

***Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas***  
***Fredericksburg Bible Church***  
*107 East Austin*  
*Fredericksburg, Texas 78624*  
*830-997-8834    [jthomas@fbgbible.org](mailto:jthomas@fbgbible.org)*

**B1032 – August 8, 2010 – The Trinity: New Testament Data**

Last week we went through the four lines of evidence for the Trinity in the OT. Hopefully some light was shed on how full the OT is of this idea of oneness and threeness in God. It's often not appreciated how preparatory the OT was for the more amplified revelation in the NT. We want to review the OT data and then press on to the NT data.

The first evidence in the OT is the **two Hebrew words for “one.”** *Echad* and *yachid*. This is a nice distinction for language to communicate. We're all familiar with it whether our language has a word for it or not. The Hebrew does have two words for “one.” If you wanted to refer to an absolute one you could do that by using *yachid*. This is the understanding of Judaism since the time of Maimonides; modern Judaism has stressed that God is absolute one, God is *yachid*. The problem with this is that the OT never refers to God as *yachid*. Always and everywhere, from the Great Shema on it refers to God as *echad*. And the Hebrew word *echad* means a oneness with multiplicity in the oneness. We're familiar with this: one cluster of bananas, there's just one cluster but inside the one there are multiple bananas; take the idea of a political administration, there is one administration but within that administration there are many offices; or the idea of a country, it's just one country but it has multiple states or regions, those are examples of how *echad* would be used to communicate the idea of singularity with diversity inside the singularity.

Then we came to the second evidence and these are the **Plural References to God**. If God is an absolute one, a solitary monotheism as modern Judaism and Islam claim, then what is the explanation for God referring to Himself in the plural? Gen 1:26, “Let Us make man in Our image.” Who's Us? There have been attempts to get around this by saying God is referring to Himself

and the angels so that God and the angels created but the problem with that is that Isaiah says God alone created, no angels were involved in creating, angels were created but angels didn't do any of the creating. Others have tried to say it's simply a plural of majesty, when a really important figure speaks he uses the plural to refer to Himself, so it's said this was just a plural of majesty, but it doesn't really do justice to why such plurals of majesty would ever have arisen in human language if indeed there was not first a plurality in God. So that's another evidence for diversity in God. By the way, we wouldn't want to use these evidences to prove the Trinity, you can't say the Trinity is in Gen 1:26, all you can argue from a plural pronoun is multiplicity, more than one. You can't say the more than one is three, you only know that from hindsight, but the evidence that there is a multiplicity in God is as early as Gen 1, later the number three becomes apparent as more revelation is given.

Third we came to a strange figure in the OT, the **Angel of YHWH**. The question about this angel is is this angel just a normal angel, a created angel, or someone else? The problem with saying this angel is a created angel is that this angel permits himself to be worshipped. Yet godly angels never permit themselves to be worshipped and so if this angel does permit Himself to be worshipped then He must be God. Look at Exod 13:21. Exodus, remember our great event of the Exodus. What does this event teach? The doctrine of judgment/salvation. The pages of Exodus demonstrate that only God can author our salvation. We're not the authors of our salvation, the government isn't the author of salvation, God is a savior. After He's saved us He goes before us to lead us, look at verse 21. "The Lord," that's YHWH, "the Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night." Now that's YHWH going before them. Turn to Exod 14:19, we get a little additional commentary on the pillar that led them. "The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them." Now wait a minute. Is YHWH in the pillar of cloud or is an angel of God in the cloud? It seems they are one and the same, doing the same function, yet at the same time they seem distinct. You see this kind of thing through the OT in a number of passages. Who is this angel of YHWH? Observing from other passages that no one has ever seen God in His fullness

and yet men did see the Lord Jesus Christ we conclude that the angel of YHWH was the pre-incarnate Son of God.

The fourth evidence is another strange one and is often overlooked, the **Word or Wisdom of the Lord**. The thing about the word of the Lord most of the time when we think of that expression, the word of the Lord came to prophet so and so, we just think of a voice coming out of the clouds. But in many cases YHWH sends His word to do things and the word returns to Him. It's not 100% clear. All I'm trying to point out is that the OT text has these openings, these cracked doors that invite us to consider.

