

Reflections of the Trinity

Introduction

God is one and yet subsists in three persons. This is one of the fundamental truths of Christianity and a doctrine which separates it from all other religions. The Trinity is a community of love based upon the three persons who each function in an individual way within that community. In order to achieve any common goal, the three persons function according to the divine order of their characters.

Thus the Father originates and decrees; the Son achieves that which the Father decrees and the Spirit applies that which the Son accomplishes. Thus in salvation the Father elects a people to be saved in Christ and sends the Son to accomplish this redemption. The Son works to achieve the necessary salvation and then the Spirit applies that redemption to the people God chose. Each has a part to play, in their own way, and the work of all three is united in a common purpose.

Since God is God, and wonderful in all his ways, it seems appropriate that in all his decrees there is a reflection of this harmonious working of three things in one purpose. So it is that as one studies the fulness of God's decree one can trace triplets involved in the outworking of that decree; three key aspects to a matter. It may be helpful to look at some of these.

The Tabernacle

We start with the Tabernacle because this is something that was made according to the divine pattern under strict controls.

According to all that I show you, *that is*, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make *it*. Ex 25:9

See to it that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown you. Ex 25:40

Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He [God] said, 'See *that* you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'

Everything in the tabernacle, from the hangings to the silver sockets had to be made according to divine instructions. This was a structure that was planned in heaven to represent God. The vessels, utensils, manner of operation and even the compounds of spices had to be made strictly according to divine instructions. Any man failing to operate within the Tabernacle according to God's command was to be killed. Later, individuals that tried to simulate their own rituals were destroyed by divine fire (Lev 10:1-2).

The reason for such care was because God chose to dwell amongst his people in the Tabernacle and it had to be holy in every respect; nothing symbolising the flesh could be involved; it was a work of God.

As an aside, it may be worth noting here that the Tabernacle is a type firstly of Christ, then of the church and thirdly of man in God's image (believers), all who are the dwelling place of God. Christ always obeyed the Father's commands and godly Christians also seek to obey the Father's commands. The church too must obey God's commands in the way it is structured and in the way it operates. The church must follow the divine pattern and not the way of men. Thus to ignore divine principles in building the church is a great sin, just as worthy of death as building the Tabernacle wrongly. Since God's precedent for the church is to meet in homes in small numbers as a family, practising mutual edification, centring on the Lord's Supper, and being led by a team of equal elders who can all teach, we can say that the modern churches have failed to follow the heavenly pattern and stand condemned before God.

Now, regarding our purpose in this paper, despite the fact that the Tabernacle can be subdivided into very many aspects (hangings, framework, foundations, utensils, vessels, curtains etc.) God highlights three key divisions. There is no doubt that the three significant divisions of the Tabernacle are: the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place and the outer court. The Holy of Holies was sometimes called 'the Holiest' while the Holy Place was sometimes called 'The sanctuary'. Hebrews describes the first two parts of the Tabernacle:

For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing *the services*. But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance. Heb 9:2-7

There are very good reasons to see in this threefold division a symbol of the nature of man, as God's temple. We will consider that later.

So, in the first of our subjects there is a very clear division into three fundamental aspects. The Tabernacle is the key type (figure) of God dwelling with men. However, God cannot dwell with men until the matter of sin is dealt with. This leads to another set of types, the feasts of Israel.

The great festivals¹

Now there are some who teach that there are seven Jewish feasts but this is not the emphasis of Scripture. They usually cite: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First-fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The feast days and fast days can be segregated into a number of items; the seven above but also the Sabbath, Sabbath year, Year of Jubilee, New Moon, Dedication, and Purim. However, Scripture itself denominates three great feasts,

Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. Deut 16:16

Exodus 23:14-17 also shows clearly that there were only three feasts:

Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year. You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the Feast of Harvest, [Weeks/Pentecost] the first-fruits of your labours which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering [Tabernacles] at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labours from the field. Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

On these days all labour was to cease. There was no 'Feast' of Trumpets, the Bible never calls this a feast but proclaims the blowing of trumpets during all the feasts. The Passover is also a part of the feast of Unleavened Bread. There were occasions of holy convocation [*miqra*, Heb: 'a calling together, 'assembly'] which were not feasts. Trumpets and the Day of Atonement are stated to be convocations but not feasts (Lev 23:24, 27; Num 29:1). Also feasts were times of gladness (Num 10:10) but the Day of Atonement was solemn, a 'day of affliction', a fast, and certainly not joyful (Lev 23:27). A fast is not a feast. The offering of first-fruits was performed in two specific feasts: of the wheat harvest at Weeks (Pentecost, Ex 34:22) and of 'the first of the first-fruits' at the Passover (Ex 23:19, 34:26).

