

DEFINITION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

Probably the best written statement of what the Trinity doctrine teaches is the Athanasian Creed. This creed was not written by Athanasius himself, and both the date and authorship are uncertain. Some say that it was formulated in the 5th Century. ISBE says that it was nowhere mentioned at the Catholic Synods before the 8th Century. The Roman Catholic Church uses it in its services on Sundays, mainly in Lent and Advent. Greek Orthodox places it as Orthodox teaching. The Anglican Church outside Ireland and America uses it on great festivals. The Lutheran Church puts it in the Book of Concord - Luther doubted whether anything so "weighty and glorious" had been written since the New Testament times. (History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith, Curtis, p. 82)

ATHANASIAN CREED (Part I)

"Whosoever would be saved must above all hold the Catholic faith, which except a man have kept whole and inviolate, he shall without doubt perish eternally. Now the Catholic faith is this,

I. That we worship one God in a Trinity and a Trinity in a unity, neither confusing the persons nor separating the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit, but of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit the Divinity is one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. As the Father is, such is the Son, and such the Holy Spirit. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is infinite, the Son is infinite, and the Holy Spirit is infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal, and yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal, just as there are not three uncreated nor three infinities, but one uncreated and one infinite. Likewise the Father is omnipotent, the Son is omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent, and there are not three omnipotents, but one omnipotent. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods, but there is one God. So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord, and yet there are not three Lords, but there is one Lord. For just as we are compelled by Christian truth to confess each person singly both God and Lord, so by the Catholic religion we are forbidden to speak of three Gods or Lords. The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created nor begotten, but proceeding. There is therefore one Father, not three fathers, one Son, not three sons, one Holy Spirit, not three holy spirits. And in this Trinity there is no earlier or later, no greater or less, but the whole three persons are coeternal and coequal with each other; so that in all things, as is aforesaid, both a Trinity in a unity and a unity in a Trinity is to be worshipped. Let him, therefore, who would be saved think thus of the Trinity."

ISBE, Vol. V, pp. 3012, 3016 says the Trinity is:

"the doctrine that there is one only and true God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three coeternal and coequal persons, the same in substance but distinct in subsistence."

*Subsistence - existence or inherent quality.
Substance - the material of which anything is made.*

"when we have said these three things, then - that there is but one God, that the Father and the Son and the Spirit is each God, that the Father and the Son and the Spirit is each a distinct person -- we have enunciated the doctrine of the Trinity in its completeness."

Chapter Two

HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE NATURE OF GOD
IN THE EARLY CENTURIES OF CHRISTIANITY

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Part I

INTRODUCTION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

The general trend of the development of the doctrine of the Trinity is almost unanimously agreed upon by secular historians and professors of church history. To get an accurate concept of how and why it was conceived, however, one needs to obtain a relatively complete picture of the problems and reactions that the Post-Apostolic Church was involved in -- and this can be done only by a full, unbiased treatment of the facts. We can have no truly objective story of the Trinitarian controversy, however, for the following reasons:

First, history is not impeccable, but as its name implies is "his story," and is usually colored by prejudice whenever controversy is involved.

Secondly, it is impossible for a historian to present an objective review, for to do this, he has to present equal testimony from both sides --and this is not available.¹ When all anti-trinitarians were anathematized by the council of Nicea, their works were burned. Our knowledge of them comes mainly from hard-core Trinitarians, who wrote with great vehemence during the heated years of Theological battle.² Moreover, nearly all theologians and historians since, have imbibed this Catholic doctrine and are more than willing to defend it. When, however, Trinitarians admit the weaknesses of their own system, the late date of their theology, and details that are embarrassing to their own cause -- we may be sure that they are revealing the truth.

This brief history is, therefore, a history stripped of the glorifications of the Trinity -- all of which are opinions not facts. The acknowledgements of Trinitarian problems have been made a part of this history, for without it the account would be even more one-sided, for we have no testimony from opposing sources.

¹The principle source of information of Monarchianism is the work of Hippolytus (who was bitterly opposed to it) and Tertullian's "Adversus Praxean"; A Source Book for Ancient Church History, by Ayer; and The History of Christian Thought, by McGiffert. "None can at this date say what precisely were Sabellius's opinions" - Ency. of Religion and Ethics, by James Hastings.

²"Tertullian met Praxeas and sarcastically charged him with having executed at Rome two commissions of the devil, having driven away the Holy Ghost and having crucified the Father (Praxeas thought the Catholic doctrine tritheistic)." - History of the Christian Church, by Phillip Schaff.

"Hippolytus...calls Callistus 'An unreasonable and treacherous man, who brought together blasphemies from above and below, only to speak against the truth, and was not ashamed to fall now into the error of Sabellius.'" - History of the Christian Church, by Phillip Schaff

History is often inaccurate and contradictory to itself; the reader may, therefore, find information at variance with some of the quotations of this account, as the author also has found. Some of these discrepancies are not real, they are the result of an incomplete history--no one can include all the details. A review of several sources is necessary to obtain even a relatively accurate picture.

For the sake of simplicity and brevity, I have woven together the pertinent data from a number of respected authorities into one short history. I have not undertaken to rewrite that history in my own words-- I have, instead, arranged the information as a compilation of quotations.

So that the reader may be fully informed, I have printed the quotations in capital letters and have included sub-numbers after each quotation, referring to the source of information. Words in small letters are either connecting words or are a rearranged condensation of quotations. Words in small letters in parenthesis, are "my" comments. Key words have been underlined to draw them more forcibly to the attention of the reader.

In the interest of brevity, I have often left out less pertinent sections of quotations. To keep from breaking up the continuity of the history, I have not indicated these omission by the usual signs of ellipses. I have also rearranged some data, in order to make a complete and comprehensible thought without using all the words the writer used, which oftentimes involves several paragraphs.

Sub-numbers refer to the following sources of information.

- 1 - The Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 27, p. 67, 1948.
- 2 - Ibid, Vol. 6.
- 3 - The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, 1939.
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- 5 - History of the Christian Church, by W. Walker, Prof. of Ecclesiastical History at Yale.
- 6 - A History of Christianity by K. S. Latourette, Prof. of Oriental History at Yale.
- 7 - Webster's New World Dictionary, 1964.
- 8 - Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 3, p. 82, 1950.
- 9 - Pentecostalism, by Dr. John Thomas Nichol, 1966.
- 10 - Story of the World's Worship, by F. S. Dobbins (former Prof. of Lit. at Yale; President of the American Bible Society, Associate of the Am. Oriental Society and the London Society of Biblical Archeology, etc.), 1901.
- 11 - History of the Christian Church - Schaff, Vol. 11.

- 12 - History of Christian Thought by McGiffert, Vol. I.
- 13 - Grover Universal Encyclopedia, 1965.
- 14 - Colliers Encyclopedia.
- 15 - The Early History of the Church by Abbe Duchesne, Vol. I.
- 16 - The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics by James Hastings.
- 17 - The New Bible Dictionary by Douglas.
- 18 - Butlers Works, 1887.
- 19 - The New Catholic Encyclopedia, by McGraw Hill.
- 20 - History of Christianity by K. S. Latourette - Sterling
Professor of Missions and Oriental History and Fellow of
Berkeley College in Yale Univ., 1953.
- 21 - Early Christian Doctrines by J. Kelley - Oxford U.
- 22 - Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, Scribners.
- 23 - The Real Truth About Baptism in Jesus Name, by John Peterson.
- 24 - Truths on Water Baptism, by Ernest G. Moyer.
- 25 - The Trinity and Christianity, by Dr. Charles Lowry - quoted
by God in Three Persons, by Carl Brumback.
- 26 - Compendium of Church History by Dr. Andrew Zenos, Prof. of
Biblical Theology in the McCormick Theo. Seminary, Chicago.
- 27 - A Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the
Christian Church, Vol. IV by St. Athanasius - The Christian
Literature Co., Oxford and London, Parker and Co., 1892.

Part II

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

CHRISTIANITY INHERITED THE MONOTHEISM OF ISRAEL BUT GRADUALLY DEVELOPED IT BY THE ELABORATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, UNTIL THE 4TH CENTURY AN ELABORATE THEORY OF A THREEFOLDNESS IN GOD APPEARS. IN THIS NICENE OR ANTHANASIAN FORM OF THOUGHT GOD IS SAID TO CONSIST OF THREE PERSONS: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT, ALL EQUALLY ETERNAL, POWERFUL, AND GLORIOUS. IT WAS HELD THAT THIS TRI-PERSONALITY OF GOD WAS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH MONOTHEISM, SINCE THE FATHER IS THE "FONS ET ORIGO" OF DEITY FROM WHOM THE SON AND SPIRIT ARE DERIVED BY AN ETERNAL PROCESS OF GENERATION, AND BECAUSE THE DIVINE ESSENCE IS ONE. THE DOCTRINE THUS INCLUDED THESE

THREE ELEMENTS: (1) THE COEQUAL ETERNITY OF THE THREE PERSONS; (2) THE SUBORDINATION AND DERIVATION OF THE SECOND AND THIRD FROM THE FIRST; AND (3) THE CONSEQUENT ONENESS OF THE DIVINE NATURE OF WHICH ALL THREE PERSONS ALIKE PARTAKE?²

THE TERM "TRINITY" IS NOT A BIBLICAL TERM, AND WE ARE NOT USING BIBLICAL LANGUAGE WHEN WE DEFINE WHAT IS EXPRESSED BY IT AS THE DOCTRINE THAT THERE IS ONE ONLY TRUE GOD, BUT IN THE UNITY OF THE GODHEAD THERE ARE THREE COETERNAL AND COEQUAL PERSONS, THE SAME IN SUBSTANCE, BUT DISTINCT IN SUBSISTENCE. AS THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IS INDISCOVERABLE BY REASON, SO IT IS INCAPABLE OF PROOF FROM REASON. THERE ARE NO ANALOGIES TO IT IN NATURE, NOT EVEN IN MAN, (for the body, soul, and spirit constitute only one person.). THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY LIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT RATHER IN THE FORM OF ALLUSIONS THAN IN EXPRESS TEACHING.⁴

THE CHURCH DOGMA OF THE TRINITY WAS THE WORK OF THREE CENTURIES AND WAS FAIRLY ACCOMPLISHED IN THE NICEAN AGE; IN THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS WE FIND FOR THE MOST PART ONLY THE SIMPLE BIBLICAL STATEMENT OF THE DEITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST.¹¹

(The Apostolic Church taught the Revelation of God throughout the Mediterranean area, and it is significant that at the end of the Apostolic era, we find no trace of Trinitarianism - but we do find the concept of one God in three manifestations, later called Modalistic Monarchianism.)

Part III

MONARCHIANISM

MODALISTIC MONARCHIANISM MADE ITS WAY TO ROME AT THE END OF THE FIRST CENTURY AND IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE SECOND CENTURY MONARCHIANISM IDENTIFIED THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT SO COMPLETELY THAT THEY WERE THOUGHT OF ONLY AS DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF OR DIFFERENT MOMENTS IN THE LIFE OF ONE DIVINE PERSON, CALLED NOW FATHER, NOW SON, NOW SPIRIT, AS HIS SEVERAL ACTIVITIES CAME SUCCESSIVELY INTO VIEW. THIS DOCTRINE IN THE SECOND, AND THIRD CENTURIES ALMOST SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING ITSELF AS THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH AT LARGE.⁴

(The term "Modalistic Monarchianism" refers to the "ism" (belief) of "mono" (One) "arch" (ruler) in various modes or manifestations.)

