

Holy Trinity (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 0 0] If you turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 13 and to the 14th verse, you will find in that verse the subject that I would speak to you concerning this evening.

2 Corinthians chapter 13, the 14th verse. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.

And that is the benediction that we will probably use when the service ends. And here I bring it into the beginning of the preaching.

The reason is that I would try to speak on the subject of the Holy Trinity. The three persons in the one Godhead.

The one in three, the three in one. And you see in this verse that these are clearly set out.

[1 : 1 6] There is this clear presentation of these distinct persons of the Godhead. The Lord Jesus Christ. God that is the Father.

God that is the Holy Spirit. It wasn't all that many weeks ago that we looked at that ending of Matthew chapter 28 and we saw the baptismal formula in the 19th verse.

Go ye therefore and teach or make disciples of the nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

And there again there are these clear distinctions. These persons of the Godhead set out in that verse. The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Now this doctrine of the Trinity is a high doctrine. Let me say what almost every Jehovah Witness will tell you if you engage in discussion or argument that the word doesn't appear in the Bible and therefore there is no such thing as the Trinity.

[2 : 3 9] There are several words that we frequently use that are not found in the Bible but these are convenient words to describe what is found in the Bible. And this word Trinity is used not so much for its excellence in itself but in order that it might enable us to use a word a descriptive word for this blessed doctrine that in the one Godhead there are three persons.

If we won't use the word Trinity you won't find that there is nothing about the Trinity you will only find that you've got an involved and lengthy necessity in order to describe what you're talking about in many words.

Whereas in this one word in a proper understanding of it we can conveniently know exactly what we mean and what the Bible is teaching concerning the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit these three distinct persons in the one Godhead.

So it's utterly foolish to say that because the word doesn't occur that there can be no doctrine of the Trinity for the Bible of the Old and New Testament is full of the three persons of the Godhead.

We are not ashamed nor are we unwilling to be Trinitarian. Unitarianism is heresy. To say that there is but one God and that there are not these persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is heresy.

[4 : 18] And anyone that believes that is in grievous and very serious error indeed. Without the Trinitarian theology of one God in three persons I do not believe that a person can be saved.

I do not believe that a person is saved that denies the Trinity. Now that's a strong statement but I think it's mere sentimentalism to contradict it.

Mere sentimentalism to say that oh well surely a person must be saved by grace even if they don't believe in the Trinity. How can that possibly be?

How can any person be saved that denies the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ? How can any person be saved that denies the deity of the Holy Ghost?

And we've got therefore to be clear that if we've got no Trinity then we've got no salvation. And thank God we have the Trinity.

[5 : 20] We thank God that it has been brought to us and that the Church in all of its history when it has been brought to confess its faith has confessed its faith in the one God in three blessed persons each person fully and equally and wholly God.

So this is the subject that's before us. It's high doctrine. There's a great element of mystery to it. We would tread with reverence and yet I trust that we will have something of a clear understanding as far as we can have a clear understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity.

I want to speak of the doctrine of the Trinity first of all in these confessions of the Church and then to say a little bit about the oneness of the Godhead and then in the third place to speak a little on the three distinct persons in the one Godhead.

So we begin by the doctrine of the Trinity in the confessions of the Church and to come to the confessions of the Church we've got to understand a little concerning the heresies that gave rise to these confessions because we find that in the early centuries after the Apostles one after another heresies arose serious departures from the faith once delivered unto the saints and in each of these cases God raised up those faithful ministers to resolutely grapple with the scriptures and to champion the truth and God caused there to be those deliberations of many ministers upon these controverted points of doctrine and God so overruled in his almighty providence that there was in these early councils and in these early confessions a true statement of the word of God it's a marvellous thing we tend

I think to forget because we are in the aftermath of the reformation we are those that look to the great confessions of the reformation to the Westminster confession to the the 39 articles of the Church of England 1571 we look to these Protestant confessions but we must remember that the great early confessions were no less accurate no less sound and there was a marvellous overruling of God that these things should be so we have to be acquainted a little with the heresies it reminded me in thinking along these lines last evening of 1 Corinthians 11 and the 19th verse where Paul says for there must also be heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you we say instinctively oh the heresies what awful consequences of these heresies and yet through the heresies there was that study of the word and there was that coming to a clear understanding of these doctrines that God had given so that there was an overruling of them and by the means of the heresies those that were approved of God were made manifest the truth was made manifest in this way it's God's way it's not our way we would never think of doing it this way but that's how God did it the Bible was studied and the Bible was considered and men were raised up that were able to search the scriptures and come to these conclusions it's a wonderful thing also when you consider that in these days what it involved to have a Bible in a preparation for yesterday afternoon's address

