

The Trinity and the Incarnation

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Date: 11 December 2011

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[0 : 00] Deuteronomy 6.4 is referred to as the Shema among the Jews. If the nation of Israel were to have a motto, that would be it.

That one phrase more succinctly and directly communicates the position of Israel in relation to Jehovah God more than anything else.

It is the Jew who is characterized in the Old Testament as being primarily monotheistic. That simply means the belief in and the worship of one God.

Virtually all of the pagan nations around them, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Hivites, and all of the otherites, they were all polytheistic. They all worshipped multiple gods, as did later the Romans and the Greeks.

But Judaism has always been characterized as monotheistic. And in the world's population, you might say they stood out like a sore thumb. And this was the verse that is so frequently referred to among the Jews, whether ancient or modern.

[1 : 19] It is Deuteronomy 6.4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. It has been said that when a Jewish baby is born into a Hebrew family, usually the first words they learn are mama and dada.

And then the next thing they are to learn is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. That is referred to as the Shema. And while we're talking about the verse, I might just point out to you that the word for one there, in Deuteronomy 6.4, it represents a compound unity.

The Lord is one, and it actually infers a plurality in the oneness. It is precisely the same word that is used in the Hebrew when the text says, And for this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and be joined unto his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh.

Well, we know that when a husband and wife become such, they are married, they do not become one person.

They are still two separate entities. But nonetheless, there is a union of some kind that is mystical and wonderful, whereby the two have a commonality.

[2 : 52] There is a oneness to the two. And that is precisely the same word that is used in Deuteronomy 6.4, and it indicates, of course, that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

And we'll be focusing on that in this particular session. More than anything else, Christmas is all about incarnation.

It isn't about lights and trees and Santa and all the rest of it. It is about incarnation. An incarnation is the enfleshment of deity that adds to it humanity.

This is God becoming a man. Now, right at the outset, let me explain something. It is not God the Father becoming man.

He never was. He never will be. It is God the Son becoming man. It was the second member of the Trinity that took upon him humanity, human flesh, and was born in Bethlehem.

[4 : 11] The incarnation follows in importance closely after creation itself as regards the stunning operations and activity of God.

What we are talking about is God becoming a man, taking upon him the form of a human being, a servant made in the likeness of man.

John tells us, and the Word, which is in reference to Christ as the Logos, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. In speaking of the operations and activities of God, we must address the specific roles of deity and how they were assigned to its various members, because each member of the triune Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, works in complete congruence and cooperation with the other members.

There is no rivalry. There is no jealousy. There is no competition. There is nothing but infinite, internal love and devotion that each member has for the others.

[5 : 31] There is no superiority in the Trinity. They are co-equal and co-eternal. Using the term, various members of deity must bring us to an appreciation of God's triune nature.

And when we talk about the operations and activity of God, we are involving the Trinity. We at Grace Bible Church are unapologetically committed to the Trinitarian concept of the one true God. And I would be the first to acknowledge and admit that this is very often misunderstood, not only by those who are not Christians, it is frequently misunderstood even by those who are Christians and who will one day be with the Lord.

I want to begin by sharing with you some of the comments, and it is an extensive quote, but it is, I feel, fully justifiable from the volume on theology and lectures in systematic theology by Dr. H.C. Thiessen.

And I would invite your careful attention. I will do my best to read the material and then briefly offer some content as I see fit, and we'll be ad-libbing a little bit, but this is really very, very important stuff.

[7 : 05] This has to do with the unity of God. The unity of God means that there is but one God and that the divine nature is undivided and indivisible.

That there is one God is the great truth of the Old Testament. And we just shared that with you from Deuteronomy, but you could appeal to 1 Kings 8.60 to Isaiah 45.5.

The same truth is frequently taught in the New Testament, the idea of one God, in Mark 12.29, John 17.3, 1 Corinthians 8.4-6, and 1 Timothy 2.5.

Now I know I'm giving these too fast for anybody to look up, but I just want to insert them in the record and for people who are listening to this by way of recording, they can look them up at their laser if they choose to do so.

There can be, in other words, Dr. Thiessen says, but God is not merely one. He is the only God as such.

[8 : 17] He is unique. There can be only one infinite and perfect being. To postulate two or more infinite beings is illogical and inconceivable.

That the divine nature is undivided and indivisible is intimated in Deuteronomy 6.4, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

God does not consist of parts, nor can he be divided into parts. His being is simple. Now remember, we're talking about one God.

