and Logos are distinct personalities but of the same essence. The holy spirit is the common essence of both. Irenaeus does not ascribe personality to the holy spirit. Thus, Irenaeus preserves monotheism with the Logos and holy spirit being disclosed in God's economy. Though Irenaeus was not a trinitarian, he affirmed the divinity of the Logos and holy spirit.

Irenaeus appeals to the Johannine writings to support his view of the incarnation ("Exposition" 379). "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). This view of the incarnation refutes the various attempts by the Gnostics to explain away Jesus' humanity. The incarnation of God was perhaps the most difficult problem for the Gnostics since they taught that matter is evil. Thus, it was necessary for them to try to explain the existence of Jesus in esoteric spiritual terms. Irenaeus brands all of their explanations as heretical ("Exposition" 379).

Irenaeus taught that the incarnate word came to reveal the Father. Jesus as the incarnate word was the spokesman and the holy spirit was the agent that enabled the hearer to understand the revelation. This view is in keeping with the scripture. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Yet no one knows the things of God

except through the holy spirit (I Cor. 2:9). Thus, the word of God and holy spirit work together in revealing the will of God.

Iranaeus' Christological views are also based on the Johannine writings. The Logos is coeternal with the Father. The Son and the holy spirit served as the agents of creation under the direction of the Father ("Exposition" 378). Thus, the Logos and the holy spirit are subordinate to the Father. These tenants are in agreement with the scripture.

Views of Origin

Origin attempted to explain the unity of God and the plurality of spirit beings (Rusch 13). According to Origin, God brought into existence an order of spiritual beings, souls, co-eternal with himself (Rusch 13). Moreover, the Father, Son and holy spirit were ingenerate. Thus, Origin departed from the emanating generation views of the apologists and Tertullian. Origin believed that the Word was one continuous exercise of will by the Father.

In his attempt to distinguish the Father from the Son, Origin states that the Father and Son differ from each other in hypostasis. The term hypostasis can mean essence of subsistence, but for Origin it meant essence (Rusch 14). The Son was sometimes referred to as a second God by Origin. Origin believed that the word was a derivation of God, of a different essence, yet one with God.

Origin's explanation of the substance and derivation of God contradicts the unity of God. How can a being be of a different substance and yet be one with God? The argument could be made that since God wills the existence of Logos, the Logos would be within the will of God, and thus at one with God. But this argument would not confirm essential trinitarianism, since the Logos is not of the same essence as the Father. Furthermore, how

can the Son be a distinct person and at the same time the result of the continuous will of God? Origin did not attempt to answer these questions.

Origin's views on the origin and substance of the Son are not in agreement with the scriptural record. The Son is coeternal with the Father and is of the same essence as the Father (John 1:1, 17:2, Eph. 4:4). Origin's claim that God created coeternal immortal souls is also refuted by the scriptures. The first mention of the word soul in the Bible is in conjunction with the creation of Adam. God breathed into Adam the breath of life and man became a living soul (Hebrew, nephesh). The word nephesh is used in the Bible for human and animal life.

Origin viewed the holy spirit as an active personal substance. The holy spirit originates with the Father and extends to all things that are holy. Whereas the Logos mediates between the rational creation and God (Rusch 15).

Origin viewed the Son and holy spirit as part of God's eternal existence. Thus, some scholar's view Origin's views as genuine trinitarianism. This assertion of "genuine trinitarianism" is difficult to comprehend in view of Origin's different hypostases for Father and Son. How can the Son be a part of God's eternal mode of being and yet be of a different essence? Trinitarian apologists attempt to justify Origin's explanation of the derivation of the Logos by stating that the word is one with God but on a lower level. This is a contradiction.

Hypostatical unity is impossible apart from the Logos being of the same essence as the Father. How then could Origin's views be considered genuine trinitarianism since he does not teach an eternity of essence? The scriptures teach us that the Father and Son are one in essence, yet the Son is subordinate to the Father.

Views of Hippolytus

Hippolytus views God as the one infinite, eternal deity alone in himself (Refutation 394). Yet contained eternally within the Godhead are the Father and holy spirit. By an exercise of the will God brought forth the Logos. The Logos is of the same substance as God (Refutation 397). Hippolytus does not explain how the holy spirit was brought forth except in terms of the economy of manifestation "...God is one. But as far as regards the economy, there is a threefold manifestation..." ("Extant" 226).

