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The Trinity and Christian Unity

By George Miley

The Scriptures reveal that God is One, and simultaneously Three. God is a personal plurality of oneness ... a fellowship ... a communion. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit do not experience unity and plurality as antithetical. *Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14*

How can One be Three and Three be One? Thinking analytically—mathematically—it doesn't make sense. But God is personal. **To begin to comprehend the Triune God, we must think in terms of the characteristics of personhood.** Persons possess the capacity to live in relational oneness with other persons. God is three Persons in eternal, holy, loving, indivisible relationship.

Each Person of the Trinity relates to the others in harmony, submission, honor—agape love. The Son is submitted to the will of the Father. The Father has entrusted all authority to the Son. The Son departed to make room for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention to Himself, but to the Son. There is no dishonor, competition, jealousy or unkindness among them. The Persons of the Trinity would simply not tolerate it. *Matthew 26:39; 28:18; John 16:7, 13-14*

God created man—male and female—like Him. Human beings are designed for relational harmony with other persons—God, and fellow humans. Here God's pattern is unveiled for marriage, family, society, Church. Relational oneness with God actualizes relational oneness with others. Harmonious relationships are deeply and beautifully fulfilling for every person. *Genesis 1:26-27; 2:24*

But we violated our relational oneness with God. For the first time personal relationship was broken. Pervasively damaged by being separate from God, humans chose alienation from each other. Relational violations came to permeate human life—in marriages, families, neighborhoods, societies and nations. They found their way into the story of Israel. Division came to characterize the Church. And God wept.

“Behold, I make all things new.” The Son came to redeem and reverse the effects of sin. By his death He paid the penalty for our guilt, and by His resurrection He released into redeemed, healed and transformed human lives the power to initiate relational reconciliation. *Revelation 21:5; Isaiah 53:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19*

Diversity does not cause division. Diversity expresses God's unbounded creativity. He fashioned a diverse universe ... a multifaceted human family. Hence the Church is diverse. No culture, organizational structure or Christian tradition can

contain God. Diversity is an expression of God's being; division is an expression of man's sin.

Divisions among Christians are antithetical to trinitarian reality. Father, Son and Holy Spirit form one communion into which God has incorporated redeemed followers of Jesus. As this one fellowship, composed of both God and man, grows in visibility, it will also grow in influence. It will foster the healing of human divisions. And mankind will know that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. *John 14:20-23; 17:20-23*

