

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 1

Name _____

1. Read the Introduction, pages 13-16.

2. The author outlines several reasons why the doctrine of the Trinity needs to be examined. List 3 of these reasons.

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3. The last paragraph on page 14 mentions the three most popular views of God. Briefly define those 3 views:

- Monotheism

- Polytheism

- Pantheism

4. On page 15, the Christian's view of salvation is presented in light of the Trinity. Explain the role of each person in our salvation.

- The Father

- The Son

- The Holy Spirit

5. Read the middle paragraph on page 15 at least three times: make sure you understand the significance of the point the author is making. It begins with "Further, our view on this doctrine..."

6. The introduction concludes with three questions that "require our attention." Paraphrase those three questions (write them out in your own words).

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 2

Name _____

1. Read pages 17-29 (up to subtitle “The Three-in-Oneness of God”). Yes, I read it.

2. The historical church has accepted 2 separate sets of evidence by which the doctrine of the trinity has been accepted as biblical. (Page 18)

A) The Bible teaches _____

B) And, the Bible teaches _____

3. Deuteronomy 6:4 is used to establish what point about the Trinity?

4. Matthew 6:26-32 is used to establish what point about the Trinity?

5. Isaiah 9:6 is used to establish what point about the Trinity?

6. Acts 5:3-4 is used to establish what point about the Trinity?

7. T/F The Holy Spirit possesses the attributes or qualities of God.

8. T/F Jesus used the expressions “Father” and “God” interchangeably.

9. T/F What Jesus thought of himself is not important in making a case for his deity.

10. T/F Another word for trinity is triunity. By this we mean that God is three in one.

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 3

Name _____

1. Read pages 29 to the top of 35.

2. The next section begins, “The two considerations together lead, by implication, to the conclusion that if both are true, then it must also be true that God is three-in-one, or triune.” What are the two considerations he is referring to?

A) _____

B) _____

3. The science of textual criticism attempts to discover:

- a. What the original author meant by what he said
- b. What the original author actually wrote
- c. Why the author’s writing was accepted in the New Testament Canon
- d. What other writings (texts) influenced the author

4. Elohim is a Hebrew word for God that is plural in form. However, the Hebrew language utilizes a “plural of majesty” when speaking of a king – plural in form but not in numbers. The “plural of majesty” is used to refer to God:

- a. never
- b. sometimes
- c. always

5. The Old Testament Shema, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one...” is often used to dispute the trinity. How does Genesis 2:24 offer a response to this?

6. The baptismal formula (Matt 28:19)

- a. strongly implies equality among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- b. is in conflict with baptizing in the name of Jesus in the book of Acts
- c. is not that relevant to the discussion
- d. is another example of the “plural of majesty”

7. Where is the Triadic Benediction? _____ How does it help make a case for the doctrine of the trinity?

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 4

Name _____

1. Read pages 35 to 42. Yes, I read it.
2. T/F If the doctrine of the trinity is true, then it is impossible to relate to the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit independently.
3. T/F Paul is the only New Testament writer to use a triadic pattern. However, this does not make the case for the trinity any less valid.
4. 1Corinthians 8:6 indicates that Paul thought:
 - a. the Father and the Son are just two different names of the same God
 - b. the Father and the Son are unique and distinct
 - c. the Father is more divine than the Son
 - d. can't really tell from this verse what Paul really understood about this
5. Read the last paragraph on page 42 at least 3 times. Yes, I read it.
6. In order to back that paragraph up, provide one scripture reference to support (not necessarily prove absolutely, but support) the following points:
 - A. God is one and unique
 - B. The Father is divine
 - C. The Son is divine
 - D. The Holy Spirit is divine
 - E. These three are in union

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 5

Name _____

1. Read pages 43 to the top of page 47.
2. Those who hold to postmodernism would answer the apparent contradiction of the trinity by:
 - A. The trinity is not a contradiction because God is not really three.
 - B. The trinity is not a contradiction because God is not really one.
 - C. The trinity is a contradiction but we don't know how to resolve it.
 - D. The trinity is not a contraction because the Bible says it is not.
 - E. Contradictions are not relevant because truth is not absolute.
 - F. The function of the trinity is three. The essence of the trinity is one.
 - G. The essence of the trinity is one. The function of the trinity is three.
 - H. None of the above.
3. T/F Because we are finite and God is infinite, we will never fully understand him.
4. Give a brief definition to modalism.
5. Give a brief definition to tritheism.
6. Give an example of a contradictory statement (different than the book's).
7. What is the author's point about the American Philosophical Association's T-shirts?
8. It is one thing to be asked to take something by _____, but something quite different to be asked to take something by _____ when one does not know what he or she is being asked to _____.
9. T/F Complete and absolutely accurate understanding of the Trinity is essential for one to be a true Christian.
10. Why or Why not?