Hippolytus refers to the writings of the apostle John in defending this economy of manifestation. Hippolytus quotes John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Hippolytus gives the following explanation for this passage.

If then, the Word was with God, and was also God, what follows? Would one say that he speaks of two Gods? I shall not indeed speak of two Gods, but of one; of two Persons however, and of a third economy (disposition), viz., the grace of the Holy Ghost. For the Father indeed is One, but there are two Persons, because there is also the Son; and then there is the third, the holy spirit. The Father decrees, the Word executes, and the Son is manifested, through whom the Father is believed on. The economy of harmony is led back to one God; for God is One. It is the Father who commands, and the Son who obeys, and the holy spirit who gives understanding: the Father who is above all, and the Son who is through all, and the holy spirit who is in all. And we cannot otherwise think of one God, but by believing in truth in Father and Son and holy spirit. ("Extant" 228).

Hippolytus insists that all three must be recognized yet the unity of God must be maintained. Thus, Hippolytus teaches an essential trinity, yet the Son is subject to the Father and holy spirit ("Extant" 226).

Hippolytus' view of the Godhead is scripturally correct with regard to the essential nature of the Godhead, but incorrect with regard to the origin of the Logos and the economic manifestation of God. The scriptures maintain that the Father and Son are co-

eternal. Whereas, Hippolytus insists that the Logos was brought forth from the same substance as the Father. This allows for the eternal existence of essence of the Logos, but not for eternal personality. The scriptural economy of manifestation calls for two coeternal personalities of the same essence, which essence is the holy spirit. The holy spirit is divine and proceeds from God. But it is not a separate personality.

Hippolytus correctly explains how the Logos became the Son through the incarnation. Hippolytus quotes Rom. 8:3, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be shown in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Hippolytus explains that it was the word who became flesh. Hippolytus asks, "What Son of his own, then, did God send through the flesh but the Word, whom he addressed as Son because he was to become such (or be begotten) in the future" ("Extant" 229). Hippolytus' view of the Logos becoming the Son at the incarnation is in harmony with the Biblical record. The word became the begotten Son of God with the incarnation. Hippolytus is hard pressed to explain how the Son was begotten. He offers the following explanation:

But let us also look at the subject at hand,--namely, the question, brethren, that in reality the Father's power, which is the Word, came down from heaven, and not the Father Himself. For thus He speaks: "I came forth from the Father, and am come." Now what subject is meant in this sentence, "I came forth from the Father," but just the Word? And what is it that is begotten of Him, but just the Spirit, that is to say, the Word? But you will say to me, How is He begotten? In your own case you can give no explanation of the way in which you were begotten, although you see every day the cause according to man; neither can you tell with accuracy the economy in His case. ("Extant" 229).

Views of Tertullian

Tertullian seems to lean heavily upon the platonic ideas of an emanating spirit. "...Before all things God was alone ... being in Himself and for Himself universe, and space and all things. Moreover, he was alone, because there was nothing external to him but himself." (Tertullian 600).

He then states that God was not alone because he had his reason and thought which he designates as the word. This eminence of reason and the word were with God from the beginning though reason and thought preceded the word just as reason and thought precede the spoken words of human beings. Thus, Tertullian attempts to make a distinction between the word and God. The word is a distinct person that emanated from God. Yet the word is God (Tertullian 600 - 601).

Tertullian believed that the holy spirit proceeded from the Father through the Son. (Tertullian 599). But he also believes that the holy spirit is a separate person. The Father, Son and the holy spirit are the very self same person. Tertullian explained this procession as follows:

... that this one proceeded from Himself, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made. ... As if in this was also one were not All, in that All are of One, by unity (that is) of substance; while the mystery of the dispensation is still guarded, which distributes the Unity into a Trinity, placing in their order the three *persons* the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost: three however, not in condition, but in degree, not in substance but in form; not in power, but in aspect; yet of one substance, and of one condition, and of one power, inasmuch as He is one God, from whom these degrees and forms and aspects are reckoned, under the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Tertullian 598)

Tertullian's essential trinity is hierarchial. The word emanates from the Father just as the root puts forth the tree and the fountain the river and the sun the ray. "Now the spirit is

indeed third from God and the Son, just as the fruit of the tree is third from the root ..." (Tertullian 603).