Well then, where do you get Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? They are persons who constitute the one God. There is a difference between personhood and Godhood.

God is one. The persons who make up the Godhead consist of three. That's where the difficulty arises. And I trust that it will become more simple as we move on.

[9 : 24] God's being is simple, numerically one, free from compositions. Man's is compound, having both a material and an immaterial part.

But God is spirit and is not susceptible of any such division. This unity is, however, not inconsistent with the conception of the Trinity.

For a unity is not the same as a unit. A unit is marked by mere singleness. The unity of God allows for the existence of personal distinctions in the divine nature, while at the same time recognizing that the divine nature is numerically and eternally one.

Unity does imply that the three persons of the Trinity are not separate essences within the divine essence.

Many sects and cults have broken with the historical Christian faith at this point by failing to accept the doctrine of three persons but one essence.

[10 : 42] And immediately we say, of course, well, how can this be? The way it can be is because we are talking about and speaking of the existence of one on a higher plane than that of finite humans.

It ought not to come as a surprise to you that the infinite God has characteristics about himself that are completely different from yours.

Many people make the mistake into thinking that God is just like a man only he's bigger and stronger and smarter. That doesn't even begin to tell the tale.

There are similarities between God and man because he created man in his likeness and in his image. So there are commonalities between the creator and the creature but there are also vast dissimilarities.

There are things about the almighty that are completely apart from anything finite or human. So please eliminate from your thinking the idea that God is like a human only bigger smarter and stronger.

[12:01] There is so much more involved than that. The doctrine of the Trinity is not a truth of natural theology but of revelation.

Reason may show us the unity of God but the doctrine of the Trinity comes from direct revelation. Where in the world would you get the idea of one God subsisting in three persons from anything you see in nature?

I do not think that could be concluded. So we embrace the doctrine of the Trinity solely because it is a product of divine revelation.

It is in the scriptures throughout Old and New Testament. Granted it is not explained and laid out to our satisfaction so that we can say oh I see I get it now.

No you don't. No you don't. And neither do I. Why? Because there are things about God that you just don't get and you never will get and even though you will be with him for eternity you still won't get him.

[13:12] Because we will never take on the characteristic of infinite being. And God will never be diminished of the characteristic of his infinity.

There will always be that great gulf that separates the creature from the creator. We'll never escape that. That's one of the things that makes God God. Dr. Thieson continues.

Though the term Trinity does not occur in the Bible it had a very early usage in the church. Now you would be surprised that some people are so narrow minded that that ends the issue for them right there.

Well if the word Trinity isn't in the Bible I don't want anything to do with it. It can't be biblical. Well please remind these people that the word Bible isn't in the Bible either.

The word Trinity is a compound word that comes from TRI meaning three and unity meaning one.

[14:20] So you put them together and you get three in one. That's the meaning of the word Trinity. It is a marriage of the word tri and unity.

So God is one subsisting in three persons. He is one essence. He is one God not three gods.

This is the great misunderstanding of Islam. And if you've ever talked to any of the Islamic persuasion Chill worldview of the God Config they are lie and are doing it deliberately or they themselves are ignorant and they teach it.

That Christians worship three gods and they believe that we believe that God the Father had a sexual relationship or sexual intercourse with Mary the Virgin and produce Jesus the God-man. That is blasphemy. That is so far from the truth, I can't tell you how far it is. We do not know how the Spirit of God implanted a seed in the womb of the Virgin Mary that grew in her womb as the babe of Bethlehem and was born as Jesus the Messiah.

[15:52] We don't have a clue how God the Holy Spirit did that. But as the angel Gabriel told Joseph, who was ready to put Mary away because he knew he wasn't the father of this baby that she is expecting, and it wasn't his child, and the angel said, Fear not, Joseph, to take unto thee Mary your espoused wife, for that holy thing which shall be born of her is the Son of God.

It is the power of the highest overshadowing you, and that holy thing will be the Son of God. And you will name his name Jesus. He shall save his people from their sins.

May I continue with Dr. Thiessen. In Christian theology, the term Trinity means that there are three eternal distinctions in the one divine essence, known respectively as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

These three distinctions are three persons, and one may speak of the tri-personality of God. We worship the triune God.

The Athanasian Creed expresses the Trinitarian belief thus, We worship one God in the Trinity, and the Trinity in unity.

[17:18] We distinguish among the persons, that is, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but we do not divide the substance. It goes on to say, The entire three persons are co-eternal and co-equal with one another, so that we worship complete unity in Trinity, and Trinity in unity.