Fifth, we're going to **Explicit References**. These are very interesting texts. Here is where the Trinity may indeed be present in the OT in very clear form. Isaiah 48:16, Yahweh speaks. You've got to see the context so go to verse 12 and we identify the speaker. It's all quotes in your translation. Who starts off the speech? "Listen to me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last." Who's the speaker? YHWH! Now go to verse 16, what do you make of this? It says: "Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first time I have not spoken in secret, from the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit." Question: what is the antecedent of the pronoun Me? Every pronoun has an antecedent; the antecedent means a noun that goes before the pronoun. What's the antecedent of Me? The speaker, but who's the speaker? YHWH. So now you've got two YHWH's here, verse 16, "The Lord God," that's YHWH's name there, "The Lord God sent Me," and Me is YHWH in verse 12, "*and* [He sent] His Spirit." This is a pretty powerful text; you have to think about it.

The other text I cite is in Isaiah 61:1. This is a quote that one Sabbath day the Lord Jesus Christ got up in a synagogue, the book of Luke recounts this, and He quotes this passage, and the people really get ticked off. They know what He meant when He got up and said this, this young son of a carpenter coming up in our synagogue and daring to say after reading this scroll, because the men in the congregation would take turns reading the Bible, and he read the scroll and said, "This day its fulfilled in your midst, it's Me," I'm the guy spoken of in Isa 61. And he walked over and sat down. Can you imagine the crowd's response when He said that? In Isa 61:1, we've got to know the context so go to the previous verse, Isaiah 60:22. Who's speaking, in verse 22 it's "I, the LORD." Now in Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is

upon me, because the LORD has anointed Me—“who’s the antecedent of the pronoun Me? The speaker of verse 22; who’s that? It’s the Lord. Now you’ve got the Lord has anointed the Lord, moreover, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me.... To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners.” That looks like three people to me.

So remember there are these two passages in the OT, Isaiah 61:1 and Isaiah 48:16, and there’s something going on here.

That such is the case is clear by the time you reach the NT because the NT authors, who were monotheistic Jews, do not have a problem referring to God as both one and three. They do not hold that there are three gods, but that there is one God who is Father, Son and Spirit. Nor do they reveal any inclination that they are inventing a new doctrine. It is rather quite easy for them and natural for them to speak this way. What we’re trying to show here is that even with the Trinity doctrine there is not much new with the NT. B. B. Warfield, one of the great Reformed theologians at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century comments, “If they [NT writers] betray no sense of novelty in so speaking [of God as a Trinity], this is undoubtedly in part because it was no longer a novelty so to speak of Him. It is clear...that as we read the New Testament, we are not witnessing the birth of a new conception of God...The doctrine of the Trinity does not appear in the New Testament in the making, but as already made.” As we’ve said numerous times, there is not much new in the NT. Even the Trinity is a conception of God already revealed in the OT.

But today we want to come to the NT supporting data because we do get clarity. We can’t go through all of it, this class is a framework, not a detail. So today I want to examine the text only for the Third Person of the Trinity. I think we’ve shown plenty about the deity of the Father and the deity of the Son, but there’s still the Third Person of the Trinity, the Spirit. Often in church history and in practical Christian life the Spirit kind of gets the short end of the stick here, not being given due honor. The Holy Spirit is sometimes conceived of as a vague impersonal force, rather than a full person. That’s the assertion that’s made. But the NT brings into focus the personality of the Spirit of God, that it’s not just an influence of God; it’s a person, with all the attributes of God.

One of the problems in the text is because it's translated "it" and the reason it's translated "it" is because the word "spirit" is neuter, it's neither male nor female gender, it's just neuter, so it comes across as an impersonal "it." Why the Holy Spirit is neuter I don't know. Obviously there must be a theological reason for it. What I want to do is try and capture the imagery of "Spirit." There are two words, one in Hebrew and one in Greek that are translated spirit. In the OT it's *ruach*, and in the NT it's *pneuma*. We get the word pneumonia from this word; it's a word that is associated with air in the lungs, we still use it that way, because "spirit" and "breath" are the same, they come out of the same noun, same concept.

Here's the concept behind the words that are used for the third person of the Trinity. "The general term spirit is visualized in the Bible as breath or *wind*, something that is active but that is never seen directly (John 3:8).