THIS WAS A FAIRLY WIDESPREAD, POPULAR TREND OF THOUGHT; AND THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND IT WAS THE TWO-FOLD CONVICTION, PASSIONATELY HELD, OF THE ONENESS OF GOD AND THE FULL DEITY OF CHRIST. WHAT FORCED IT INTO THE OPEN WAS THE MOUNTING SUSPICION THAT THE FORMER TRUTHS WERE BEING ENDANGERED BY THE NEW LOGOS DOCTRINE AND BY THE EFFORTS OF THEOLOGIAN TO REPRESENT THE GODHEAD AS HAVING REVEALED ITSELF IN THE ECONOMY AS TRI-PERSONAL. AS EARLY AS JUSTIN'S TIME, WE READ OF OBJECTIONS TO HIS TEACHING THAT THE LOGOS WAS SOMETHING NUMERICALLY OTHER THAN THE FATHER.²¹

MODALISM WAS EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT TO OVERCOME. IT WAS SHARED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMON PEOPLE AND WAS IN HARMONY WITH THE DOMINANT

PIETY OF THE AGE. MODALISM, IN FACT, WAS OFFENSIVE ONLY TO THE THEOLOGIAN, PARTICULARLY TO THOSE WHO FELT THE INFLUENCE OF THE PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY.¹² NOR IS IT SURPRISING THAT THESE MONARCHIANS SHOULD HAVE HAD A STRONG FOLLOWING. GOD IS ONE. FOR THIS MONOTHEISM THE PROPHETS HAD FOUGHT AND PREVAILED.¹⁶

Of those who took up the Monarchian defense, the more noted were HERACLITUS of the early second century; NOETUS, PRAEAS, A FOLLOWER OF NOETUS WHO TRANSPLANTED THESE VIEWS TO ROME ABOUT 190; EPIGONUS AND CLEOMENES, TWO OTHER DISCIPLES OF NOETUS; and SABELLIUS, who was EXCOMMUNICATED for his views in 217.⁵

Part IV

GNOSTICISM

GNOSTICISM WAS PRE-CHRISTIAN IN ITS ORIGIN. THERE WERE JEWISH AND HEATHEN TYPES, WHICH MAY BE TRACED BACK TO BABYLONIAN RELIGIOUS CONCEPTIONS, A DUALISTIC VIEW OF THE UNIVERSE, PERSIAN IN ORIGIN, AND A DOCTRINE IN THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH WAS PROBABLY EGYPTIAN. Gnosticism taught that THE WORLD OF MATTER IS EVIL: ITS CREATOR IS NOT, THEREFORE, A HIGH, GOOD GOD, BUT AN INFERIOR BEING. MAN, TO BE SAVED MUST BE FREE FROM THIS BONDAGE TO THE VISIBLE WORLD, AND ITS spiritual RULERS. THE MEANS OF HIS FREEDOM IS KNOWLEDGE (GNOSIS), A MYSTICAL SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT.

GNOSTICISM FOUND MUCH IN CHRISTIANITY THAT IT COULD USE. CHRIST WAS accepted as THE REVEALER OF THE HITHERTO UNKNOWN HIGH AND ALL-PERFECT GOD, THE HIGHER SAVING KNOWLEDGE. But, SINCE THE MATERIAL WORLD IS EVIL, CHRIST WOULD NOT HAVE HAD A REAL INCARNATION--He was merely an apparition, AN APPARENT BIRTH FROM A VIRGIN MOTHER, PAUL'S writings were twisted so that he taught Gnosticism--he was accepted as THE CHIEF APOSTLE of their doctrine. TRADITION points to SIMON MAGAS (ACTS 8:9-24) AS THE FOUNDER OF "CHRISTIAN-GNOSTICISM."

GNOSTICISM WAS AN IMMENSE PERIL TO THE CHURCH as ITS GOD WAS NOT THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND (in their view) CHRIST HAS NO REAL INCARNATION, DEATH OR RESURRECTION. THE PERIL WAS THE GREATER BECAUSE GNOSTICISM WAS REPRESENTED BY SOME OF THE KEENEST MINDS IN THE CHURCH OF THE SECOND CENTURY.⁵

(It was against the teachings of Gnosticism that the early Post-Apostolic Church defended itself; there was, as yet, no Trinitarian Doctrine. The first and early second century Christians were believers in one God who was one Person manifested as the Father; as Jesus, the Son of God; and as the Holy Spirit.)

Part V

MODIFIED GNOSTICISM

MARCION, A WEALTHY SHIP OWNER and PARTIAL Gnostic, CAME TO ROME ABOUT 139, teaching that ALL THE APOSTLES EXCEPT PAUL MISUNDERSTOOD THE GOSPEL, inasmuch as they ACCEPTED THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ITS GOD. THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BECAME UNJUST IN OPPOSING CHRIST who did away with THE JEWISH LAW.

Because he JOINED THE ROMAN CONGREGATION, MAKING IT A GIFT OF THE EQUIVALENT OF \$10,000, and because he FOUGHT AGAINST LEGALISM, he made deep and DANGEROUS INROADS into CHRISTIANITY. He was, however, EXCOMMUNICATED IN 144. Most all Christians rejected his doctrines.⁵

Part VI

LOGOS-CHRISTOLOGY, THE ROOT OF ARIANISM
AND TRINITARIANISM

In the second century, AT ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT, WITH ITS GREAT UNIVERSITIES, LIBRARIES, LEARNED PROFESSORS AND THROGS OF EAGERLY INQUIRING AND ACTIVE-MINDED STUDENTS--WHERE THE HEBREW PHILOSOPHY OF PHILLO AND THE GREEK TEACHING OF PLATO HAD BLENDED WITH THE DOCTRINE OF MOSES AND THE PROPHETS FOR A MODIFIED TEACHING OF CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT--THE FIRST SERIOUS ATTEMPT WAS MADE BY CHRISTIANS TO ADJUST THE FACTS AND TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL AND THE RELATIONS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE TO REASON AND PHILOSOPHY.²

This modified philosophy which resulted in a concept of a human Christ, called "LOGOS CHRISTOLOGY," RAN TO SEED IN WHAT IS KNOWN AS "ARIANISM"--and was IN OPPOSITION TO THE DOMINANT SABELLIAN TENDENCIES.⁴ AND YET LOGOS-CHRISTOLOGY WAS ALSO TO BE DEFINED AS A DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY--NOT THE ANATHANASTAN TRINITARIANISM, to be sure, but the forerunner of it.⁵

THE HISTORIC DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY CONTAINS TWO ELEMENTS, REPRESENTING TWO INDEPENDENT AND DIVERSE INTERESTS: THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF THE SON OF GOD incarnate in Jesus Christ, and the full deity of this pre-existent Son of God. THE FORMER IS KNOWN AS THE LOGOS CHRISTOLOGY AND BY THE END OF THE THIRD CENTURY (in the form of Arianism) HAD OVERCOME MONARCHIANISM¹² (which emphasized that the deity of the Messiah was the One true God, the Jehovah Elohim of the Old Testament, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob).

TERTULLIAN'S MOST INFLUENTIAL WORK WAS THE DEFINITION OF THE LOGOS CHRISTOLOGY: "ALL ARE OF ONE, BY UNITY OF SUBSTANCE; WHILE THE MYSTERY OF THE DISPENSATION IS STILL GUARDED WHICH DISTRIBUTE THE UNITY INTO A TRINITY, PLACING IN THEIR ORDER THE THREE, THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT..."⁵

THE GREAT ADVOCATE OF LOGOS-CHRISTOLOGY WAS HIPPOLYTUS 167-235, THE MOST LEARNED CHRISTIAN WRITER THEN IN THE CITY, a highly reputed COMMENTATOR, CHRONICLER, CALCULATOR OF THE EASTER DATES, APOLOGIST, AND OPPONENT OF HERETICS.

HIPPOLYTUS VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED THE MONARCHIANS, whose chief con-
tender was NOETUS OF SMYRNA. THE FIGHT IN ROME WAXED so HOT that BISHOP
ZEPHYRINUS (198-287) HARDLY KNEW WHAT TO DO, THOUGH HE LEANED TOWARD THE
MONARCHIAN SIDE. His successor, KALLISTOS (CALIXTUS) (217-222), THE MOST
ENERGETIC AND ASSERTIVE BISHOP THAT ROME HAD YET SEEN, EXCOMMUNICATED
SABELLIUS (who continued Monarchianism previously defended by Noetus).
He also CHARGED HIPPOLYTUS WITH BEING A WORSHIPPER OF TWO GODS. KALLISTOS,
TRYING TO FIND A COMPROMISE FORMULA, asserted that FATHER, SON, AND LOGOS
ARE ALL NAMES OF ONE INDIVISIBLE SPIRIT. YET SON IS ALSO THE PROPER
DESIGNATION OF THAT WHICH WAS VISIBLE; JESUS, WHILE THE FATHER WAS THE
SPIRIT IN HIM. THIS PRESENCE OF THE FATHER, AFTER HE HAD TAKEN UNTO HIM-
SELF OUR FLESH, RAISED IT TO THE NATURE OF DEITY, BY BRINGING IT INTO
UNION WITH HIMSELF, AND MADE IT ONE, SO THAT THE FATHER AND SON MUST BE
STYLED ONE GOD.

THIS COMPROMISE WON THE MAJORITY IN ROME, AND OPENED THE DOOR FOR THE
FULL VICTORY OF THE LOGOS CHRISTOLOGY THERE. THAT VICTORY CAME FROM THE
PEN OF TERTULLIAN (213-218), WITH ITS CLEAR DEFINITION OF A TRINITY IN
THREE PERSONS.

HOW COMPLETELY THIS CHRISTOLOGY WON ITS WAY IN WESTERN CHRISTENDOM
IS SHOWN BY THE TREATISE ON THE TRINITY, WRITTEN BY THE ROMAN PRESBYTER
NOVATIAN, BETWEEN 240 and 250 A.D.⁵

TERTULLIAN, a converted Stoic lawyer, was THE FIRST TO APPLY THE
WORD "TRINITY" TO THE CONCEPTION OR REVELATION (FROM HUMAN LIFE) OF THE
TRIUNE GODHEAD.² HE DECLARED THAT IN HIS SUBSTANTIA, OR SUBSTANCE, GOD
IS ONE. "FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT", SO TERTULLIAN SAID, "ARE THREE
PERSONAE, OR PERSONS. IN "PERSONA" TERTULLIAN SEEMED TO HAVE IN MIND
THE USE OF THAT WORD IN ROMAN LAW WHERE IT MEANT A PARTY IN A LEGAL AC-
TION.⁶ TERTULLIAN said that THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT
were THREE, NOT IN SUBSTANCE BUT IN FORM: NOT IN POWER BUT IN APPEAR-
ANCE, FOR THEY ARE OF ONE SUBSTANCE AND ESSENCE AND ONE POWER, INASMUCH
AS HE IS ONE GOD FROM WHOM THESE DEGREES AND FORMS AND ASPECTS ARE
RECKONED UNDER THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT. HE DESCRIBES THESE DISTINCTIONS OF THE GODHEAD AS "PERSONS",
MEANING BY THE WORD NOT OUR USAGE IN THE SENSE OF PERSONALITIES, BUT
FORMS OF MANIFESTATION.⁷ THE DIFFERENCE IS NOT IN BEING OR PERSON BUT
IN FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY... "PROSONON", THE GREEK WORD OF WHICH THE LATIN
TRANSLATION IS PERSONA. THE WORD MEANS NOT PERSON BUT FACE, AND WAS
USED OF A MASK WORN BY ACTORS IN THE THEATER OF FOR THE PART THEY PLAYED.¹²
THIS DOCTRINE WAS TO REMAIN UNTIL THE TIME OF AUGUSTINE⁵, A CENTURY
LATER, WHEN IT RECEIVED ITS MOST COMPLETE ELABORATION AND MOST CARE-
FULLY GROUNDED STATEMENT--UNTIL A REAL DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY AT LENGTH
CAME INTO EXPRESSION, PARTICULARLY IN THE WEST.⁴

TERTULLIAN SAID THAT THE MAJORITY OF BELIEVERS ARE STARTLED AT
THE DISPENSATION OF THE THREE IN ONE, ON THE GROUND THAT THEIR VERY
RULE OF FAITH WITHDRAWS THEM FROM THE WORLD'S PLURALITY OF GODS TO THE
ONE ONLY TRUE GOD. IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO SEE IN TRINITARIAN
CONCEPTIONS AUGHT ELSE BUT AN ASSERTION OF TRI-THEISM⁵ (three Gods).