[9 : 41] I was brought to consider that if you had lived around about the second or third century by the time the whole of the New Testament had been clearly settled and if you were to possess suppose you could have if you had such money because you would need a vast sum of money to have it but suppose you had the money to have your very own Bible you would probably need a truck or a lorry to transport it about all the scrolls that would go to making up the Old Testament all the papyrus and parchments for the New Testament it was not a portable thing that we conveniently carry about with us bring even as we come to chapel have you ever thought of that and while the churches all sought to have their Bibles there were so few copies certainly in the early days that was why there was such a multiplying of copies that more would have them but it would be for many of these churches similar to certain

Eastern European countries until quite recently that whole Bibles were not possessed they had as many parts as they could afford but it would be a very strong church and a very rich church that could have the whole word of God written possess a copy of its own not copies of it be one copy and if you wanted to see the Bible you would have to come and you would have to study it where it was kept you remember in our land even after the Reformation that there was the chained Bible to be consulted it was chained because it was so precious perhaps if the Bible were chained again and there were hardly any copies people would be wanting to come and read it because of its scarcity perhaps the very familiarity with it the ease of procuring it takes away something of the wonder of it but I just pass that on to you that it we must not forget that we're a very favoured people that live in the day after printing and in the day of modern publishing and we can choose the print we can have different sizes of

Bible we have got convenient pocket Bibles we have handbag Bibles we have pulpit Bibles we have all sorts there wouldn't be a member of this church but that member is a Bible probably more than one copy of the scriptures in your home we're very favoured and we have such a rich heritage there were no concordances in the early centuries Alexander Cruden made a concordance in the 1700s and think of how he did it every word writing every word in a card until he was covered with cards his whole house had cards with different words on it no computers to make it easy and then others that followed because they were encouraged by him and others improved upon his work but it was an enormous undertaking and commentaries there were some beginning to be available on the scripture but nothing like there came to be afterwards we're so richly endowed with these things and yet we must remember that the best of all books is the scripture itself well the scripture then was examined against the heresies and the heresies were measured and found to be wanting now let me mention quickly some of the main heresies that came very quickly very inadequately in a sense but I don't want to take time to describe heresies but there was

Arius and Arianism and Arius was one and those that followed him were many that taught that Jesus was a mere man but he was not God no divinity and that of course is with us those that are Unitarian are nearly all Arian that's what they are really Unitarian is a much too polite word for them they are the old heretics the Arians Jehovah Witnesses are Arians they deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ then there were modalists and modalists believed that there was one God but that there were not distinctions there were not persons that this God at different times appeared in different ways in the Old Testament he appeared as the Father in the New Testament he appeared as the

Son and after the preaching of the apostles he appeared in the mode of the Spirit and there were those who were modalists that said it wasn't even that there was a real Son it was just that there was a thought went out from the Father and clothed itself in flesh and as the Son there was really the Father it was the Father in a fleshly form and when the Son was crucified it wasn't the Son that was crucified it was the Father that was crucified in the appearance of a man and called the Son of God it was the Father who suffered the Father suffered not the Son and the Spirit of course they had no time for the Spirit whatsoever in nearly all of these heresies they never regarded the

[15 : 32] Spirit as any more than an influence never as a person of the God then there were nominal Trinitarians that said yes we believe in the Father Son and Spirit but if you pressed them they wouldn't believe that the Father and the Son and the Spirit were divine persons and of course if a person denies that they are divine persons he might subscribe the Trinity I fear that there are those that say yes we are Trinitarian they enter perhaps into the ministry as Trinitarians they subscribe the Orthodox confessions but they don't believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God they don't believe in the Holy Ghost as the third person of the God head at all they are nominal Trinitarians but they are at heart Unitarians they don't believe in Jesus as the Son of God they don't believe in the Holy Spirit as God at all and therefore they're just heretics whether they're nominal