The doctrine of the Trinity must be distinguished from both tritheism, tritheism is simply another compound word, tri means three, theism means God, put them together and you get three gods. That is not Christianity. That's the kind of Christianity that Islamists and others accuse us of holding, but historically has never held.

Tritheism is unacceptable, and that is the worship of three gods. And it must be determined, distinguished from Sabalianism.

Tritheism, or tritheism, denies the unity of the essence of God and holds to the three distinct gods. The only unity that it recognizes is the unity of purpose and endeavor.

[18 : 35] God is a unity of essence, as well as of purpose and endeavor. The three persons are consubstantial. Sabalianism, which was another ism that was taught by some of the cults, held to a trinity of revelation, but not of nature.

It taught that God as Father is the creator and lawgiver, as Son is the same God incarnate who fulfills the office of Redeemer, and as Holy Spirit is the same God in the work of regeneration and sanctification.

In other words, Sabalianism taught a modal trinity as distinguished from an ontological trinity. Modalism speaks of a threefold nature of God in the same sense in which a man may be an artist, a teacher, a friend, or as one may be a father, a son, and a brother.

But this is in reality a denial of the doctrine of the trinity. For these are not three distinctions in the essence, but three qualities or relationships in one and the same person.

So Sabalianism is out. That's the idea that there is one God, and sometimes he functions as a father, sometimes he functions as a son, sometimes he functions as the Holy Spirit.

[20 : 06] In the same way that you, as an individual, may be a husband, sometimes you act in a husbandly role, you may also be a brother, and sometimes you act in a brotherly role, and you may be a father, and then you act in a fatherly role.

That is not a description of the triune God. This is one God wearing three different hats, and he becomes this when the need requires it. Then he changes his hat and becomes this when the need...

No, no, no, no. That isn't it at all. There is but one essence subsisting in three gods. To be sure, the doctrine of the Trinity is a great mystery.

It may appear to some as an intellectual puzzle or contradiction. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity, mysterious as it may seem, is not an outgrowth of speculation, but of revelation.

What has God revealed about this doctrine in his word? And he has revealed plenty. Let me just say this up front so it can be germinating in your minds as I read it.

[21 : 24] Throughout Scripture, Old Testament as well as New, the case is made crystal clear for God the Father, for the Father being God.

An equal case is made for the Son being God, as well as the Holy Spirit being God.

And when you add them up, you get three gods. No, you don't! You get three persons. One God. How can we square this?

How can we say that God, the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God, but there are not three gods?

And Christianity adamantly denies that. We try to make it a matter of simple mathematics, and when you do, it will not compute.

[22 : 25] Rather than think in terms of one, plus one, plus one, equals three, you need to think in terms of one, times one, times one, equals one.

That's the Trinity in unity. It is interesting that God uses plural pronouns.

Now, let me give you some examples about this. I won't ask you to turn to them for time's sake, because it will be more expeditious to just keep right on moving.

God uses plural pronouns. What shall we say to this? Genesis 1.26. Where the scriptures record God saying, let us make man in our image.

And 3.22. And the Lord God said, behold, the man is become as one of us.

[23 : 43] What is this? The language is there. The Hebrew is quite clear, and the translation into English in the various translations are equally clear, and it is undeniable.

It is a plural. But God is speaking, and he's using a plural pronoun. who else is he including? Who else is he including? Genesis 11.7.

Let us go down, and there confound their language. This is in connection with the Tower of Babel, when the languages of people were confounded, and they were scattered.

And then Isaiah 6.8. Also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

Isn't that curious? Doesn't that strike you as peculiar? Don't words mean anything? Doesn't language and sentence structure mean anything?

[24 : 49] Plural? Doesn't plural mean something different from singular? Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? What a strange way of putting something. Why do you suppose he would speak in terms like that?

It's because there is a multiplicity of persons, a plurality of persons involved. And then, more definite indications that this plurality is a trinity are found in the following facts.

The Lord is distinguished from the Lord. What? The Lord is distinguished from the Lord. Yes.

Genesis 19.24 states, Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

What kind of double talk is that? Did you hear it? Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

How do you account for that? There is a multiplicity of persons involved. And Hosea 1.7 declares, I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the Lord their God.

[26 : 21] Now wait a minute. I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the Lord their God.

It is one person talking about another person. Now the reason that some tend to discount this and just dismiss it all together is, well that just doesn't make any sense.