To Tertullian, THESE PERSONAE (persons), OR PARTIES, HAVE THEIR
PLACE IN THE "OIKONOMIA" (ECONOMY), OR ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITY OF GOD,
SINCE GOD IS RATIONAL, THERE WAS IN HIM REASON, THE GREEK LOGOS. THIS
REASON WAS GOD'S OWN THOUGHT. THE REASON EXPRESSED ITSELF IN THE WORD,

WORD WHICH CONSISTS OF REASON. YET, THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE REASON HAD NOT YET EXPRESSED ITSELF IN WORD, WHEN, NAMELY, THE SON WAS NOT.⁶ THE SON WAS CONCEIVED BY TERTULLIAN AS BEING SUBORDINATE TO THE FATHER, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT PROCEEDED FROM THE FATHER THROUGH THE SON.⁷

(Tertullian, once a Stoic and for a while a Montanist, was not an advocate of Logos-Christology, for he admitted that Jesus was God. He was not a Trinitarian of the Later Nicean school of thought, for he admitted that there were not three personalities but rather three manifestations in the Godhead. He was not a Monarchian because he taught that the Son and Holy Spirit emanate from the Father by an eternal process of generation. It seems that he welded the teaching of Logos Christology and Monarchianism together and remolded them toward a stepping stone towards Trinitarianism. He is regarded by many historians as holding a primitive form of Trinitarianism.¹¹ Although he FOUNDED THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE, HE KNEW AS LITTLE OF AN ONTOLOGICAL TRINITY AS DID THE APOLOGISTS.¹⁶

TERTULLIAN EMPLOYED TERMS WITH WHICH HE WAS FAMILIAR IN THE LAW COURTS. HE WAS POLEMICAL AND, LIKE AN ADVOCATE (lawyer), NOT ALWAYS FAIR TO HIS OPPONENTS. HE WAS AT TIMES BETRAYED INTO INCONSISTENCIES. HIS IDEAS WERE SOMETIMES MOLDED BY STOIC THOUGHT. LIKE THE MONARCHIANS, WHOM HE ATTACKED, TERTULLIAN BELIEVED IN THE MONARCHIA, OR SOLE GOVERNMENT OF GOD. AS TO THE MONARCHIANS, SO TO HIM, GOD IS ONE.²⁰

TERTULLIAN BLUNTLY CALLS THE FATHER THE WHOLE DIVINE SUBSTANCE, AND THE SON A PART OF IT, ILLUSTRATING THEIR RELATION BY THE FIGURES OF THE FOUNTAIN AND THE STREAM, THE SUN AND THE BEAM. HE WOULD NOT HAVE TWO SUNS HE SAYS. THE SUNBEAM, TOO, IN ITSELF CONSIDERED, MAY BE CALLED SUN, BUT NOT THE SUN A BEAM.¹¹

Part VII

THE MONARCHIAN SPLIT

(By 190 A.D. the Logos-Christology doctrine had made enough of an impact upon the Christian world, to influence some, who were otherwise Monarchians, to believe that Christ was only a man until He was anointed at His baptism. This later theory was called "Dynamic Monarchianism.")

THE FIRST DYNAMIC MONARCHIAN OF PROMINENCE WAS THEODOTUS. HE CAME TO ROME ABOUT 190 A.D. AND THERE TAUGHT THAT JESUS WAS A MAN, BORN OF THE VIRGIN, OF HOLY LIFE, UPON WHOM THE DIVINE CHRIST (OR THE HOLY SPIRIT) DESCENDED AT HIS BAPTISM.

MUCH MORE NUMEROUS (and much earlier) THAN THE DYNAMIC MONARCHIANS WERE THE MODALISTIC MONARCHIANS WHO MADE AN APPEAL TO THE MANY THAT IN THE PRESENCE OF HEATHEN POLYTHEISM, THE UNITY OF GOD SEEMED A PRIME ARTICLE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

CYPRIAN COINED FOR THESE MODALISTIC MONARCHIANS THE NICKNAME "PATRIPASSIANS" (the teaching that the Father suffered, along with the Son on the cross). THE FIRST PROMINENT ADVOCATE OF PATRIPASSIANISM WAS PRAEAS (190 A.D.). TRUE, HE WOULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD AS SPEAKING DIRECTLY OF A SUFFERING (PATI) OF THE FATHER, BUT ONLY OF A SYMPATHY (COPATI). HE CONCEIVED THE RELATION OF THE FATHER TO THE SON AS LIKE THAT OF THE SPIRIT TO THE FLESH.¹¹

(The controversy regarding Patripassianism seems somewhat obscured at this late date. Cyprian and others claimed these Modalists were Patripassians); SABELLIUS DENIED THAT HE WAS A PATRIPASSIAN.¹⁰ (Shaff admits that the Patripassians did not mean a real suffering but only a sympathy. Would any Trinitarian claim that God the Father had no sympathy with His own son as He hung upon the cross? The Modalist never used the term of themselves.)

Part VIII

SABELLIUS

MONARCHIANISM WAS ALSO CALLED SABELLIANISM, FROM SABELLIUS, ITS MOST FAMOUS EXPONENT⁶ WHO WAS TEACHING IN ROME during the later part of his life, ABOUT 215 A.D.⁵

GOD APPEARED TO MEN AND MADE HIMSELF KNOWN AS FATHER, AS SON, AND AS HOLY SPIRIT. BOTH THINGS BEING TRUE, THE OBVIOUS SOLUTION IS THAT THE TRINITY IS ONE OF MANIFESTATION. GOD IS LIKE AN ACTOR ON THE GREEK STAGE; HE IS ABLE TO TAKE DIFFERENT PARTS AT DIFFERENT TIMES BY PUTTING ON A NEW MASK OR FACE (THIS IS THE LITERAL AND ORIGINAL MEANING OF THE GREEK WORD FOR PERSON, "PROSOPON", WHICH WAS APPLIED BY SABELLIUS TO THE ROLES OF FATHER, SON AND SPIRIT). HE WAS INFLUENCED, I BELIEVE, AT THIS POINT BY NOTING (A) THAT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD PATENTLY APPEARS IN DIVERSE WAYS, AND (B) THAT ACCORDING TO THE FOURTH GOSPEL THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES NOT COME UNTIL THE SON IS GLORIFIED."

SABELLIUS USED ANALOGIES, COMMONLY EMPLOYED BY TRINITARIANS TO DEMONSTRATE HOW THREE CAN BE ONE, TO PROVE THAT THE THREE MANIFESTATIONS ARE, IN REALITY, ONE PERSON. THE ONE SUN HAS ROUNDNESS, HEAT, AND LIGHT; BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE SUN. THE ONE MAN HAS BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT; BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE PERSON. SO GOD MIGHT MANIFEST HIMSELF AS FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT, BUT STILL BE ONLY ONE PERSON.

DR. LOWRY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE SABELLIAN VIEW "LEFT A PERMANENT IMPRESS UPON SUBSEQUENT TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY. IT TAUGHT THAT THE PERSONS OF THE TRINITY WERE ENTIRELY EQUAL AND THAT CHRIST IS FULLY GOD."²⁵

THE DOMINANT SABELLIAN TENDENCY battled to DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST THE NEWER LOGOS-CHRISTOLOGY DOCTRINE. Sabellius said that FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT ARE EACH A "PROSOPON" (MANIFESTATION) OF ONE GOD. SABELLIUS, THOUGH SOON EXCOMMUNICATED AT ROME had a very LARGE FOLLOWING. HIS ABSOLUTE IDENTIFICATION OF FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT WAS REJECTED by the Roman Bishop, BUT IT IMPLIED AN EQUALITY WHICH ULTIMATELY, AS IN AUGUSTINE, TRIUMPHED OVER THE SUBORDINATION OF SON AND SPIRIT, CHARACTERISTIC OF THE LOGOS-CHRISTOLOGY BOTH OF TERTULLIAN AND ATHANASTUS.⁵

(Notice that the doctrine of the Trinity ("as in Augustine") accepted the implied equality of the Father and Son of Monarchianism instead of the Logos-Christology theory of subordination of the Son to the Father, of Tertullian--and even Athanasius, whose name is associated with the original Nicean creed of the Trinity)!

Kallistos had excommunicated Sabellius, the strong defender of Monarchianism, and strong pressure was being brought to bear by government and church officials to wipe out the teaching that God was one person in three manifestations. DIONYSIUS, HEAD OF CATECHETICAL SCHOOL IN ALEXANDRIA, AND BISHOP OF THAT CITY AROUND THE MIDDLE OF THE 3RD CENTURY still FOUND SABELLIANISM VERY INFLUENTIAL IN HIS DIOCESE AND PREACHED AGAINST IT. In fact Monarchianism continued until the 6th century, being the only viewpoint allowed in the country that Sabellius had fled to, in earlier days.

Part IX

MONTANISM AND THE OPPOSING CATHOLIC CHURCH

MONTANISM ORIGINATED IN ASIA MINOR ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF THE SECOND CENTURY WHERE PAUL AND HIS PUPILS HAD PLANTED CONGREGATIONS. SCENES TOOK PLACE SIMILAR TO THOSE UNDER THE PREACHING OF THE FIRST QUAKERS, AND THE GLOSSOLALIA AND PROPHECYING IN THE IRVINGITE CONGREGATIONS. THEY CALLED THEMSELVES SPIRITUAL CHRISTIANS IN DISTINCTION FROM THE CARNAL CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE SPREAD OF THE MOVEMENT THREW THE CHURCH INTO COMMOTION. THE BISHOPS AND SYNODS OF ASIA MINOR, THOUGH NOT WITH ONE VOICE, DECLARED THE NEW PROPHECY THE WORK OF DEMONS, AND CUT OFF THE MONTANISTS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH. ALL AGREED THAT IT WAS SUPERNATURAL--A NATURAL INTERPRETATION OF SUCH PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA BEING THEN UNKNOWN--AND THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE WAS TO ASCRIBE IT EITHER TO GOD OR TO HIS GREAT ADVERSARY. PREJUDICE AND MALICE INVENTED AGAINST them, CHARGES OF IMMORALITY, MADNESS, AND SUICIDE, WHICH WERE READILY BELIEVED.¹¹

(In the mind of Phillip Schaff), THE MONTANISTS WERE NOT, ORIGINALLY, A DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH, BUT A MORBID OVERSTRAINING OF THE PRACTICAL MORALITY AND DISCIPLINE OF THE EARLY CHURCH. IT WAS EXCESSIVE SUPERNATURALISM AND PURITANISM AGAINST Gnostic RATIONALISM AND CATHOLIC LAXITY. IT IS THE FIRST EXAMPLE OF AN EARLY AND WELL MEANING, BUT GLOOMY AND FANATICAL HYPER-CHRISTIANITY AND HYPER-SPIRITUALISM. MONTANISM SOUGHT A FORCED CONTINUANCE OF THE MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, WHICH GRADUALLY DISAPPEARED AS CHRISTIANITY BECAME SETTLED IN HUMANITY.

THE MONTANISTIC PROPHECY RELATED TO THE APPROACHING HEAVY JUDGMENTS OF GOD, PERSECUTIONS, etc. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MISTRUSTED THEM ALL THE MORE FOR THEIR PROCEEDING, NOT FROM THE REGULAR CLERGY, BUT IN GREAT PART FROM UNAUTHORIZED LAYMEN AND FANATICAL WOMEN. THE MONTANISTS ASSERTED THE UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD OF CHRISTIANS, EVEN OF FEMALES, AGAINST THE SPECIAL PRIESTHOOD IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, WHICH FROM THE TIME IGNATIUS HAD MORE AND MORE MONOPOLIZED ALL MINISTERIAL PRIVILEGES AND FUNCTIONS. THE MONTANISTS FOUND THE TRUE QUALIFICATION AND APPOINTMENT FOR THE OFFICE OF TEACHER IN DIRECT ENDOWMENT BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD. THE MONTANISTS WERE REGARDED BY SOME ORTHODOX, BY OTHER HERETICAL, IN THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY¹¹ (some being anti-Trinitarians).

(There seems to be little question but that this spiritual group did fall into excesses, false teaching, and legalism, but it tried to preserve the heart of Christianity, and many were martyred for their faith.)

(It is important to see that the forced ecumenicism by Constantine, resulted in a Roman Catholic church--which opposed the charismatic gifts of the Spirit and the teaching that God is one person in three manifestations. The theologians of this system were courted by Rome while the Montanists, Monarchians, and other followers of Christ were hunted down by Imperial decree. Historians talk about "the Church" and "the Church Fathers", but they mean, for the most part, the ecclesiastical system that Rome allowed to remain above ground (out of the catacombs and off of the stakes in the arenas). Are we to defend the doctrines of this carnal church against the plain truths of the Bible? Shall we accept their teachings of the Trinity, infant baptism, papal infallibility, the adoration of Mary, celibacy, lent, limbo, purgatory, penance, and other non-scriptural doctrines?

Surely, we must be willing to reinvestigate our concepts--this time from the Bible, without the help of those schooled by the grandsons of Rome!)

