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Sunday School Lesson
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THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

THE FIRST PERSON IN THE TRINITY – GOD THE FATHER

The world today is indebted to the Jewish Nation, the oracles of the one true God, for **Monotheism** – relating to the belief that there is only one God. Other nations had multiple gods or **Polytheism** – the belief in many gods.

The Shema of Deuteronomy 6: 4 reads” Hear, O Israel: the LORD our GOD is one LORD: “Hear O Israel” The first two words of a section of the Torah and a centerpiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services. There are two Hebrew words for one, the first means singular and the other “echadh” means many but one in harmony, mind and thought. A united one or united composite. (LORD has been substituted for JHVH or JHWH, the unspeakable name of G-d, the Tetragrammaton often pronounced as Yahweh or Jehovah). Jesus quoted from the Shema in Mark’s Gospel 12: 28 – 31; St. Luke 10: 25 – 27; St. Matthew 22: 34 – 40

Job 23: 13 echadh mind

Ezekiel 7: 5 only or echadh

2 Samuel 7: 23 what one nation or echadh nation & I Chronicles 17: 20 – 21

Zechariah 14: 7 one day or echadh day

Genesis 2: 24 two become one or echadh flesh, sexual intercourse and harmony of marriage.

God is One in essence but three in person; the **one and only**: Isaiah 44: 6 – 8; 45: 5 – 6; Psalm 86: 10.

Plurality of God: Genesis 1: 26; Genesis 11: 7; Isaiah 6: 1 – 8

Elohim is plural meaning Gods or deities. Eloah is a word which refers to God the Father or God of Host and God the Son, more than one. (Proverbs 30: 4) El is singular meaning God the Father alone, as best I can tell.

In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1

And the LORD appeared to Abraham (Genesis 18: 2) A **Theophany** is God taking on the appearance of men.

Christophany is pre incarnate Body of Christ. **Anthropomorphism** is describing or attributing human characteristic to God, animals or non-human entities. Perception of a divine spirit being in human form.

THE SECOND GOD IN THE TRINITY – JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD

THEN THEY MEET JESUS: God is still ONE in the New Testament; **then they meet Jesus**. Synoptic Gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke, tell his genealogy, what he said and what he did. John’s Gospel tells us who Jesus is, His divine identity. Peter was the first man, a Jew, to say thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God (St. Matthew 16: 16) and Martha was the first women, a Jew, to say “I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God”. (St. John 11: 27) In the beginning of John’s Gospel he calls Jesus the Word or the Logos (the reason why things behave as they do). The Logos was with God and the Logos was God (John 1:1-3, 14). Toward the end of John’s Gospel, we see doubting Thomas, a Jew, saying “My Lord and My God” (St. John 20: 28). In the Gospel of John, you also have the 7, **I AM** statements of Jesus making Himself equal to **I AM**.

His Humanity: In John’s Gospel it’s stated twice: Every spirit that confess not that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is not of God (1John 4: 2 – 3; II John 1: 7, Hebrews 4: 15; Philippians 2: 7). And in John 14: 9 – 11 Jesus’

statement to Phillip “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father”. And later in St. John 10: 38 Jesus says “I and my Father are one.” Now we have been introduced to two distinct persons who are God. If this were the end of the story, we would be **Binitarianism**, which means one deity in two persons.

THE THIRD PERSON IN THE TRINITY – THE HOLY SPIRIT

Thirdly, we are introduced to a third Person, who is God also; The Holy Spirit. The Jews meet three persons yet they knew Him to be One God. This third person is the Holy Spirit or the working God as some call Him (St. John 14: 16 – 17; St. John 16: 7 – 17).

The Third Person in the Trinity is equal to the Father and the Son: Ephesians 4: 3 – 6; I Corinthians 12: 4 – 6; II Corinthians 13: 14; Colossians 2: 9; St. Luke 1: 35; St. Matthew 28: 19; St. Matthew 3: 16 – 17; Romans 14: 17 – 18; I Peter 1: 2; II Corinthians. 1: 21 – 22; I John 5: 7 – 8. Coeternal with the Father and the Son.

There is equality in the Trinity, and yet there is a voluntary subordination or order. It’s always The Father and The Son and The Holy Spirit. **The Father’s will is always done** and has priority over the other two persons, yet they are equal in Power, Glory, Essence. The three persons are distinct, yet are one substance, essence or nature. **The nature is what one is, whereas a person is who one is.** This is known as **trinitarianism** while others are known as **nontrinitarian**. Another word used to describe the essence of the God Head is the **Triune** God.

The Father did not die on the Cross; the Son did and the Father turned His back on the Son, who was made sin for us. Mary was the mother of the Son of God, not the mother of God, or the mother of the Holy Spirit. She was the son of God bearer, (God bearer) not the mother of God.

Analogies to attempt to explain: (1+1+1=3, NOT!) it’s more like 1x1x1=1. Some use Water what can be a liquid a vapor or a solid; however, they are not all three at the same time. Some use the triple circle as a symbol or the three-leaf Shamrock. Some say three scrambled eggs where the whites have combined and the yolks remain separate. Analogies fall short, **there is none like God.** (See drawing which may help) The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit: in some sense three and another one. Three persons yet one personhood or essence.

Marriage and sexual intercourse is when two become one flesh; sharing the same harmony, attitudes, mind. In the case of the Trinity, all three separate persons share the same nature, harmony, attitudes and attributes, and Glory.

GOD IS LOVE

God the Father above us, God the Son with us or besides us, God the Holy Spirit within us. God is relational. God has relations within Himself. God is Love! Salvation is being brought into that family of love as adopted sons. (St. John 1: 12; I John 3: 1) God made man in His image and has given us the pattern for relationships with each other. God already had one Son with whom He shared perfect relations and love and harmony; so, God, The Father, begat man to have a bigger family! We are here on earth to be God’s adopted family. Therefore, the Trinity is the pattern of how we are to live together in God’s eternal love family. Jesus prayed “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (St. John 17: 21 – 26). The Trinity of Love is the pattern for fellow believers. The Trinity of Love should be visible in the Church in such a way that the world sees it and says “**see how these Christians love each other**” that’s how we persuade the world. By this shall all men know that you are my disciple, if ye have love one to another (St. John 13: 34 – 35; Ephesians 5: 2). The Trinity is the pattern of how to live together and how Christ will gather all things together in one (Ephesians 1: 10).

God is Love always, and wants to share love with us, as well as for us to share with each other; to demonstrate the Trinity of Love to the world.

(Excerpts from Teachings of David Pawson)