When Tertullian's views are examined in light of the scripture, his view of the emanating reason, thought and word from God cannot be substantiated. Tertullian's argument is much the same as many other philosophers. Tertullian quotes John 14:16, ("I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another comforter ... even the spirit of truth.") in attempting to prove that the holy spirit is a distinct person from Jesus. This scripture does not prove that the holy spirit is a separate person. Jesus was then comforting his disciples as God in the flesh. Later he would comfort them as the resurrected Christ living in them through the holy spirit. Jesus told the disciples that the Father would send the holy spirit in his name (Jesus' name). Furthermore, the holy spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son to us (Titus 3:4). The spiritual essence of God, Christ and the saints is the same holy spirit. But the holy spirit is not a separate person. "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ he is none of his (Rom. 8:11). Note it is the spirit of Christ -- not a separate person that implants life to a Christian -- and that spirit proceeds from the Father.

Council of Nicea

During the first three centuries of the Christian Church there were continual controversies over the relationship of the members of the Godhead. Eventually the nature of God emerged as the criterion of orthodoxy.

Western theology was characterized by Monarchianism. God was a single monarch. Yet an essential trinity of three distinct persons. Even though the western bishops were convinced of the distinctions of persons within the one God, they had difficulty in explaining the distinctions apart from the economy of manifestation. The difficulty partly centered

around their reaction against the Logos theology of the East. Western theologians thought that the Logos theology might lead to belief in two Gods.

Eastern theology was influenced by Johannine and neo-platonist's ideas of the Logos. Eastern theologians recognized the unity of god, but were also careful to clearly explain the distinction within the unity.

These differences along with varying views of individual theologians fueled the fire of controversy for centuries. The Council of Nicea attempted to harmonize the views of Eastern and Western theologians on the nature of the Godhead.

The Council produced a document that is called the Nicene Creed. This document is a declaration of belief rather than an explanation of the doctrine of the trinity. The Nicene Creed became the measure of orthodoxy though it fell far short of resolving all of the questions that surrounded the controversy over the nature of the Godhead.

The positions affirmed by the creed addressed many of the controversies of the past. The Logos was of the same substance as the Father and coeternal with the Father. The word ~~homousios was adopted to mean that the substance of the Son inseparable from the substance of the Father.~~ Homousios signifies the same nature and substance but allows for distinction between persons one from the other (Schaff 4). The Council believed that this word was best suited for refuting the Arian heresy which stated that the Son was a created being and not of the same substance as the Father. Belief in the holy spirit was affirmed, but it was not assigned a separate personality.

Views of Augustine

Augustine was more interested in the unity of God than in the three hypostases of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Rusch 6). He rules out all subordination. The trinity acts as

one in all things. Analogies are used often to try to show the unity of the trinity in action. But Augustine's explanation of the unity of God's actions is plagued by the reality of the incarnation. He asserted that the existence of the Son is dependent upon the will of the Father. The Father eternally wills the Son. Augustine's extreme insistence upon the unified action of the trinity presents the problem of the separate manifestation of the personalities of the Godhead. How do the Father, Son and holy spirit relate to each other? His position borders on patripassianism. Did the Father die on the cross with the Son?

The generation of the holy spirit was also a problem for Augustine. He viewed the holy spirit as the common gift of the Father and Son. This led Augustine to believe that the

~~holy spirit proceeded from the Father and Son, filioque~~

This teaching eventually led to the split between the Eastern and Western Churches. The Eastern Church bishops contended that the Orthodox position insisted upon the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father. Whereas the Western Church refused to yield on Augustine's position on the nature of the trinity.

Augustine's position on the trinity is certainly not in keeping with the scripture. The Father and Son are separate persons hypostatically, yet homoousios. According to scripture the holy spirit proceeds from the Father through Christ to us (John 15:26, Titus 3:6). When Augustine's position on the trinity is examined in the light of Christian orthodoxy and scripture it is difficult to understand the basis of its pervasive acceptance in the West.

Views of the Cappadocians

The controversy of the Post-Nicene period centered around the definition of homoousios, homoiousios and hypostasis. Moreover, relationships between Father, Son and holy spirit continued to be hotly debated. Though the unity of Father, Son and holy spirit

had been affirmed by the Council of Nicea, a clear explanation of how these three are manifested in one God was still lacking.

