

GOD IS TRIUNE
The Attributes of God
Banska Bystrica, 23rd April 2017

<p>“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,” Matthew 28:19</p>	<p>“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-6</p>
<p>“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” 2Cor 13:14</p>	<p>“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:1-2</p>
<p>“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God’s elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be ...” 1 Peter 1:1-2</p>	<p>“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.” Romans 14:17-18</p>
<p>“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.” Isaiah 44:6</p>	<p>...yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 1Cor 8:6</p>
<p>As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16-17</p>	<p>And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. John 14:16-17</p>

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0. INTRODUCTION

- **Heb 4:13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account (πρὸς ὃν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος) **s ktorým máme do činenia**
- **Mt 11:27** All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and **no one knows the Son** except **the Father**, and **no one knows the Father** except **the Son** and anyone to whom **the Son** chooses to **reveal** him.

0.1. TRINITY – AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD?

- [Oxford Dictionary] attribute – A quality or character ascribed to any person or thing, one which is in common estimation or usage assigned to him; hence, sometimes, an epithet or appellation in which the quality is ascribed.
- [LACOSTE] “The Trinity is the **mystery** of a single God in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—recognized as distinct within the unity of a single nature, essence, or substance.”

0.2. THE WORD “TRINITY”

- not in the Bible... *Comma Iohanneum* > *there is no sure evidence of this reading in any Greek manuscript until the 1500s*; ([Wiki] The comma first appeared in the Vulgate manuscripts of the 9th century. The first Greek manuscript that contains the comma dates from the 15th century.)
 - ^{KJV} **1 John 5:7** For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost:
- the doctrine of the Trinity → a Bible exposition, *not* an inspired dogma
- The vitally important matter is *to worship* the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as the ONE God who’s oneness is in PLURALITY of being (אלהים)

0.3. HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE

- Ebionitism (some Messianic Jews today) – [Oxford] (1) a 'reduced' doctrine of the Person of Christ, to the effect, e.g., that Jesus was the human son of Joseph and Mary and that the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove lighted on Him at His baptism, and (2) over-emphasis on the binding character of the Mosaic Law.
- Arianism (Jehovah's Witnesses) – Jesus (“it was when he was not”); “eternal
- Sabellianism, Patripassianism, Modalist monarchianism (“Jesus only” Pentecostals, Branham), Adoptionist monarchianism
- Tritheism – Mormons, who maintains that "God the Father (Heavenly Father), Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct beings who together constitute the Godhead.
- Nicea 325; Constantinople 381 → “Apostolicum”
- SCHLEIERMACHER → as an appendix to his dogmatics (*Der Christliche Glaube*)

Schluss. Von der göttlichen Dreiheit. §. 170–172. . . 440–456

0.4. TRINITY AS AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD

- → *filioque* (1054)

0.4.1. AUGUSTINE

- Ontological equality of the Persons

0.4.2. THREE CAPPADOCIANS

- Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil (Bazil Vel'ký, Gregor Naziánsky a Gregor Nisský)
- “economic Trinity” hierarchy (external activities of God → the economic Trinity)
- **John 14:28** I am going to the Father, for **the Father is greater than I**
- **1Cor 15:28** ...the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put **all** things in subjection under him, that **God** may be **all** in **all**.

1. GOD – TRIUNE IN HIMSELF

[POLKINGHORNE] Much writing on the Trinity is formidably technical in its character, and is often astonishingly self-confident in its assertions. As people speak of **begetting** and **procession**, of **filiation** and **spiration**, of **perichoresis** and **appropriation**, sometimes one may perceive something of the motivation that lies behind these utterances, but at other times one is driven to wonder **‘How do they know?’**¹

- The ontological character of the Trinity

1.1. BEYOND SPACE-TIME REALITY

- identity in space-time: difference in place and properties → there is no “place” for God and there are no ontological differences in His being the Father, the Son, the Spirit

