

The God Incarnate, and the God Who Testifies

Knowing God, chapters 5-6

Discussion Questions

Answer the questions by either stating if the statement is True or False, or by filling in the blank.

1. God the Spirit is a person exactly like Jesus and the Father are persons.
2. If the designation for the first person of the Trinity is "Father" and the second the "Son" the third person of the Trinity is designated as _____.
3. When Jesus became a man, he gave up some of his divine attributes, such as omniscience, omnipresence.
4. The Spirit is the lowest of the Trinity in terms of submission.
5. One does not have to believe in the Trinity in order to be truly saved (i.e., truly a Christian).

Christians are not that clear on the Trinity.

Confusion, Dear Father, thank you for dying on the cross for our sins... They say it's a mystery. They say it's unfathomable. They say it's a contradiction: 3 in 1. Some say it's OK if God defies logic, or us above logic, "supra-logic" as some put it. But is this the case?

The Nature of the Trinity

Not a contradiction, but a mystery. There are three persons in the Trinity. But there is only 1 God. So here's the question: where's the contradiction? Where's the illogic of that? Just because we usually associate one person with one being doesn't mean that it's not logical to have more than one person in one being.

The Relationships within the Trinity

The Father, Son and Spirit have enjoyed eternal communion in the God-head. They are co-eternal, co-creators, and enjoy eternal fellowship together.

Confusion about the Son:

What does it mean to say Jesus is the "Son of God"?

Does it mean He is a "Son of God," as Jehovah's Witnesses believe?

Does it mean He is the "son of God" as other religions believe?

Biblical teaching:

The Son has always been, will always be, fully God. And from the incarnation on, both fully God and fully man. He has one personality, but two natures.

Confusion about the Spirit:

Does the Spirit empower us in some mystical way?

Is the Spirit some impersonal power, like The Force in Star Wars?

Biblical teaching:

The Spirit is a full person and member of the Trinity. He can be lied to. He can be grieved. He acts and operates as an agent. He is *another* Counselor/Helper. But at the same time, there is subordination.

Confusion about the Trinity: all three members are God, so all have the same role.

Biblical teaching: We might call it economic hierarchy but not ontological hierarchy.

Case Study: Prayer

Have you heard people pray to Jesus and/or the Holy Spirit? Is it biblical to pray to Jesus and/or the Spirit?

Prayer is almost always to God the Father.

In NT, as Jesus taught, he taught us to pray to the Father, like He Himself prayed to the Father. Model prayer in the Lord's prayer where Jesus instructs His disciples to pray the "Our Father in Heaven..."

Biblical prayer in the New Testament (and all of Scripture as later revealed,) is prayer **to the Father, in the name** of the Son, **through/by** the Spirit.

Prayer to the Father

The Lord's Prayer

Paul's prayers in Ephesians, Colossians, etc.

Prayer and the Spirit

Romans 8:26-27; the Spirit helps us.

Eph 6:18; Jude 20; pray in the Spirit.

Prayers to Jesus in Bible?

Stephen prayed in Acts 7:59-60 to Jesus to receive his spirit. And Jesus did say to ask anything Him in His name.

Conclusion

Is it a sin or wrong to pray to Jesus and/or to the Spirit? In the sense that they are all God? No, it's not wrong. In the sense that the biblical model seems clear that we should direct our prayers primarily to God? Then yes, that's the model. Pray to your Heavenly Father in the name of your Savior Jesus, by the power and with the help of your Counselor, the Spirit, the One who convicts you of sin, reminds of His truths, and sanctifies you by His power.

Application: Be Able to answer the questions with biblical purity and confident humility. Read chapters 5-6. ☺