

Belgic Confession of Faith 8-9 – Three Things About The Trinity

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: No other faith, no other religion, believes in a triune God 三一真神 (Trinity). But where does the word “Trinity” come from? “Trinity” is made up of the words “three” and “unity.” The term “Trinity” was used in reaction to the errors of some men who taught that God was one God and one person, instead of one God but three persons.

Those who taught that God was one God and one person, not a Trinity, had different reasons for that:

1. Some believed that Jesus is not God, but God only adopted Jesus as his son after he was born.
2. Others believed that Jesus was not God and God simply changed forms from one person to another. Jesus was one form!
3. There were some who believed that the Holy Spirit is not God, but that he was only a force sent out by God.

You will hear the truth about the Trinity today.

Our headings are:

The Unity of God

The Tri-Unity of God

The Economic Tri-unity God.

Our goals are: That knowing the gloriousness of the Trinitarian God whom you serve, you will stand in awe and humility before him, and you will worship him better.

According to this truth and this Word of God, we believe in one only God, who is the one single essence, in which are three persons, really, truly, and eternally distinct according to their incommunicable properties; namely, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is the cause, origin, and beginning of all things visible and invisible; the Son is the word, wisdom, and image of the Father; the Holy Spirit is the eternal power and might, proceeding from the Father and the Son. Nevertheless, God is not by this distinction divided into three, since the Holy Scriptures teach us that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit have each His personality, distinguished by Their properties; but in **such wise that these three persons are but one only God**.

Hence, then, it is evident that the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, and likewise the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. Nevertheless, these persons thus distinguished are not divided, nor intermixed; for the Father has not assumed the flesh, nor has the Holy Spirit, but the Son only. The Father has never been without His Son, or without His Holy Spirit. For They are all three co-eternal and co-essential. There is neither first nor last; for **They are all three one, in truth, in power, in goodness, and in mercy**.

根据此真理并神的道，我们相信只有一位神，他只有一个本质 1，而分三个位格 2，根据各位格不变的本性，永远分清，即圣父、圣子与圣灵 3。圣父为一切有形与无形之事物的原因，来源与起始 4；圣子是圣父的道 5、智慧 6 与形像 7；圣灵是由父与子所发出 8 永远的能力 9。虽然如此，神并不因此分为三个，因为圣经教导我们，圣父、圣子、圣灵每位都有他们的位格，由他们的属性而分清；虽然如此，这三位却是一位神。由此证明圣父非圣子，圣子亦非圣父；照样，圣灵既非圣父，亦非圣子。虽然如此，这些位格如此分清，但不分开，亦不互相混合；因为圣父并未取了肉身，圣灵亦未如此，只有圣子 10。圣父向来未有离开圣子，或离开圣灵。因为他们是同永远与同质的。无始无终，无先无后；因为他们在真理上，在能力上，在善良上与恩慈上是三而一的。

The Unity of God

1. You would often hear preachers saying that God is One, and they are right. “God is One” is in the preface of the 10 commandments and is often repeated the Holy Scriptures.

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, **the LORD is one!**

The Jews call this verse a Kiriathshema – something they recited twice per day.

The introduction to this verse is called the **Shema Yisrael – Hear, O Israel**. (We call the Lord’s Prayer “Our Father.”) The fact that it was repeated twice per day showed how important it was. **So why was this important?** It was important because it identified God as one...one God. But what is interesting is that the word “one” is “echhad” which means a great one – not an “ordinary one.” Later, Apostle Paul reminded Timothy of the “oneness” of God.

1 Timothy 2:5 - **For there is one God...**

Isaiah quoted the Lord in exactly the same way.

Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; **Besides Me there is no God.**

So let there be no doubt that there is only one God of heaven and earth.

God is one eternal, self-existent being. He alone is God and there is none else beside him. He is omnipotent 无所不能, he alone. He is omnipresent 无所不在 – only he can be. He is omniscient 无所不知 – only he knows all things. He is infinite, perfectly good, and self-sufficient, not needing anything from man...

2. Muslims and Jews often attack Christians, accusing us of worshipping 3 gods. But we don’t. We can’t.

3. What lessons can you learn from the fact that there is “one true God?”

a. Since there is one God, only he is to receive worship from man... all other gods of all other religions are false. To worship any other God is a perversion. Don't join in pagan worship... Don't do it to make people feel comfortable. Refuse to join them so that they feel uncomfortable.

b. Take this as a warning to not adore sports or movie stars either or view anything in this world as a god. This is not an idle warning. God pronounced many curses on those that worship any other god. Don't make yourself into God... or your children... or your spouse. God is jealous and he might take away what you make into a god.

The Tri-unity God

1. The Trinity has some remarkable parallels in society.

Man's soul engages in 3 activities: the intellectual, the volitional 意志, and the emotional.

Matter exists in 3 forms: gasses, liquids, and solids.

We experience time in 3 dimensions: the past, the present, and the future.

There are 3 kingdoms or orders: the mineral, the plant, and the animal.

The rainbow is dominated by 3 primary colors: red, yellow, and blue.

While these are not proofs of the Trinity, they make wonder if God did not intend for you to marvel at these things.

