

LESSON 8

Triune God (Trinity)

Objective : God in one, and in Him the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are wonderfully collected together.

Bible Portion : Jn.14,15,16

Memory Verse : Jn.14:15-16

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Introduction

We have learnt the natural and moral attributes of God. This study will makes us respect, love and worship God in a real sense. We will be transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory. (II cori.3:18). Let us approach to the feet of Christ to understand the glorious and wonderful fact that the God is triune.

God is one

Man, who went away from God due to sin, failed to find the true God and he started worshipping nature and the deities made out of his concepts. During those days, Hebrews, the descendants of Abraham developed monotheism. In the Old Testament and New Testament, we see a number of verses show that God is one. (Deut.4:35; 6:4; Is.44:6-8;46:14-18,Mk.10:18,12,29, I Tim.2:5).

Trinity is the greatest mystery of God’s qualities. It cannot be understood with men’s reason. But this is not a tough subject to those who read and thing about the word of God sincerely. The things we see in the nature every day, is beyond our knowledge. What is lighting and thunder during the rainy seasons? You may say that it is current of electricity. Then, what is the current of electricity? How does it form?

Can you explain the structure of single-cell and evolution of the current incorporated in it? Reality is not deniable though we are unable to understand it. So there is a need of approach with faith and humility to understand the deep truths related to God. This way of approach will help us to understand God according to the word of God and the reason.

Compound Oneness

God's oneness is a compound one. This is a truth. Bible explains many times and we can see it in the nature also. Let us consider some instances of depicting the compound oneness though they have some limitations.

1. Though electricity is invisible, we can sense it in the form of light, heat and sound. Each one of these is electric current. But light is not heat, heat is not light.
2. We are familiar with water. Its chemical structure is H_2O . It can be seen in different forms. It is glacier sometimes. It takes the form of water and water vapor. Water vapor is not water, and water is not glacier. Are they all one?
3. The physical body of man consists of body, soul and spirit. (I Thess. 5:23). It is a compound oneness. Though body, spirit and soul have separate identities, they are one.
4. In geometry, we can learn about rectangle. It has its own oneness and peculiarity. If it is 1cm length and 1cm width, what should be its area? The answer is $1 \times 1 = 1$. It is an example for compound oneness.
5. You might have seen cube. Let us consider a cube which is 1cm length, 1cm height and 1 cm width. Though its six sides are shaded in different colors, it is one. Its diversity makes it colorful, and do not destroy it. Its volume is not $1+1+1=3$, it is $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$. The teachings of trinity do not present three Gods.
6. Let us examine a triangle. It has three equal sides. Though each side has its own identity, it is a picture. The identities of sides do not harm the triangle. The whole triangle can be represented as God, and the sides show father, son and the Holy Spirit.

Trinity in the creation of God

In the creation, we see not only the compound oneness, but also the reflection of trinity.

1. The physical body of man is triune, consists of the body, soul and the spirit. (I Thess. 5:23)
2. Atom, the smallest unit of matter consists of protons, neutrons and electrons.
3. Universe is formed out of space, time and matter.
4. Space consists of length, width and height.
5. Time consists of past, present and future.
6. Matter consists of energy, movement and arrangement.

Evidence from the Bible

A.Old testament:

Though Jews do not believe in trinity, the holy book of Christians and Jews has a number of evidences to establish the trinity.

1. The Hebrew root for absolute unity is 'yached', but the root word for compound oneness is 'Echad!'. The term 'Echad' is used in Old Testament (Deut.6:4). The verbs and adjectives used along with this word are in plural forms.
2. The Hebrew words for God are in plural. For instance, in Gen.1:1 says, In the beginning God created heaven and earth; the term used for God is 'Elohim' here, and it is a plural word. Such terms are used in Deut. 4:32, and Is.45:18.
3. The pronouns that God himself used were plural. (Gen. 1:26, 3:22, 11:7, Is 48:12-16, 63:8-10). And now the sovereign Lord has sent me, with his spirit. 'I' refers in the verse is Messiah. So the father, son and the Holy Spirit are expressed in this verse. The angel of his present refers in Is.63:9 is Christ. Thus, the reality of trinity is revealed here. We can see about the son of God in Psalms 2:7-12, Prov.30:4, Dan. 7:13; the holy spirit in Neh.9, 10, Gen. 1:2, 41:38, Jud.13:25 and about God in Deut.33:6, Mal,2:10.

So, the trinity is also described in the Old Testament.

4. The angel of God appeared to Abraham, Hagar, Jacob and Judges was God himself. He was God worthy to be worshipped. The angel of God is the son of God, Jesus Christ. (Gen.18:1,13,17-21;16:7-13,31:11-13,Jud.6:12-24).

B. New Testament

The teachings of trinity, which was partially told in Old Testament, are clearly established in New Testament

1. Luke's description of Jesus birth (1:34) clearly tells us the role of the father, son and the Holy Spirit.
2. At the time of Jesus' birth, the triune God was active. (Mt.3:16-17).What is their role?
3. Jesus in his teachings shows his unity with father and the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Natural unity: I and father are one (Jn. 10:29, 14:6-11, 17:21, 23).
 - b. Unity in Love: Jn. 15:9-12.
 - c. Unity in aim and actions: Jn.14:10, 26; Jn.16:13-15.
 - d. Jesus words about the dwelling of Holy Spirit in believers that we will come to him and dwell with him. (Jn. 14:16-18).
 - e. The names of triune God is referred together.
 - f. Jesus was glorified with God before incarnation. (Jn. 17:16; 27:28).
4. 'Jesus' command about baptism is that the disciples should baptize in the name of father, son and Holy Spirit. The term 'name' is used instead of using 'names'. It refers to the compound unity of trinity. (Mt. 28:19).
5. Apostolic greetings were in the name of father, son and Holy Spirit. (II cori. 13:14).
6. The teachings and epistles clearly show that the deliverance and salvation of man is the compound act of trinity. (Heb. 19:14,Act.

2:38-39, 5:30-32, I Peter. 1:2). At the death of Stephen, he was received by the trinity. (Act. 7:55-56). When a person received Jesus by faith, he is sealed by the Holy Spirit, and is invited to the relation with God. It is the most important evident of trinity. The continuous communication of the trinity will bring peace and joy in every believer.

7. Jesus is also divine as that of father and the Holy Spirit. (Heb.1:8,Tit.2:12, Col.1:14-17, Act.5:3-4,Jn.14:16-17).

This subject will be studied in detail in coming lessons.

God, the son and the Holy Spirit are divine personalities; But God is one. So, from the time of apostles, the church have been believing in the divinity of Jesus Christ, approves 'oneness in trinity' and 'trinity in oneness'. It is biblical and reasonable.

Questions:

1. Write three verses that show the oneness of God?
2. Explain the oneness and compound oneness? What is the root word used for God's oneness? What are the best examples of compound oneness in nature?
3. Nature reflects the trinity of God. Why?
4. What are Old Testament portions that reveal trinity?
5. How Jesus revealed trinity in his preaching after the Passover?
6. Establish the doctrine of trinity in the light of New Testament?

