

7. There Is Only One God.

Hear, O Israel: the Lord, our God, is one Lord. *Deut. 6, 4.*

Everyone's own reason tells him that there is only *one* God. There is but one infinite, self-existing Spirit, who revealed Himself as the "I Am," from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things. There is none other God but one. There are not three gods; there are not many gods, but there is only "one God and Father of all." There is but one divine essence; and this one divine essence is called, and is, God. Nevertheless there are three distinct persons, and each one of these three persons is God. When you name one person, you name the entire Holy Trinity. The three persons dwell one in the other, as Christ says: "I am in the Father and the Father in Me." There is but one plan, one power, one administration, one sovereign authority. The thought of the three is actually one. To all belongs the same honor. Accordingly a Church Father has said: "I cannot attempt to think of One; as soon as I would do it, I am instantly surrounded with the splendor of Three; I cannot attempt to distribute the Three, but am instantly carried back to the idea of One."

There is only *one* God. Already Moses taught this fact to the children of Israel when he said: "The Lord, He is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else." And in the Book of Isaiah the Lord says of Himself: "I am the First, and I am the Last; and beside Me there is no God."

The religion of heathen peoples is polytheism, that is, they believe in many gods. There is in their religion no conscious monotheism, no conception of a single Supreme Power, from whom man and nature and all the forces in nature have their origin. Yet God revealed Himself to the first parents of the human race, and later, too, as a single personal Being, so that all races of men had at the first this idea as an inheritance handed down to them.

Prayer.

O Thou incomprehensible God, Thou art three in persons, but only one in essence; for there is only one God, and not many. Alas! the foolish hearts of the Gentiles are darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools, changing Thy glory into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and beasts, and creeping things, and worshiping and serving the creature more than Thee, the Creator of all things, blessed forever. O Holy Trinity, for Thy revealed Word, for all Thy grace and benefits bestowed upon us, we render unto Thee praise, honor, and glory. Amen.

Be steadfast! Be wise!
Build on, my soul, till death
Shall bring you to your God;
He takes you at your parting breath
To your divine abode.

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