

## Theology Simply Explained — WSC6 “Understanding Monotheistic Trinitarianism”

**Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 6—especially explaining how we must guard true monotheism, as we think about the God Who has revealed Himself, in Christ, as Triune.**

Q6. How many persons are there in the Godhead? ***There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.***

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))**

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Catechism question this week is number six. How many persons are there in the godhead? And the answer is, there are three persons in the godhead. The father, the son. And the holy ghost. And these three are one god. The same in substance. Equal in power. And glory.

So, last week when we had how many gods are there, And the answer was there is about one only the living and true. God, we actually spent Uh, much of The answer on that question. Making sure that we get this one only living in true. God correctly. Because there are many who call themselves monotheists, but they do not believe in the actual true god in the actual living.

God, And so, if you say there is about one only, Uh, this Statue of a woman. That is in the. The side room as you enter the house. You, of course, are a blasphemer. And you do not do much better. If you say, There is about one only and he is the muslims allah.

Or you say there is about one only and he is not jesus christ. Which the jews? Those who Um, professed judaism over against christianity do. All of that is idolatry. And so when we had there is about one only the living and true. God, one of the things that we emphasized was how this god has made himself known to us.

Not only in the creation. Which is the creation by the sun. Um, not only in the scriptures. Which are given to us. By the spirit of christ. And we're reminded of this. Yesterday in the class. One of the proof texts that was given was first peter one verse 2.

But if you go down to verse 11 of that chapter, you Find that the prophets by him. The lord gave us the old testament scriptures. Were carried along by the spirit. Not of god, generally does it? Say they're all though? That would have been fine to say the spirit of god or the spirit of the lord, but he very specifically says, the spirit Of christ.

And so god has made himself known to us and the creation which was created by the sun and the scripture. Uh, which came to us by the work of the spirit of christ, the spirit of the sun. But of course, god has made himself known Fully and finally, in the sun himself.

Which is. The point of the opening versus of the book of hebrews. So, the the question about, How many gods are there? We answered with respect, especially to the trinity. Because the father of the sun, and the holy spirit, Whom we know. Uh, in the lord, jesus christ is the one Uh, true and living god.

But now we have the question. How many persons are there in the godhead? And, Uh, it's clear that there are three persons in the godhead, because when he made himself known to us in christ, he made us known and made himself known to us in the sun. Who has?

Uh, fully revealed to us the father. Not only by teaching us to call him father and to know him as christ's father and by our adoption in christ. Also as our father Uh, but making it clear for instance to fill up, that he who has seen the sun has seen the father and that there was nothing more of the father to be seen.

Than that, which we may see. Uh, in the sun. In john 15. So He has made himself. Uh known to us in the sun through whom we know the father and the son. Through whom and from whom, We know the holy spirit. Excuse us, excuse me. And so the spirit of the lord whom we know, and can see in various ways in the Old Testament already.

And it is a person. By things like his Brooding. Um, Over the creation, even from the very beginning. We know him especially as a person when the lord jesus describes him to us as another paraclete. Another one. Who was called alongside? All believers. As jesus in his earthly ministry was called alongside.

That's the meaning of the word paraclete. It was called alongside his disciples. His apostles. And so, as the lord jesus tells us about How the holy spirit is going to interact with believers and as he's preparing his disciples. Um, for himself. Physically to remove by the ascension to the third heaven.

Lord, jesus emphasizes the personality, the, the personal. Aspect quality. Character. Of. The third person of the godhead, god. Of the holy spirit. And so it has not surprising to us. That we read about the love of the spirit and the fellowship of the spirit and grieving the spirit in the rest of the new testament.

It's very consistent. With the way, the Lord jesus talks about the holy spirit as a person and, of course he should Because, Um, not only in his divine nature from all eternity. Has. The sun. Known and loved and adored and enjoyed, and had fellowship with the father and the spirit.

But also now, even in his human nature, as he grew in wisdom, and as he grew in favor with god, one of the things that The lord jesus, and his human nature would do then. And did do Is growing in his knowledge of and love to and delight in god, the holy spirit as a person.

And so, This is something that as the spirit conforms us to christ, we are going to grow in Knowing the spirit as a person having fellowship with him. Knowing his love to us and having loved to him as we have also love to the father, of course and love to the sun.

But so also, we should have love unto the spirit and be reverential towards him and be careful not to bless him. This is one of the weaknesses of our age in which the doctor and the holy spirit is so poorly taught. And poorly believed, is that Christians will speak of who the holy spirit is and what the holy spirit.

Does and has done in ways that they would never do with the father. And with the sun, they would never take something dubious that they decided or something dubious that they spoke, or something dubious that they did and attribute it to the father or to the son. Uh, but one of the The results, the symptoms of a deficiency of love for the spirit and reverence for the spirit in.

In common christian interaction is by attributing to the holy spirit dubious things by treating the holy spirit as one who Exists primarily for Um, impressing us. With sensational activities rather than the living god. Who made us? And who has redeemed us and is redeeming us. Um, But as we are conformed to christ, we will more and more just like our savior perfectly does.

Uh, love and know. God, the holy spirit. But one thing that we must do, then when we recognize that The one true god is the one who has revealed to us in the sun. The one whose name, the the sun into whom we are baptized The god, he places upon us, the name of the living god and that name singular.

Is father, son, and holy spirit. One of the things that we must do then is emphasize that these three who are three persons And each of whom love us. And each of whom we love. That these three are yet. One god not three gods plural and that's Where the bulk of the language in the catechism question is spent There are three persons in the godhead to the father of the son and the holy ghost.