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 6

Name _____

1. Read pages 47 to the top of 53.
2. This section lists three popular heresies in church history regarding the trinity. Each heresy was an attempt to better explain the mystery, but did so at too high of a cost. These three attempts are designated by the author as:
 - A. Redefining the _____ of Christ.
 - B. Denying the _____ of the Son from the Father.
 - C. Redefining the _____ between the Father and the Son.
3. Dynamic Monarchianism suggests:
 - A. The Father and the Son are the same person
 - B. Jesus was a man who became divine, and thus morally one with the Father
 - C. The Son was a separate God: equal to the Father but not one with him
 - D. Jesus was a sub-god, a “deitized” high angel or exalted creature.
4. The ancient church rejected Dynamic Monarchianism because:
5. The section, *Denying the Distinction of the Son from the Father* on pages 49 and 50 describes which heresy?
 - A. Modalism
 - B. Tritheism
 - C. Arianism
 - D. Dynamic Monarchianism
6. What ancient heresy describes the view of the Trinity held by the Jehovah’s Witnesses?
 - A. Modalism
 - B. Tritheism
 - C. Arianism
7. What is the difference between homoousios and homoiousios?
 - A. the first word means *same*, the second word means *similar*
 - B. the first word means *similar*, the second word means *same*
 - C. there is no real difference in the definition between the 2 words
 - D. none of the above
8. The “Orthodox Formula” states that
 - A. God is three natures, three persons
 - B. God is one essence, three persons
 - C. God is one essence, one person

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 7

Name _____

1. Read pages 53 to 68
2. Use a dictionary to give a brief definition of *centripetal*.
3. _____ modalistic
_____ perichoresis
_____ hypostasis
_____ dualism
_____ trithestic
- A. Two ultimate principles
B. Very strong empathy, ability to interpenetrate thoughts
C. God is one person who expresses himself in 3 forms
D. Refers to the mystery of Christ's incarnation
E. Latin word similar to "person" but not exactly the same
F. Metaphysical mystery of the Godhead
G. God consists of three independently divine beings
4. Read the last 2 paragraphs of this section (on pages 67, 68) twice. Yes, I read it.
5. Read the first of these two paragraphs (page 67) 2 more times. Yes, I read it.
6. Familiarize yourself with these important points:
 - Three persons who constitute three centers of consciousness within one being.
 - Capable of interacting with one another.
 - Bound together so closely by the centripetal power of love that they are inseparable.
 - The life of each flows through each of the others.
 - None could exist independently of the others.
 - Divine life flows through each of the three.
 - No member of the Trinity acts independently of the others.
 - Some divine acts may be more the work of one particular member.
 - Any and all divine works are nonetheless the work of the entire Trinity.

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 8

Name _____

1. Read pages 69 to 84 Yes, I read it.
2. Read the 2nd paragraph on page 72 (begins with “In a sense...”) twice. I read it.
3. The question of whether God is three-in-one is not minor or peripheral; it concerns the very _____ of God.
4. Orthodoxy means: _____.
5. Historically, churches that have neglected importance in doctrinal belief have
 - A. multiplied in numbers and flourished
 - B. influenced their culture, resulting in great social changes for the better
 - C. been very evangelistic, enjoying many great revivals
 - D. all of the above
 - E. none of the above
6. What is one way in which the doctrine of the Trinity addresses the problem of evil?
 - A. The Holy Spirit supernaturally removes evil from the world
 - B. The Father purposed evil and therefore evil is really good
 - C. Jesus as God takes the effects of evil upon himself
 - D. none of the above
7. The doctrine of the Trinity
 - A. Makes it impossible to harmonize Christianity with other religions
 - B. Makes it promising to harmonize Christianity with most other religions
 - C. Makes it promising to harmonize Christianity with all other religions
 - D. Makes it promising to harmonize Christianity with only a few other religions
8. When we pray, it is proper to address our prayer to
 - A. The Father
 - B. The Son
 - C. The Holy Spirit
 - D. Any or all members of the Trinity

MAKING SENSE OF THE TRINITY • LESSON 9
Final Assignment

Name _____

1. Read final section, bottom of page 84 to 96. Yes, I read it.

The author writes, “God has created us in his image. That image, however, is not merely structural but also dynamic and relational, and is not borne by us merely individually, but also is a collective or “communitarian” fashion. If this is the case, then the relationships that obtain among the members of the Trinity furnish the key to the relationships that should be present between the believer and other believers, and quite possibly, other humans regardless of their spiritual condition.

2. Explain what is meant by, “God has created us in his image. That image, however, is not merely structural but also dynamic and relational.”

3. Explain what is meant by “and is not borne by us merely individually, but also is a collective or communitarian fashion.”

4. Give example(s) of how these truths could be applied to our daily lives.