

The Doctrine of God: The Trinity, part 2

Wednesday, February 3rd, 2024

Two Videos:

Steve Furtick and Modalism

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=VmIK1LmDM7w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmIK1LmDM7w)

St. Patrick's Bad Analogies

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=KQLfgaUoQCw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQLfgaUoQCw)

Remember what we have said

1. There is one eternal substance — God
2. There are three distinct persons within the substance
3. (Yet) Each person is the substance
4. There is no “sharing” among them as if God is a pie and is made up of the Three

How have people tried to
make sense of this doctrine?

1. Modalism/Sebellianism

> From the teacher, Sebellius

> Coined the idea of “of similar substance”

> *Homoiousios = of similar substance*

> Sebellianism is the same as Modalism

Modalism:

1. Main Idea:

> God shows Himself as three persons but is not actually three persons.

> Example:

- John 10:30, “I and the Father are one...”

- John 14:9, “If you have seen me...”

Modalism:

1. Main Idea:

> In essence, the idea of the three persons is an illusion.

> God merely takes on the “mask” of the Father or the Son or the Spirit when necessary

Arianism

1. From the teacher, Arius

> There is only one God, the Father

> The Son of God, Jesus, was created

> He is “like the father” or of similar substance, but not the same

Arianism

1. Main Idea

> Hebrews 1:3, “*He is the radiance of the glory of God...*”

> Colossians 1:15, “*He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation...*”

Arianism

1. Main Idea

- > Jesus is *only* included as God because God created Him to be like God
- > Jesus does not have the *One Eternal Divine Substance*, but is of a similar substance — a return of *homoiousios*

Subordinationism and Adoptionism

1. Subordinationism

> Affirms that Jesus is of the same nature as the Father but is not equal to the Father in His attributes or in His being

> Jesus is subordinate to the Father

Subordinationism and Adoptionism

2. Adoptionism

> Jesus was an ordinary man until His baptism

> It was at the baptism that the Father adopted the Son and gave him supernatural abilities

Why These Formulations?

> The desire was to avoid *Tri-Theism*, which denies the One Eternal Divine Essence/Substance

> Later, the opposite would be the case. That is, an attempt to explain God in the Bible as absolute oneness

From the Athanasian Creed:

“The Catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity; neither confusing the Persons, nor dividing the Substance. That we are compelled by the Christian truth that each person is God and Lord, and that the Deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is One; equal in glory; co-equal in majesty.”

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