These things help to corroborate 佐证 what you read in the Bible... where the Trinity is so clearly taught that even the blind could see it.

2. The Bible teaches this 1 and only God exists in 3 distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All 3 persons have the incommunicable attributes 不能传达的属性 of God alone. Incommunicable attributes are attributes that cannot be given to man. For example: all power, all knowing, present everywhere.

3. How can you see that there are 3 persons in the Godhead? The Bible. You can begin to see evidence that God was more than on persons in the first chapter of the Bible.

Genesis 1:27-28 - So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them...

The word used for God is "elohim" which is a unique plural word. "Im" at the end of a word signifies plurality. Abram, after he was promised to be the father of all nations, became Abrah -im.

4. What about specific teaching about the Trinity? The Scriptures are full of the description of the Trinity.

a. At the baptism of God the Son (Jesus) by John all three persons of the triune God were clearly present. (The Father speaks from heaven, the Holy Spirit comes down.)

b. The baptismal formula announced by Jesus clearly teaches the Trinity. In the baptismal form the minister will say: I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (You are only baptized into God.)

c. The angel's advent message to Mary reveals the triune God. The Father spoke, the Holy Spirit will work through Mary, The Son will be born.

d. The apostolic blessing (Benediction 祝福) of Paul is clearly Trinitarian.

2Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

5. Now let's get specific? How is person proved to be a member of the Godhead?

1. The Father

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said **that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.**

The Jews did not deny the Trinity. They denied that Jesus was part of the Trinity. They killed him for this claim.

1Corinthians 8:6 - yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him...

2. The Son

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.**

This "Word" who was "God" was the Son. He came and lived among the Jews 2000 years ago. He was Creator also.

Colossians 1:16 - For **by Him all things were created** that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

3. The Holy Spirit was called "God" by Apostle Peter.

Acts 5:3-4 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to **lie to the Holy Spirit** and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? "While it remained, was it not your own? And

after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart?
You have not lied to men but to God."

6. This is where most cults 邪派 fail; they depart from the Trinity – Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Unitarians, etc.

7. What becomes clear, however, is that you cannot comprehend 理解 the Trinity. God is so great that he is not contained in one person...but in 3. Can you then argue that since you don't fully understand the Trinity that you must reject it? No, the Bible says it. God's Word is true. You must humbly accept it and know that your finite mind cannot fully comprehend the great doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity has been affirmed throughout history.

8. You cannot be a Christian without believing in the Trinity. It is foundational 基础性 to faith. The Bible teaches that Christ must be the object of your faith and the Bible teaches that your faith must be in God. Conclusion you must believe that Jesus is God.

9. Your Trinitarian God is not the same God that Muslims worship, though they argue this. And don't ever concede 承认 that we have 3 gods, as Muslims charge also. (Unpardonable sin-shirk) Don't ask me to explain!

The Economic (Work of) Tri-Unity God

1. The Father is the cause and source of all things. While the Son and the Spirit were involved in creation, their plan was from the Father. He was the foreordainer of all things and so is rightly credited with creation. (See Psalm 90.)
Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...

2. The Son is the Word (John 1), wisdom (Proverbs), and image (Colossians 1:15) of the Father. He is your Savior and Redeemer by His blood. He is your eternal King who rules over you and protects you.
Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

3. The Holy Spirit is the eternal person coming from the Father and the Son. Holy Spirit is your Sanctifier. He does this by dwelling in your hearts. He seals you for eternity. He prays for you and he purifies faulty prayers you make.
Ephesians 1:13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

4. Lessons:

- a. You must observe the workings and ways of each person of the Trinity to worship God better...** The ignorant cannot worship properly. Sincerity is not enough. You will **grow in awe as you consider the work of the Trinity.**
- b. You must learn to emphasize the work of each person of the Godhead when you bring the Gospel to the lost.** It is not enough to say, "Jesus loves you." There is no context. Teach of election, redemption, and sanctification. Bring the full Gospel to the Lost.

Conclusion:

There is 1 God in 3 persons who perfectly work together. All 3 are necessary for your salvation. The Father chose you, the Son redeemed you, and the Spirit sealed you. If 1 of these persons were not God, you could not be saved from your sins. Period.

Brothers and Sisters:

1. You worship this Triune God, Jehovah God. You don't worship Allah, or Brahma, or Buddha. Those are all false gods who cannot see, hear, think, or act. None can alter the events of the world. None can secure you for eternity.

2. What does accepting this great doctrine mean to you? Accepting this doctrine will **humble you and make you realize how great God is.** Accepting this doctrine will make you **love the Lord and worship him better** – seeing his greatness and your sins and helplessness without him. Accepting this doctrine will make **you serve God with confidence,** knowing he is your Creator and Preserver. Accepting this doctrine **will take away fear of the future,** for God's Holy Spirit seals you to the end of the world.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you are serving an idol 偶像. Maybe you've made idols of famous people, of money, of children, or of career. But Jehovah God, is the one and only God. If you surrender to him and let him be the center of your life

you will experience his great blessings, love, and care. But if you reject him, by his great power, he will crush you and banish 摒弃 you to hell forever. The choice is yours.