

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2, Paragraph 3 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”, Message # 64 – “Errors Regarding the Trinity”, Presented in the Adult Sunday School Class by Pastor Paul Rendall, on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

**Paragraph 3** – In this divine and infinite Being there are three subsistences, d) the Father, the Word or Son, and Holy Spirit, of one substance, power, and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, e) yet the essence undivided: the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is f) eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit g) proceeding from the Father and the Son; all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one God, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on him.

d) 1<sup>st</sup> John 5: 7;    Matthew 28: 19;    2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13: 14;    e) Exodus 3: 14;    John 14: 11;  
1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 8:6;    f) John 1:14,18;    g) John 15:26;    Gal 4: 6)

**John 14: 7-12** – “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” “Philip said to Him, ‘Lord show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.’” “Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip?’” “He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, show us the Father?” “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” “The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.” “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.” “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.”

It is not as though the apostles, Christ’s disciples, did not know Christ. They had believed in Him, they had been saved by His grace through faith in Him, and yet they did not yet understand this great mystery of the Divine Trinity; that the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; that he who has seen Christ has seen the Father. Not that the Father has a body of flesh and bones or a human body; He does not. He is Spirit. But it is the Son who was begotten in eternity past who was, and is, in the Father, and the Father in Him. They are Consubstantial in the Godhead as Persons. The words that Christ spoke, were not spoken on His own authority as a Man, but the Father who dwelt in Him, and who He was Consubstantial with, was doing the works that He did, because they were One as God, yet two distinct Divine Persons. The works of Christ were the works of God and He and the Father were Consubstantial in them.

**3. Errors in relation to the Son and the Holy Spirit being Consubstantial with the Father:**

**A. Modalism** - *Modalism is the belief that God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are three different modes or aspects of one monadic God, as perceived by the believer, rather than three distinct persons within the Godhead – that there are no real or substantial differences between the three, such that the identity of the Spirit or the Son is that of the Father.*

**“Modalism, or Sabellianism, involves errors regarding the Trinity.** *The orthodox doctrine of the Trinity affirms that God is one in essence and three in Person. Modalism initially was taught by a bishop in the early church named Sabellius who lived around 215 AD.*

*Modalism teaches that only one God exists and that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are different modes or manifestations of the one God.*

*Modalism undermines the Scriptural teaching that God never changes (Mal 3:6: Jas 1:17) because it portrays a God who changes his modes. In addition, Modalism undermines the mediatorial work of Christ. Scripture teaches that Jesus is the mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5). However, in Modalism they believe that God the Father and God the Son are the same Person and therefore they have God mediating with himself, which is illogical and contrary to Scripture.*

*In Modalism they have Jesus praying to himself (John 17:11), sending himself (John 20:21), and even returning to himself (John 20:17), all which again is illogical, nor the correct interpretation of the Scriptures they cite. Scripturally, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are distinct Persons - not the same Person - in the Godhead. There are not three Gods, but three Persons in the one Godhead. We see this distinction very clearly in Scripture.”* (Taken from <https://thirdmill.org/answers/answer.asp/file/46672>, Third Millennium Ministries)

**John 17: 1-5** - “Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come.’ “Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.” “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” “I have glorified You on the earth.” “I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” “And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

Now, as we read these words, we must take notice of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God the Son, is not addressing Himself, but He is addressing another Person in the Godhead; even the Father, and the One who is both His Father as a Man, and His Father as begotten of the Father in eternity past. He is praying to Him now as a Man. He is not praying to Himself, even though He is God. And this shows us that there is a very real distinction to be made between God the Father and God the Son as Persons in the Godhead. As God the Son, the Lord Jesus did not need to pray these things. But as the God-Man, the only Mediator between God and men, He very much needed to pray that the Father would glorify Him, in order that He might glorify the Father by His being able to perfectly and successfully complete the mission of His earthly ministry and redeem all of God’s elect people by His sufferings on the cross. He had glorified the Father on the earth in His finishing the work of a perfect obedience to God’s holy law, and now seeing that He was actually going to go through these intense sufferings, He prays that He would be glorified together with the Father, in His death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven afterwards, to enter in, as a glorified Man and Mediator, into the glory of being in heaven together with the Father, and experiencing for the first time, that glory as the God-Man.

