

THE HOLY TRINITY

"The Unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead"

INTRODUCTION:

Existence of God cannot be denied because we cannot explain the creation without the Creator. To understand this, we go from creation to Creator and come to the conclusion that 'God exists'. The conclusion is probability; not certainty.

There are three kinds of causes:

1. Self-Caused - Contradictory
2. Caused by another - Contingent
3. Uncaused - Eternal

There are three kinds of being:

1. Possible being - He may exist
2. Impossible being - Never possible
3. Necessity being - He cannot exist

So by studying the nature, we can come to some understanding about God but we cannot come to right understanding about God.

Hence from the beginning of the creation, mankind have been encouraging themselves in understanding God. So just by seeing the Universe, we understand the existence of God. But we have to take more effort to come to the understanding that God does not exist.

We cannot understand the nature of God (Who God is?). But the people in India have struggled to understand the nature of God. So they came to conclusion that God is 'neti neti' ie; "not this; not that". God can be neither defined nor described - thus emphasizing Transcendence. But they thought this idea is not useful to anybody. So they came to conclusion that 'All is God' ie; "this is God; I am God".

In the Bible, we see that God talked to Moses and Moses wanted to know who God is. He asked God, "Who are you?" God said, "I am that I am". Even then he was not satisfied. He prayed to God – "Show me thy Glory, I pray" (Ex 33:18). God revealed Himself to Moses in ways he can understand God.

From this we understand that God has to reveal Himself so that we get right understanding about God. From the revelation of God, we Understand that word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible. It is not a Speculative Truth; but a Revealed Truth.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Christianity had its beginning and growth in a Polytheistic and Syncretistic world. Christianity with its exclusive claim had to explain the unity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Tertullian was the first to use the word "Trinity". The church began to formulate this doctrine on 4 AD. The Council of Nicer declared the Son to be co-essential with the Father (325 AD). The Council of Constantinople accepted the deity of the Holy Spirit (381 AD).

Athanasius and Augustine gave the final touch to this doctrine. This doctrine makes three affirmations; namely:

1. There is but one God
2. The Father, the Son and the Spirit is each God
3. The Father, the Son and the Spirit is each and distinct person

BIBLICAL BASIS:

The Bible maintains that there is threeness to God as well as oneness.

Threeness : Mt 28:19, 3:16-17, II Cor 13:14

Oneness : Deut 6:4, 1 Cor. 8:4, 8:6

Father – 100% nature of God

Son – 100% nature of God

Holy Spirit – 100% nature of God

The net is not 300% but 100%

Threeness pertains to persons whereas oneness pertains to essence or nature. (Ex: Although, billions of humans live in earth, we all have one and the same nature in common. It is no contradiction to say that I am one of many people who possesses the same nature that makes each of us human.)

To help distinguish between person and nature, we must distinguish between the “is” of the identity and the “is” of the description / prediction.

Jesus is God. God is Jesus. Both are not identical. Because Jesus does not exhaust what it means to speak of God. ‘Jesus is God’ – He possesses a nature that only two other persons share. Therefore, there is not just one person who can properly be called God.

The members of the Trinity are deeply interrelated or mutually indwell one another (*perichoresis*) and thus have a necessary and unbreakable oneness. Even though human beings share the same human nature, they exist separately and distinctly from one another. The members of the Trinity are inseparably related.

Plural personal pronouns indicate an agreement in Number and Grammar. “God said: Let us make man in our own image.” (Gen 1:26)

Man (male & female) having the image of God. (Gen 2:23-24)

Micro --> Macro --> Probability

Father addressing the Son

Mark 1:11, Luke 3:22, Heb 1:8-12

Son communicating with the Father

Matthew 11:25-26, 26:39

John 11:41, 12:27-28

Holy Spirit praying to God in the hearts of believers

Romans 8:26

PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY:

- God is love
- God is holy
- God speaks
- Transcendence and Immanence

IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOCTRINE OF TRINITY**1. The importance of Humanity - (male & female) made in the image of God**

- a. Both are equal; but not the same
- b. Both have unique role to play
- c. Each one's role is not inferior or superior
- d. No caste system (*In Hinduism, the inequality comes from the understanding of Brahman. In Christianity, the equality comes from the understanding of Triune God.*)
- e. Equality in the Church (*One body; many members. All are having equal responsibility. Mutual submission is a must among believers.*)

2. The importance of Sexuality

- a. The relationship between a husband and wife reflects the relationship existing in the Trinity. (Gen 2:23-24)
- b. Marriage is a self-giving relationship. Satan perverts this to destroy us and to insult God. (I Cor 5:9-13, 6:9-10) Male and female relationship outside marriage is selfish relationship. (What is the attitude of Hinduism and Islam towards sex? [
- c. Sex is sacred and gifted by God.
- d. We are looking forward to the marriage of the Lamb with His bride. (Rev 19:7-9)

3. The importance of Relationship

God is relational in His being. So relationship is very important in Christian life; relationship with oneself, family, wife, children, and believers.

Following are some philosophies concerning relationships:

Western - Individualism is given importance (Thinking Self)

Eastern - Community is given importance (Feeling Self)

Existentialism - Activity is given importance (Acting Self)

But in Trinity, both Individualism and Community are equally important.