Humankind is sometimes seen as a body of water stirred up and blown about by spiritual forces (Dan 7; Eph. 4:14)." Remember what the Ephesians passage says, unstable Christians tossed about by waves and blown around by every wind of doctrine. That's the image. In Daniel 7 the idea is that human kingdoms rise up out of the sea, it's a picture of the nations as chaotic, ruled by the human race that is very unstable and whoooo, the wind blows upon it and moves it. Always it's the sea of humanity and the winds that blow upon them are the spirits, evil spirits that blow upon the waters and influence it, move it, stir it up. Both Daniel and Paul give the Biblical view of history that we are the water and we are under great spiritual influences or powers all around us. We, in our western mind, like to think of forces in history, physical forces, economic forces, political forces, racial forces, military forces, etc...But frankly, it's a very shallow view of history because we fail to see beyond these forces to the meta-forces, what is the cause of those forces? And why is it that they're so unpredictable. No economist yet has been able to predict anything of significance; if they were they'd be billionaires. Here these guys are teaching in college campuses, making all these pontifical announcements about economic forces, and the simple street test is they're not billionaires and therefore they do not know what they're talking about. They have a lot of ideas and they project them, but they're not predicting too well. They can't even do as well as most people in meteorology.

The point is that the Holy Spirit and other spirits are active all the time behind the curtain of history. The picture then is of wind, breath. Remember God said I made man's body in the Garden of Eden; the picture was He made it out of the dirt of the ground, and what did God do after He finished Adam's body? He breathed into it. Doesn't that remind you of first aid, CPR? God breathed into the nostrils of Adam. And it was a picture of breath; it's not some spooky fourth dimension type thing. If you were there and had a video camera that's what he would look like, the manifestation of God, Second Person, took this lump of clay, working with it and goes whooo, and there's Adam. So the breath, the coming of the breath is a picture of the Spirit.

Associated with this is another picture and you get this in Prov 1:23. Here's a classic passage that gives you this idea, it relates the *pneuma* with speech. I take you to Prov. 1:23 because it's talking about ordinary teaching, but it uses terminology the NT later uses for such wondrous events as Pentecost. Because people read the NT and they don't read the OT, they get into Acts and see Pentecost, the pouring out of the Spirit, and they conceive of all this stuff that goes on, mystical spooky stuff, and fail to see and capture the metaphor. The language that is used to describe Pentecost is right here, in Prov 1:23. Look how it occurs. Wisdom is speaking, "Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you." That is called parallelism in Hebrew poetry. Clause #1 is parallel in meaning to clause #2. What does clause #2 say; forget clause #1 for a moment. "I will make my words known to you." That's speech. What's the object of speech? Communication of content, truth goes from mind #1 to mind #2. "I will make my words known to you," I'm going to talk to you, I'm going to teach you, I'm going to give you content. Parallel to clause #2 is clause #1, and what is clause #1? "I will pour out my spirit on you." So what is pouring out of the spirit? It's revelation of the Word of God. So you have the Spirit here and you have the Word. That describes the relationship of the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity, that very metaphor.

Our throats, our lungs and our larynx are built and designed by God to reveal this truth. You can't speak without air. Something's got to pass across the vocal cords, you've got to make them move, that's the only way we make sound. So what does God have us do? He has us breathe, we have lungs, and they're pushing air across the vocal cords, that's the only way we can speak. So our throats, our lungs, our larynx and the air around us are designed to

teach us the truth that the spirit is poured out means that we have ideas in our hearts that we want to express, we want to share. And when we speak and we make our hearts known, what this text is saying, it's pouring out our spirit to others. That's what pouring the spirit out is, there's nothing whooooo about it. The pouring out of the spirit is a synonym for communication, verbal communication of content.

If people would just get this out of Prov 1:23 when they get over in Acts and they start seeing the pouring out of the Spirit, what was that? The pouring out of the Spirit was the beginning of the NT revelation coming through the apostles and the prophets. It was words, it was speech in different languages that communicated the magnificent things God had done in Jesus Christ. So again, pay attention to OT text because that sets you up for the NT.