It can't mean that. Well, it does mean that. And if this were one isolated instance where we were dealing with an issue like that, we'd say, well, maybe probably a corrupted text from the Hebrew or a mistranslation or poor copying or whatever.

But this is found many, many times. And do you think that God, the Holy Spirit, who inspired His Word, put that in there just to frustrate people? Or is He actually communicating something about Himself and He wants you to get it?

The Son is distinguished from the Father. The Son, speaking through Isaiah the prophet, says, The Lord God has sent me and His Spirit.

[27 : 33] Thou art my Son, today I have begotten Thee. Jesus is not only called the Son of God, but also the only begotten Son, John 3.16 and 18, and His firstborn Son, Hebrews 1.6.

Christ did not become the eternal Son of God at the Incarnation. He was the Son before He was given, Isaiah 9.6.

His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity, Micah 5.2. The Spirit is also distinguished from God. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Then verse 2 states, The Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. The oft-occurring phrase, The angel of the Lord, as found in the Old Testament, has special reference to the pre-incarnate second person of the Trinity.

His appearances in the Old Testament foreshadowed His coming in the flesh. The angel of the Lord is identified with the Lord, and yet distinguished from Him.

[28 : 42] Read the text. They are there. In Genesis 16, verses 7-14, when He appeared to Hagar. And Abraham in 22, verses 11-18.

To Jacob in Genesis 31, verses 11-13. To Moses, Exodus 3, verses 2-5, where He used the tetragrammaton and communicated His personage to Moses, when Moses says, If I go tell Pharaoh that the Lord God has sent me, Pharaoh will say, Well, who is He?

What's His name? I don't know this God. What shall I say to them? And the Lord said, You tell Pharaoh that I Am hath sent you.

Well, what does that mean? The I Am. The I Am is the always, eternal, ever, existing One.

He is not the I was. And He's not the I will be. But He is ever the eternal I Am. And the I Am in the tetragrammaton refers to this One without a beginning.

[29 : 57] this One who exists because of Himself. He is the self-existent One. And He is the only One who is.

Everybody else who has ever existed has existed only because somebody else was before them. But the I Am precludes all that.

He is the self-existent One. He is saying, I am the One who exists because of Myself. And He's the only One who is able to say that.

In light of the above intimations of the Trinity in the Old Testament, the Old Testament contains a clear anticipation of the fuller revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament.

Well, while the Scriptures unmistakably insist upon a plurality of persons in the Godhead, the Bible as unmistakably sets forth the deity of each of its members that make up the Godhead so that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God.

[31 : 13] The teaching of the Trinity, and I want you to get your teeth into this, the teaching of the Trinity is one more indication of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Why do I say that? Because if the Bible were merely a product of collusion or conspiracy among men, as some insist, you know, this is one of the prominent opinions out there in our culture today. Well, the Bible, it's an interesting ancient old book, it's got a lot of wisdom and a lot of neat stuff in it, but it was just written by a bunch of men. They just, just a bunch of old guys with beards wearing bathrobes sat down and took pens and things, and they wrote about life from their philosophy and their viewpoint, and that's all the Bible is.

You'd be surprised how many people see the Bible that way. They don't see it as the very word of the living God, they see it as a compilation of people who just wrote about life as they saw it.

And if the Bible were merely a product of collusion or conspiracy among men, the teaching of the Trinity most assuredly would not be included.

[32 : 32] Why not? Because it would look like you are inserting a very clear and obvious contradiction. contradiction. And if you want to present something and try to pass it off and have people believe that it is the word of God, don't put anything in it that seems to be contradictory because people won't buy it.

But do you know what the Bible does? It just simply tells the truth with the full realization that there are no doubt will be people who will read it and say, oh, I just can't get in, this just doesn't make any sense and scrap it to their loss.

In fact, if you were going to try and write a book and conspire with others to write a book with the intent of what? What's the goal?

What's the objective? Are they going to gain money from it? Of course not. They didn't get a cent from it. They didn't have publishers, you know, they didn't have million bestsellers and rake off the profits and the royalties and things like that like people do today.

So what possible motive would they have? The Bible is not a conspiracy and it is not a group of men in collusion over centuries compiling this and trying to pass it off as a word of God because if it were that, there is a whole lot that we would leave out.

[33 : 57] It only complicates the issue. But the Bible includes it. And the Bible really includes a strong, strong case for a plurality of persons and the Godhead. It does appear contradictory on its surface.