Part X

ARIANISM AND THE COUNCIL AT NICEA

By the 4th century, THE WEST, THANKS TO THE WORK OF TERTULLIAN AND NOVATIAN, HAD REACHED PRACTICAL UNANIMITY REGARDING THE UNITY OF SUBSTANCE BETWEEN CHRIST AND FATHER (in a more or less modified or restyled "Logos-Christology").⁵ THE EAST, where MUCH MORE INTELLECTUAL ABILITY and INTEREST in SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY WAS TO BE FOUND, WAS DIVIDED. ORIGEN, who taught that Christ WAS A SECOND GOD, GENERATED by the Father, was very influential. SABELLIANISM WAS TO BE FOUND predominant IN EGYPT, and in numbers, elsewhere.^{5,6}

The Arian struggle BEGAN IN ALEXANDRIA, ABOUT 320, IN A DISPUTE BETWEEN ARIUS AND HIS BISHOP, ALEXANDER. MONARCHIAN INFLUENCES IMBIBED IN ANTIOCH LED HIM TO EMPHASIZE THE UNITY AND SELF-CONTAINED EXISTENCE OF GOD⁵--Yet his basic doctrine found its SEED in the LOGOS-CHRISTOLOGY teaching.⁴ He also WAS A FOLLOWER OF ORIGEN, in that HE believed that CHRIST WAS A CREATED BEING, MADE OF NOTHING. CHRIST WAS A LOWER GOD than THE FATHER. IN THE INCARNATION, THE LOGOS ENTERED A HUMAN BODY, TAKING THE PLACE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT. TO ARIUS'S THINKING CHRIST WAS NEITHER FULLY GOD NOR FULLY MAN, BUT A "TERTIUM QUID" BETWEEN.⁵

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE ALL OF ONE MIND WITH REGARD TO THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST. "THEY SING HYMNS, SAID PLINEY, TO THE CHRIST WHOM THEY HONOR AS GOD."¹⁵

BISHOP ALEXANDER WAS INFLUENCED BY THE OTHER SIDE OF ORIGEN'S TEACHING. TO HIM THE SON WAS ETERNAL, LIKE IN ESSENCE TO THE FATHER, AND WHOLLY UNCREATED..

IN 321 ARIUS was CONDEMNED. ARIANS FOUND A REFUGE IN THE POWERFUL BISHOP, EUSEBIUS OF NICOMEDIA. Both parties WROTE WIDELY TO FELLOW BISHOPS, defending

their position. THE QUARREL THREATENED THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH THAT the new Emperor, CONSTANTINE, DEEMED ESSENTIAL.⁵ CONSTANTINE ATTEMPTED TO RECONCILE THE PARTIES, BUT FAILING, CONVENED THE FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL AT NICEA (A.D. 325).²⁶

THE ARIANS PRESENTED A STATEMENT OF THEIR POSITION, BUT THIS AROUSED VIOLENT OPPOSITION (chiefly because Christ was said to be divested of Deity prior to His baptism). EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, WHO TOOK A MIDDLE POSITION BUT WAS AGAINST ANY LEANING TOWARDS SABELLIANISM AND HENCE WAS INCLINED TO FAVOR THE ARIANS, SUGGESTED AS A STATEMENT TO WHICH ALL MIGHT AGREE THE CREED WHICH WAS IN USE IN HIS OWN SEE (church).⁶ IT WAS, HOWEVER, WHOLLY INDEFINITE AS TO THE PARTICULAR PROBLEMS INVOLVED, DATING FROM BEFORE THE CONTROVERSY.⁷ THIS SEEMED TO WIN THE GENERAL ASSENT, INCLUDING THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE EMPEROR Constantine. IT BECAME, THEREFORE: THE BASIS OF WHAT HAS BEEN KNOWN AS THE NICEAN CREED. THIS CAESAREAN CREED WAS NOW AMENDED MOST SIGNIFICANTLY⁸ by a number of changes that rid the creed from wording which could be interpreted as Arianism and added elaborate definitions to support the new trend.

THE BISHOPS KNEW THAT THE TEST for orthodoxy presented WAS NOT IN SCRIPTURE, THAT IT HAD A SUSPICIOUS HISTORY IN THE CHURCH. BUT THE FATHERS WERE REMINDED OF THE PREVIOUS UNRESOLVED DISCUSSIONS AND OF THE FUTILITY OF THE SCRIPTURAL TESTS. WITH A GREAT REVULSION OF FEELING THE COUNCIL CLOSED ITS RANKS AND SIGNED. EUSEBIUS OF NICOMEDIA SIGNED EVERYTHING, EVEN THE CONDEMNATION OF HIS OWN CONVICTIONS, JUSTIFYING HIS SIGNATURE BY A MENTAL RESERVATION. SECUNDUS AND THEONAS refused to SIGN and were EXILED.²⁷

Constantine, ESSENTIALLY A POLITICIAN, NATURALLY THOUGHT THAT A FORMULA THAT WOULD FIND NO OPPOSITION IN THE WESTERN HALF OF THE EMPIRE (Northern Italy, the Balkans, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Bohemia, etc.), AND WHICH WOULD RECEIVE THE SUPPORT OF A PORTION OF THE EAST, MORE ACCEPTABLE THAN ONE WHICH, WHILE HAVING ONLY A PART OF THE EAST IN ITS FAVOR, WOULD BE REJECTED BY THE WHOLE WEST. (The East comprised southern Italy, Greece and Asia Minor-the areas that Paul labored most in.)

THE ADOPTION OF THE NICEAN Creed DEFINITELY WAS DUE TO CONSTANTINE'S INFLUENCE. THAT HE EVER UNDERSTOOD ITS SHADES OF MEANING IS MORE THAN DOUBTFUL: BUT HE WANTED TO UNITE EXPRESSION OF THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH to cement his Empire together.⁵

(The original Nicean Creed had one predominate purpose: to defend the Deity of Christ against Arianism, and does not demand a Trinitarian concept, unless the phrase "God from God" is intended to imply an eternal generation. The formula adopted is as follows):

WE BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, FATHER, ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE; AND IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD, BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER, ONLY-BEGOTTEN, THAT IS FROM THE SUBSTANCE OF THE FATHER, GOD FROM GOD, LIGHT FROM LIGHT, TRUE GOD FROM TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE, OF ONE SUBSTANCE WITH THE FATHER, THROUGH WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE, BOTH THE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND THINGS OF EARTH: WHO FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR SALVATION CAME DOWN AND WAS MADE FLESH, WAS MADE MAN, SUFFERED, AND ROSE AGAIN ON THE THIRD DAY, ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, AND COMETH TO JUDGE QUICK AND DEAD; AND IN THE HOLY SPIRIT. BUT THOSE WHO SAY 'THERE WAS ONCE WHEN HE WAS NOT', AND

'BEFORE HIS GENERATION HE WAS NOT', AND 'HE WAS MADE OUT OF NOTHING'; OR PRETEND THAT THE SON OF GOD IS OF ANOTHER SUBSTANCE OR SUBSTANCE, OR CREATED OR ALTERABLE OR MUTABLE, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ANATHEMATIZES.¹²

CONSTANTINE BANISHED ARIUS and those who would not SIGN the creed.

ARIUS PRESENTED TO CONSTANTINE A CREED CAREFULLY INDEFINITE ON THE QUESTION AT ISSUE. TO CONSTANTINE'S UNTHEOLOGICAL MIND THIS SEEMED A SATISFACTORY RETRACTION AND A WILLINGNESS TO MAKE HIS PEACE. HE DIRECTED ATHANASIUS TO RESTORE ARIUS TO HIS PLACE IN ALEXANDRIA. Athanasius refused and so was BANISHED TO GAUL. ARIUS was to be restored, but died THE EVENING BEFORE THE FORMAL CEREMONY.

THE NICEAN FAITH WAS PRACTICALLY UNDERMINED WHEN CONSTANTINE DIED ON MAY 22, 337, SHORTLY AFTER HE WAS BAPTISED.

DOCTRINAL DISCUSSIONS THAT EARLIER WOULD HAVE RUN THEIR COURSE WERE NOW POLITICAL QUESTIONS OF THE FIRST MAGNITUDE now that THE EMPEROR HAD ASSUMED A POWER IN ECCLESTIASTICAL AFFAIRS.⁵

THE ORIGINAL NICEAN SUCCESS HAD BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY IMPERIAL INTERFERENCE. THEODOSIUS, IN 380, ISSUED AN EDICT THAT ALL SHOULD HOLD THE FAITH WHICH THE HOLY APOSTLE PETER GAVE TO THE ROMANS, WHICH HE DEFINED MORE PARTICULARLY AS THAT TAUGHT BY THE EXISTING BISHOP, DAMACUS OF ROME, AND PETER OF ALEXANDRIA. HENCEFORTH THERE WAS TO BE BUT ONE RELIGION IN THE EMPIRE. ONLY THAT FORM OF CHRISTIANITY WAS TO EXIST WHICH TAUGHT ONE DIVINE ESSENCE IN THREE PERSONS. Arianism and Sabellianism were forbidden.

YET EVEN WHEN THE SYNOD OF 381 MET, THE NICEAN CREED ADOPTED IN 325, FAILED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICTORIOUS PARTY. A new CREED CAME INTO USE, AND BY 451 WAS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL. IT ULTIMATELY TOOK THE PLACE OF THE GENUINE NICEAN CREED: AND IS KNOWN AS THE "NICEAN" TO THIS DAY.⁶

(The new creed adds several clauses which make it definitely Trinitarian, namely):

1. To the original clause: "The only-begotten Son of God" was added: "who was begotten of the Father before all the ages."
2. To the clause: "the Holy Spirit" was added: "the Lord, the life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified."

The amended creed is as follows:

WE BELIEVE IN ONE GOD FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH AND OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE; AND IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD WHO WAS BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER BEFORE ALL THE AGES, LIGHT FROM LIGHT, TRUE GOD FROM TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN NOT MADE, OF ONE SUBSTANCE WITH THE FATHER, THROUGH WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE;

WHO FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR SALVATION CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND WAS INCARNATE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MARY THE VIRGIN, AND WAS MADE MAN AND WAS CRUCIFIED ON OUR BEHALF UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, AND SUFFERED AND WAS BURIED, AND ROSE ON THE THIRD DAY ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES, AND COMETH AGAIN WITH GLORY TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND DEAD, OR WHOSE KINGDOM THERE SHALL NOT BE AN END; AND IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE LORD, THE LIFE-GIVER, WHO PROCEEDETH FROM THE FATHER, WHO WITH FATHER AND SON IS WORSHIPPED AND GLORIFIED, WHO SPOKE THROUGH THE PROPHETS; IN ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH. WE CONFESS ONE BAPTISM FOR REMISSION OF SINS; WE EXPECT A RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD AND THE LIFE OF THE AGE TO COME.¹²

IN THE STRUGGLE THE IMPERIAL CHURCH CAME INTO EXISTENCE, AND A POLICY OF IMPERIAL INTERFERENCE WAS FULLY DEVELOPED. DEPARTURE FROM OFFICIAL ORTHODOXY HAD BECOME A CRIME.

CYRIL, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA, 412-444 APPLIED TO THE VIRGIN MARY "THEOLOKOS" "GOD BEARING", OR AS USUALLY TRANSLATED, "MOTHER OF GOD" A TERM WHICH WAS TO BECOME AS SHARP AND BITTER A THEOLOGICAL CONFLICT AS THE CHURCH HAD KNOWN. IN 430 A SYNOD AT ROME ORDERED NESTORIUS, bishop of Constantinople, EITHER TO RECANT OR BE EXCOMMUNICATED for saying "Mother of Christ" instead of "Mother of God". NESTORIUS WAS PUT IN EXILE, OFTEN IN GREAT PHYSICAL DISTRESS.⁶

IF THE STOIC METAPHYSICS HAD BEEN DOMINANT INSTEAD OF THE PLATONIC, AND THE IMMANENCE OF GOD, OR THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURE, HAD BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE NICENE THEOLOGIANs, THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY WOULD HAVE BEEN UNNECESSARY; THE RELIGIOUS INTEREST--TO FIND GOD IN CHRIST--COULD THEN HAVE BEEN CONSERVED, AS IT WAS BY THE MODALISTS WITHOUT DISTINGUISHING THE PRE-EXISTENT SON OF GOD FROM THE FATHER.

THE NICENE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY CONTAINS BOTH A RELIGIOUS AND A PHILOSOPHICAL ELEMENT, THE FORMER ROOTED IN CHRISTIAN FAITH, THE LATTER THE PRODUCT OF METAPHYSICS.¹²

(Is there any question that our only hope of recovering the truth rests in the Word of God, alone? All post-apostolic traditions contrary to the Bible must be cast aside if we wish to know the God of the Scriptures.)

