

# **The Principles of Christian Religion**

**A Study through the Baptist  
Catechism using Benjamin  
Beddome's *Scriptural Exposition***

# Outline of the BC

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# Question and Answer 9

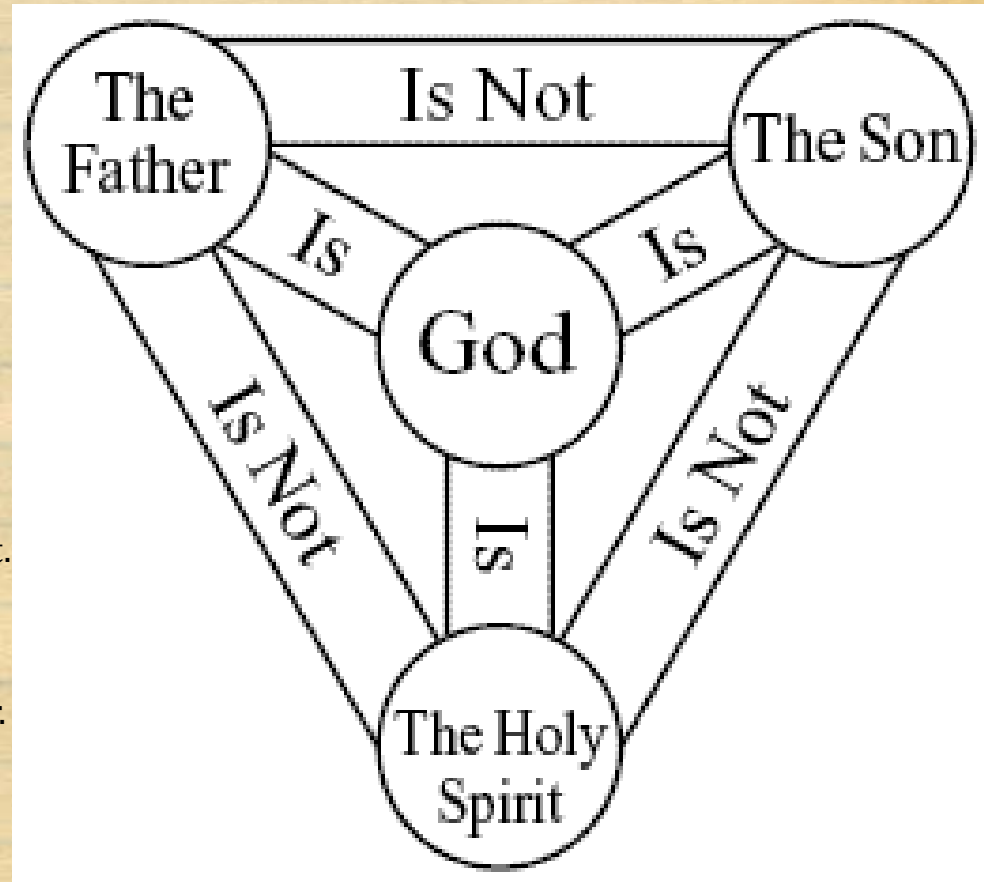
Q. 9: How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in essence, equal in power and glory.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 John 5:7; Matthew 28:19

# The Shield of the Trinity

1. The Father is God.
2. The Son is God.
3. The Holy Spirit is God.
4. God is the Father.
5. God is the Son.
6. God is the Holy Spirit.
7. The Father is not the Son.
8. The Father is not the Holy Spirit.
9. The Son is not the Father.
10. The Son is not the Holy Spirit.
11. The Holy Spirit is not the Father.
12. The Holy Spirit is not the Son.



# Question and Answer 9

- This is the core of the doctrine of the Trinity.
  - There is only one God, one divine essence; but there are three divine Persons.
  - Each Person is fully and equally God.
  - But each Person is distinct from the other Persons.
  - Both God's oneness and His threeness must always be kept in balance.
  - 2LCF 2.3; Athanasian Creed: "We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance [essence]."

