

## Oh, How I Love Your Law!

Week 6 – Parenthesis – The Doctrine of the Trinity

OT: Exodus 3:13-15 | NT: John 1:1-3

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### 1. Second Helvetic Confession, Chapter III – Of God, his Unity, and his Trinity

GOD IS ONE. We believe and teach that God is one in essence or nature, subsisting in himself, all sufficient in himself, invisible, incorporeal, immense, eternal, Creator of all things both visible and invisible, the greatest good, living, quickening and preserving all things, omnipotent and supremely wise, kind and merciful, just and true. Truly we detest many gods because it is expressly written: "The Lord your God is one Lord" (Deut.6:4). "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:2-3). "I am the Lord, and there is no other god besides me. Am I not the Lord, and there is no other God beside me? A righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me" ((Isa. 45:5, 21). "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex. 34:6).

GOD IS THREE. Notwithstanding we believe and teach that the same immense, one and indivisible God is in person inseparably and without confusion distinguished as Father, Son and Holy Spirit so, as the Father has begotten the Son from eternity, the Son is begotten by an ineffable generation, and the holy Spirit truly proceeds from them both, and the same from eternity and is to be worshipped with both.

Thus there are not three gods, but three persons, consubstantial, coeternal, and coequal; distinct with respect to hypostases, and with respect to order, the one preceding the other yet without any inequality. For according to the nature or essence they are so joined together that they are one God, and the divine nature is common to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

For Scripture has delivered to us a manifest distinction of persons, the angel saying, among other things, to the Blessed Virgin, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). And also in the baptism of Christ a voice is heard from heaven concerning Christ, saying, "This is my beloved Son" (Math. 3:17). The Holy Spirit also appeared in the form of a dove (John 1:32). And when the Lord himself commanded the apostles to baptize, he commanded them to baptize "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Elsewhere in the Gospel he said: "The Father will send the Holy Spirit in my name" (John 14:26), and again he said: "When the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me," etc. (John 15:26). In short, we receive the Apostles' Creed because it delivers to us the true faith.

HERESIES. Therefore we condemn the Jews and Mohammedans, and all those who blaspheme that sacred and adorable Trinity. We also condemn all heresies and heretics who teach that the Son and Holy Spirit are God in name only, and also that there is something created and subservient, or subordinate to another in the Trinity, and that their is something unequal in it, a greater or a less, something corporeal or corporeally conceived, something different with respect to character or will, something mixed or solitary, as if the Son and Holy Spirit were the affections and properties of one God the Father, as the Monarchians, Novatians, Praxeas, Patripassians, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, Aetius, Macedonius, Anthropomorphites, Arius, and such like, have thought.

SCRIPTURES CITED AND REFERENCED: 2 Timothy 2:15; Isaiah 46:9-10; Isaiah 40:28; Deuteronomy 29:29; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Luke 24:44-45; Mark 2:28; John 8:58; John 18:6; Luke 21:27; 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; **Isaiah 63:16-17; Isaiah 64:8-9; Exodus 4:22-23; Psalm 2; Daniel 7:13-14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Numbers 11:25; Judges (throughout); Isaiah 34:16; Isaiah 64; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28-29; Hebrews 13:8; Revelation 1:8; Revelation 21:6; Revelation 22:13; Isaiah 7:14**

## 2. The Debrecan Synod Confession on the trinity summarized

- God is one
- God is three witnesses or persons
- The three persons of God are distinct but not different
- The three persons of God are diverse in their particular office and form of persons, but united in their substantial office of God
- The three persons of God are each very, truly, and eternally God, not changed into God at some point
- The three persons of God are inseparable, in terms of time or nature
- The three persons of God are each YHWH, referred to as such in scripture, and coequal with one another
- The three persons of God are the Creator
- That God is pure essence – pure being – there is no “accident,” i.e., an element of his substance that is useless to his essence, or nothing in God is non-essential
- “There is no deity outside the Trinity, nor is there Trinity outside the one deity (Isaiah 43-34)
- The three persons only are due worship, the one God in essence is alone due worship.

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