And on the surface it is. It is contradictory on the surface. And if you never get beneath the surface of the Bible that's all you'll see is a contradiction.

But when you really delve in and begin comparing Scripture with Scripture and seeing how connected it all is and how it all flows together despite the fact that it was contributed to by 40 human penmen with one author written on three continents in three different languages over a period of 1500 years.

That's amazing. And we find the Trinitarian concept throughout. So if mere men wrote the Bible with the intent of trying to make people believe it was from God the teaching of the Trinity would be one of the first doctrines to go.

Leave that out. They'll never buy that. Yet there it is as big and bold as life. God's life. Now having covered this to the extent that we have and granted this has been a very superficial treatment.

[35 : 28] And I want to thank you for hanging with me and applying your powers of concentration to this because I suspect that it hasn't been easy but it is important. And I thought in connection with bringing this will grace people be able to get this?

And my second thought was and I know I'm somewhat biased but my second thought was if anybody is able to get it grace people will get it.

And if you get it you've really got something. You've got something that 99% of Christendom doesn't have. Couldn't begin to explain. Doesn't have a clue of it.

So with this brief foundation laid and I emphasize that it is very brief. As to the existence and the working of the Trinity I want to just momentarily direct the operation of the Trinity to the incarnation that of God becoming a human being made of flesh and bones.

And all members Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are actively involved in creation and in incarnation and in redemption.

[36 : 48] So let's think for just a moment of the role of God the Father. What was his role in the incarnation?

We are told that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. What I would like to know to the extent that my puny, finite brain can grasp even a corner of it is?

What must have been in the mind and the heart of the Father as he prepared to yield up his Son, not only for Calvary, which would be bad enough, for he would imbue him with a physical body capable of suffering great agonizing pain.

But he knew he was also sending him forth to experience what for me is lack of a better term, a rupture.

A rupture, an unthinkable cleavage of some kind in that triune Godhead. death. Because Jesus was not only to die physically, which he did, but he was to die spiritually.

[38 : 25] And we know that physical death is the separation of the human spirit from the human body. That's physical death. But spiritual death is the separation of the human spirit from God.

That's another death that Jesus was going to die. You realize what that's saying? You realize that something beyond description is happening in the Trinity when the Father turned away from the Son and the Son screamed out, my God, my God.

God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? From the depths of his humanness and all of the pathos that he could muster, he acknowledged that something was happening between him and his Father that had never happened in all eternity.

eternity. Wow. That was really something. That was the pinnacle of redemption.

that was a horrendous incalculable price that was paid beyond anything that we can get our brain around.

[40 : 07] When the Trinity does business within itself, it is always in mutuality, in concert, in cooperation, and this wasn't.

This was different. This was a break. How could that be? I don't know. I don't know. But I think it was horrible behind words.

What did the Father feel? Does the Father have feelings? Does God have feelings? We know there's a theological term called anthropomorphism, just a big 25-cent word that theologians use to impress people out in the fuse.

Anthropomorphism simply means the word anthropos comes from anthropology, which means man, and morphe comes from the Greek word which means shape, shape.

And you put anthro and morphisms together and you get the shape of a man. So God in many places is spoken of as being in the shape of a man.

[41 : 37] He has arms that are not shortened that they cannot save. and we are engraved in the palms of God's hands. Does God have hands?

Does he have arms and legs? And one of the humorous references is that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro over the earth. Does God have eyes and ears like we do?

No. These are anthropomorphisms. These are assigning to God the shape of a human. Well, why does the Bible do that?

Why does the Bible do that? Think about it for a moment. What else can it do? It's because we are so limited in our finiteness to grasp and appreciate something about God.

God uses what theologians call the language of accommodation. God accommodates us by bringing himself down to a level that we can understand when he describes himself.

[42 : 49] And no, he doesn't have arms and legs and feet and toes and all the rest. No, he doesn't. Jesus did in his humanity. The Father is spirit.

But all of these things, these human-like characteristics are used in connection with God because whatever the divine equivalent is, that's what he has.

But he doesn't have what we have. We don't have what he has. Yet, if he is to express anything so that we can get some kind of a handle on it, he has to accommodate us by bringing it down and using language that we can grasp and understand.

Let me ask you this. how would you go about communicating to an ant? Well, you can see the problem, can't you?

Yeah. How would you go about communicating to an ant? Wow. Well, may I say this? God had an even greater problem than that.