# Question and Answer 9

- Terminology:
  - **Godhead** = Middle English equivalent of “Godhood”; divine nature or essence
  - **Person** = from Latin *persona* (Greek *prosopon*); an analogy of sorts; indicates an objective, distinct identity
  - **Subsistence** = from Latin *subsistentia* (Greek *hypostasis*); “indicating a particular being or existent, and individual instance of a given essence” (Muller)
  - **Essence** = from Latin *essentia* (Greek *ousia*); “the whatness or *quidditas* of a being, which makes the being precisely what it is” (Muller)

# Question and Answer 9

## 1. Statement of the Doctrine

- There is a plurality in the godhead (Gen. 1:26).
  - Excursus: The Trinity in the OT
    - Does Gen. 1:26 (and 11:7) imply the Trinity?
    - Clearer Indications:
      - » The Spirit of the Lord: Gen. 1:1-2; Exo. 31:3
      - » The Angel of the Lord: Gen. 16:7-13; 18:1-21; 19:1-28; Josh. 5:13-15; Mal. 3:1
      - » Personifications of the Word or Wisdom of God: Psa. 33:4,6; Prov. 8:12-31
      - » Mentions of More than One Divine Person: Psa. 45:6,7; Isa. 48:16
    - Berkhof: “Thus the Old Testament contains a clear anticipation of the fuller revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament.”
- The godhead consists of three persons (1 John 5:7; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).

# Question and Answer 9

## 1. Statement of the Doctrine

- The Father is a distinct person from the Son and Spirit (John 10:29).
- The Son is a distinct person from the Father and Spirit (Psa. 110:1).
- The Spirit is a distinct person from the Father and Son (John 14:26).
- These three are the same in essence, affection, and operation (~~John 5:7~~ John 10:30).
- It may not with any propriety then be said, that there are three Gods (Zech. 14:9).



# Question and Answer 9

## 2. Arguments for the Doctrine

### a. Divine Names

- The Son is called God (Rom. 9:5).
- The Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3,4).
- The Son is called Jehovah (Jer. 23:6).
- The Spirit is called Jehovah (Exo. 17:7; cf. Isa. 63:10).
- This name is not given to any but God (Psa. 83:18).

# Question and Answer 9

## 2. Arguments for the Doctrine

### b. Divine Attributes and Actions

- The Son is eternal (John 8:58).
- The Spirit is eternal (Heb. 9:14).
- The Son is omnipresent (Matt. 18:20).
- The Spirit is so too (Psa. 139:7).
- The Son is omniscient (John 21:17).
- The Spirit is so too (I Cor. 2:10).
- The work of creation is ascribed to the Son (John 1:3).
- It is also ascribed to the Spirit (Job 33:4).
- Creation is a work peculiar to God (Heb. 3:4).

# Question and Answer 9

## 2. Arguments for the Doctrine

### c. Objects of Worship

- The Father is the object of prayer (Matt. 6:6).
- The Son is also the object of prayer (Acts 7:59).
- And the Spirit (Rev. 1:4).
- We are baptized in the name of all the three persons in the Trinity (Matt. 18:19).
- Religious worship is a prerogative of deity (Rev. 19:10; 22:9).

# Question and Answer 9

## 2. Arguments for the Doctrine

### d. Sources of Blessing

- Divine blessings are derived from all three persons in the godhead (2 Cor. 13:14).
- Each of these have their distinct province in the affair of man's salvation (Eph. 2:18).
  - 2LCF 2.3: “[W]hich doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with God, and comfortable dependence on Him.”
  - According to John Owen, our salvation “is wholly *founded* upon and inwrapped in this truth [the Trinity], both as to the *eternal spring* and *actual execution* of it.”

# Question and Answer 9

## 3. Applications of the Doctrine

- The unity in the Godhead is a motive to unity among the saints (John 17:21).
- We should hold fast to this doctrine (2 Tim. 1:13).
- Owen again: “Deny the Trinity, and all the means of the communication of grace, with the whole of the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ, fall to the ground. Every tittle of it speaks this truth: and they who deny the one reject the other.”