I guess maybe it's 50 50 or so. So, maybe not bulk of the language and these three. Our one god now is very important, then That we distinguish these two. Uh, phrases that follow the same in substance, not similar and substance. There is not. You know, a third of the god substance in the father and a third of the god substance in the sun, and a third of the god's substance in the spirit.

The living god is one. Pure entire simple. And he said, well, i can't understand that. Well. Shocker. We dirt creatures. Can't understand. The the living god but he is one God. And, Four thousand years. He emphasized his oneness. To the creatures whom he had made in his own image.

Before. Uh, finally and fully revealing to himself, revealing himself. Excuse me. Before, finally, and fully revealing himself to us in the sun. So that he could say of all of the displays of himself that precede it Even glorious displace. Like what Moses saw in the mountain or israel saw.

At the inauguration of Of the tabernacle or what israel saw. On the The eighth day of the priest's ordination. Aaron, and his four sons seem to be two. Or what isaiah saw. In isaiah, chapter 6, or what is ezekiel saw in the vision with the chariots? Above all of those.

None of those had been seeing god like those who saw the lord jesus by faith. Like you who see? The lord jesus by faith. And we know it's by faith and not by sight. There are many Who did not see him as the only begotten of the father? There are many who did not see him as full.

Of grace and truth of steadfast love and faithfulness. There are many who physically saw him to whom the seeing of god in him. The beholding of god. And jesus christ, that is described in John 1, it doesn't apply to them. And so, when you by faith know jesus and see jesus by the eye of faith, not by the eye of sight.

As the only begotten of the father. Who is full of steadfast, love and faithfulness. The holy spirit is giving you a clearer and fuller. Glimpse. Of the one, true and living god. Of the triune god. Than anyone had. Until the lord jesus christ came, which is why the book of hebrews opens by Comparing unfavorably the many times.

And in many ways that god spoke or revealed himself to the fathers as unfavorable in comparison to the last word, the final word, the full word in these last days, he has spoken to us by his son. Now, does jesus have apostles and prophets through whom he He gave the scriptures.

Absolutely. Does he address us even now when the scriptures are correctly, preached in the power and by the help of the holy spirit and believingly heard preached in the power and by the help of the holy spirit. Yes. But jesus himself. Is the full and final revelation of the triune god.

Uh, to us. And so it's important that we see that this is one god not three Even though he exists from all eternity, in three persons, and not one the same and substance, not similar in substance one, Substance. Um, that is That is shared the father, the son and the spirit.

Um, Being one god. And then therefore, a corollary is very important. Equal in power and glory. So that as the scripture describes, The sun has begotten of the father. Of course he is eternally, begotten. His infinity turn on unchangeable. The begetting of the sun is not something that begins.

Is something that is and god gives us language would by which to understand the relation of the father to the son. So the father has the personal property that which belongs to the aspect of his person to beget and the sun has the personal property that which belongs properly to his person to be begotten.

And yet, we must not violate. Any of the other truth that the bible teaches us teaches us about god in order to try to understand the begetting. Her to try to understand. The being begotten. By the sun. And so he is eternally begotten to us. What does that look like in time continually begotten?

Sure. But we must be careful not to go beyond the language of the scripture then. There was no time at which the beginning began. There's no time at which the proceeding. Began. Um which the spirit is described as being sent forth by the father and being sent forth by the sun and and so There are personal properties of the father and of the sun that they send the spirit.

Then there's a personal property of the spirit that he is sent by the father and that he is sent by the sun. And that's as far as we speak. Because that's as far as the scripture tells us, And you, you walk all the way up to the edge. Over the bible tells you and you don't take us step further.

Why? Because as, as calvin. So Uh, wisely, put it if you walk up to the edge of the abyss where you have scripture to stand upon and you take one more step you fall into the abyss, So, do not go past. Uh, the scripture in those things. Um, More pertinent to our own time.

And this is something that isn't just a function of our of our day, but is an error that comes out, of course, of the heart under the mind of sinners, which is where all these errors come from there are those who think of the thought of the sun, as being less in authority.

Than the father. That there is this submission within the godhead. The sun learned obedience, when he added humanity to himself, As a man. He does. What is appropriate to the nature of a man? Including things like not knowing a day or an hour, including things like saying nevertheless not my will, but thine be be done.

Jesus has two wills. He has a divine will. That is an appropriate aspect of being god. And there are not multiple wills, and god he has one god. And so there is one, will that is the same. Her father, son and holy spirit, having the same will Um, But jesus also has a human, will it is It's actually an early church, heresy called the monothelliteracy.

And you can hear the New Testament, Greek word fellow for i will. And that word monothellite to say that there's only one will in jesus. No, he is fully gone and fully man. So he has a divine will and a human will Uh, but There is only one will in god, and if you have any form of submission within the godhead, the sun, submitting, to the father, or the spirits submitting, to the father, and to the son, then you introduce multiple wills into god.

And what you have is not one true and living god, and three persons, but three gods of similar nature. Um, which is of course a blasphemy and is against Uh, what the bible teaches us? So they are equal in power and glory. Um, They, there is not a hierarchy of power within the godhead.

There is not a hierarchy of authority within the godhead. There is not a hierarchy of glory. Within the godhead. Uh, we are to Reverence, and Uh, worship and love the spirit. Just as much as we are the sun just as much as we are. Uh, to do onto the father.

For they are equal. In power and glory, they are equal. In their worthiness.

So, they Question again. How many persons are there in the godhead? And the answer is. There are three persons in the godhead, the father, the son. And the holy ghost. And these three are one. God, the same and substance. Equal. In power and glory.