1.2. PERICHORESIS

C. Trin., *interpenetration* ἐνοῦνται γάρ, ... οὐχ ὥστε συγχεῖσθαι, ἀλλ' ὥστε ἔχεσθαι ἀλλήλων· καὶ τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλαις π. ἔχουσι δίχα πάσης συναλοιφῆς καὶ συμφύσεως †Cyr. Trin. 10(6³.16A; M.77.1144B) = Jo.D. f.o.1.8(M.94.829A); ἡ ἐν ἀλλήλαις τῶν ὑποστάσεων μονή τε καὶ ἰδρυσις· ἀδιάστατοι γὰρ αὐταί, καὶ ἀνεκφοίτητοι ἀλλήλων εἰσίν, ἀσύγχυτον ἔχουσαι τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλαις π. Jo.D. f.o.1.14(M.94.860B); *ib.* 4.18(1181B); *id. rect. sent.* 1(M.94.1424A); οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐσία τέμνονται, οὐ δυνάμει χωρίζονται, οὐ τόπῳ, οὐκ ἐνεργείᾳ, οὐ βουλήσει μερίζονται, ἀνεκφοίτητον ἔχοντες τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλοις ἰδρυσίν τε καὶ π. *id. Jacob.* 78(M.94.1476B); αἱ τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις ἀδιαιρέτως ἅμα καὶ ἀσυγχύτως ἦνῶνται· ἀδιαιρέτως μὲν, διὰ τὸ μοναδικὸν τῆς φύσεως, καὶ τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλαις ἀσύγχυτον π. *id. nat.* 4(M.95.117D); ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τῆς... τριάδος αἱ τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις διὰ τὴν φυσικὴν ταυτότητα καὶ τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλαις π. εἰς θεὸς εἰσὶ τε καὶ λέγονται, οὕτως ἐπὶ τοῦ... Χριστοῦ αἱ δύο φύσεις διὰ τὴν ὑποστατικὴν ταυτότητα καὶ τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλαις π. εἰς υἱὸς εἰσι *id. fid. Nest.* 36(p.576).

2. TRINITY AND OUR REALITY

- The economical works of the Trinity

[GUNTON] I have argued that trinitarian conceptuality enables us to think of our world, in a way made impossible by the traditional choice between Heraclitus and Parmenides, as both, and in different respects, one and many, but also one and many in relation.²

2.1. LOVE → IDENTIFICATION

- love = self-giving...
- **1Tim 2:5-6** ⁵ For there is **one God**, and there is **one mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all (ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων), which is the testimony given at the proper time.
- **Lev 19:18** ...you shall **love** your **neighbor as yourself** (ἡμιῶν ἡμιῶν)
- **John 15:13** Greater **love** has no one than this, that someone **lays down his life** for his friends
- **1John 3:16** By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

2.2. COMMUNITY → THE SPIRIT

- unity = spiritual sense of oneness in diversity
- **2Cor 13:14** The grace of (1) the Lord Jesus Christ and (2) the love of God and (3) **the fellowship** of the Holy Spirit be with you all
- **Phil 2:1** if there is ...any participation in the Spirit (εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος)

¹ POLKINGHORNE, J. *Science and the Trinity*, Yale : YUP, 2004, p. 91.

² GUNTON, C. *The One the Three and the Many*, Cambridge : CUP, 1993, p. 7.

- **Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵**not neglecting to meet together** (μὴ ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν), as is the habit of some (καθὼς ἔθος τισίν), but encouraging (παρακαλοῦντες) one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

2.3. COMMUNICATION → WORD(S)

- flow of information = light; direction; unity in understanding and purpose...
- **John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word...
- **Eph 4:15** Rather, speaking the truth in love (ἀληθεύοντες δὲ ἐν ἀγάπῃ), we are to grow up in every way **into him** who is the **head**, into Christ
- **Eph 4:25** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you **speak** the **truth** with his neighbor, for **we are members one of another**

3. TO REMEMBER

- The importance of Trinitarian understanding is in *worshipping* the real God → experiencing salvation through the Son of God, the Father and the Holy Spirit.
- The doctrine of the Trinity (a true exposition of the Bible) fundamentally affects our view of reality and our life in Christian community.
- Beware of losing the sense of a *mystery* and founding/basing your faith on definitions and explanations, instead on the revelation given by the Son and the Holy Spirit!