TRINITARIAN ONENESS

Distinction ← Dialectic ← Oneness

Multiplicity, plurality, complexity
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
co-equal, co-essential, co-eternal
Jesus declared:
“I and the Father are one” (Jn. 10:30).
Jewish leaders rejected as blasphemy against monad
God.
Early Christians forced to consider how such a oneness
could be explained.

Ontological Trinity

Theophilus of Antioch (175)
Referred to Father, Son, Holy Spirit as trias - triad or
threesomeness.
Tertullian of Carthage (160-230)
First to use Latin trinitas - triunity or trinity
What are the three?
Distinctions, realities, natures, particulars, persons?
Council of Nicaea (325) identified as “three personae”

What is the one?
Substance, nature, essence, being?
Athanasius (296-373) explained that the three
Persons were essentially and consubstantially the “same
being” - homoousion.
Council of Nicaea (325) accepted homoousion as orthodox
statement of God’s oneness.

Essential Oneness

Operational Trinity

Administrative and Functional
Distinction
Paternity, filiation, procession
The Father sent the Son. the Son emptied Himself,
the Spirit is joined with the spirit of man.

Relational Oneness

Singular, simplicity, unity
One God - Deut. 6:4; Mk. 12:29; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6;
I Tim. 2:5
Monotheism
Trinitarian Monotheism
Trinity - Trinity - three-in-one

Polytheism - many gods
Tritheism - three gods

Subordinationism
Son and Spirit subordinated to Father
as second-class deities

Arianism (Arius-250-336)
Not co-equal, co-essential persons.
Son made by the Father.
Spirit proceeded from the Father.
Thus Son and Spirit are
ontologically inferior to the Father,
as demi-gods.
anomoousion - “not same being”
heteroousion - “different being”
Semi-Arians - Son and Spirit are
homoousion - “like or similar
being”

Social Trinity
Divine committee

Single integer
Mathematical oneness

Monad Monotheism
(singular, unextended unit of one)
Judaism, Islam, Jehovah’s Witnesses

Monistic Monotheism
(singular, comprehensive extension
in all things)
“Only one Person in the universe”
“God is all in all”
“God only”

Monarchianism
Impersonal primacy of God the
Father

Modalism - Sabellianism
One God without distinction,
revealed in 3 modes, manifestatins,
forms or roles.

Unitarianism

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