Trinitarians they're actual Unitarians and they're heretics well we find that there were these Arians and these modalists and these passionists and these nominal Trinitarians and you discover in the history of the early church that in 324 a great council was called at Nice in the south of France or as it was known then Nicaea and there was much debate over many months on the doctrine of the Trinity and in 325 there was the publication of the great confession or the creed of Nicaea the Nicene creed this was a momentous date in the history of the church 325 this divides all the fathers of the early centuries the writers whose works are extant they are divided usually into the pre

Nicene or the anti Nicene fathers before 325 then there are the Nicene fathers that were in 325 engaged in the publishing of this confession then there are the post Nicene fathers afterwards this was a watershed in the history of the early centuries and the Christian testimony and this Nicene creed made a statement on the Trinity and I propose to read you the statement that it made the creed of Nicene 325 we believe in one God the father all sovereign maker of all things visible and invisible and in one Lord Jesus Christ the son of God begotten of the father only begotten that is of the substance of the father God of God light of light true

God of true God begotten not made of one substance with the father through whom all things were made things in heaven and things on the earth who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh and became man suffered and rose on the third day ascended into the heavens is coming to judge the living and the dead we believe also in the Holy Spirit and those that say there was when he was not that is God that there was when he was not and before he was begotten he was not that is the son and that he came into being from what is not or those that are led that the son of God is of another substance or essence or created or changeable or alterable these the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes now Catholic there is not

Roman Catholic it means the universal church that's in its pure sense there were no Roman Catholics at that day this is pre Roman Catholicism this is the universal church this is the faith once delivered unto the saints in that universal sense these the Catholic and the Apostolic Church anathematizes they saying that there's no salvation apart from this view of God Father Son and Holy Spirit now then there's a statement on God and a full statement on the Son let little on the Holy Spirit did you notice and we believe in the Holy Spirit that's all the Spirit was not an issue in 325 as it became an issue afterwards it was when the Spirit became an issue afterwards when semi aliens and denied that the Holy Spirit was to be believed in as God that there had to be dealing with that matter and they searched the scriptures on this issue and they came up with a fuller statement a number of years later 381 at

[20 : 46] Constantinople there was another council and there was as a result of that a fuller statement very much the same on the Father and on the Son but on the Holy Spirit this Constantinopolitan Creed which is larger than Nicene Creed with these slight additions so it's sometimes called the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed 381 it says of the Spirit and we believe in the Holy Spirit the Lord and the life giver that proceedeth from the Father who with Father and Son is worshipped together and glorified together who spake through the prophets you see that by another 30 years or so they felt it needful rather another 50 years or so they felt it needful that they should be much more specific in their doctrine of the Holy Spirit but you find that the great creed was none of these but that which obtained and that which was subscribed is what is usually called the

Athanasian Creed the Athanasian Creed is a quite a remarkable statement I know a gospel standard minister that has it pasted in his Bible and not infrequently reads it when he goes out to preach in some of the churches you wouldn't think that would be likely to happen but it does happen he thinks so highly of the Athanasian Creed it was probably not drawn up by Athanasius but it represents the Athanasian teaching who was mightily raised up of God as a defender of the faith and stood as some have said against the world against all the semi-Aryan and Aryan leaders in the churches maintaining the whole doctrine of the Godhead Father Son and Spirit now this is the creed of the Athanasian creed this is the great creed that for hundreds of years was universally accepted in the churches and here is the statement of it whoever would be saved must first of all take care that he hold the

Catholic faith the universal faith the faith once delivered unto the saints which except a man preserved whole and inviolate he shall without doubt perish eternally this is the Catholic faith that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance for the person of the father is one of the son another of the holy spirit another but the divinity of the father and of the son and of the holy spirit is one the glory equal the majesty equal such as is the father such also is the son and such the holy spirit the father is uncreated the son is uncreated the holy spirit is uncreated the father is infinite the son is infinite, the Holy Spirit is infinite, the Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal, and yet there are not three eternal beings but one eternal being, as also there are not three uncreated beings, not three infinite beings but one uncreated and one infinite being. In like manner the Father is omnipotent, the Son is omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent, and yet there are not three omnipotent beings but one omnipotent being. Thus the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, and yet there are not three gods but one God only. The Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord, and yet there are not three lords but one Lord only. For we are compelled by Christian truth to confess each person distinctively to be both God and Lord, and we are prohibited to say that there are three gods or three lords. The Father is made by none nor created nor begotten. The Son is from the Father alone, not made, not created but begotten. The Holy Spirit is not created by the Father and the Son nor begotten but proceeds.