[43 : 55] And the reason he did is because the difference between you and an ant is not infinite. It's measurable.

But the distance between man and God is infinite. It is not measurable. Oh, my. Now, if God has anthropomorphisms, the attribution of human-like characteristics to God, which he really doesn't have, but that's the only way it can communicate with us, does God have feelings like we have? Does God have a heart that hurts? does he have body parts that feel pain? No, he doesn't. Well, why does the scriptures use these terms of him? And they are not called anthropomorphisms, they are called anthropopathisms. and what does that mean?

It's the same thing, anthropo, meaning man, and the pathism, coming from the word pathos, or pathetic, and it means feelings, or emotions.

[45 : 21] It is, anthropopathisms is assigning to God human feelings, emotions, sensations, which he does not have, at least he does not have human ones.

But, I think it is safe to say that God has, on his level of divinity, that which is the equivalent of human emotions, only they are deity sized, not human sized.

And by that, I don't mean they are just like ours, only bigger or greater. But language fails us to really describe what they are like.

And yet, Isaiah 65 and verse 19, and I'm giving you just a couple before I close. God is speaking and he says, I will rejoice in Jerusalem and in my people.

Think of that. God rejoicing. What do you do when you rejoice? Well, you, when your team scores a winning touchdown and you're there at the game on the 50 yard line, what do you do?

[46 : 31] You're probably not yawning. You're probably jumping up and down with a lot of rah, rah, rah, and go team and all the rest of it. That's human emotion. That's rejoicing.

God has whatever the divine equivalent of rejoicing is, is attributed to him. And in 32, 41 of Jeremiah, he says, I will rejoice over them and do them good.

I will plant them in the land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. God has a soul. I thought only humans have souls.

God has a heart? Really? How many times does it beat? A minute? Or what is this? All of this is bringing God down on our level where we can get some grasp, some appreciation of his being. But don't ever think he's just like us, only a little bit bigger, and a little stronger, and a lot smarter. He's much, much more than that. So, I leave you with a question, and we will continue this series next week as we see the Son of God involved in incarnation.

[47 : 51] And we are talking about trying to bridge the gap between the infinite and the finite, and we really cannot do that. But if nothing else, you see the problem, and see at least a superficial solution, then you will have a lot more than what most have.

and the great loving heart of the Father must have been exercised and strained in ways that we cannot imagine.

Whatever God's equivalent and deity is of a human heart or mind. Because you see, this further complicates the issue.

Your emotions serve exclusively at the pleasure of your intellect.

You do not feel anything without thinking something first, whether it is elation, joy, sorrow, or what.

[49 : 03] And your emotions are determined by what your intellect understands is happening around you. or what your intellect thinks is happening around you.

And you correspond to that emotionally with feeling a certain way. Whether it's gladness or sadness or euphoria or whatever it might be, it is always processed by the mind first because you have to have a reason for jumping up and down and clapping your hands with excitement.

It's because your intellect has processed something that has happened and your emotion responds to that. But you see, we are so unknowing in everything that is transpiring and we don't know what's going to happen the next 30 seconds.

We have to wait until the event transpires and then our emotions come trailing along. But how does this work with God?

Because he knows the beginning from the end and the end from the beginning. And God's equivalent of emotions is not held hostage to what his intellect understands because in his intellect he understands everything.

[50 : 20] And it is all immediate and present before him with whom we have to do and he doesn't wait for anything to happen to know it. Because everything he knows, he knows without having learned it, he knows it intuitively.

is this some kind of a God or what? My, oh my, oh my.

I would like to think that we have scratched the surface, but I know better. Maybe we have scratched the scratch on the surface, and that's about it. But that's what we're talking about, is infinity.

Eternal, immutable God. What a being. And this God, this deity, out of that one God, is going to peel off one person of that Godhead, and come down here, and start out as one of us, as a baby, in a manger.

Amazing. Father, we've talked about a lot that we sure don't begin to understand. Yet, we see these marvelous things revealed in your inexhaustible word.

[51 : 53] There is no denying them. There is an excitement at beginning to understand some of them. God's love. It just makes you loom larger and larger in our minds as you ought.

And we bless you for being the God that you are. And Father, thank you for employing the language of accommodation. Otherwise, we wouldn't know what we do know about you.

indeed, you are a condescending God who has stooped to our lowly estate, and we are so grateful. Use this truth, we pray, to quicken our minds and hearts for the word being made flesh next week. We bless you and thank you for it in Christ's wonderful name. Amen.