¹ I incorporate material here from my paper, 'The Feasts of Israel'.

The three feasts were:

1. *The Feast of Unleavened Bread.* The Passover was the start of this feast. The First-fruits (Lev 23:9-14) were offered on the day after the Passover Sabbath and were part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
2. *The Feast of Weeks.* Seven weeks after Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:15-16). Pentecost was the Greek name given to this feast much later when Hellenising influences spread in Israel.
3. *The Feast of Tabernacles.* This was prepared by the blowing of Trumpets on the first day of the 7th month and the Day of Atonement on the 10th day. The Feast proper began on the 15th day. The Day of Atonement was not a feast but a fast which included repentance for sin.

The reason for only three is also found in their fulfilment. The feasts were fulfilled in the following ways:

1. *Redemption accomplished:* The Feast of Passover was when the Passover lamb was sacrificed and was the day of the Crucifixion (15 Nisan). The Feast of Unleavened Bread thus speaks of Christ accomplishing our salvation by sacrifice. He was God's First Fruits and the First-born of a new creation.
2. *Redemption applied:* The Feast of Weeks refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit who applies salvation.
3. *Redemption consummated:* The Feast of Tabernacles in the 7th month speaks of fulness and perfection and refers to the Second Coming of Christ, the consummation of salvation.

Thus the great festivals of Israel, pictures of salvation in Christ, are three in number.

Sin

The first consideration in evaluating the decree of salvation is to explain the need for it.

Sin entered the world through the fall of Adam and necessitated the work of salvation to deal with the damage to both man and the natural world. Though there are many ways in which sin could be analysed and dissected,² there are three chief aspects which summarise the effects of sin in man.

Alienation from God

The first effect is that it alienates man from God. When God made Adam, man was able to commune immediately with God in the garden; fellowship was based upon unity. Man was in the likeness of God, in holiness and righteousness, and was able to fellowship with God without barriers. Sin ruined this and caused a separation between man and God, symbolised by the expulsion from Eden and the guarding of the way back with a fiery sword. God and man were now enemies.

Moral corruption

The second effect is that man became a polluted vessel. Every intent of his heart was evil continually (Gen 6:5) and his best righteous work was like a filthy rag (Isa 64:6). Nothing a man could do was good in God's eyes (Ps 14:3) and he could never change his ways (Jer 13:23).

Condemnation

As a result of his moral corruption man is guilty before God and worthy of condemnation leading to divine wrath and judgment. Everything man does merely adds to his condemnation.

² See my paper, 'The Problem of Sin'.

These three items comprise the chief effects of sin, which lead to three chief factors of salvation.

The divine answer to sin

Reconciliation

The answer to man's alienation from God is reconciliation. The blood of Christ has brought us near to God and dealt with all the obstacles to fellowship.

Sanctification

Through the processes of sanctification, God deals with the pollution of sin in our whole being. Through the blood of Christ we are made holy to God.

Justification

Finally, the blood of Christ also results in our being pronounced and declared as righteous in God's eyes. This is achieved by the sins of the believer being imputed to Christ and the righteous obedience of Christ to the law being imputed to the believer. There is no longer any condemnation to the believer in Christ.

Thus the divine fixing of the problem of sin, through the blood of Christ, has three chief features to answer to the three chief problems of sin.

Redemption and salvation

To be redeemed from sin man needs a number of dealings from God; thus we see many items of doctrine in systematic theologies regarding the nature of salvation (e.g. regeneration, reconciliation, propitiation, justification, adoption, sanctification, preservation, glorification, etc.). However, all these detailed subjects can be collated into three chief matters under the headings, redemption and salvation.

Redemption

Redemption is the ransoming, or buying back, of man from the claims of the law and justice. This is the language of slavery, describing man as a slave to sin who needs to be set free.

There are three aspects to redemption:

1. REDEMPTION IS ACCOMPLISHED by the work of Christ on our behalf. The blood of Christ is the payment which secures redemption for the elect.
2. REDEMPTION IS APPLIED by the Holy Spirit to the elect in time so that they are actually made free from the effects of sin as a slave master.
3. REDEMPTION IS CONSUMMATED at the Second Coming when all the benefits of it are instantly and fully made available to the believer as a result of the transformation of his body to be like Christ's.

Salvation

Salvation is also sub-divided into three chief categories, though it can be analysed as a large number of components.