A little more about the personality of the Holy Spirit. Acts 5:3 is a classic text used for years by theologians to emphasize the personality of the Holy Spirit. Remember the incident: Ananias and his wife wanted to impress everyone by how much money they were giving to the church and so they said - we sold some land and we give all the proceeds to the church, but really they kept some back for their personal piggy bank. "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why hast Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit....'" Can you lie to an "it?" You lie to people, not an "it," not a force. So this is one of the classic NT passages where you see the Holy Spirit presented as a full person. Moreover, in verse 4, "...You have not lied to men, but to God." So not only is the full personality of the Holy Spirit given, but the full deity of the Holy Spirit is given in this text. There are a lot of other verses that support the personality of the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor 3:17; 1 Thess 3:11-13 cf. Rom 5:5; Acts 28:25-27; Isa 6:9-10; Heb 10:15-17 cf. Jer 31:31-34)

In Matt 28:19 the baptismal formula is another powerful reference of God's threeness and His oneness that includes the Spirit. What we want to point out in Matt 28:19 is that the "name" is singular. That's very significant. For a Jewish mind, what is the name of Yahweh? It's very sacred. The name of Yahweh is so sacred that they lost how to pronounce it. Nobody to this day knows how the Tetragrammaton is to be pronounced. We know it's not Jehovah, Jehovah just takes the vowels from Adonai, so it's ironic the Jehovah's Witnesses have latched on to that. But when we say Yahweh it's just a guess; we don't know because in the Hebrew text all we have is

consonants, no vowels in there. The vowels have to all be supplied, so we wind up with this thing called the Tetragrammaton, and that's considered so sacred nobody would pronounce it for centuries. Because nobody pronounced it for centuries they forgot how to pronounce it and the vowels dropped out and were lost.

In light of all that, now let's look at verse 19: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name," what you have to think about here in verse 19 is that everything that follows that noun, "name," in the rest of that clause, "of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit," all that is a new revelation of what the name of God is. It's not just as simple and straightforward as it would seem to the casual reader. To someone who knew his OT well, this is an exposition of the name of YHWH. The name of YHWH is now the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a tremendous, powerful revelation of the Trinity here, in the baptismal formula.

There's one other passage, 2 Cor 13:14 that we often use in our church services, and it is a third classic reference where the Trinity in the NT occurs in a mature way. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." There the tri-unity of God is distinguished by what they do. God referring to the Father as is typical in the NT. Here is where the distinct roles come in and in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity there are two terms that are used by students of this doctrine. One is called the ontological Trinity, and the other is called the economic Trinity. That's talking about the difference between God in His own existence and being and God in relation to the created universe. So the ontological Trinity is discussing the Trinity before creation, when there was no plan of salvation being executed, no fall actually having occurred. In that situation you have the ontological Trinity. The economic Trinity is the description of how the Trinity works with respect to history. In 2 Cor 13 the roles that are introduced in that benediction refer to the economic Trinity, watching the Trinity doing things, particularly doing things in the plan of salvation. Notice what is ascribed to each of the three persons. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," grace comes to central focus in the person of the Son, "the love of God," for "God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son," so the Father is grace too but the idea is that the love that motivates is behind the grace, "and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit," He's the one that brings it to us as individuals, always glorifying Jesus Christ, never drawing



attention to Himself. That's why the Holy Spirit doctrine is so difficult, because He doesn't ever make Himself an issue; He makes Jesus Christ the issue. It's a model of what we should be doing. People get off into emphasizing the Holy Spirit, the Charismatic movement is about that, they have their eyes on the wrong member of the Trinity. Our eyes are to be fixed on Jesus, not the Spirit, not the Father. But there you see the Trinity, there's the NT evidences.

I'm going to show you how the Trinity came to be formulated after centuries of thought. These words are not casual. "The Nicene Creed as usually recited in Western churches says," look at the titles; we're not focusing so much on the deity of Christ as the whole Trinity itself. "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." See, there's the First Person, the First Person is put first. "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God: Begotten of His father before all words [God of God], Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made," and there's the strong deity of the Son, they're using every way... those poor people that wrote that Nicene Creed, they're trying to cut Arianism out, so they're doing everything they can. I want to draw your attention to one phrase, "Begotten, not made," because every heretic in church history camps on the word "Begotten," and what do you suppose heretics do with that word? Make Jesus created, He's begotten. We'll get to that in just a moment but why did the fathers put "begotten" in the Creed then if it caused so many problems? They had a reason. "Begotten, not made," they had to put that "not made" on there so that it would knock out the false idea that begetting means He was made. So they had to put that in there to correct it. "...Being of one substance [essence] with the Father; by whom all things were made..." So that last clause elevates the Lord Jesus Christ to what role? It makes Him the Creator of the universe. Now look what they do with the Holy Spirit. "And [I believe] in the Holy Ghost," the Holy Spirit, "the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified." The key word to underline there that has caused problems down through history is "proceedeth." And you'll note in brackets "[and the Son]", that's the filioque clause that we speak of on occasion. It's that little clause that separated the Eastern Church from the Western Church. That's the clause that made Russian Orthodox Church the forerunner of communism, because what it did was it demeaned, "and the Son," now you have the Holy Spirit sent from the

