Compass Life Adult Sunday School

Pastor Pete

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**“Contra-Fosdick: “Divine Forgiveness”**

**I. A Tale of Two Seminaries: The Story of Princeton and Westminster**

The great theologians of Princeton Seminary championed Reformed Christian scholarship during the early 20th century. Internationally renowned, the faculty included the insightful biblical interpreter Geerhardus Vos, the steadfast defender of biblical \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ B.B. Warfield, and the esteemed New Testament scholar J. Gresham Machen. In the 1920s, the mainline Presbyterian church struggled with liberalism. J. Gresham Machen set the terms of the debate with his book Christianity and Liberalism. He argued that liberalism teaches not a lesser form of Christianity, but an entirely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Machen explains the difference between liberalism and fundamentalism, “The truth is that the life-purpose of Jesus discovered by modern liberalism is \_\_\_\_\_ the life purpose of the real Jesus, but merely represents those elements in the teaching of Jesus--isolated and misinterpreted--which happen to agree with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ program. It is not Jesus, then, who is the real authority, but the modern principle by which the selection within Jesus' recorded teaching has been made. Certain isolated ethical principles of the Sermon on the Mount are accepted, not at all because they are teachings of Jesus, but because they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with modern ideas.” Princeton compromised by reorganizing its \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to include members tolerant of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Princeton’s new leadership slowly transformed the seminary from an institution that trained biblically faithful ministers to a mirror that reflected the shifting trends in the mainline Presbyterian church. Machen left the prestige of Princeton to stand for the truth of the \_\_\_\_\_. He knew that theological compromise would harm the spiritual power of the church. His fight for Christianity cost him a great deal. Not only did Machen lose his position at Princeton, but his church also declared him guilty of insubordination and stripped him of his credentials as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In 1929, Machen founded a new school, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, with senior faculty members from Princeton and bright young scholars to carry on Princeton’s noble tradition. Machen’s prized faculty (John Murray and Cornelius Van Til, among others) shared his sacrificial heart and vision for robust theological education. They followed Machen to Westminster in order to build a new stronghold for Reformed theology and train the next era of passionate Christian pastors and theologians. Machen’s faculty and their successors equipped generations of incisive scholars and bold preachers throughout the 20th century. Their distinct, robust teaching method empowers students with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ grounded systematic theology, biblical counseling, presuppositional apologetics, redemptive-historical hermeneutics, Christ-centered \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and extensive historical theology.

**II. Fosdick’s Sermon: “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?”**

“It is interesting to note where the Fundamentalists are driving in their stakes to mark out the deadline of doctrine around the church, across which no one is to pass except on terms of agreement. They insist that we must all believe in the historicity of certain special miracles, preeminently the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of our Lord; that we must believe in a special theory of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—that the original documents of the Scripture, which of course we no longer possess, were inerrantly dictated to men a good deal as a man might dictate to a stenographer; that we must believe in a special theory of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—that the blood of our Lord, shed in a substitutionary death, placates an alienated Deity and makes possible welcome for the returning sinner; and that we must believe in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of our Lord upon the clouds of heaven to set up a millennium here, as the only way in which God can bring history to a worthy denouement. Such are some of the stakes which are being driven to mark a deadline of doctrine around the church. If a man is a genuine liberal, his primary protest is not against holding these opinions, although he may well protest against their being considered the fundamentals of Christianity. This is a free country and anybody has a right to hold these opinions or any others if he is sincerely convinced of them. The question is—Has anybody a right to deny the Christian name to those who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with him on such points and to shut against them the doors of the Christian fellowship? The Fundamentalists say that this must be done. In this country and on the foreign field they are trying to do it. They have actually endeavored to put on the statute books of a whole state binding laws against teaching modern \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. If they had their way, within the church, they would set up in Protestantism a doctrinal tribunal more rigid than the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

**III. The Deity of Christ**

The **deity of Jesus** is considered an essential doctrine and is a central non-negotiable \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ within Christianity. Also known as the "divinity of Christ," this doctrine asserts that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God incarnate. As the apostle Paul stated, "the whole fullness of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9; ESV).

