

and of the Holy Spirit, unless Thou wast a Trinity. Nor wouldest thou, O Lord God, bid us to be baptized in the name of Him who is not the Lord God. Nor would the divine voice have said, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God, unless Thou wert so a Trinity as to be one Lord God. And if Thou, O God, wert Thyself the Father, and wert Thyself the Son, Thy Word Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit your gift, we should not read in the book of truth, "God sent His Son;" nor wouldest Thou, O Only-begotten, say of the Holy Spirit, "Whom the Father will send in my name;" and "Whom I will send to you from the Father." Directing my purpose by this rule of faith, so far as I have been able, so far as Thou hast made me to be able, I have sought Thee, and have desired to see with my understanding what I believed; and have argued and labored much. O Lord my God, my one hope, hearken to me, lest through weariness I be unwilling to seek Thee, but that I may always ardently seek Thy face." Do Thou give strength to seek, who hast made me find Thee, and hast given the hope of finding Thee more and more. My strength and infirmity are in Thy sight: preserve the one, and heal the other. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight; where Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter; where Thou hast closed, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee, love Thee. Increase these things in me, until Thou renewest me wholly. I know it is written, "In the multitude of speech, thou shalt not escape sin." But O that I might speak only in preaching Thy word, and in praising Thee!... O Lord the one God, God the Trinity, whatever I have said in these books that is of Thine, may they acknowledge who are Thine; if anything of my own, may it be pardoned both by Thee and by those who are Thine. Amen.

4. Important truths to be stressed when presenting the doctrine of the Trinity

a. The unity of being and plurality of Persons of the Trinity are equally ultimate. These distinctions are inherent, basic, and eternal.

The triune God (Father, Son, and Spirit) is one personal Being. The three members of the Trinity are three interacting Persons with distinct existence. Scripture does not permit this doctrine to be understood in terms of Modalism, in which God is one Being and one Person who manifests Himself in differing forms or modes at various times, or in terms of Tri-theism, in which God is three Persons and three Beings. The correct representation is that God is one Being and three Persons.

b. The three Persons of the Trinity interpenetrate one another, not only in terms of essence (defined as the sum of all characteristics or attributes of God's nature), but also in terms of thinking, feeling, willing, and acting.