Therefore there is one Father, not three fathers, one Son, not three sons, one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity there is nothing prior or posterior, nothing greater or less, but all three persons are co-eternal and co-equal to themselves, so that through all us was said about both unity in Trinity and Trinity in unity is to be adored. Whoever would be saved, let him thus think concerning the Trinity. Well, that reflects a different day from our easy-going, imprecise day where it's just a shallow sort of notion about the Trinity.

They were very specific, weren't they? And we don't dismiss these confessions. I couldn't find anything in these confessions that I have any reservation about. And therefore you see, and sometimes people say, well, we are not, but we are those that are reformed and we are those that are different. We are reformed only in the sense that we go back to the Scripture and from the Scripture these confessions came. And we go back to the Scripture and we have similar confession of faith. Truth is one truth, unchanged and unchanging, and will be till the Lord comes again. Now there is the Athanasian Creads, and it's a mighty statement of the truth of God in this matter of the Trinity. Now let us leave confessions at that point, but this was why these statements were made. This is the reason why these formulations were put together, to state against the backlog of heresy, the truth of the Scripture.

[27 : 00] Let us then hasten to the second point. God is one God. Now what I comment, you've got to think of it against that background of the Creed, which is much more exhaustive than the people. I'm supplying now the Scripture to show you the rightness of these statements.

We believe in the oneness of the Godhead. And the great place in the Old Testament is Deuteronomy chapter 6 and the fourth verse, which every child in Israel had to learn from his earliest years. This was what he was taught as soon as he could be taught anything. Deuteronomy chapter 6 verse 4.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. The Lord our God. Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.

There is the unity of the Godhead. And yet notice this. Jehovah our Elohim. And we've been through this in the studies on Thursday nights a year or so back, the names of God in the Old Testament. And Elohim is that plural word. So that in the use of Elohim for God, and in this very setting that there is but one Jehovah, there is that shadowing, foreshadowing of these different persons in the Godhead. There is this plural word that stands for God. And yet it is sandwiched there between this profound statement of the unity of the Godhead.

The Lord our God is one Jehovah. Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. Jehovah the Father, Jehovah the Son, Jehovah the Holy Ghost.

[29 : 01] Now there is a similar statement concerning the oneness of the Godhead in Galatians and in the third chapter, in the 20th verse, in the argument that the Apostle is making. He comes to this statement in Galatians chapter 3 and in the 20th verse.

Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. You see, if there is a mediator, and the mediator is the Son of God. Jesus Christ is the mediator. There is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

The emphasis of both of the emphasis, that one which is from 1 Timothy 2, 5 and this one, Galatians 3, 20, is that while there is a mediator who is a divine mediator, there is a mediator, there is a mediator, there is a mediator who is a mediator, there is a God.

There is a mediator. There is a mediator. There is a mediator. There is a mediator. There are not three gods, but there is but one God, and the essence of God belongs to all the persons of the Godhead.

Now we're not to say that, well, let us think of the Godhead as essence. We can speak almost irreverently of these great subjects, but let me, for the sake of elucidation of this, say that if we were to conceive that this were the Godhead, the essence of the Godhead, we're not to think that if we divide it into three parts, a third of it is the Father's, a third of it is the Son's, a third of it is the Holy Spirit's. Each person of the Godhead possesses all the Godhead.

[31 : 06] The Father is all the Godhead, the Son is all the Godhead, the Spirit is all the Godhead. And yet there are not three gods, but one God. This is the mystery of it. This is the absoluteness of it, as it is revealed to us.

And all the attributes of God, God in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, all these things belong to all the persons of the Godhead.

They all are possessed of every one of these attributes in all its fullness. Not a third of wisdom to the Father, a third to the Son, a third to the Spirit, and so forth.

But all the wisdom of the Godhead belongs to the Father. All the mind of God, all the willing of God, belongs as much to the Father and the Son and to the Spirit as to any one person.

And while in terms of our salvation we read of the Father willing, the Father wills, but it's not that there's an unwilling Son and an unwilling Spirit.

[32 : 08] That the Father should will, we have to understand that the Son wills and the Spirit wills. There's that beautiful harmony in the Godhead. They are never contradictory, the one to the other, these blessed persons of the Godhead.

There is that perfect oneness. God is one. Hear, O Israel. Jehovah, Elohim is one Jehovah. Oh, that we might worship God in the wonder of that one blessed God.