The Bible directly states that Jesus is \_\_\_ in a number of passages. Taken by themselves, these verses provide enough evidence for the church to believe in and teach the deity of Jesus Christ. But the indirect evidence of Scripture is equally compelling. The names of God are often applied to Jesus. He is called "the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the Everlasting Father" and "Immanuel" (meaning "God with us"). Elsewhere Jesus is called "The Lord (Jehovah) our Righteousness," "God" and "Son of God."The Bible ascribes the characteristics of deity to Jesus Christ. He is described as \_\_\_\_\_\_, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.Jesus Christ is equal with God the Father. He is worshiped as God. His name is assigned equal standing with God the Father in the church's baptismal formula and in the apostolic benediction.Christ performed works which only God can do. He is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He is the upholder of all things.He \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He will raise the dead and execute judgment.Jesus Christ Himself claimed deity. He taught His disciples to pray in His name. He claimed that He and the Father were one and that He was the Son of God. He claimed that to know Him was to know God, to see Him was to see God, to receive Him was to receive God, to believe Him was to believe in God and to honor Him was to honor God, while to hate Him was to hate God.

**IV. Understanding the Trinity**

The doctrine of the Trinity means that there is one God who eternally exists as \_\_\_\_\_\_ distinct Persons — the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Stated differently, God is one in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and three in person. The Trinity is an unfathomable, and yet unmistakable doctrine in Scripture. As Jonathan Edwards stated, “I think [the doctrine of the Trinity] to be the highest and deepest of all Divine mysteries”. Yet, though the fullness of the Trinity is far beyond \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ comprehension, it is unquestionably how God has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Himself in Scripture—as one God eternally existing in three Persons. God is three Persons in one essence; the Divine essence subsists wholly and indivisibly, simultaneously and eternally, in the three members of the one \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Scriptures are clear that these three Persons together are one and only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). John 10:30, 33 explain that the Father and the Son are one. First Corinthians 3:16 shows that the Father and the Spirit are one. Romans 8:9 makes clear that the Son and the Spirit are one. And John 14:16, 18, and 23 demonstrate that the Father, Son, and Spirit are one. Yet, in exhibiting the unity between the members of the Trinity, the Word of God in no way denies the simultaneous existence and distinctiveness of each of the three \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Godhead. In other words, the Bible makes it clear that God is one God (not three), but that the one God is a Trinity of Persons. In the Old Testament, the Bible implies the idea of the Trinity in several ways. The title Elohim (”God”), for instance, is a plural noun which can suggest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (cf. Genesis 1:26). And there are also passages where all three divine Persons are seen at work (Isaiah 48:16; 61:1). The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ formula of Matthew 28:19 designates all three Persons of the Trinity: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” In his apostolic benediction to the Corinthians, Paul underscored this same reality. He wrote, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God [the Father], and the fellowship of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, be with you all” (2 Corinthians 13:14). Other New Testament passages also spell out the glorious truth of the Triune God (Romans 15:16, 30; 2 Corinthians 1:21–22; Ephesians 2:18). In describing the Trinity, the New Testament clearly distinguishes three Persons who are all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ active. At Christ’s baptism, all three Persons were simultaneously active (Matthew 3:16–17), with the Son being baptized, the Spirit descending, and the Father speaking from Heaven. Jesus Himself prayed to the Father (cf. Matthew 6:9), taught that His will was distinct from His Father’s (Matthew 26:39), promised that He would ask the Father to send the Spirit (John 14:16), and asked the Father to glorify Him (John 17:5). These actions would not make sense unless the Father and the Son were two distinct Persons. Elsewhere in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit intercedes before the Father on behalf of believers (Romans 8:26), as does the Son, who is our Advocate (1 John 2:1). The Bible is clear. There is only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, yet He exists, and always has existed, as a Trinity of Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (John 1:1-2). To deny or misunderstand the Trinity is to deny or misunderstand the very nature of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**10/21 Contra-Fosdick: “Good Works are NOT Good Enough”**