Edward Christian Church- "God: Who is He?" -pt4b November 29, 2016
People of All Ages, Lifestyles, Arenas of Life ask the same questions, "Does God know me?"
"Does God love me?" "Can God ever forgive me?" Underneath these questions lies an even more basic issue. What is God really like... Who is He?

Questions About God

It seems there are many different views / opinions about God. "How can God be three in one?" "Why is it necessary to believe in Jesus, wasn't He just a man?" "Why does it matter if there is a Trinity?" These questions are most often sincere. Yet at times they are raised only as a smoke screen to shun any personal accountability to God for change.

"The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" -Psalm 14:1

Question: "What Does the Word Trinity Mean?"

The word *Trinity* refers to the **state** of being **threefold**. It is a term **applied** to the **unity** of the **Father**, the **Son** and the **Holy Spirit** as three **distinct** persons in **one** God. **All** attempts by the **human** mind to **describe** the **concept** of the "**Trinity**" falls **short** of a **full** explanation, but still we **try**.

- Example: Imagine a triangle. Each side is necessary for a triangle to exist.
- God the Father is <u>Above Us</u>. And yet, so is the Son Above Us.

 "He [God the Father] raised him [Christ] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority." -Ephesians 1:20-21
- God the Son is With Us.

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel-which means, 'God with us.'" - Matthew 1:23

Those on earth at the time of Jesus saw the very character of God visibly demonstrated through the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus, who is God, took on human form that we might know how He acted and interacted in a Godly way and how he loved the unlovely. He gave love to those who were persecuting and mistreating Him, even though He didn't have to do so. And yet, so is the Spirit with us.

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" -Psalm 139:7

• God the Holy Spirit is Within us.

"[God] set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." -2 Corinthians 1:22

The Holy Spirit is sent to <u>dwell in our hearts</u> once we have trusted in Jesus Christ and believed that He is Savior and Lord. The very Spirit of God then Dwells Within Us.

❖ Question: "Is the God of the Old Testament 'just' God the Father?"

No. In the **first** verse of the **Bible**, the Hebrew word translated "God" is **Elohim**. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" -**Genesis 1:1**

The **noun** *Elohim* is **plural**, but it takes a **singular verb**. The **idea** of both **plurality** and **unity** is in the **Hebrew** word for **God**. Even in the **first** verse of **Scripture**, we have the **Trinity**!

- El means "strong and mighty God."
- -im is the plural ending.
- *Elohim*, the word, conveys both unity and plurality.

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.'" -Genesis 1:26
"The LORD God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.'" Genesis 3:22

"Come, let us go down/confuse their language so they will not understand each other" Gen 11:7

❖ Question: "Did Jesus Ever Teach the Concept of the Trinity?"

Yes. - "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (**Matthew 28:19**—The **Great Commission**)

Notice: He did not say in the "names" of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—but used "name" (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

❖ Question: "Did Jesus Claim to be God?"

Yes, with absolute clarity to the Jews. The words "I am" in John 8:58 imply that Jesus is the Holy Name of God, YHWH, for Himself, equating Himself with God. In the minds of the observers, this was blasphemy; therefore, they attempted to stone Him, for stoning was the rightful penalty for blasphemy!

"Jesus replied, 'If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word. Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.' 'You are not yet fifty years old,' the Jews said to him, 'and you have seen Abraham!' 'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I am!' At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds." -John 8:54-59

❖ Question: "Is One Person of the Trinity More Important Than Another?"

No, but there is a differentiation of roles and a subordination in their function.

"Jesus gave them this answer: 'I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." -John 5:19

Here we see the Son Submitting to the Father.

Each person performs roles different from the other two, but no one is inferior to the others.

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