DIONYSUS POINTED OUT THAT IN OPPOSING SABELLIUS MANY DIVIDE AND CUT TO PIECES AND DESTROY THAT MOST SACRED DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD, THE DIVINE MONARCHY, MAKING IT AS IT WERE THREE POWERS.¹⁶

Part XI

THE MODE OF BAPTISM

EVERYWHERE IN THE OLDEST SOURCE IT IS STATED THAT BAPTISM TAKES PLACE IN THE NAME OF JESUS.⁸ THERE IS NO MENTION OF THE BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF THE TRINITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, EXCEPT IN THE COMMAND ATTRIBUTED TO CHRIST IN MATTHEW 28:19.³ (It is a Trinitarian theological opinion and assumption that the Baptismal command in Matthe 28:19 was in the name of the Trinity.

The Scriptures came first. Both Oneness and Trinitarian teachers accept the verse in light of their understanding of the general tenor of Scripture. The Oneness people see no Trinitarian formula here but a truth that was revealed in the carrying out of the command by the Apostles in baptizing in the name of Jesus. The Trinitarians made the command a formula and made the formula a general statement of authority).

(The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, p. 388, says): "THE FORMULA OF THE trinity IS GIVEN IN MTT. 28:19 BUT IT IS CURIOUS THAT THE WORDS ARE NOT GIVEN IN ANY DESCRIPTION OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM UNTIL THE TIMES OF JUSTIN MARTYR: AND THERE THEY ARE NOT REPEATED EXACTLY. IN EVERY ACCOUNT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE RITE IN APOSTOLIC TIMES A MUCH SHORTER FORMULA IS IN USE, NAMELY 'IN THE NAME OF JESUS'. THE LONGER FORMULA OF MTT. 28:19 BECAME UNIVERSAL only in the SUB-APOSTOLIC CHURCH at which time triune immersion was invented. Tertullian said: 'AND IT IS NOT ONLY ONCE, BUT THRICE, THAT WE ARE IMMERSSED INTO THE THREE PERSONS, ONCE AT EACH SEVERAL MENTION OF THEIR NAMES.' The church gave INJUNCTIONS TO USE THE LONGER FORMULA, AND PUNISHMENTS, INCLUDING DEPOSITION, THREATENED THOSE WHO PRESUMED TO USE THE SHORTER."

K. LAKE HOLDS MATTHEW 28:19 AS GIVEN NOW TO BE FALSE IN AS MUCH AS EUSEBIUS "FATHER OF CHURCH HISTORY", OFTEN QUOTES THE TEXT WITHOUT MENTION OF FATHER, SON AND HOLY GHOST BUT INSTEAD QUOTES, "MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS IN MY NAME." THE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS SCRIPTURE WOULD INDEED NEVER HAVE BEEN QUESTIONED IF IT HAD NOT BEEN SUCH A CONTRAST WITH OTHER EARLY CHURCH TEACHING, PRACTICE AND APOSTOLIC HISTORY. THAT IT IS A REASONABLE POSSIBILITY OF BEING AN INTERPOLATION WE SHOULD ALL AGREE, AS OTHER INTERPOLATIONS ARE KNOWN TO EXIST.²²

FEINE, KATTENBUSCH, AND CONYBEARE ARGUE THAT THE TRINITARIAN FORMULA (so called) IN MTT. 28:19 IS SPURIOUS, saying that THE BAPTISM RECORDED IN THE N.T. AFTER THE DAY OF PENTECOST ARE ADMINISTERED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.³ (I.S.B.E. continues): "THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE LATE ECCLESIASTICAL ORIGIN OF MTT. 28:19 ARE NOT CONVINCING; ON THE OTHER HAND THE COMMAND OF JESUS MAY NOT HAVE BEEN REGARDED AS A FORMULA FOR BAPTISM."³ (It should be noted that the term "Name" in Mtt. 28:19 is singular, and that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not names but titles. Also it is significant that every reference to baptism speaks only of Christ Jesus: "know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" - Rom. 6:3; "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" - Gal. 3:27; "...they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" - Acts 8:16), etc.

WHEREIN HAS THE SPIRIT OF THE PASSAGE BEEN OVERLOOKED? MATTHEW 28:19-20 READS AS FOLLOWS: "AND JESUS CAME AND SPAKE UNTO THEM SAYING ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. GO YE THEREFORE AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN (R.V. "INTO") THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: AND, IO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD." TWO THINGS ARE EVIDENT:

1 - FROM BEGINNING TO END THE BOOK OF MATTHEW LAYS SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE KINGSHIP OF JESUS. CHRIST'S DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION HAD AN EFFECT UPON MAN'S RELATION TO GOD AND THIS ASPECT WAS EMPHASIZED IN THE

COMMISSION AS RECORDED IN LUKE--BUT IT ALSO ALTERED CHRIST'S RELATION TO MAN. "HE HUMBLED HIMSELF--WHEREFORE GOD HIGHLY EXALTED HIM AND GAVE HIM THE NAME WHICH IS ABOVE EVERY NAME THAT IN THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW" (PHIL. 2:8,9, R.V.) "OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE THINGS AND TO ENTER INTO HIS GLORY?" (LUKE 24:26) "ALL AUTHORITY IS GIVEN UNTO ME--GO YE THEREFORE! NOTHING CAN BE PLAINER THAN THIS--THE COMMISSION IN MATTHEW EMPHASIZES AN ASPECT OF THE GOSPEL TOO OFTEN NEGLECTED, BUT ABOUT WHICH CHRIST IS VERY JEALOUS. TO FULFIL THE GREAT COMMISSION IN THE MANNER CHRIST INTENDED, WE MUST "TEACH ALL NATIONS" THAT "ALL AUTHORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN UNTO HIM" (AS PER MATTHEW), AND WE MUST "PREACH REPENTANCE, AND REMISSION OF SINS IN HIS NAME, AND THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER" (AS PER LUKE). THE APOSTLES FULFILLED BOTH MATTHEW AND LUKE ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST; "LET ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL KNOW ASSUREDLY THAT GOD HATH MADE THAT SAME JESUS, WHOM YE CRUCIFIED, BOTH LORD AND CHRIST. REPENT, AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST." (Acts 2:36,38)

THE SAME MESSAGE IS FOUND IN EVERY APOSTOLIC SERMON RECORDED IN THE ACTS AND IN THE SAME ORDER:

- 1 - THE EXALTED POSITION OF THE MAN CHRIST JESUS AS THE RESULT OF HIS SACRIFICE.
- 2 - THE CONSEQUENT BENEFITS TO MAN THROUGH HIS NAME. READ ACTS 3:13, 16, 19; 4:10-12; 5:31, 32; 7:55, 56, 60; 10:42, 43; 13:33, 38, 17:3, 7, 30, 31; 26:13, 16, 18.²³

FORMULA USED BY APOSTLES

OUR FIRST REFERENCE TO BAPTISM IS FOUND IN MATTHEW 28:19, "GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST."

AGAIN IN MARK 16:16-17, JESUS SPEAKING, "HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED; BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED. AND THESE SIGNS SHALL FOLLOW THEM THAT BELIEVE; IN MY NAME SHALL THEY CAST OUT DEVILS; THEY SHALL SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES." HERE THERE IS REFERENCE TO BAPTISM AND THE WORKS THAT WERE TO FOLLOW IN HIS NAME.

IN LUKE 24:47 JESUS SAID, "AND THAT REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS SHOULD BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME AMONG ALL NATIONS, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM." THAT THE APOSTLES FULLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT JESUS MEANT IS EVIDENT FOR THEY ALWAYS BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. PETER'S SERMON ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST, THE FIRST TO BE PREACHED WAS A DIRECT FULFILLMENT OF LUKE 24:47. "THEN PETER SAID UNTO THEM, REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST." ACTS 2:38.

PHILLIP WENT DOWN TO THE CITY OF SAMARIA, AND UPON BELIEVING THE WORD, THE PEOPLE OF THAT CITY WERE FILLED WITH GREAT JOY AND WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS. ACTS 8:16, "(FOR AS YET HE WAS FALLEN UPON NONE OF THEM: ONLY THEY WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS.)"

CORNELIUS AND HIS HOUSEHOLD OF RELATIVES AND BRETHREN WERE COMMANDED TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. ACTS 10:47-48. "CAN ANY MAN FORBID WATER, THAT THESE SHOULD NOT BE BAPTIZED, WHICH HAVE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST AS WELL AS WE? AND HE COMMANDED THEM TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD." ("Lord Jesus Christ" - Greek)

THE EPHESIANS WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, ACTS 19:5 SAYS "WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS."

THE ROMANS WERE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST, ROM. 6:3-5, "KNEW YE NOT, THAT SO MANY OF US AS WERE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH? THEREFORE WE ARE BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH: THAT LIKE AS CHRIST WAS RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD BY THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, EVEN SO WE ALSO SHOULD WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE. FOR IF WE HAVE BEEN PLANTED TOGETHER IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION."

THE GALATIANS WERE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST. GAL. 3:27. "FOR AS MANY OF YOU AS HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST HAVE PUT ON CHRIST."

THE CORINTHIANS WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST ICor. 6:11, "AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU: BUT YE ARE WASHED, BUT YE ARE SANCTIFIED, BUT YE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, AND BY THE SPIRIT OF OUR GOD." PAUL UNDOUBTEDLY REFERS TO BAPTISM INTO JESUS CHRIST IN I COR. 1:13, PAUL SAYS, "WAS PAUL CRUCIFIED FOR YOU? OR WERE YE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF PAUL?" WHAT PAUL WANTED TO POINT OUT TO THESE PEOPLE WAS TO FOLLOW THE ONE WHO HAD BEEN CRUCIFIED FOR THEM, INTO WHOM THEY HAD BEEN BAPTIZED. HE COULD HAVE SAID, "WAS THE FATHER, THE SON, OR THE HOLY GHOST CRUCIFIED FOR YOU", BUT EVIDENCE POINTS TO THAT OF BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.

HEALING AND DEVILS WERE ALWAYS CAST OUT IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, PAUL ALSO SAYS IN COL. 3:17, "AND WHATSOEVER YE DO IN WORD OR DEED, DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS." BAPTISM IS AN ACT OR DEED PETER SAYS IN ACTS 4:12, "NEITHER IS THERE SALVATION IN ANY OTHER; FOR THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, WHEREBY YE MUST BE SAVED." AT NO PLACE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CAN BE FOUND BAPTISM EVER ADMINISTERED TO ANYONE EXCEPT IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.²⁴

SUCCESSIVE APOSTOLIC WRITERS

TURNING NOW TO THE ONLY WRITERS WE HAVE ANY RECORD OF WHO IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED THE DISCIPLES WE RECORD--

NICODEMUS: NO MENTION OF WATER BAPTISM. HE FURTHERMORE MAKES NO MENTION OF THE TRINITY. IN THE FICTICIOUS TALE OF PAUL, AND THE MARTYR THECIA. WE FIND REFERENCE TO BAPTISM CHAPTER 9:6-9, "AFTERWARDS THEY BROUGHT OUT MANY OTHER WILD BEASTS; BUT THECIA STOOD WITH HER HANDS STRETCHED TOWARDS HEAVEN, AND PRAYED; AND WHEN SHE HAD DONE PRAYING, SHE TURNED ABOUT, AND SAW A PIT OF WATER, AND SAID, NOW IT IS THE PROPER TIME FOR ME TO BE BAPTIZED. ACCORDINGLY SHE THREW HERSELF INTO THE WATER, AND SAID, IN THY NAME, O MY LORD JESUS CHRIST, I AM THIS LAST DAY BAPTIZED. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE STORY AS A WHOLE IS ONLY FICTION, BUT THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE GENERAL MODE OF BAPTISM WAS IMMERSION AND IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

CLEMENT: SILENT ON BAPTISM, HIS EPISTLES GENERALLY REJECTED AS NOT TO DULY HONOR TRINITY.

BARNABAS: IN REFERENCE TO BAPTISM SAYS, PAGE 157, 162: BLESSED ARE THEY WHO PUT THEIR TRUST IN THE CROSS, DESCEND INTO THE WATER: FOR THEY SHALL HAVE THEIR REWARD IN DUE TIME: "HAVING RECEIVED REMISSION OF OUR SINS, AND TRUSTING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, WE ARE BECOME RENEWED, BEING AGAIN CREATED AS IT WERE FROM THE BEGINNING."

IGNATIUS: THERE ARE 15 EPISTLES DESIGNATED TO IGNATIUS, EIGHT OF WHICH WHICH ARE KNOWN TO BE FORGERIES. AMONG THOSE THAT ARE GENUINE THERE IS NO REFERENCE TO BAPTISM. HE DOES MAKE MANY STATEMENTS LIKE THIS: "JESUS CHRIST, WHO WAS THE FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES, AND APPEARED IN THE END TO US. SALUTATION: "FARE YE WELL IN THE HARMONY OF GOD, YE WHO HAVE OBTAINED THE INSEPARABLE SPIRIT, WHO IS JESUS CHRIST."

