

The Triune God**Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 8**

1. WHY WE CONFESS THE TRIUNE GOD: The New Testament makes _____ what was already _____ in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament illumines what is taught in the New Testament.
 - a. The oneness of God is clear in the _____ from the beginning, and Israel's confession of faith taught and defended that _____ about God.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deuteronomy 6:4)
 - b. The _____ of Jesus as a public event in real history vindicated all that he _____ and _____ as Israel's Messiah.

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (1 Corinthians 15:3-5)
 - c. Jesus clearly said and did things that indicated his deity – things that resulted in the _____ of blasphemy, and that an Israelite would _____ be inclined to accept apart from Christ's _____ vindication in his resurrection.

⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." ⁵⁹ So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59)
 - d. In the light of that vindication of Christ, something implicit in the Old Testament became much more clear: there was always a kind of complexity within Israel's confession of the oneness of God. There was a three-fold aspect in both _____ and _____: God – Word – Spirit.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)
2. A REVEALED MYSTERY: We confess and defend what God _____ in his Word, and we do so with both boldness and _____.
 - a. Old and New Testament _____ and proclaim "three distinct persons."
 - b. That three-ness of God _____ contradicts the one-ness of God: "only one divine being" – "one, true, eternal God."

"At the same time, we should, in the use of these terms, always remember that they are of human origin and therefore limited, defective, fallible. The church fathers always acknowledged this. For example, they held that the term persons which was used to designate the three ways of existence in the Divine Being did not do justice to the truth in the matter but served as an aid towards maintaining the truth and cutting off error. The word was chosen, not because it was accurate in every respect, but because no other and better was to be found. In this matter again the word is far behind the thought, and the thought is far behind the actuality. Although we cannot preserve the actuality in any but this inadequate form, we may never forget that it is the reality itself and not the word that counts. In the dispensation of glory other and better expressions will certainly be laid upon our lips." Herman Bavinck, *The Wonderful Works of God*, 140-141.
 - c. The tri-unity of God certainly involves _____, but not irrationality; indeed, it is satisfying to both _____ and _____.
 - d. As we confess in the Athanasian Creed, the proper response to all of this is _____: "So in everything... the unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, is to be worshipped."