1. Salvation is applied to the believer to constitute him with a HEAVENLY STANDING before God. This incorporates several features, such as: regeneration, justification, adoption, and definitive sanctification, which all work together and flow into one another. As a result of these the believer is enabled to sit with Christ in the heavenly places and commune with God. He can come boldly to God's throne standing in the righteousness of Christ and legally made clean before God.

2. The earthly STATE of the believer is different to his heavenly legal standing. The believer stands holy in the courts of heaven but on the earth the believer is subject to temptation and to the lusts of his old nature which lead him to sin. It is the gradual work of the Holy

Spirit in him which enables the believer to gradually (but never fully in this life) overcome the power of sin in his person. The state of the believer is his current earthly experience.

3. The future GLORIFICATION of the believer involves the transformation of his body into a new, spiritual, resurrection body to accompany his new nature within his spirit. It is accomplished at the end when Christ returns and when the process of salvation is consummated and the believer is fitted for glory.

Thus we can see that both redemption and salvation can be sub-divided into three vital features.

The plan of salvation – the decree of God

God is totally sovereign and everything that happens is under divine control to secure a specific purpose. Nothing that happens is outside God's plan and sovereign control, including the free will of man, and this is the outworking of the eternal decree of God to create a world and populate it with men, allow them to sin and then choose some for eternal life. All of God's plan is to secure a demonstration of his perfect and holy nature. The elect are a testimony to God's grace, mercy and love while the reprobate in hell are a testimony to God's wrath and hatred against sin, his justice and his holiness.

Now the plan of God can be considered from three angles:

The heavenly decree in eternity past: is the eternal plan of the Father to secure a testimony to his glory in a material world populated by human beings. This plan incorporated knowledge of all that would occur in history and the decree to deal with sin through Christ. The source of a believer's salvation lies in this decree whereby God elected those who would benefit from the atonement of Christ.

The accomplishment on earth: is the working out of this decree in Christ so that the salvation of the elect is assured and God's kingdom developed. It is where the work of Christ is also applied by the operations of the Spirit to produce a church of elect persons who are the body of Christ on earth. He also provides power to deal with the ensuing warfare between God's enemies and his church.

The final glory: is the consummation of the work of Christ and the plan of God in the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth and the transformation of the elect by the provision of a new body. It includes the establishment of the elect with Christ in glory upon the new earth, where heaven and earth meet in harmony, but also the establishment of hell outside this realm to be a place of eternal punishment for the devil, his angels and all sinners.

Thus we see three aspects to the plan of God.

Sanctification

Sanctification has to be applied to the whole man; this means that his spirit, soul and body must be made holy.

May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess 5:23

This means that there must be three aspects to the work of sanctification; and indeed there are. Sanctification can also be analysed according to its impact in time: thus we see that there is a past effect, a present effect and a future effect. These three tenses of sanctification apply specifically to the three organs of man's nature.

The past tense of sanctification – the immediate cleansing of the human spirit

The Bible makes it very clear that there is a past definitive sanctification (sometimes called legal, positional or judicial sanctification). This is seen in:

To those who are sanctified [perfect tense] in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints. 1 Cor 1:2

And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified [aorist tense]. 1 Cor 6:11

There are many other verses like this where Scripture tells us that a sanctification occurred in the past, hence believers are called ‘saints’ despite their continuing sinful acts. This is a divine act different from justification, whereby we are legally declared righteous in heaven, but it occurs at the same time enabling us to sit with Christ in heaven.

The part of us that sits with Christ in heaven, the part of us that communes with God in heaven, is our spiritual nature. When a man is born again it is his spirit which is resurrected from death, nothing else changes. His soul (will, emotions, intellect) remains, organically, exactly the same and his body does not alter. The believer is given a new heart and a new spirit. The heart is in the spirit and is the gateway to the soul; these are both changed by regeneration.

The new nature, in the heart/spirit is made in holiness, in the likeness of God, and is where God dwells in us by the Spirit of God (Eph 4:24). The spirit has to be cleansed for all this to happen and this is what definitive sanctification does.

Thus there are three aspects to definitive sanctification: the provision of a new spirit and a new heart, plus the impartation of a new nature which resides in the heart, a nature like Christ’s.

