

Augustus Hopkins Strong writes:

1. The mode of this triune existence is inscrutable.

It is inscrutable because there are no analogies to it in our finite experience. For this reason all attempts are vain adequately to represent it:

(a) From inanimate things- as the fountain, the stream, and the rivulet trickling from it (Athanasius); the cloud, the rain, and the rising mist (Boardman); color, shape, and size (F. W. Robertson); the actinic, luminiferous, and calorific principles in the ray of light (Solar Hieroglyphics, 34).

(b) From the constitution or processes of our own minds -- as the psychological unity of intellect, affect, and will (substantially held by Augustine); the logical unity of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (Hegel); the metaphysical unity of subject, object, and subject-object (Melancton, Olshausen, Shedd).

No one of these furnishes any proper analogue of the Trinity, since in no one of them is there found the essential element of tri-personality. Such illustrations may sometimes be used to disarm objection, but they furnish no positive explanation of the mystery of the Trinity, and, unless carefully guarded, may lead to grievous error.

2. The Doctrine of the Trinity is not self-contradictory

This would be, only if it declared God to be three in the same numerical sense in which he is said to be one. This we do not assert. We assert simply that the same God who is one with respect to his essence is three with respect to the internal distinctions of that essence, or with respect to the modes of his being....

3. The doctrine of the Trinity has important relations to other doctrines.
 - A. It is essential to any proper theism.
 - B. It is essential to any proper revelation.
 - C. It is essential to any proper redemption.
 - D. It is essential to any proper model for human life.

Augustine, in the concluding chapter of his great work, *De Trinitate*, writes:

O Lord our God, we believe in Thee, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the Truth would not say, Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son