Fundamentals of the Christian Faith

The Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

June 17, 2018
Selected Scriptures
Lesson 1 – Preview: The Importance of Doctrine in Faith and Practice

✦ Truth produces holiness (Titus 1:1)

Lesson 2 – The Bible

✦ When the Bible speaks, God speaks (2 Tim. 3:16)

Lesson 3 – The Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
A BASIC DEFINITION

Within the one *Being* that is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal *persons*, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

✧ When speaking about the Trinity, we are talking about one *what* and three *who’s*. 
A. The Trinity is progressively revealed in Scripture

1. Partial revelation in the Old Testament
   ✦ Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness (Gen. 1:26)
   ✦ 6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...7...Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of joy above Your fellows. (Ps. 45:6-7)
   ✦ The Holy Spirit is a distinct person (Isa. 61:1, 63:10)

   ✦ All 3 persons of the Trinity are named together (Matt. 3:16-17, 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14)
B. 3 statements summarize the biblical teaching

1. God is 3 distinct persons
   - The Father is not the Son
   - The Father is not the Holy Spirit
   - The Son is not the Holy Spirit
   - John 1:1-2, 14:26; Rom. 8:27; Heb. 7:25
   - A person has a mind, emotion, and a will

Modalism claims God is one person who appears in 3 different forms/modes, at different times
   - I and the Father are one (Jn. 10:30)
   - He who has seen Me has seen the Father (Jn. 14:9)
The Trinity in Salvation

Total Depravity
  o Man is unable and unwilling

Unconditional Election
  o The Father elects

Limited Atonement
  o The Son atones for the sins of the elect

Irresistible Grace
  o The Spirit applies salvation to the elect

Perseverance of the Saints
  o God causes His people to persevere to the end
B. 3 statements summarize the biblical teaching

1. God is 3 distinct persons
2. Each person is fully God
   ✦ The Father is fully God (Gen. 1:1)
   ✦ The Son is fully God (Isa. 9:6; John 1:1-4, 20:28)
   ✦ The Holy Spirit is fully God (Ps. 139:7-8; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4)

- Arianism denies the full deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit
  ✦ Jesus is “the firstborn of all creation” (Col. 1:15)
  ✦ Jesus is God’s “only begotten” Son (John 1:14, 3:16)
We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father....
B. 3 statements summarize the biblical teaching

1. God is 3 distinct persons

2. Each person is fully God

3. There is only one God
   - Gen. 2:24; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 45:5-6; 1 Tim. 2:5
   - Paul uses the plurality of the Trinity to argue for the unity of the Trinity and the Church (1 Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:4-6)

Tritheism denies that there is only 1 God
B. 3 statements summarize the biblical teaching

1. God is 3 distinct persons
2. Each person is fully God
3. There is only one God

- All analogies have shortcomings
  - 3 leaf clover
  - Tree (roots, trunk, branches)
  - Water (steam, liquid, ice)
  - Man (husband, father, son)
C. Application

1. Unity and diversity in marriage
2. Unity and diversity in the Church
3. Unity and diversity between Jews and Gentiles

Unity and diversity exists in human relationships, because unity and diversity exists in God Himself.
D. Why do we need the Trinity?

1. The atonement is at stake
2. Justification by faith alone is threatened
3. If Jesus is not infinite God, should we pray to him or worship him?