And yet, these different persons equally possessed of all of deity. Now, let us come in the third place to the persons of the Godhead.

We make that statement of the oneness of the Godhead. Now, let us look for a little time in closing up the three persons of the Godhead. Now, let us see it in the Scripture, for the Scripture is our authority.

And we see it in Genesis 1.26. Genesis 1.26. You know the verse because we've looked at it when we were considering Elohim. But we look at it again, Genesis 1.26.

[33 : 20] At the very beginning of our Bibles, that's where you find the Trinity. You find the Trinity in the first chapter of the Bible, in the opening verses of the Bible. When the next time the Jehovah Witness comes on the door and says that there's no Trinity, you say, well, I find the Trinity there in the very beginning of the Bible.

The beginning God created. And how did he create? He created by a word, let there be. And there was the word which is the name of the Son, one of the names of the Son.

And the Spirit, we're told, was moving upon the face of the waters. But we stick with Genesis 1.26. And God said, this is to do with the creation of man.

God said, let us make man in our image, having after our likeness. Now, here is God addressing himself.

Who is God addressing you? There's no one to address. He is not addressing angels, because angels have nothing to do with creation. We've been looking at that recently. He, to whom is God speaking?

[34 : 28] He is addressing himself in the distinctions of the Godhead. Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

Here is the one God, then, addressing these distinct persons of the Triune God.

Now, just think of God said there. Elohim said. And there is Elohim, which I've said is a plural word. And yet, said is a singular verb.

And it is that this God that is expressed by a word that has a plurality in the very form of the word.

EI is the singular. Elohim is the plural. This plural word, which has a singular verb, is descriptive of the Trinity.

[35 : 30] There is that foreshadowing of the Trinity, as I say in that very word, Elohim. And here in this verse, it's so clearly put. And God said. So God created.

And in the 27th verse, that next verse, it is so much then all back to the singular. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God.

But in that converse of the preceding verse, it's God said, let us make man in our image and in our likeness.

There is a plurality in the one essence of the Godhead. Now in the Psalm 33, if you turn to the Psalms and the 33rd Psalm and to the 6th verse.

The 33rd Psalm and the 6th verse tells us that by the word of the Lord were the heavens made. And what do we have of the word?

[36 : 43] The word of the Lord in John chapter 1 and the opening verses. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that is made. All things were made by the word who is the second person of the Godhead, the eternal son.

And here he is by the word of the Lord were the heavens made. And all the host of them by the breath. It's the same word by the spirit of his mouth.

The spirit of his mouth. The spirit proceeding out of the mouth of the word. Brought these things into being.

And there is that there in that statement. And this in the Old Testament with its very pronounced sense of the oneness of Jehovah. There is this that speaks of the word.

[37 : 44] That by the word of the Lord were the heavens made. And all the host of them by the spirit of his mouth. And there are other places time forbids. The 110th Psalm.

We can't look into it. The address of the father to the son which is to do with the ascension. Where there is the statement of the father to the son.

The Lord said unto my Lord sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.

And that is the father in address to the son regarding that which would be his. The promise fulfilled after he had submitted himself to the all the provisions of the covenant.

And been made to be sin for us. There is that promised. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. It is Isaiah 53. That he shall see of the travail of his soul.

[38 : 46] And shall be satisfied. And all the names of Isaiah 9.6. Wonderful counsel of the mighty God. The everlasting father. The prince of peace. We said these easily belong to the father.

But they equally belong to the son. And you know that in that verse they are specifically attributed to the son. And it would be true to attribute all of these things to the spirit also.

Because of what we see of the unity of the Godhead. That all these persons is possessed of the whole of deity. All the attributes that belong to one belong to all of the others also.

Yet not three gods but one God. And many verses of a similar sort. And then the Holy Spirit. The distinct person of the Holy Spirit.

Is in the Acts. Comes out very forcibly in the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The doctrine of the Spirit. Acts 5 and verse 3. Peculiar setting for doctrinal truth.

[39 : 50] But it's there. God isn't going to say that we. In the Bible that we've got a manual of theology. And we've got an index to look up the Trinity.

And we've got the record. The saving record. We've got to use it. And we find in the most surprising places. Doctrinal truth. Theological statements. Here is Ananias and Sapphira lying.

Against God. And what happens to them. Well in the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. And in the third verse. Peter said. Ananias.

Why hath Satan filled thine heart. To lie to the Holy Ghost. And to keep back part of the price. Of the land. A lying.