Father, the Son has nothing to do with it, the Son is sort of a minor person of the Trinity, and wherever Jesus Christ was small, what expands to fill His place? The state. So in societies where you have a weak Christology, and the Russian Orthodox Church has always had a weak Christology; the Greek Orthodox has had a weak Christology because they rejected this filioque clause. So those little brackets have a lot of implications.

Article 1 of the Episcopalian Creed, the Anglican Church. The Anglican Church shows Reformation thinking because Henry, while he was trying to mess around with all of his wives did one good thing - he decided that he didn't know what he was doing in the Church so he sent to Geneva and got some people to come from Geneva and give some theology to the Church of England. "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." There's another great creed trying to come to grips with the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Westminster Confession of Faith is probably one of the most debated and refined creeds. We wouldn't agree with everything in the Westminster Confession of Faith, particularly its eschatology, but on the other hand it's a very powerful thing. This was ironed out by the Puritans, this was ironed out by people who were very Biblically literate, and it was a grand, high level of Westminster that this came out of.

"There is but one only, living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute ... In the unity of the God head there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: The Father is of none," notice what they've done here in the Westminster Confession of Faith. They're trying to get at those words, proceedeth and begotten, "The Father is of none, neither begotten, not proceeding;" what they're trying to say there is "neither begotten" distinguishes Him from the Son, so neither begotten distinguishes the Father from the Son, "not proceeding distinguishes Him from the Son and the Spirit, "the Son is eternally begotten of the Father;" and there they qualify

themselves. Now watch it. See, begotten in context is not talking about a point in time that the Son was created, He's eternally begotten, it's not just at the incarnation or something, but always going on, whatever this is, "the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."

In other words, the structure, are they referring to the economic Trinity or are they referring to the ontological Trinity here when they use the word "eternal?" They're using the ontological Trinity. What they're attempting to do here is to attribute distinct aspects within the members of the Trinity that existed forever and ever and are immutable. They don't change in the OT; they don't change in the NT, if we could take a time machine before creation God would still have these differences in Himself. He doesn't become these things when history begins or because of what happens in history. The Father, the Son and the Spirit have never changed in their relationships or their roles, they are eternal. What we observe in the plan of salvation is but a revelation of eternally immutable distinctions.

What I've tried to do with Trinity doctrine is break it into five propositions, we don't have time to go through all these today so I'll just start with one. "1. God is Absolutely One." Think about that and think about the usual illustrations people come up with for the Trinity. Light, wave particle, etc..., eggs...well, these aren't super bad illustrations but they're not super good either, they're finite and by definition the Trinity is not finite, so there's always a categorical failure to encapsulate God in the finite. I'll give you some of what men have come up with next week but know that the test for these illustrations is the five propositions we're going through. Whatever illustration you come up with for the Trinity, you're free to come up with...there's many analogies out there, but just be sure that your thinking in terms of these five propositions because if you don't you're going to cut Him down to size where you've encapsulated Him and defined Him after creation and when you do that you've created a God. We have to be careful how we handle this.

The first one is "God is Absolutely One. God cannot be divided into parts. He is not a divine being who can be described (as pagan thought tries inevitably to do) by prior categories or attributes." What I'm getting at there is the idea that you have this idea of goodness, this idea of eternity, the idea of love, and then we fit God into that category. The category is already there like a

yardstick and then God comes along and we put Him in our concept. You can't do that, that's a pagan way of thinking. What we have to do, what we're challenged to do by Scripture is to reverse the process and say it's God's character that establishes the yardstick. Righteousness in the final analysis is not a category that is there before God and God reaches out and adopts it. Righteousness is what God is like, that's the highest, that's the most complete, that's the deepest exposition of righteousness, what He's like. Love is not a quality or an attribute like Aristotle conceived of it, and then God happens to have that quality. It's rather that God's character sets up the category. The categories follow God, not God following the categories.

