

Responsive Dependence

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 30, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him...

~Ephesians 1:16-17 (ESV)

1) The Tri-Unity Of God, Christ, and Spirit

- A) Following an expansive personal blessing of God (Ephesians 1:3-14), the Apostle Paul is immediately drawn into prayer and thanksgiving for his friends in Ephesus (1:15-23).
- B) Since Paul's prayer is "for this reason..." (1:15), we should be continually mindful of Ephesians 1:3-14, focusing on the lavish provision of "redemption through his [Christ's] blood" (1:7) with a pronounced emphasis on life "in Christ" (every verse 1:3-14).
- C) Do not miss the Trinitarian unity within Paul's opening blessing, beginning with "God and Father" (1:3) then focusing on life "in Christ" (1:3) and finally the presence of God with His people "with the promised Holy Spirit" (1:13-14).
- D) When I use "Trinitarian" language, I mean the following 7 things:
 - i) There is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4).
 - ii) The Father is God (Ephesians 1:3).
 - iii) The Son is God (John 1:1 & 14, Titus 2:13).
 - iv) The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4, Hebrews 9:14).
 - v) The Father is not the Son.
 - vi) The Son is not the Holy Spirit.
 - vii) The Holy Spirit is not the Father.

} Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19,
Galatians 4:6, 1 Corinthians
12:4-6, 1 Peter 1:1-2
- E) Respective of these 7 truths, the Trinity is one God who eternally exists as three distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Alternatively, God is One in essence and Three in person, Triune.

2) Why Is The Trinity Important?

- A) The Trinity is significant because our world is wrecked with false reflections of God, inaccurate pictures of His glory. Two primary movements crush the world with false reflections of God:
 - i) **Islam** emphasizes singularity in language, culture, belief, and expression -- without little allowance for diversity -- inaccurately reflects the wondrous variety of a Triune God, who loves diversity.
 - ii) **Postmodernism** emphasizes diversity of opinions, perspectives, beliefs, and expressions -- with little allowance for unified truth -- inaccurately reflecting the unity of a Triune God, who loves unity.

The Trinity allows for God's followers to engage the cultures and religions of the world in a meaningful manner, evangelizing the world in Christ, effectively answering both questions of stunning variety and diversity while appreciating individuality and unity.

- B) God exists in a perfectly functioning unity of Father, Son, and Spirit. The Trinity is relationship, and an accurate reflection of God by His people is one of unified relationships, or "community." Communion, baptism, and the church are all expressions of unity, and Trinity.

3) Magnifying God's Glory In Unceasing Thanks

- A) The splendor of the opening Trinitarian blessing of Ephesians 1:3-14 brings Paul to a thankful appreciation for the "faith and love" of God's followers, His church (Ephesians 1:15).
- B) Faith in God, Christ, and Spirit -- the Truth between all believers in all places -- combined with the outflow of loving unity between the "saints" (those in Christ) motivates "ceaseless thanks," praise to God! Accurate reflection of God magnifies "the praise of His glory!"

4) Responsive Dependence

- A) Further, the faith and loving unity of the Ephesians produces a response of prayerful dependence (1:16). The prayer (don't miss it) is Trinitarian in its nature, a prayer for the fullness of God (1:17).
- B) Paul prays for God's Spirit activity in believers lives for engagement of "wisdom" (the right application of truth), and "revelation" (the supernatural revealing of truth) in Christ (knowledge of Him). Dependence on God for Spiritual living in Christ in the real world!