Even though the word, ~~homousios (of the same substance)~~ had been adopted by the Council of Nicea, the Eastern bishops preferred ~~homoiousios (of like substance)~~ (Rusch 23). Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, convened the Council of Alexandria in 362. The Council attempted to distinguish the terms ousia and hypostasis. The same substance or essence emerged as the meaning of ousia. Thus, the Father, Son and holy spirit were of the same substance. Hypostasis meant that there were three distinct persons in the Godhead. Yet the Father, Son and holy spirit were of the same substance.

The Cappadocians further refined Athanasius' attempts to clarify how ~~three persons~~ (~~hypostasis~~) of the ~~same substance (ousia)~~ are essentially one God. Initially they accepted the Nicene homoousios to mean only likeness and not identity of substance. This was essentially the view of most of the Eastern bishops, whereas homoiousios meant identity of substance to the Western bishops. Eventually they like Athanasius, "affirmed the consubstantiality of the three, they also signified by this consubstantiality not just likeness but identity of substance" (Fortman 81). They choose hypostasis as the word best fitted to express person, and their formula for expressing God's trinity was one ousia in three hypostasis (Fortman 83).¹ Their formula provided the means of uniting the Eastern and Western positions (Rusch 23).

Their explanations concentrated on preserving the unity of the Godhead while maintaining the distinctions of persons. Both Gregorys speak of the divine action that begins with the Father, proceeds through the Son and is completed by the holy spirit. Thus, the

same energy passes through all yet the three are one. But the question of how God can be both one and three without contradiction continues to plague trinitarians to the present time.

Basil tried to resolve this problem by asserting the representation of the universal by the particular. The stress was on three hypostases who share the same nature. He pointed out that ousia has the same relation to hypostasis as common has to particular:

The distinction between ousia and hypostasis is the same as that between the general and the particular. . . . Wherefore, in the case of the Godhead, we confess one essence or substance . . . but we confess a particular hypostasis, in order that our conception of Father, Son and Holy Spirit may be without confusion and clear. If we have no distinct perception of the separate characteristics, namely, fatherhood, sonship, and sanctification, but form our conception of God from the general idea of existence, we cannot possibly give a sound account of our faith. We must, therefore, confess the faith by adding the particular to the common (Fortman 80).

The Cappadocians were aware that this explanation was defective. They realized that the particular of the Godhead was not identical with three separate human personalities (Fortman 80). Basil attempted to further illustrate his position by stating: "Just as each human being has his or her own individuality and yet represents universal humanity, so each person in the Godhead is set apart by that person's own characteristics but is still a part of the whole divinity." This is tantamount to saying that God is like one coiled snake that simultaneously uncoils with three heads and retracts into one snake. One human may in his/her individuality represent universal humanity, but this does not mean that three are one humanity. The problem is not in the particular representing the universal, but in the universal (plurality, the triad) representing one God. In the final analysis, employment of the particular universal analogy does not adequately answer the question of how three persons exist in one and how one exists in three.

The Council of Chalcedon

The Council of Chalcedon attempted to settle the Christological questions raised by the Antiochene school and the Alexandrine school. For the Alexandrines, "Jesus' divinity must be emphasized, even if it had to be done at the expense of his humanity" (Gonzalez 252). On the other hand, the Antiochenes were determined to assert Jesus' humanity without diminishing his divinity. Both schools agreed that Jesus was both divine and human (Gonzalez 252). The problem centered around the union of the divine and the human.

The western bishops had basically accepted Tertullian's explanation of two natures in one person. The Alexandrians accepted Apollinaris' explanation that Jesus had a physical body but not a human intellect. The Antiochenes rejected this position. "A human body with a purely divine mind is not really a human body (Gonzalez 253).

They insisted that Jesus must be fully God and human in order to be the savior of humankind. Eventually the Apollinarian position was rejected by the Council of Constantinople 381.

This rejection of Apollinaris' position did not end the controversy. The teachings of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, declared that Mary should not be called theotokos, bearer of God, but rather Christotokos, bearer of Christ. Gonzalez explains the importance of Nestorius' position:

When Nestorius declared that Mary was the bearer of Christ, but not of God, he was affirming that in speaking of the incarnate Lord one may and must distinguish between his humanity and his divinity, and that some of the things said of him are to be applied to the humanity, and others to the divinity (Gonzalez 254).

