

4. The meaning of the unity of God
5. The meaning of the plurality of God
6. The essential equality of the three Persons
7. The economic subordination of the three Persons
8. Mystery versus complete rational penetrability in the formulation of the doctrine
9. Summary of the doctrine

Most of what I am going to say will not *be new* to most of the members of this audience; some of what I am going to say may *sound new* to some of you. I ask only that you keep an open mind until the completion of this paper. Then close your mind around that which the Spirit of God through the Word of God witnesses to as truth, and throw all the rest away!

1. The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity

The Bible does not use the word "Trinity," but it does teach each of the distinct truths out of which the theological doctrine of the Trinity has been constructed. The Bible simply tells us that God is one (Deuteronomy 6:4), and that there are three distinct Persons who are God. The Father is God (Jude 1); the Son is God (Titus 2:13); and the Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4). Whatever it is to be God, the Father is that, and the Son is that, and the Spirit is that. And these three divine Persons are not three Gods, but one God. This is what Scripture teaches.

Edward Bickersteth, in his classic work. *The Trinity*, states the teaching simply and succinctly. He writes:

To one who receives with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls, the Scriptures ... prove beyond contradiction that as the Father is God, so is Jesus Christ God, and so the Holy Spirit is God. This truth, however, must be combined with another, which is revealed with equal clearness and enforced with equal solemnity -- "I am Jehovah, and there is none else, there is no God beside me." The combination of these truths establishes the doctrine of the Holy Trinity...^5

2. Sonic Historic Orthodox Formulations of the Doctrine