The present tense of sanctification – the process of cleansing the soul

Progressive sanctification is the process of making the elect soul more holy. This is done over the believer’s lifetime as the result of the Holy Spirit’s work in the person. He applies the work of Christ to the believer enabling him to put off the old nature, more and more, and to put on the new as a result of having died and having been raised with Christ. This itself involves dealing with sins committed by grieving, confession and repentance, and learning how to deny one’s self and choose Christ. This is the renewing of the mind leading to gradual transformation (Rm 12:1-2; 2 Cor 3:18).

Thus progressive sanctification also has three aspects: it is the gradual transformation of the soul – that is the will, the emotions and the mind. This is never completed in this life until Christ returns.

The future tense of sanctification - the immediate transformation of the body

The future tense occurs at the end, at the coming of Christ, when the process of salvation is consummated and finalised. This involves the transformation of the body into a new spiritual body like Christ’s; the removal of the old nature; and the completion of progressive sanctification. At this point the believer is fully sanctified in spirit soul and body, ready for dwelling on a new earth where earth and heaven are harmonised. Heaven has become material as well as spiritual.

Thus glorification, or the final aspect of sanctification, also has three aspects: it is the removal of the old nature, the provision of a new spiritual body and the final cleansing of progressive sanctification.

Our enemies

Though there is one enemy of God’s people, he works through three separate instruments. In doing this he varies his temptations and attacks through means targeted to individuals

who are weaker a particular area. Thus the work of sanctification is us has to enable us to deal with all three areas. The battle of the Christian is on three fronts.

The world

Anyone who loves the world is an enemy of God; thus the world is a great temptation for the believer. I have seen professing Christians lose their faith completely as a result of falling in love with the world. The world is the enticement of sin through the fleshly temptations prevalent in the world's system. Thus it has many different types of temptation: it tempts with money, power, fornication, indulgence, greed, hedonism, gluttony and so forth. All these reach out like tentacles from the world.

In the OT the world as our enemy is typified by Egypt, and Pharaoh in particular, but also by Babylon.

The flesh

The flesh is the human person, or soul, acting upon the desires of the old nature. When the believer submits to the command of the old man, he becomes flesh. The flesh is the summation of the Adamic life in all its sin according to our own personal predilections. My fleshly weaknesses will not be the same as yours. The temptations of the enemy through our flesh are very difficult to deal with since they appear to come from deep within us. This is unlike the temptations from the world which come from outside us.

In the OT the temptations of the flesh are symbolised by those nations which were related to Israel and who harassed her, such as the Moabites and Ammonites (both descended from Lot).

The devil

The devil is the arch-enemy of God and the constant attacker of God's people. He uses both the temptations of the world and of the flesh to harass the Lord's people. He is said to throw fiery darts at the elect, and these usually come in the form of accusations because he is the accuser of the brethren. Guilt is a common form of attack. He is also the originator of all forms of deception used against the church, being the father of lies.

In the OT the devil is represented by the Canaanites, whom Israel was to completely destroy for the seriousness and depth of their sinful history in rebellion to God. These were idolaters who were thoroughly committed to pagan gods and barbaric practices, which included burning their own children as a sacrifice.

Man

Although man's nature could be broken down into a great many structures (skeletal, vascular, muscular, respiratory, nervous, organs, etc.) there are three chief organs which Scripture uses to describe man's nature: spirit, soul and body. This is called 'trichotomy'. There are many, especially Reformed, theologians who deny this and claim that man can only be divided into soul and body (dichotomy). However, this is a complete denial of Scripture which explicitly states that man is tripartite (1 Thess 5:23) and separately delineates 'spirit' and 'soul' throughout scripture (e.g. Zech 12:1; Ezek 18:4); even explicitly (Heb 4:12). In addition these theologians find themselves being continually forced to use both 'spirit' and 'soul' in their descriptions of doctrine since 'soul' clearly has reference to the human personality (such as thinking, feeling, choosing) while 'spirit' has reference to communion with God. God dwells in the human spirit (where the heart is) but cannot dwell in the human soul.

The human spirit

This comprises the facilities of spiritual communion, spiritual intuition and conscience. It is where God dwells in the believer and where the new man resides. This is the vessel of

God consciousness and it is where we communicate with God. The heart is the gateway of the spirit which communicates with the soul. It comprises of the conscience which is in the spirit and the higher mind of the soul. The new nature, where God dwells, is in the heart and this is a spiritual instrument.

The human spirit is symbolised in the Tabernacle by the Holy of Holies. The heart is symbolised by the Ark of the Covenant, where God dwelled. It was shrouded in darkness.

The soul

This comprises the emotions, the will and the intellect; it is the vessel of self-consciousness. It is the executive of the person and is where human personality is formed, being a compound of emotions, volition and mind. Through the soul we communicate to other humans.