PAPIAS WAS SILENT ON BAPTISM.

POLYCARP WAS SILENT ON BAPTISM.

SHEPHERD OF HERMAS. SIMILITUDE 9:120, PAGE 255, "WHOSOEVER THEREFORE SHALL NOT TAKE UPON HIM HIS NAME, HE SHALL NOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD." VERSES 151, 153, 154 and part of 158, page 258, "IT WAS NECESSARY, SAID HE, FOR THEM TO ASCEND BY WATER, THAT THEY MIGHT BE AT REST. FOR THEY COULD NOT OTHERWISE ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, BUT BY LAYING ASIDE THE MORTALITY OF THEIR FORMER LIFE. FOR BEFORE A MAN RECEIVES THAT SEAL HE IS FREED FROM DEATH, AND ASSIGNED UNTO LIFE." "NOW THAT SEAL IS THE WATER OF BAPTISM, INTO WHICH MEN GO DOWN UNDER THE OBLIGATION UNTO DEATH, BUT COME UP APPOINTED UNTO LIFE." "THEY WENT DOWN THEREFORE INTO THE WATER WITH THEM, AND AGAIN CAME UP."

THIS COMPLETES THE ONLY RECORDS OF WRITERS WHO WERE EITHER CONTEMPORANEOUS OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED THE APOSTLES. IT MAY BE NOTED THAT THERE IS NO MENTION OF THE TRINITY OR THE TRINITARIAN FORMULA OF BAPTISM.^{24*}

Part XII

TRINITARIANISM, AN OUTGROWTH OF IDOLATRY

THE BASIS OF THE PRESENT CHRISTIAN CONCEPT

IN 451, THE CELEBRATED COUNCIL OF CHALCEDONY DISCIPLINING EUTHYCHAS, FORMULATED THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY WHICH HAS EVER SINCE BEEN REGARDED AS THE LIMIT OF HUMAN WISDOM ON THIS SUBJECT.²

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY DID NOT FORM PART OF THE APOSTLES PREACHING. IN ITS FINAL FORM IT IS A PRODUCT OF MANY FACTORS. SOME OF THESE ARE BIBLICAL--ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE CONSIDERATIONS AT LEAST PARTLY PHILOSOPHICAL. THE REFORMERS RETAINED THE VIEW THAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY DESCRIBES THE ESSENCE OF THE GODHEAD, BUT LATER PROTESTANT THEOLOGAINS HAVE ARGUED THIS POINT.¹³

THE THEORY RECEIVED ITS CLASSIC FORM FROM ST. THOMAS AQUINAS¹⁴ (a Roman Catholic philosopher; 13th century A.D.). AFTER IT RECEIVED FURTHER ELUCIDATION AT THE HANDS OF JOHN CALVIN (a noted 16th century theologian), IT PASSED INTO THE BODY OF THE REFORMED FAITH.¹⁷

*See Chapter Thirteen for the scriptural truth on water baptism.

HEATHEN TRINITIES

TRIADS OF DIVINITIES OCCUR IN NEARLY ALL POLYTHEISTIC RELIGIONS--THE EGYPTIAN TRIAD OF SIRIS, ISIS, AND HORUS; THE HINDU TRIAD OF BRAHMA, VISHNU, AND SHIVA, ETC. IT WAS NO MORE THAN WAS TO BE ANTICIPATED THAT ONE OR MORE OF THESE TRIADS SHOULD NOW AND AGAIN BE POINTED TO AS THE ORIGINAL OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY. (The so called "Christian" doctrine of the Trinity bears a close resemblance to the older Hindu verse): "IN THOSE THREE PERSONS THE ONE GOD WAS SHOWN--EACH FIRST IN PLACE, EACH LAST--NOT ALONE: OF SIVA, VISHNU, BRAHMA, EACH MAY BE FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AMONG THE BLESSED THREE."¹⁰

(Christians unanimously agree that Hinduism is Polytheism and yet they regard the Trinity doctrine in Christianity as being Monotheistic, in spite of the fact that both doctrines acclaim three persons in one God.)

A TRINITY OF DEITIES IS COMMON TO ALL NATIONS. THE EMPEROR OF CHINA OFFERS ONCE EACH YEAR A SACRIFICE TO THE SPIRIT OF TRINITY AND UNITY. LAO-TSE (600 B.C.) SAYS: "TAO IS BY NATURE ONE; THE FIRST BEGAT THE SECOND; BOTH TOGETHER BROUGHT FORTH THE THIRD; THESE THREE MADE ALL THINGS." WE ARE MORE FAMILIAR WITH THE INDIAN TRIMURTI: BRAHMA, VISHNU, AND SIVA, WHO ARE REPRESENTED AND WORSHIPPED AS THREE PERSONS, ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINAL DIVINE PRINCIPLE BRAHM IS BUT ONE. IN A COMMENTARY ON THE RIG VEDA IT IS SAID: "THERE ARE THREE DEITIES, BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE GODHEAD, THE GREAT SOUL." THE SO-CALLED CHALDEAN ORACLE SAYS: "THE UNITY BROUGHT FORTH THE DUALITY WHICH DWELLS WITH IT AND SHINES IN INTELLECTUAL LIGHT: FROM THESE PROCEEDED THE TRINITY WHICH SHINES IN ALL THE WORLD." THE NAMES OF THE CHALDEAN TRINITY ARE: ANOS, ILLINOS, AOS; THE PHOENCIANS: ULOMUS, ULOSURUS, ELIUN; THE EGYPTIANS: KREPH (OR AMMUN), PITHAH, OSIRIS; THE IRISH: KRISAN, BIOSENA, JIVA; THE SCANDINAVIANS: THOR, WODEN, FRICCO. THE ANCIENT PRUSSIANS, POMERANIANS, WENDS, THE OLD AMERICANS, AND THE BABYLONIANS, ALL had their trinities. THE DIVINITIES OF GREECE WERE GROUPED BY MYTHOLOGERS BOTH IN A SUCCESSIVE: URONAS, CHRONDOS, ZEUS; AND A SIMULTANEOUS TRINITY: ZEUS, POSEIDON, ALDONEUS.¹⁸

CONCLUSIONS

(Butler concludes): DO NOT ALL THESE COINCIDENCES SERVE AS INDIRECT PROOF TO COMPEL US TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SCHELLING WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID "THE PHILOSOPHY OF MYTHOLOGY PROVES THAT A TRINITY OF DIVINE POTENTIALITIES IS THE ROOT FROM WHICH HAVE GROWN THE RELIGIOUS IDEAS OF ALL NATIONS OF ANY IMPORTANCE...THIS IDEA DOES NOT EXIST BECAUSE THERE IS SUCH A THING AS CHRISTIANITY; ON THE CONTRARY, CHRISTIANITY EXISTS BECAUSE THIS IDEA IS THE MOST ORIGINAL OF ALL."¹⁸

(It must be admitted that the heathens knew of a Trinity, long before Christ, and therefore, Christians. If God is a Trinity, it is incongruous that the heathens knew of it long before the Christian era, when the prophets of Israel did not!)

(Phillip Schaff defends the heathen concept in these words: "THE DEEPER MINDS OF THE HEATHEN AMBIGUITY SHOWED A PRESENTIMENT OF A THREE FOLD DISTINCTION IN THE DIVINE ESSENCE, WHICH LIKE ALL THE DEEPER INSTINCTS OF THE HEATHEN MIND, SERVE TO STRENGTHEN THE CHRISTIAN TRUTH."¹⁸ (As though the instincts of darkness can help illuminate the light of God's revelation!)

(I.S.B.E. justifies the Trinity with its definitions that are closer to heathen idolatry than the Bible, thusly: "THE DEFINITION OF A BIBLICAL DOCTRINE IN SUCH A UNBIBLICAL LANGUAGE CAN BE JUSTIFIED ONLY ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT IT IS BETTER TO PRESERVE THE TRUTH OF THE SCRIPTURE THAN THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE."⁴ (As though the truth of the Bible can not be taught by using biblical terms!))

Many modern scholars, however, are admitting that the doctrine of the Trinity is indefensible. There is even a change of attitude toward a more biblical definition of the Trinity:

IT MIGHT BE WELL IF THE TERM "TRINITY" WERE EMPLOYED TO DESIGNATE THE THREEFOLD SELF-MANIFESTATION OF GOD. THE FIRST CHRISTIANS HAD WITH ST. PAUL A SAVING EXPERIENCE OF THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND OF THE LOVE OF GOD AND OF THE COMMUNION OF THE HOLY GHOST, AND THE THEOLOGIANS WERE LED, INEVITABLY, TO EFFECT AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE GOSPEL OF THEIR SALVATION AND THE SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY, AND MORE ESPECIALLY THE PLATONISM, IN WHICH THEY HAD BEEN TRAINED, WHILE, IN MAKING ROOM FOR THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL WITHIN THE WORLD--NOT ALTOGETHER HOSPITABLE--OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY, THEY FOUND THEMSELVES TRANSLATING THEIR EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD--THE GOD OF THE FATHER OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST--INTO A DOCTRINE OF DIVERSITY AND MULTIPLICITY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM MERELY ABSTRACT UNIT, WITHIN THE DIVINE NATURE ITSELF. IN OTHER WORDS, IN THINKING OUT THE TRINITY THEY ARRIVED AT THE TRINITY. THE GREATEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL OF THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS, ORIGEN, ATHANASIUS, BASIL, THE GREGORIES, AUGUSTINE, ALL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE DIVINE NATURE REMAINED FOR THEM A MYSTERY.

IN THE SYSTEM OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY DOES NOT USUALLY FIT WELL INTO THE GENERAL DOCTRINE OF GOD, AND OFTEN BEARS THE CHARACTER OF A DOCTRINE APART.

IN SHORT, GOD HIMSELF IS THE FATHER REVEALED; GOD HIMSELF IS THE CHRIST REVEALING; GOD HIMSELF IS THE HOLY SPIRIT ABIDING. IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT THERE WAS NO WORD "PERSON" IN THE VOCABULARY OF THE GREEK-SPEAKING THEOLOGIANS WHO SHAPED THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY TO THE AUTHORITATIVE FORM IT ASSUMED IN THE NICEANO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED. THROUGH ORIGEN'S INFLUENCE IT CAME TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE THEOLOGICAL TERMINOLOGY AS THE DESIGNATION OF A MEMBER OF THE TRINITY.¹⁶

Part XIII

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ADMISSION

The New Catholic Encyclopedia, after discussing the "doctrinal evolution and theological elaboration of the mystery of the Trinity," says:

There is the recognition of the part of exegetes and biblical theologians, including a constantly growing number of Roman Catholics, that one should not speak of Trinitarianism in the New Testament without serious

qualification. There is also the closely parallel recognition on the part of historians of dogma and systematic theologians that when one does speak of an unqualified Trinitarianism, one had moved from the period of Christian origins, to say, the last quadrant of the fourth century. It was only then that what might be called the definitive Trinitarian dogma "one God in three Persons" became thoroughly assimilated into Christian life and thought.

Herein lies the difficulty. On the one hand, it was the dogmatic formula "one God in three Persons" that would henceforth for more than fifteen centuries structure and guide the Theological essence of the Christian message, both in the profession of faith and in theological dialectic. On the other hand, the formula itself does not reflect the immediate consciousness of the period of origins; it was the product of three centuries of doctrinal development.

...Among the Apostolic Fathers, there had been nothing even remotely approaching such a mentality or perspective; among the second century Apologists, little more than a focussing on the problem as that of plurality within the unique Godhead."

Part XIV

ANTI-TRINITARIANS IN THE LATER CHRISTIAN CENTURIES

MICHAEL SERVETUS (1511-1553), A SCHOLAR, PHYSICIAN, AND SCIENTIST OF NOTE; DEEPLY RELIGIOUS AND DEVOTED TO CHRIST, WISHING TO RESTORE WHAT HE CALLED TRUE CHRISTIANITY, WOULD NOT CONFORM TO THE ACCEPTED DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY. HE ALSO DENOUNCED PREDESTINATION AND INFANT BAPTISM. HE WAS ARRESTED, PRESUMABLY AT CALVIN'S INSISTENCE. SERVETUS WAS CONDEMNED ON THE CHARGE THAT HE DENIED THE TRINITY AND REJECTED INFANT BAPTISM, OFFENSES PUNISHABLE BY DEATH UNDER THE JUSTINIAN CODE.²⁰ (Luther and Calvin consented to his death). IN SPITE OF CALVIN'S PLEA FOR A MORE MERCIFUL FORM OF EXECUTION, SERVETUS WAS BURNED AT THE STAKE. HENCEFORTH, CALVIN'S POSITION IN GENEVA WAS NOT TO BE SERIOUSLY CONTESTED.²⁰ (The Reformed Church later put up a monument, repenting).