I make that point because now that we're getting into the Trinity we're going to deal with oneness and threeness, and see what happens. The pagan thinks of a oneness and a threeness in mathematical terms, he's got his number system, and then he says how do we explain God in terms of the number system. Whereas, what we should do is turn this whole thing around and say the reason we have numbers is because God's character is that way, He's the ground of the number, therefore we have numbers. We don't say we have numbers whether or not God exists and we will try to fit Him into our abstract idea of our idea of numbers. That's turning things on its head. That's the Continuity of Being view, that's pagan thought, the idea that I can have a category that comes from my mind, or collective humanity, that is above both God and man and applies to each in the same way and with the same authority. No. The Bible insists that it is God's character that sets up the qualities.

Isaiah 40:18 is a passage in the OT that says "To whom then will you liken God; Or what likeness will you compare with Him?" He challenges, go ahead, name a category by which you can measure Me. It's a very important verse, it clearly denies that there is any such prior category to which God can be likened or classified. "Any such categories comprehended by man are (q)ualities that themselves derive from the Creator. Our sense of geometry and space derive from His Omnipresence. Our sense of time derives from His eternality. His attributes, therefore, are not impersonal Ideals thought by man; they are (Q)ualities of His personal character. God *is* each one of these characteristics entirely. *All* of God is involved in righteousness, *all* of God is involved in justice, and so on."

What I'm trying to say there is avoid the pie concept of God. If you look at a pie chart and it's all slices, and here's love, here's .... No-no, wrong picture, because that would imply there are parts of God that aren't righteous. Then over here He's righteous, here He's love, but here He's... it gets too fouled up to do it that way. The only way we can handle this is to make all of Him righteous, all of Him is love, all of Him is holy, they are all mutually exhaustive of one another. There's no conflict between say God's love and God's holiness. So, however we define holiness and love we've got to remember that they co-existed for all eternity in the character of God without conflict. We don't understand how it all works but we do know *that* it does work since our concepts of love and holiness stem from His.

Nor do we say in the same analogy of the pie that the Father is 1/3 God and the Son is 1/3 God and the Spirit is 1/3 God, and when we put the three Persons together we get God. That's not God because if you do that the Father is less than God, the Son is less than God, the Spirit is less than God because you'd have to have all three to have God, which means you're doing addition with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that God is a composite being of Father, Son and Spirit. That's not right, the Father is all God, the Son is all God, and the Spirit is all God. If that's the case then we have mutual exhaustiveness here too. And that is the case.

So when we come to God He is absolutely one, He is not divided into parts; the very idea of unity comes out of God. Next time we'll go into proposition two, God is absolutely three and we'll finish the five propositions, and if you want, think through some illustrations from creation, they're at least finite, we can understand them, and the idea that there are triads in creation shows us creation is reflective. Why do triads exist in creation? That's a question to ask. But we'll continue working with the Trinity. Trinity is very challenging to work with but hopefully these five propositions will help you keep everything in balance, because later on we'll deal with a very practical result, this comes out in the issue of prayer. When we pray, who do we pray to? We were asked to be part of the Christmas walk, the annual Christmas walk thing each year, and as I analyzed the material you pray at one church to the Father, we're fine with that, at another church you pray to the Son, at another church you pray to the Spirit. I'll show you that if you pray to the Son you've allocated the intercessory ministry from the Son to somewhere else and then you have a missing element needed, something else, and

historically you know what the something else was? It was Mary. So you've got to watch it, there are certain things that fall out of this. Mary becomes the fourth person of the Trinity. Why is that? Because we've made Christ so unapproachable that the only way to approach Him is through the mother, the way to a son's heart is through his mother, we've all seen that, that's a very earthly, pagan way of thinking. But if we go to the Father in the name of the Son, the Son is the intercessor, so I don't need Mary; I have direct access to the Son. So there are some practical things, even what we would think of as just simple, normal, every day prayer life that flows out of this Trinity.

That's why these guys were so concerned when they did the Nicene Creed and they did the Westminster Confession, these guys put a lot of time into it. They weren't just playing theological games because they realized if they didn't get it right, this house was nothing more than a house of cards and it wouldn't stand.

[Back To The Top](#)

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2010