In attempting to explain his position, Nestorius declared that abiding in Jesus were two natures, human and divine (Gonzalez 254). His enemies quickly attacked this position.

They asserted that, Nestorius was dividing them into two persons instead of joining the divine and human. The Council of Ephesus 431, "dealt with the case of Nestorius and, without allowing him to

defend himself, declared him a heretic..." (Gonzalez 255). The controversy continued to rage in the midst of political and religious upheaval until the Council of Chalcedon 451.

The Council rejected the extreme position of both Alexandrine and Antiochenes.

They produced the following:

Following, then, the holy Fathers, we all with one voice teach that it is to be confessed that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same God, perfect in divinity, and perfect in humanity, true God and true human, with a rational soul and a body, of one substance with the Father in his divinity, and of one substance with us in his humanity, in every way like us, with the only exception of sin, begotten of the Father before all time in his divinity, and also begotten in the latter days, in his humanity, of Mary the virgin bearer of God.

This is one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, manifested in two natures without any confusion, change, division or separation. The union does not destroy the difference of the two natures, but on the contrary the properties of each are kept, and both are joined in on person and hypostasis. They are not divided into two persons, but belong to the one Only-begotten Son, the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. All this, as the prophets of old said of him, and as he himself has taught us, and as the Creed of the Fathers has passed on to us (Gonzalez 257).

RELATIONSHIP OF MEMBERS OF THE GODHEAD EXAMINED

IN LIGHT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Methodology

The essential question of essential trinitarianism i.e. how one God is essentially three persons cannot be resolved through philosophical or logical constructions. Laws of science, mathematics and logic refute one in three and three in one. This is obviously the reason why the trinity question is elevated or reduced to the realm of a mystery by several notable

theologians including Augustine. That which cannot be explained is called a mystery, yet its authenticity is dogmatically proclaimed.

The scriptures provide the only possible hope for explaining the essential nature and relationship of the Father, Son and holy spirit. Inductive logic based upon scriptural premisses should serve as the method for interpretation.

Homoousios of God, Father and Holy Spirit

The human family is connected through DNA though it is not seen and in that sense it is homoousios with all members of the family. The same genes that are in our parents are in us. After humans are conceived and mitosis begins to take place, the literal unity with the parents and the offspring disappears. Yet the offspring carries the genes of their parents in their bodies.

The members of God's spiritual family are invisibly joined together in a more literal sense than members of the human family. Through the spirit of God the Father literally joins us with Him, the Son and members of the body of Christ. The apostle Paul very vividly describes the substance of the believers union with God and each other in I Cor. 12:12-27. There is one spirit and all Christians have been baptized into one body. There are many individual members of the body of Christ, all joined to the same body. Just as there are many members of the human body all working together for the edification of the whole body. In Rom. 12:5 and Eph. 4:25, Paul impressed upon these Christians that they were members one of another. He further illustrates the unity of the Christians with Christ by stating "that the body of Christ is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh" (Eph. 5:30). This unity is made possible by the Holy Spirit.

All members of the body of Christ are joined together and hence members one of another through the spirit of God. Thus we are all joined to God and Christ by the holy spirit. The holy spirit abides in Christians. Christians who have received the earnest of the spirit form the body of Christ. The members of the body of Christ are called the temple of God and/or the church. Yet it is God and Christ who dwell in us and with us. The "oneness" that Jesus prayed for in John 17 is fulfilled through the indwelling presence of the holy spirit. God is in Christ, Christ is in the Father. The Father and Son are in us and we in them through the one spiritual essence of God.

Just as DNA is the common substance of the human family, the holy spirit is the common substance of the God family. Father, Son and begotten members all share a common essence. God is spirit and his spirit is holy. The above analogy of the spirit of God and DNA, coupled with Paul's statements concerning the unity of God, Christ and the body of Christ, clearly demonstrates that God, Christ and members of the body of Christ are homoousios (one substance) with God. Yet each member has his/her own personality (hypostasis) and distinction as an individual entity.