To the Holy Ghost. Lying to the Holy Spirit. Whiles it remained. Was it not thine own. And after it was sold. Was it not in thine own power. Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart.

[40 : 47] Thou hast not lied unto men. But unto God. And God alone in the New Testament. Like that we understand of the Father. Thou hast not lied unto men.

But thou hast lied unto God. But the preceding verse says. He's lying to the Holy Ghost. But there is no contradiction. A lying to the Holy Ghost. Is a lying also to God the Father.

And then if you go down to the ninth verse. Then Peter said unto her to Sapphira. How is it that ye have agreed together. To tempt the Spirit of the Lord.

But you know the Lord in the New Testament. Is Christ the Son. And there I see in these verses. So plainly the Spirit. As a person of the Godhead.

And you see that there is that doctrine of the oneness of the Godhead. Set forth in these three verses. There is that lying.

[41 : 49] There is that lying to the Holy Ghost. There is that lying unto God. There is that tempting of the Spirit of the Lord. God. And you see the whole Trinity in this.

Meditate upon it. Consider it for yourself. So there are these scriptures that speak to us of the Son. And that speak to us of the Holy Spirit.

As persons. Distinct persons of the Godhead. And yet they are all of them of the oneness. They are in a oneness. The oneness of essence. And yet the three persons.

That are distinct persons of the Trinity. What a great mystery it is. What do we mean by a person after all? A person is a distinction.

A person is always separate from others. You are a person. I am a person. You are not me. And I am not you. When we use the word person.

[42 : 47] We think of I. If I see. It's not that you are seeing. If you are seeing. It's not that I am seeing. If I am a person.

Then I see. I hear. Everything I do. My every action. Is something that I am personally involved in. That's because I am a person. An animal isn't a person.

Why isn't an animal a person? We don't say a dog is a person. We don't say a chimpanzee is a person. Why not? Because they are not thinking.

They are not thinking. As man is given to think. We believe that their brains of course. All animals have brains.

But they don't think. They haven't the ability to think. And to come to a conclusion. That belongs to man only. That's why man has not evolved. Man has not just come from the apes.

[43 : 40] As we have been told. And many people are prepared to believe. Just taking it on the word of the scientist. That could not be. There is a colossal difference.

Between the animal and the man. Because a man is a thinking creature. He is made in the image and the likeness of God. And when he comes to a decision.

It is his decision. He thinks. He does. He wills. He is a person. Eagle. I. And this belongs to a person. So that when God is a person of the Trinity.

We mean that God is an individual. God is one that is a separate distinction. He is not the son. And the son is not the spirit.

And the spirit is not the father. Each is an I. I will. The father wills. And the father wills. It's not the same as the son willing. And the spirit willing.

[44 : 40] Is not the same as the father willing. And yet they are all of them willing the same thing. But they are all distinct persons. The person is a distinction.

And the father is one person. And the son is another person. And the Holy Spirit is another person. Now I don't think that we can go into the son.

Because I've recently been looking in Hebrews. At the son in the third verse. The son is the express image of God. There is that express image of God in the son.

We've seen something of the eternal son. The son didn't just become the son. When he was born at Bethlehem. A son of Todd. He was always the son. The father always the father.

The first person always has the father to the son. The son begotten. The only begotten son. Who is in the bosom of the father. John 1.18 He hath declared him.

[45 : 38] He has shown forth what God is. We will never see the Godhead. But we see the son of God. And in the seeing of the son of God. We see the Godhead.

He that hath seen me hath seen the father. But we do not see the father. No man hath seen God at any time. And yet if we see the son. We see the Godhead. But we see the Godhead in the one person.

Through whom God deals with us as a mediator. And he is the express image of God. He that hath seen me hath seen the father. These are amazing things.

But they are revealed things. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead. All the fullness of the Godhead. And it dwells in him even though he is incarnate.

It dwelt in him before he was incarnate. But even incarnate. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Bodily. Bodily. Please the father that in him should all fullness dwell.

[46 : 41] And bodily. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead. Bodily. He is the eternal son begotten. We can only conceive of someone begetting in time.

The person that begets is before the person who is begotten. But this does not apply in the Godhead. The son is eternally begotten. And he is always as one that is springing forth from the father.

Now you are not to think of the eternal generation as something that took place in eternity. But something that is eternally happening. He is continually springing for the son.

