

God and the Holy Trinity

Introduction

Q: Should we have modern-day confessions of faith, dealing with modern controversies?
- yes (e.g. Nashville Statement on sexuality and gender).

Q: And, if so, why bother with old ones like the Westminster Confession?

- it's never really been bettered... and point of unity for the Reformed churches to unite around.

Chapter 2 *Modern Language version – 1993 – OPC*

1. There is only one living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection. He is a most pure spirit, invisible, with neither body, parts, nor passive properties. He is unchangeable, boundless, eternal, and incomprehensible. He is almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, and most absolute. He works all things according to the counsel of his own unchangeable and most righteous will, for his own glory. He is most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. He is also most just and terrifying in his judgments, hating all sin, and will by no means acquit the guilty.

2. God has all life, glory, goodness, and blessedness in and of himself. He alone is all-sufficient, in and to himself, not standing in need of any creatures which he has made, nor deriving any glory from them, but rather manifesting his own glory in, by, to, and on them. He alone is the fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things. He has absolute sovereignty over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatever he pleases. In his sight all things are open and manifest; his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent of his creatures; so that nothing to him is contingent or uncertain. He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands. To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatever worship, service, or obedience he is pleased to require of them.

One God, no limit

How many gods? - Deut. 6:4

God is spirit - John 4:24, 1 Tim. 1:17

Creator, not creature

- no "passions" – Acts 14:15
- no parts/ "simplicity" – Isaiah 6:3
- no change or limit – Malachi 3:6
- free and absolute – Ps 115:3

God's works:

- according to His will – Eph. 1:11
- for His glory – Rom. 11:36

Psalm 145:1-3

Most loving! – 1 John 4:8,16

Justice: he hates sinners – Ps 5:5-6

God in himself

Aseity – from Himself... not dependent

e.g. has Life – John 5:26

he does not need us!

Most holy – Isaiah 6:3

Therefore, WE owe him worship...
as defined by Him

3. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son.

The Holy Trinity

Three-one → "Trinity"

Matthew 28:18-19

1 God – one "name" (therefore unique)

3 persons: "F, S and HS" (therefore relational)

They *are* one and *work* as one... and yet are different

Of none

Begotten (not made)

Proceeding

Questions...

To think about...

How does the oneness of God contradict the idea that we each have our own God?

How does God's being a "spirit" affect our worship of him? (Clue: images? idols?)

How is *He* different to *us*?

Caution: avoid Trinity illustrations – they aren't true!

What if we don't grasp that God is one God in three persons? "... only the bare and empty name of God flits about in our brain to the exclusion of the true God." (John Calvin)

"It is the existence of this God alone that I confess. With reference to the claimed existence of any other god as the true God, I am not simply agnostic, I am a convinced atheist. I deny that any other gods exist save as idolatrous creations in the minds of sinful men." (Robert Reymond)

Personal response: for what should we give thanks... confess... pray?