The human soul is symbolised in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle where priestly ministry was conducted, going in and out from the outside, but was not visible to outsiders.

The body

Comprises the material structures of the person and is the vessel of worldly expression; it reflects the choices of the soul to communicate with the world.

The body is symbolised by the court of the Tabernacle, which was open to the outside elements and was visible to all.

Thus Scripture delineates the nature of man as three substances, spiritual, soulish and material which occupy the spirit, soul and body.

Christ – the Son of God

There are three significant manifestations of the Son of God in Scripture.

The Second Person

The first is his pre-incarnation existence as the Second person of the Trinity. In this form the Son is a spiritual being only but who, on occasion, took on the appearance of human flesh in order to appear to men (like Abraham) in theophanies.

Jesus

The second revelation of the Son of God is in his incarnation as Jesus the Messiah. In his incarnation the Son took on human flesh and thus had two natures within one person. In this human nature he was subject to human weakness and frailty just as any other man, but without sin. It was in this nature that the Son was able to be subject to death.

Christ Jesus

The third revelation of the Son of God is as Christ Jesus, the manifestation of Christ after the resurrection whereby the Son is both God and glorified man. The human nature of Jesus is resurrected from the dead by the power of God and raised as a glorious, spiritual new form of manhood; the firstborn of the new creation.

The offices of Christ

There are three chief offices used to describe the work of Christ: prophet, priest and king.

The church

The church is one; it is the body of Christ. However, the experience of the church is in three distinct stages.

The heavenly or invisible church

This is the congregation of saints who have finished their course on earth, who have died and who have gone to be with Christ in heaven. Though their earthly role is complete, they are not yet glorified with a spiritual body but are immaterial spirits in heaven (Jn 14:2-3; Rev 6:9-11) awaiting the resurrection.

The militant or visible church

This is the church on earth now, which is battling for the faith against the enemies of God.

The glorified church

This will be accomplished at the end when Christ returns. It is when the Lord brings the heavenly church with him in the clouds and then gathers up the church on earth to be with them (1 Thess 4:13-18). At this time both the heavenly church and the militant church are together transformed to have new bodies like Christ's (1 Jn 3:2). This church will then populate the new earth and fellowship with God for eternity.

The kingdom of God

Similarly to the church, because it is identifiable with it, the kingdom of God currently exists in three spheres.

Heavenly aspect

In heaven the kingdom of God, that is the reign of God as sovereign ruler, is perfect and full of glory. There is nothing in heaven which does not submit to the rule of God in Christ. Angels, seraphim and cherubim are all subject to God's rule and share in his glory in a reflected manner.

Present in part on earth now

On the earth now the kingdom of God is only seen where the rule of God is evidenced. This is primarily manifested in believers, i.e. the church, who submit to the reign of Christ in their lives. However, to a certain degree it is also evidenced in the way that nature obeys the commands given to it by God. When trees cleanse the air through photosynthesis they are submitting to God's purposes for trees.

However, for the most part everything in the world is reacting to sin in one way or another, both in nature and in the world of men. Where there is fellowship with sin there is no submission to God's law. Where there is no submission to God's law then there is no submitting to God's reign.

Where believers express the will of God in their personal lives, in their families and in their churches they are manifesting the rule of God and therefore the kingdom of God. Thus the expression of the kingdom on earth now is only partial and hidden.

Fully revealed in the new earth

The full expression of God's kingdom in a material form is only seen when the earth has been cleansed by fire and purified and heaven is placed upon it. When believers are given new spiritual, glorious bodies and occupy this new earth with Christ, then the kingdom is manifested in glory and fulness.

Ephesians

As a result of being shut up for two years under Roman guard in house arrest in Rome, Paul was able to meditate upon the truths of the Gospel and write to many churches without rushing around ministering from city to city in missionary activity. Thus it is here that Paul wrote his most sublime letters, containing the deepest spiritual truths of the New Testament: Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians.

It is generally regarded that Ephesians is the deepest of the three and the highpoint of Paul's writing ministry. It is here that Christ is presented in his glory and sovereignty as well as where our election is described with clarity and the church is demonstrated as being the body of Christ.

While Ephesians could be analysed in a number of ways, there are three chief themes which are brought to our attention. Different writers have expressed these differently, but they mean the same thing. One writer describes Ephesians as, 'The wealth, walk and warfare of the Christian' while another describes it under the title, 'Sit, walk, stand'.

