

Lecture 20 – The Trinity & the New Testament (cont.); The Work of God: Creation

“Then Peter said, ‘Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God.’” Acts 5:3-4

Key Terms

Perichoresis, creation ex nihilo, Holy Spirit = God, interpenetration, divine act

Objectives

- *Outline and locate Scripture's teaching on the deity of the Holy Spirit.
- *Consider God's work of creation and what that tells us of His character.
- *Consider implications of the doctrine of creation for your understanding of God's redemptive work and Christian discipleship.

The Trinity & the New Testament (cont.)

[IV. The Deity of the Holy Spirit]

D. The deity of the Holy Spirit

“It might well be said that the deity of the Father is simply assumed in Scripture, that of the Son is affirmed and argued, while that of the Holy Spirit must be inferred from various indirect statements found in Scripture.” M. Erickson

1. Equivalence with God. To say Holy Spirit is to say God.
 - a. Acts 5:3-4
 - b. 1 Cor. 3:16-17 and 6:19-20
2. Possesses characteristics or attributes of God
 - a. Knowledge (1 Cor. 2:10-11; John 16:13-14)
 - b. Power (Rom. 15:19; John 3:5-8; Matt. 19:16-25)
 - c. Eternality (Hebrews 9:14; 1:10-12)
3. Performs the works of God
 - a. Creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; Ps. 104:30)
 - b. Scripture (2 Pet. 1:21)
 - c. Redemption (John 3:5-8; Titus 3:5), sanctification (1 Pet. 1:2), and resurrection (Rom. 9:11)
4. The Spirit is associated with the Father and the Son.
 - a. Baptism in the threefold name (Matt. 28:19)
 - b. Benediction of 2 Cor. 13:14
 - c. All three have a part in salvation.

E. Conclusion (*This point is not on the CD lecture*)

1. The Holy Spirit is a person, not an impersonal force.
2. He is God, and thus to be worshipped and revered.
3. He should not be thought of as inferior to the other two members of the trinity in any way. His subordination belongs to the history of redemption.

IV. The Interpenetration of the Three Persons (*perichoresis*)

A. Distinction

B. Interpenetration: Each person shares in the life and work of the other two.

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1. Equality within the three persons
 2. Mutual submission
 3. Intimacy with one another
 4. Mutual deference
- C. Calvin's contribution (Bray, ch. 5)
1. Relativization of the question of essence in favor of the primacy of person
 2. The persons of the trinity are equal to one another in every respect.
 - a. Contra monarchian starting points (Western modalism and Eastern subordinationism)
 - b. Each of the persons is *autotheos*.
 - c. *Perichoresis* at the level of person, not essence
 3. Knowledge of one involves knowledge of the other two at the same time
 4. Places attributes into a much more personal scheme of understanding (Bray, p. 212ff)
- V. Summary Statement on the Trinity (*This point is not on the CD lecture*)
- A. There is one God, and only one God, not three Gods.
 - B. There are three who are God.
 - C. The three are distinct.
 - D. Scripture joins the three together in unity and equality.

The Work of God: Creation

I. God as the Creator of the World

- A. The universe is the result of a divine act of creativity.
 1. A free (non-necessary) act
 - a. No external compulsion
 - b. No internal necessity
 2. *Creatio ex nihilo*
 - a. No principles or powers outside of God are necessary to explain the universe.
 - b. God creates out of love, not necessity.
 - c. Textual base?
 - 1) No evidence of antecedent material (Romans 4:17)
 - 2) God's status throughout Scripture as the absolute monarch over the universe.
- B. Creation as a Trinitarian act

The classical formula: The Father creates through the Son by the Spirit.

 1. The Father: The source and ground of creation (1 Cor. 8:6)
 - a. The world exists by the will of the Father (Rev. 4:11).
 - b. The goal of creation is to manifest the glory of God (Ps. 19:1; Rev. 4:11).
 - c. He is the source in that He is the Father (Acts 17:28).
 2. The Son (John 1:1-3, 10; Col. 1:16-17 [*di' autou*])
 3. The Holy Spirit (Gen 1:3; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps. 104:30; Isa. 40:12-13)
 4. How can we speak of the Father as the Creator and the triune God as the Creator at the same time?
- C. God's status as Creator
 1. The sovereign King
 2. The covenant Lord