

8. There Are Three Persons in One Divine Essence.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. 2 Cor. 13, 14.

There are three distinct persons who are equally God in the one, undivided, and indivisible essence. One person is the Father, another person is the Son, and another person is the Holy Ghost. This is called the Holy Trinity. By the Holy Trinity is meant the union of three persons in one Godhead. Already in the first verse of the Bible we find a revelation of the Trinity. In the first chapter of the Old Testament, God speaks in the plural: "Let Us make man." When Sodom was destroyed, it is said: "Then *the Lord* rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire *from the Lord* out of heaven." Three are mentioned in the Aaronic Blessing, three in the song Isaiah heard: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." John, at the baptism of Christ, saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and he heard a voice from heaven saying: "This is My beloved Son." Christ said: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter." He also clearly and explicitly commands His disciples: "Baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The three persons are named in the Apostolic Benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all"; likewise in 1 Cor. 12, 4-6: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all." In the first chapter of the First Epistle of Peter we find mentioned "the foreknowledge of God the Father," the "sanctification of the Spirit," and the "obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

Though we cannot comprehend the mystery of the Holy Trinity, yet we believe it, because Scripture teaches it. Yes, we believe and confess: I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Prayer.

O Thou most holy and ever-blessed Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we thank and praise Thee that Thou hast revealed Thyself to us in Thy Word as the only true and living God from everlasting, Three in One, and One in Three, our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Glory and praise and worship be unto Thee, who hast given unto us grace to confess the eternal Trinity and in true faith to worship the Unity. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst keep us steadfast in this faith, who livest and reignest forever. Amen.

To the great One in Three
The highest praises be,
Hence, evermore!
His sovereign majesty
May we in glory see
And to eternity
Love and adore.

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