Firstly, Ephesians brings to us the glory of being united with Christ and the greatness of his power in us. Paul gets so caught up in describing this glory that he piles up superlatives upon superlatives, making up compound words. He also spends most of chapter one (after the introduction) with just two very long sentences. In these Paul expounds the greatness of the privilege of being in Christ and what this means for us. The wealth of the Christian, in Christ, is truly a good description of the early part of Ephesians where the believer is seen as seated in Christ.

This is followed by Paul's instructions on how to walk in Christ with the necessary encouragement to walk worthy of Christ in every aspect of our lives. Whether it is in the church, or as parents, or as children, or as wives, or as husbands, or as slaves, we must walk according to the greatness of Christ and the grace which he supplies to us. The wealth that Christ gives us in his inheritance must result in walking worthy in our lives. The blessings in our spirit must work out through our persons.

Then Paul explains that in trying to walk worthy there will necessarily be a battle because we have an enemy, in the form of the devil, who seeks to ruin Christ's work. However, this battle is just another means of Christ being formed in us more perfectly. We treat this warfare as opportunities to put on Christ in this way and that way. The spiritual armour is just a detailed description of putting on Christ.

Thus we see the progress of Christian discipleship. First we must see the greatness of Christ and the fulness of all that he has done for us and has given us by lavishing his grace upon us. Then we must take care to walk properly, using the grace which God supplies in order to walk in the Spirit as Christ would have walked. Finally, this walking in the Spirit will result in conflict and battles against the enemy. However, this is just another way of growing in Christ and learning how to put Christ on in practise.

Thus, arguably, the most important part of the Bible, and that which describes our position in Christ, our walk in Christ and the spiritual battle, is delineated into three key parts.

Conclusion

Without any doubt the recurrence of the number three in the various aspects of the plan of salvation is striking, but this is entirely in accordance with the doctrine of the Trinity.

We could continue with this analysis, if we had time, by evaluating many other branches of empirical knowledge and human experience. For instance,

- Our experience in the material world is based upon three dimensions.
- Our human observation of the sky is chiefly based upon three great sources, or reflectors, of light: the sun, the moon and the stars.
- The physical composition of the universe is based upon space, matter and time and each of these is a tri-unity. Space is three-dimensional; time is past, present and future; matter is generated in energy, manifested through motion and experienced by

phenomena (e.g. light = energy generating light waves moving rapidly through space experienced in the seeing of light. The universe is, therefore, a trinity of trinities.³

- The branch of physics which is concerned with the nature of heat and its association with other forms of energy has its basis in the three laws of thermodynamics.
- The fundamental basis of grammar is morphology, syntax and semantics.
- Travelling anywhere involves distance, speed and time.
- All colours in printing with dyes, inks and paints are reduced to the inter-relationships of three colours: magenta, cyan blue and chrome yellow (primary colours). In printing and photography the superimposition of the three primary colours, together with black (made by a combination of all three), produce a full range of colours.
- Music is composed of melody, harmony and rhythm.
- A fire is a chemical reaction resulting from the (1) ignition of (2) combustible material (fuel) combining with (3) oxygen.
- Although the animal kingdom is usually classified under invertebrates and vertebrates, this is unbalanced since 97% of living animals are invertebrates. It is also illogical in that some animals (like sharks) are classified as vertebrates when they have no backbone but merely a cartilaginous structure. A more logical breakdown to the casual observer is into animals that predominantly fly, that predominantly swim and that predominantly walk on, or live under, the earth. Thus the natural habitat of earth, water and air, creates the best logical classification.
- In physical construction, the minimum structure that is able to maintain implicit strength, integrity and stability is a triangle. Thus a series of triangular components are used in the composition of much larger structures, such as bridges.
- The identity of people in society chiefly relates to their understanding of themselves, their relationship in submission to their parents and their relationships as head to their children.
- In most (if not all) walks of life in human industry a worker has a relationship of submission to a senior manager; a mission of personal accountability to himself and a position of managerial responsibility to those below his rank. In the case of a king (someone at the top of the tree) though he has no human being above him in rank, he is still accountable and in submission to God, the authority that put him in place. In the case of a menial worker with no human being under him in rank, he is still acting in a managerial role to those he serves in the community; thus a street cleaner has an implicit authority over kids in the street messing up his work by dropping litter.

The fact that God is a Trinity and that God created the world to be a reflection of his character makes it entirely logical that creation appears to involve many basic constituents which involve features in triplet form. It is certainly the case with Biblical doctrine.

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³ I acknowledge the work of Henry Morris in this bullet point.