

the subordination of their working, we must stress the unity of the Godhead. God is One.

2. The unity and plurality of the Trinity

Deuteronomy 6:4 exhorts and commands: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!" And James 2:19 says, "You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder."

Isaiah 44:6 says, "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel
And His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:
'I am the first and the last,
And there is no God besides Me.'"

Both the Scriptures that speak of God's unity and God's uniqueness send the message that God is one, and that there is only one true and living God. But how are we to understand this scriptural stress? Does it mean that God is one in the sense of a numerical oneness -- one individual or one Person?

Both Dynamic Monarchianism and Modalistic Monarchianism understood God's unity in this way. But in doing so Dynamic Monarchianism denied the personal nature of the Logos, and asserted that Jesus were merely a man. And Modalistic Monarchianism or Sabellianism asserted that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit were simply one divine Person who reveals Himself in different modes according to circumstance.

On the other hand, could God's oneness be understood in the sense of a dynamic unity which allows for a plurality of Persons?

It is fascinating to note that the word translated "one" in Deuteronomy 6: 4 (ECHAD) is also used in Genesis 2:24, where we read: "For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one (ECHAD) flesh." Here in Genesis 2 ECHAD is used of two persons who become one in a dynamic unity even while they remain two persons. In the Trinity, the unity of God is located in the dynamic unity of three divine Persons who share one divine essence and life. And yet it is not a unity that is formed by three Persons who become one; it is an eternal unity of a single, simple, and indivisible essence. Without this emphasis, the doctrine of the Trinity can easily drift into Tri-theism, in which the three Persons are viewed as three Gods.

The Unitarians and Jehovah's Witnesses both believe that the doctrine of the Trinity does reduce to Tri-theism, and that this can be shown by simple reason. "After all", they claim, "if the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God, doesn't that add up to three Gods?"

Of course, the only meaningful response to this criticism is to emphasize the clear teaching of Scripture. And Scripture clearly