(Trinitarians are usually quite silent about such things--the reformers, being classed as heretics for dissenting from the Roman Catholic Church and being hunted down and murdered--should have been sympathetic to those, who in all good conscience, differ from them).

SOME WHO FOUND REFUGE AT GENEVA SYMPATHIZED WITH SERVETUS, AND TO THE DISTRESS OF CALVIN, TENDED TOWARD ANTI-TRINITARIANISM. SIMILAR TRENDS DISTURBED THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN BERN AND ZURICH. ANTI-TRINITARIANISM HAD A MARKED DEVELOPMENT IN POLAND, called SOCINIANISM from IELIO SOZINI who was COURTLY IN MANNER, MODEST, DEEPLY RELIGIOUS, OF IRREPROACHABLE MORALS. HIS SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE NEVER LED HIM TO A FORMAL BREAK WITH THE SWISS AND GENEVA REFORMERS. HOWEVER, HE DEPLORED THE BURNING OF SERVETUS.

OTHERS OF THE REFORMATION WERE INCLINED TO BE ANTI-TRINITARIANS. SOME OF THE ITALIAN ANABAPTISTS (those who rebaptized after conversion people who were sprinkled while infants) BEGAN TO DEVELOP ANTI-TRINITARIAN CONVICTIONS and MULTIPLIED, having CONGREGATIONS AND PASTORS, and holding A COUNCIL IN VENICE IN 1550.

ANOTHER CENTER OF ANTI-TRINITARIAN VIEWS WAS IN THE GRISONS, A REPUBLIC BETWEEN ITALY AND SWITZERLAND. IN 1553 THE SYNOD OF THE GRISONS ATTEMPTED TO IMPOSE A TRINITARIAN FAITH; BY 1575 ANTI-TRINITARIAN MINISTERS HAD BEEN LARGELY ROOTED OUT.

IN TRANSYLVANIA, AN ANTI-TRINITARIAN FORM OF PROTESTANTISM WAS MAKING RAPID PROGRESS. IN POLAND (in the end of the 15th C.) THE REFORMED CHURCHES were ANTI-TRINITARIANS, to which SOCINUS GAVE LEADERSHIP (called Socinians). THE SOCINIANS HAD OPPORTUNITY IN RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINE. MANY others had SIMILAR VIEWS, INCLUDING THE REMONSTRANTS AND SOME OF THE MENNONITES IN HOLLAND. IN 1659 THE SOCINIANS WERE BANISHED FROM POLAND BY DECREE OF THE DIET. The anti-Trinitarian's CHIEF GAINS ON THE CONTINENT WERE AMONG THE REFORMED; IN ENGLAND IT WAS FROM THE PRESBYTERIANS; IN THE U.S.A. FROM THE PURITANS.

IN THE 1780's THE OLDEST CONGREGATION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, IN NEW ENGLAND, OFFICIALLY ABANDONED BELIEF IN THE TRINITY.²⁰ (Some of these anti-Trinitarians held Modalistic Monarchian views, some Dynamic Monarchian views, and others the modern Unitarian views of a completely human Christ.) For example, IN 1815 E. CHANNING BECAME AN EXPONENT OF ARIAN VIEWS AND HE ACCEPTED THE NAME UNITARIAN FOR THE MOVEMENT. (The term "UNITARIAN" had been APPLIED earlier to THE SZKLETS IN TRANSYLVANIA and to others, even those believing in the Deity of Christ).²⁰ The Campellites or Disciples of Christ of the 1800's were an undenominational fellowship of devout Christians who were anti-Trinitarians but who believed in the Deity of Jesus.

CONGREGATIONALISTS WERE DEEPLY STIRRED BY THE GREAT AWAKENING WHICH BEGAN IN 1790 AND SOME OF THE CLERGY AS WELL AS THE LAITY WERE AFFECTED BY ARMENIANISM AND SOCINIANISM. SOME OF THE GENERAL BAPTIST MOVED IN THAT DIRECTION, as did A NEW ANGLICAN CLERGYmen.²⁰

(Nor was the Oneness doctrine confined to the late middle ages; IN 1115 A.D., ABELARD CANON OF NOTRE DAME, WAS CHARGED WITH SABELLIANISM.⁵ HE WAS POSSESSED OF A RAPIER-LIKE INTELLECT, was CHARMING, KEEN, A STIMULATING TEACHER; A SINCERE CHRISTIAN. HE WENT TO VARIOUS CENTERS, IN SOME PLACES, WORSTING HIS TEACHERS, AND EVENTUALLY BECAME THE MOST POPULAR OF THE LECTURERS IN PARIS. ABELARD ANTAGONIZED MANY. HIS ENEMIES HAD HIM HAILED BEFORE THE COUNCIL AT SOISSONS IN 1211 FOR HERESY. IN 1140 he WAS CONDEMNED BY A COUNCIL AT SENS because HIS VIEWS ON THE TRINITY and other subjects were REGARDED AS SUBVERSIVE TO THE FAITH.²⁰

ABOUT THE TIME OF WORLD WAR I, A DOCTRINAL CONTROVERSY SWEEPED THROUGH THE HEARTLAND OF THE UNITED STATES. THE "NEW ISSUE," ONENESS, CONTESTED THAT TRUE BAPTISM MUST BE "IN THE NAME OF JESUS" ONLY, RATHER THAN EMPLOYING THE TRADITIONAL FORMULA. FURTHERMORE, THE PROPONENTS OF THIS VIEW DENIED THAT THERE ARE THREE PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD. FOR A TIME, THIS TEACHING THREATENED TO TOPPLE THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, BECAUSE MANY OF ITS LEADERS--

MEN LIKE H. G. RODGERS, EUDORUS N. BELL, HOWARD A. GOSS, AND DANIEL C. O. OPPERMAN--SUBMITTED THEMSELVES FOR REBAPTISM IN "JESUS' NAME." THE MINISTERIAL ROLL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WAS DECREASED BY MORE THAN 150. ITS GENERAL COUNCIL IN ST. LOUIS (1916) PREPARED A "STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS." THE RIGHT TO DRAFT SUCH A STATEMENT WAS CHALLENGED BY THE "ONENESS" CONTINGENT ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE FORMATIVE SCRIPTURES ALONE WERE TO BE THE "ALL-SUFFICIENT RULE FOR FAITH AND PRACTICE," AND HERE WAS A MAN MADE CREED BEING PROPOSED. THEY ARGUED THAT THIS WAS A DEPARTURE FROM THE LIBERTY WHICH HAD CHARACTERIZED EARLIER PENTECOSTALISM. THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WITHSTOOD THE CHALLENGE AND ARTICULATED A POSITION THAT WAS STAUNCHLY TRINITARIAN. MEN LIKE J. ROSWELL FLOWER AND JOHN W. WELCH REMAINED STAUNCHLY TRINITARIAN, CRITICIZING THE NEW REVELATION ON THE GROUND THAT IT WAS TOO DEPENDANT UPON THE SUBJECTIVE FEELINGS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND NOT ENOUGH ON TRADITIONAL HISTORICO-THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES. 156 MINISTERS WITHDREW FROM THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, AND A NEW PENTECOSTAL BODY WAS ORGANIZED--THE PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE WORLD.⁹

THE UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IS THE LARGEST "ONENESS" GROUP OF PENTECOSTALS. IN 1965 IT NUMBERED OVER 200,000 (Spiritfilled, adult) MEMBERS.⁹

(Many times a division, or split, develops when one preaches the truths of God's Word that are in opposition to that of the established church teachings. In such cases, those who reject the truth of the Bible, substituting instead the traditions of men, would be held accountable for the division in the church--not those who are faithful and bold enough to reinstate the truths of Scripture.) For example, it was the Jews that refused the truth that Jesus was the Messiah, that were to blame for the split in the synagogues that Paul preached in, not Paul--they should have accepted it! The same holds true, to a lesser degree, between the reformers and the Roman Catholic Church. The Assembly of God ministers who were honest and open enough to search the Scriptures to see if the Oneness is true, and found it to be so, should not be castigated by those who are not open enough to search out these things.

(After) PENTECOST, THE CHRISTIANS CONTINUED TO BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, BUT THEY ALSO BELIEVED THAT IN JESUS THEY HAD SEEN GOD, THAT JESUS WAS GOD HIMSELF BECOME FLESH. THEY LIKewise WERE CONVINCED THAT THE POWER WHICH THEY FOUND AT WORK WITHIN THEM WAS ALSO GOD. CHRISTIANS NURTURED ON THE GREAT CENTRAL AFFIRMATION OF JUDAISM, "HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD THY GOD, THE LORD IS ONE," WERE CONSTRAINED TO THINK OF GOD AS FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT, THREE IN ONE.

A PROBLEM WHICH LONG VEXED THE CHURCH, AND WHICH EVEN NOW HAS NOT BEEN SOLVED TO THE SATISFACTION OF ALL WHO BEAR THE CHRISTIAN NAME, IS THAT OF THE TRINITY. THE FIRST CHRISTIANS WERE SURE THAT GOD IS ONE. MOST OF THEM WERE ALSO CONVINCED THAT IN SOME UNIQUE WAY, IN CHRIST WAS BOTH MAN AND GOD AND THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS FROM GOD AND IS GOD.²⁰

Part XV

THE CONFUSION - by Don Barnett

In short, Trinitarianism and Monarchianism have both conflicted and overlapped in their doctrines. The picture is confusing because the term "Trinity" did not mean to Tertullian what it meant to Athanasius, and to him it did not mean what it did to Augustine. Calvin's concept was not the same as Luther's neither was it identical to Augustine's. Even today there are several concepts under the heading of "Trinity"--many even holding Oneness views and denying three persons in the Godhead. Athanasius, whose name is identified with the Nicean Creed of the Trinity, not only admits confusion of the subject, but makes many Modalistic statements contrary to Trinitarianism, such as:

"THE DIVINITY OF THE FATHER IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF THE SON": AND EVEN THAT THE SON'S DIVINITY IS THE FATHER'S DIVINITY. "THE SON", HE ARGUES, "IS OF COURSE OTHER THAN THE FATHER AS OFFSPRING, BUT AS GOD HE IS ONE AND THE SAME. THE GODHEAD IS A UNIQUE, INDIVISIBLE MONAD."²⁰

Some are arguing that Christians should keep the term "Trinity" but return to the biblical, Monarchian view of God. Some feel that they are caught in the wedge of tradition on the one side, and the Scriptures on the other side--and they are. The majority of non-scholars today are quite ignorant about the entire subject. Most ministers graduate from Bible Schools, parroting Trinitarianism, but knowing little about its history and problems--few have examined the other side; they attack it on the grounds that they have been warned against it. The terms "Oneness," "Monarchianism" and "Sabellianism" have not only erroneously been termed the "Jesus Only" doctrine, but have become known as the devil's lie and heresy--whereas Trinitarianism is the deviate. It is even common to hear or read that Monarchianism denied the Holy Trinity--as though the doctrine of the Trinity was the established doctrine when Monarchianism was invented. The truth, as shown by history, is that the Trinity doctrine, when formulated, denied Monarchianism, which came first.

No wonder people are confused, neither knowing what they affirm nor what they are against--blindly following Catholic tradition, and labeling the teachings of the Apostles: "heresy" and "a cult"!

Part XVI

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF GOD

THE CONCEPT IN BRIEF

The Scriptures declare that there is one God and that God is One. His Old Testament name was Yahweh, better known as Jehovah.

God is an infinite, eternal Spirit who made Himself known to man in Old Testament days thru prophets, angels, the tabernacle, and miracles. God

spoke to Moses from a burning bush, from a cloud, from the tabernacle, and from Mount Siani. He manifested himself many times in angelic form; sometimes in the form of a man--as when He appeared to Jacob.

In the New Testament dispensation, God manifested himself in the Christ who was born of a virgin--God being His Father. Seven days after Christ's ascension, God revealed himself in an even more intimate way by filling believers with His Spirit.

The Scriptures make it very clear that Jesus is Jehovah of the Old Testament, in flesh. The Deity in the Son of God was none other than the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--the eternal Creator of all things.

