

IS GOD A "TRINITY"?

¹² Many religions of Christendom teach that God is a "Trinity," although the word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible. The World Council of Churches recently said that all religions that are part of that Council should advocate the belief that there is "one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit," that is, three persons in one God. Those teaching this doctrine admit that it is "a mystery." The Athanasian Creed, of about the eighth century of the Common Era, says that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Spirit) are all three of the same substance, all three are eternal (and hence had no beginning), and all three are almighty. So the creed reads that in the "Trinity none is afore or after other; none is greater or less than another."^{*} Is that reasonable? More importantly, is it in agreement with the Bible?

¹³ This doctrine was unknown to the Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967 edition, Vol. XIV, p. 306) admits that "the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is not taught in the OT [Old Testament]." It also admits that the doctrine must be dated as from about three hundred and fifty years after the death of Jesus Christ. So the early Christians who were taught directly by Jesus Christ did not believe that God is a "Trinity."

¹⁴ When Jesus was on earth he certainly was not equal to his Father, for he said there were

^{*} *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, by J. McClintock and J. Strong, Vol. II, p. 561.

12. (a) What do church creeds, such as the Athanasian Creed, teach about God? (b) What questions should we ask about this teaching?

13. According to the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, did the Hebrew prophets and the first Christians believe in a "Trinity"?

14. How did Jesus show that he was not equal with his Father?