**B. Monarchianism** – “Monarchianism (a compound word made up of mono, meaning "one" and arche meaning "rule") was a heresy concerning the nature of God. It contradicts the doctrine of the Trinity. The orthodox doctrine of the Trinity affirms that God is one in essence and three in person. The Holy Scripture teaches that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, but also that the Father is not the Son or Holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or Son. There are three distinct Persons in the Godhead.

***Monarchianism holds that there is one God as one person: God the Father. It is divided into two but related schools of belief: (1) Dynamic Monarchianism and (2) Modal Monarchianism.***

***Dynamic Monarchianism*** teaches that God is the Father and that Jesus Christ is only a man. They teach a form of Adoptionism; that Jesus Christ was tested, passed, and adopted by God the Father who then gave him certain supernatural powers. They teach that the Holy Spirit is merely a force of God the Father, and not the third Person of the Trinity. Jehovah's Witnesses and Unitarians still espouse a form of Dynamic Monarchianism.

**John 14: 27-29** – “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.” “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” “You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ “If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father, for My Father is greater than I.’ “And now I have told you before it come, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.”

You can see here how a person could fall into Dynamic Monarchianism, because the way that Jesus speaks here makes it appear that He is a lesser God than the Father. But that is not at all the way to look at what Christ is saying. He is not comparing His nature with the nature of the Father in these words. He is comparing the condition that He was presently in as a Man and Mediator with that of the Father’s absolute Being above all suffering, and having all glory and blessedness. It is not as though Christ was not fully God when He walked upon the earth, but in His obedience as a Man He knew that He must, in His obedience, humble Himself to the point of death, even the death of the cross. He told the disciples that if they knew that in going through His upcoming sufferings and death that He would accomplish redemption on their behalf, rise from the dead, ascend to heaven and sit at the right hand of the Father, alive and glorified forevermore, that they would rejoice. He is not doubting their love for Him. He is encouraging their faith.

***Modal Monarchianism*** teaches that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are just three modes of the single person who is God (cf. John 17:1-5). Today Oneness Pentecostal groups hold to this type of Monarchianism. They baptize only in the name of Jesus, not in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (cf. Matt 28:18-20).” (Taken from <https://thirdmill.org/answers/answer.asp/file/46673>, Third Millennium Ministries)

**John 10: 27-31** – “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.” “I and the Father are one.” “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.”

You can see here how those who are Modal Monarchianists might draw the wrong conclusion from verse 30 – “I and the Father are one.” By Jesus’ saying this, they know that both the Father and the Son have the Unity and Essence of Divine power to give eternal life to the sheep, and to preserve and keep all of the sheep who belong to Christ. They shall never perish, nor shall anyone snatch them out of Christ the Son of God’s hand, nor shall they snatch them out of the Father’s hand. The Father and the Son are of the same Essence, the same power and glory belong to them both, as the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Persons of the Godhead. The problem with the Oneness

Pentecostal Modal Monarchians is that because of this statement they wrongly conclude that since the Father and Son are of the same essence there is no real need in their eyes, for distinguishing the Divine Persons any further than the Lord Jesus being the One who fully represents God to Man. And therefore the Father and the Holy Spirit cease to be regarded as distinguishingly important and when they think and speak about God it is not in Trinitarian language.

**From MarketFaith Ministries online** – “Oneness Pentecostals declare that the Godhead consists of only one Person, and they deny the traditional doctrine of the Trinity. They maintain that the only real “person” in the Godhead is Jesus. Thus, they are often referred to as the “Jesus Only” Movement. They maintain that God exists in two modes, as the Father in heaven, and as Jesus the Son on earth. Nevertheless, they are the same Person, not two separate Persons. The Holy Spirit is not regarded as a Person at all, merely a manifestation of Jesus’ power or a synonym for Him. Several verses are quoted to establish this view such as Colossians 2:9 (NKJV), “For in Him (Jesus) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Oneness theologians would argue that if the Father and the Son were separate, then the Godhead could not fully dwell in Christ. They also look to Matthew 28:19 to affirm their views that Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize in the “name” (singular) of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”