

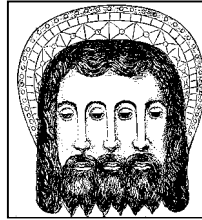
Countryside

Bible
Church

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How Many?

“Something to Think About” Series by Don Ward



The bible stresses and reiterates in both Old and New Testaments that there is one God and only one God. However, in 325 AD a creed was formulated stating there are actually three Gods, equal in every sense, which somehow comprise only one God. This concept is called “Trinity.”

This Nicene conference was a long time after the ministry of the Apostles and their Hebrew perspective. Powerful Greek philosophical ideas had long been fermenting and coloring the Christian gospel. Certain men who had been Greek philosophers became involved with defining the gospel. They tried to explain Christ’s relational unity with the Father in ontological (physical) terms. They tried to explain how Jesus is also fully God while at the same time claiming allegiance to the most fundamental bible doctrine of all, that there is only one God. Three Gods and yet one God. The results bear similarities to what the Greek Gnostics held, “a Supreme God . . . (who) is descended a series of divine personages arranged in pairs of male and female, which all together form the *Pleroma*, the mystic representation of this one God...” – Ency. Am. Vol. 12, Pg. 736, 1956.

Only a minority of the bishops of the empire would come to the conference at Nicea to consider this strange (trinitarian) idea. And

of that minority, possibly only a minority really supported it. But Constantine, the non-Christian, un-baptized emperor determined it would be the official creed of the church and threatened to banish council members who would not sign it. Constantine further declared that all who would not believe in the infallibility of this decree and future official decrees be condemned as heretics.

From the very outset fear has accompanied this concept. The creed itself states that any who do not believe in the trinity are doomed to hellfire. It became not so much the fear of God as the fear of man since dissenters suffered. Throughout a long history people suffered imprisonment and abuse. Some were even burned at the stake for failure to confess such a belief, but it was man, not God, that held the match.

If one must believe in the trinity to be saved, how could people have been saved who lived before they figured this all out? Since the word "trinity" is not even in the bible, they apparently had little option but to hold the mistaken notions that there is only one God, that Jesus is the Son of God and that the Spirit of God is the Spirit OF God.

Would God conceal a doctrine crucial to salvation so deeply in His word that it would take centuries just to discover it?

Some arguments for the trinity turn ordinary meanings on their head. For example, we are told that "one" (as in "one God") does not really mean one but a unity of one. So we end up with this centuries-old record (the bible) repeatedly telling us there is only one God just to find out that what it really means is there are three Gods (NOT one) in unity. And if there is more than one

who is God, maybe there are more than three. We are never given a specific number in the bible (other than "one"). Here's a thought, Revelation speaks of the "seven spirits of God" (Rev. 4:5).

If the Holy Spirit(s) is yet another God distinct from God the Father, would not that make Him the father of Jesus according to Luke 1:35 and the Creator, Gen. 1:2? These represent just a couple of the perplexing problems the doctrine of the trinity raises.

We believe that God is one and there is only one true God in the ultimate sense (On rare occasions the title "God" is applied in a lesser sense to others).

Moses - *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.* Deut. 6:4

Jesus - *Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.* John 17:3

Jesus - *How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?* John 5:44

Paul - *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.* 1 Cor. 8:6

Paul - *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* 1 Tim. 2:5

If you wish to study this further please contact me or go to

<http://www.mindspring.com/~anthonybuzzard/articles.htm> or <http://www.comingkingdom.org/ATCmag.html>