Springs forth from the father. Continually. He is the son to the father by an eternal generation. What a concept that is.

That he is that one begotten of the father. There are those that write on this. That are in error. They say that the begottenness is of Bethlehem. And Mary.

[47 : 45] And the child that's born. That's not so. That is. That's not much different from some of the confusions of the early heresies to say that.

He is the only begotten of the father. Full of grace and truth. By an eternal generation. That was the great issue that caused the gospel standard churches to be separated in the middle of the last century on the doctrine of the sonship.

There are those that say well it wasn't a very important thing to divide over wasn't it? I think it was. God is very jealous for his own honour. And it seems to me it's a fundamental thing that we adhere to the position which is scriptural and maintained in these early confessions to do with the eternity of the son.

He's an eternal son by an eternal generation. An eternal begetting of the son by the father. And what about the spirit?

Because as I say we cannot go much further into such a subject. We've spent enough time and more time than is available on it already. But let me just say of the Holy Spirit in John chapter 15 and in the 20.

[49 : 08] In the 15th chapter of John and the 26th verse. It's the second last verse of that chapter. When the comforter is come. And we know the comforter from previous scriptures is the Holy Spirit.

When the comforter, the paraclete, who is the Holy Spirit is come. Whom I will send unto you from the father. Even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the father.

He shall testify of me. And we believe the doctrine is as stated in the creed. And based upon such scripture as this.

That while the father is not begotten. But the son is begotten eternally of the father. That the spirit is proceeding from the father and from the son.

If there is a springing forth as it were of the son from the father. By an eternal generation. There is an eternal inspiration. Breathing forth of the Holy Spirit.

[50 : 16] Through the son and from the father. This is the doctrine of the Trinity. I say that our salvation is coupled to that.

And I close on this note that. Father, son and Holy Spirit. These three persons of the one Godhead. For our salvation.

Each one is personally involved. The oneness of divine essence. Willes the salvation of the elect. Each person of the Godhead. Fully consents to the salvation of the church.

But each person is prepared to take a particular responsibility. The father willing. And sending. And the son there coming and doing.

And the Holy Spirit as the one that is spirited from the father and the son. And coming as that mighty influence and force to effect. Sanctifying spirit.

[51 : 18] That makes that distinction. That brings us from the world. And brings us into a spirituality. Which was not there by nature. These persons of the Godhead.

In all of these blessed ways. Working for our salvation. This is the Trinity. And that's why we say that a person that denies the Trinity cannot know salvation.

I'm not saying about a person who is a saved person. That comes under a momentary lapse. Or under the influence of a false teaching. And is for a time caught up in it.

And then is brought to see the folly of it. And withdraws from it. That is one of those things we pray might not happen to any one of us. But if we're not vigilant and watchful could happen to any one of us.

We've got to be those that are very careful. And not prepared to be led away by every person that comes with some new idea to us. We want to go to the word of God.

[52 : 19] But I'm saying that the person that has no place for the Trinity. That denies deity to Christ. And is strongly a denier of the divinity of Christ.

And a person that denies the Holy Ghost as a person of the Godhead. I cannot see that such a person by any stretch of the imagination. Can be a saved man or a saved woman.

Except as I said at the beginning. By some sheer sentimentality that is prepared to say. Well even the devil will be saved.

As a woman said to me years ago. I believe even the devil will be saved. Well I don't believe the devil will be saved for a moment. Thank God. We're not to be governed by sentimentality.

But by the scripture of truth. To deny the Trinity is a solemn thing. We may say at the end of it we are hardly any wiser than when we first begun.

[53 : 15] But surely you see the oneness of the Godhead. And the persons of the Godhead. And each person distinct and individual. And yet they are there of the one essence.

One God in three persons. Blessed Trinity. When reason fails with all its power. Then faith believes. And love adores.

Let us pray. Oh Lord God. The ground upon which we have sought to place our feet is holy ground. And yet we are emboldened to venture.

Because thou hast revealed to us of these things. And we pray that the holy mystery might come to us. So that even where we cannot understand.

We may confess and adore and worship. We thank thee that our God is in three persons. And yet is one God.

[54 : 22] And we ask that we may know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The love of God. The communion of the Holy Ghost.

In our own experience. And to be with us. And to abide with us. And all thy people. Do hear our prayer. Help us to sing thy praise.

Ere we part. We ask it. Of thee the Father through thy Son. And we trust by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.