The Role of the Holy Spirit

The holy spirit is God. But just as DNA has no expression apart from individual mind and personality, the holy spirit has no personality apart from God. The spirit has mind, presence and knowledge but it does not speak of itself (Jn. 16:13). The spirit speaks what it hears (Jn. 16:13). The paraklete is called the spirit of truth. The word of God is truth. Thus, the holy spirit is the purveyor of the nature of God. Just as DNA is the purveyor of human characteristics from parents to offspring. It enables the hearer of truth to understand the meaning of truth. God convicts us through his spirit. But the spirit is not

a separate personality. The holy spirit which is the essence of God could not be a separate personality for God is spirit. The spirit performs God's work. To say otherwise, would be to admit that God uses another spirit to perform his will and work.

God's spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the son of God (Rom. 8:16). The holy spirit bridges the gap between human mortality and God's immortality. At the resurrection of the just, begotten Christians will be transformed into quickening spirits (I Cor. 15:44, 53).

The Holy Spirit is Personified in Christ

God and the Word both of whom are of one spirit are coeternal. The holy spirit proceeds from the Father. It was sent in the name of Jesus, thus the holy spirit is personified in the name of the Son. Yet God and the Son are separate personalities. "As the Father has life in Himself so hath He given the Son to have life within Himself" (Jn. 5:26). But the spirit proceeds from the Father through Christ to us (Titus 3:6; Gal. 4:6).

God is our Father. He is the source of the holy spirit, but God does not give us the holy spirit apart from his Son. This is verified by Rom. 5:10 where Paul stated that having been "reconciled to God by the death of his Son, we shall be saved by his life. Thus, Christ remains the loci centri of salvation. This is in harmony with Heb. 12:1 "...looking to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith."

From the above it is evident that the orthodox view of the procession of the holy spirit is scripturally correct. Augustine's filioque does not stand the test of scriptural examination.

Jesus said that the Father would send the spirit in his name (Jn. 14:26). The apostle John wrote in I John 5:11-12 that he who hath the Son hath life and he hath not the Son hath not life. Thus it is clear that the holy spirit is personified by Jesus Christ. Paul wrote in Col. 1:27 of Christ in you the hope of glory. It is obvious that Christ's presence is in us through the spirit. In Romans 8:9, Paul states "...Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The first part of this verse proclaims that we are not in the flesh if the spirit of God dwells in you. Then Romans 8:11 states that the same spirit that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His (God's) spirit that dwells in you.

It can be concluded from these scriptures that God's spirit dwells in us through Jesus Christ. The same spirit that is in God is in Christ. It is the same spirit that is in Christians who have received the down payment on eternal life (I Cor 1:22). By one spirit we have all been baptized into one body (I Cor. 12:13). It is the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead and it is the same spirit that will quicken our bodies at the resurrection (Rom. 8:10-11).

Coeternity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

The Logos was God and was with God from the beginning (John 1:1). Moreover, the scriptures affirm that Melchizedek (the title of the high priest of God, who is Jesus Christ) is without Father, mother, without pedigree, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually (Heb. 7:1-3). These scriptures prove that the Logos and the Father are coeternal. They are of the same substance, yet hypostatically distinct. The substance of Father and Son is the holy spirit. God is spirit (John 4:26). Thus, the holy spirit is eternal. But it is not hypostatically distinct.

When did the Father and Son relationship begin? Tertullian, Augustine and Calvin along with others taught that the Son was begotten of God before the incarnation of the Logos. Proponents of essential trinitarianism i.e. the Logos and Son emanating from the Father, are logically bound to teach the begetting of the Son before the incarnation. But this position is not in harmony with Heb. 7:3, which states that Jesus as the high priest after the order of Melchizedek is without Father, mother or pedigree. The Logos who is without descent became the "Son" of God through the incarnation of the Logos (John 1:14).

The process of how the Logos becomes the Son of God recapitulates how man is joined to God. The virgin Mary was impregnated by the holy spirit thus bringing about the union of God and man. The Logos, who was God (John 1:1), was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was united with God through the divine spirit and united with man through the flesh. He was God in the flesh. Jesus lived perfectly in the flesh and redeemed humankind by his own blood, thus making it possible for humans to be reconciled to God, Rom. 5:10. Reconciliation makes it possible for repentant humans to receive communion with God through the holy spirit. As spirit filled sons and daughters of God, Christians are partakers of the divine nature, II Pet. 1:4. They are admonished to become spiritually mature and grow up to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ, Eph. 4:12. At the resurrection Christians who have received the earnest of the spirit will become spirit beings in the family of God.