BIBLICAL CONCEPTS WITH SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

The Scripture declares that God is a Spirit,¹ filling heaven and earth.² No man has or can see God,³ except as He wishes to reveal Himself in material forms that man's eye can fix upon. God has manifested⁴ Himself in many ways:

- 1) To Moses in a burning bush.⁵
- 2) To Moses in a cloudy pillar.⁶
- 3) To Moses in veiled glory on Mt. Sinai.⁷
- 4) To Jacob as an angel in human form.⁸
- 5) To Manoah as an angel.⁹
- 6) To Abraham in human form.¹⁰

¹John 4:24

²Jer. 23:24

³John 1:18

⁴"revealed, made visible."

⁵Ex. 3:4

⁶Ex. 13:21, 22; 33:9-11

⁷Ex. 33:18-23

⁸Gen. 32:24, 30 with Hos. 12:24

⁹Jud. 13:13,22

¹⁰Gen. 18:1-3

- 7) To Nebuchadnezzar in what seemed to his heathen mind to be a son of the gods.¹¹

God's name was known in the pre-Christian era as Jehovah¹² (more correctly "Yahweh").¹³

The Scriptures make it very plain that Jesus, as to His Deity, was Jehovah¹⁴ of the Old Testament.

The New Testament declares that God manifested himself in flesh and dwelt among us,¹⁵ speaking to us in a son.¹⁶ The child was the Everlasting Father,¹⁷ dwelling in Jesus,¹⁸ who being the God¹⁹ of the Old Covenant, was the Saviour of Israel,²⁰ although many would not accept Jesus as their Creator.²¹

¹¹Dan. 3:25, 28. The KJV has: "the Son of God" but most translators render it: "a son of the gods." Nebuchadnezzar knew nothing of the Son of God who was yet unborn--neither did the Jews. The KJV translates "Elah" as "God" 78 times; as "god" or "gods" 16 times. The context must decide. See Dan. 5:23 where the context demands "gods", rather than "God" for "Elah".

¹²Ex. 6:3

¹³See Ch. IV

¹⁴Compare the following Scriptures, bearing in mind that in the KJV "LORD" is the translation of "Jehovah", whereas "Lord" is the translation of the Hebrew "Adonai" (lord, master). All of the following O.T. passages have LORD (Jehovah):

Isa. 40:3	-----with-----	Mtt. 3:3
Ps. 24:8	-----with-----	I Cor. 2:8
Zech. 12:8, 10	-----with-----	Jn. 19:18 and 1:11
Isa. 44:6	-----with-----	Rev. 1:8; 2:8
Isa. 43:10, 11	-----with-----	Titus 1:4 (Mtt. 1:21)
Isa. 52:6	-----with-----	Jn. 17:6, 11, 12; 5:43
Isa. 3:13, 14	-----with-----	I Peter 2:6-8

¹⁵I Tim. 3:16

¹⁶Heb. 1:2. The Greek has "in", not "by", as the KJV has. Some of the translations that have "in" are: Darby, Wuest, Phillips, Goodspeed, Concordant, Amplified, Youngs, ASV, ERV, Living Scriptures, Centenary, Berkeley, New English Bible, and Worrells.

¹⁷Isa. 9:6

¹⁸Jn. 14:9, 10

¹⁹Mtt. 1:23

²⁰Isa. 43:10, 11; Matt. 1:21; Titus 1:4

²¹Jn. 1:10, 11

God emphatically declared that He was One,²² the only Creator,²³ and Saviour.²⁴

Jesus was both Lord (Deity) and Christ²⁵ (humanity--"the anointed One" --not "the Anointer"). He was, as man, both "the Son of God"²⁶ and "the Son of Man."²⁷ Jesus, possessing a dual nature, spoke from two different planes of reference: sometimes as God, sometimes as man. As God, He spoke as the Father;²⁸ as man, He spoke as the Son.²⁹

As Deity, Jesus said:

- 1) "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."³⁰
- 2) "I am Alpha and Omega."³¹
- 3) "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."³²
- 4) "Before Abraham was I Am."³³

²²Ja. 2:19; Jn. 10:30

²³Isa. 42:5; (see Jn. 1:3, 10, 11).

²⁴Isa. 43:10, 11 (see Titus 1:4).

²⁵Acts 2:36

²⁶Mark 1:1

²⁷Matt. 9:6 - "Man", here, is not "anēr" (male), but "anthrōpos" ("mankind"). A generic term for either man or woman.

²⁸Deity, who begat "the man Christ -- Jesus" (I Thess. 2:5).

²⁹He who was born of a virgin (Mtt. 1:22) and therefore had a beginning. Being flesh, He had both Father and mother.

³⁰Mtt. 18:20

³¹Rev. 1:11

³²Jn. 2:19

³³Jn. 8:58

As a son (humanity), Jesus said:

- 1) "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"³⁴
- 2) "I thirst."³⁵
- 3) "He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son."³⁶

The same God of the Old Testament that dwelt in Christ,³⁷ reconciling the world unto himself,³⁸ was the same God who has filled us with His Holy Spirit.³⁹ The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is called "The Promise of the Father."⁴⁰ Jesus is the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit⁴¹--He promised that He would not leave his disciples Comfortless,⁴² He would come unto them.⁴³ As man, He would pray the Father to send the Comforter,⁴⁴ the Holy Ghost;⁴⁵ whereas, as God, He, Himself, would come unto them.⁴⁶

Jesus (Jehovah the Savior) is the name of the one God of the Old and New Testaments, who manifested himself in many ways, chiefly as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. One God in three manifestations; not One God in three persons!

³⁴Mtt. 27:46

³⁵Jn. 19:28

³⁶Jn. 19:26

³⁷I Tim. 3:16

³⁸II Co. 5:19

³⁹Joel 2:28 with Acts 2:4, 16, 17

⁴⁰Acts 1:4, 5

⁴¹Mtt. 1:11; Jn. 16:7 This He did after He went away and was given by Him as Deity, not humanity.

⁴²Greek: orphanos (orphans; fatherless)

⁴³As God; the Holy Spirit; not in flesh

⁴⁴Jn. 14:16

⁴⁵Jn. 14:26

⁴⁶Jn. 14:16-18

Part XVII

SUMMARY - by Don Barnett

Christianity inherited the Monotheism of Israel, and through the teachings of Jesus, the apostles, and the Scriptures claimed that Jesus was the God of Israel who was manifested in the flesh, received up into Glory, and who came as the Holy Spirit. This doctrine was preached everywhere, and was the dominant doctrine on the Godhead during the first three centuries.

Christian Philosophers united the concepts of Judaism, Greek Philosophy, and Christianity to form a Logos-Christology doctrine that denied the divinity of Jesus.

Hippolytus, a strong advocate of the Logos-Christology doctrine, vigorously opposed the Apostolic doctrine that God is one person in three manifestations (later called "Modal Monarchianism"). Sabellius, the leading defender of Monarchianism, was excommunicated in 217 by the Bishop of Rome, who devised a compromise doctrine.

Tertullian developed and defined the doctrine of Logos-Christology as three persons in a Trinity, but one God, in which Jesus was subordinate to the Father. And yet, he used the legal Latin term for "persons" meaning "manifestations" or "masks," rather than "personalities." The Holy Spirit was said to proceed from the Father, through the Son.

Saint Augustine, a century later, developed this teaching into a doctrine of the Trinity, in which all three persons were separate personalities, all co-equal and co-eternal.

While this compromise doctrine was cementing two rival factions together, two splits had developed: (1) Some Monarchians had been influenced by Logos-Christology until a Monarchianism developed in which Jesus was said to be without Deity until His baptism. This group, known as Dynamic Monarchianism, never became large, percentage-wise. (2) Many Logos-Christology disciples instead of following the evolution to Trinitarianism, led by Tertullian, Athanasius and Augustine, joined themselves to Arius. Arius imbibed some Monarchianism, some theories of Origen, and invented some of his own--all of which he built upon the Logos-Christology foundation. This doctrine, called Arianism, taught that Christ was human, created by God out of nothing, and made into a lower god.

The Emperor Constantine ordered a council at Nicea to resolve the difference in theology on the Godhead. This council developed into a heated battle that ended in a victory for the Trinitarians. The Trinitarian position was then strengthened by a new Nicene Creed that was carefully worded to prohibit any Arianism or Monarchianism (then called Sabellianism) and to strengthen the Trinitarian conceptions. No other views were allowed.

Arianism was not dead, however, and continued to reappear (several times as victors, banishing Trinitarian Bishops) until the reign of Theodosius. Monarchianism never again became predominant in the West, but the scriptural teaching of one God in three manifestations has reappeared many times in many generations, and exists even today in numbers in the hundreds of thousands.

In 381, the Nicean Creed was again modified to include the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit in the doctrine of the Trinity, and to assert the pre-existence of the Son of God. This tenent, adopted by the General Council in 451 as a dogma, is the "Nicean Creed" of today, which we call the "doctrine of the Trinity."

That the doctrine of the Trinity was a long, slow, hotly-contested development is quite evident from church history. That the present doctrine of the Trinity was the teaching of the early church in the first century is an absurdity in the face of church history. It would be impossible for the Apostolic Church to teach a doctrine that was only attained after several centuries of doctrinal evolution, church council debates, compromises, and mergers and divisions of ecclesiastical positions.

When the Apostolic Age closed, the doctrine of Logos-Christology, Arianism, and the Trinity were not yet invented or developed. At the end of the first century the Christian world believed that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were manifestations of one person: God.

The Protestant churches for the most part inherited the doctrines of Catholicism, and although Luther and other reformers took up the cry "back to the Bible," none of them found their way completely back to the Apostolic doctrines. Traditions are difficult to overturn; especially if they are tied in with religion -- and especially if the tradition is "said" to be both biblical and essential. This is even more true if the doctrine is claimed to be a mystery that can't be understood, is not rational, and yet must be believed without question. Such is the doctrine of the Trinity.

UNFOLDING REVELATION OF GOD

File 9 (BC)

Name David Kenady

Read the following sets of Scriptures, and write in the blank space the attribute or fact about God that is stated in them. At the end of the paper, write a paragraph giving your conclusion as to the relationship between Jesus and Yahweh of the Old Testament, and the impact this has on the Trinitarian position.

<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Attribute of, or fact about God</u>
1. Genesis 17:1	Revelation 1:8,17,18	Almighty God
2. Isaiah 51:12	John 14:16-18	Comforter
3. Zechariah 14:3-5	I Thessalonians 3:12,13 Titus 2:13 Jude 14	Coming w/ His saints
4. Isaiah 45:23	Philippians 2:9-11	Every knee shall bow
5. Isaiah 63:16 Isaiah 64:8	Isaiah 9:6 John 2:19-22 with Galatians 1:1	Father
6. Isaiah 44:6 Isaiah 48:12	Revelation 1:6,8,13,17 Revelation 2:8 Revelation 22:12,13,16	First and Last
7. Isaiah 14:3 Jeremiah 6:16 Exodus 33:14	Matthew 11:28	Gives rest
8. Psalm 22:28	Matthew 2:6	Governor
9. Exodus 3:14	John 8:58	I AM
10. Psalm 9:7,8	II Corinthians 5:10	Judge
11. Isaiah 44:6	John 1:49	King of Israel
12. I Kings 8:39 Jeremiah 17:10	Revelation 2:18,23	Knows hearts of men
13. Deuteronomy 30:20	John 11:25 John 14:6	Life
14. Isaiah 60:19 Psalm 27:1	Revelation 21:23 John 8:12	Light

UNFOLDING REVELATION OF GOD

<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Attribute of, or fact about God</u>
15. Zechariah 12:8-10	John 19:34-37	The one pierced
16. Deuteronomy 10:17	Revelation 19:16	Lord of Lords
17. Psalm 107:29	Matthew 8:26,27	still the storm
18. Isaiah 43:10,11 Isaiah 45:15,21	Acts 13:23 John 4:42 Titus 2:13	Only Savior
19. Zechariah 3:9 Zechariah 4:10	Revelation 5:6	Seven eyes
20. Psalm 23:1 Isaiah 40:10,11	John 10:11,12 1 Peter 5:4	Our shepard
21. Zechariah 11:6,12,13	Matthew 26:14-16 Matthew 27:3-10	Betrayed for 30 pieces
22. Isaiah 8:13-15	1 Peter 2:8 Acts 4:11	Stone of stumbling
23. Job 9:8	Matthew 14:25	Walks upon the sea
24. Isaiah 40:1-3	Matthew 3:1-3	Preceded by voice in wilderness - "Make way for YHWH,
25. Isaiah 40:8 Isaiah 14:24	Matthew 24:35	his word last forever.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus is YHWH of the Old Testament. There is no distinction, the doctrine of the Trinity demands a distinction of Deity - but Jesus IS YHWH as Deity.