

PERICHORESIS: THE LOVE DANCE OF THE TRINITY

(Greg Deuble ... greg.thebiblejesus@gmail.com)

When the leaders of the Church in the Third and Fourth Centuries wanted to explain their novel doctrine of the Trinity, they came up with that big word, *perichoresis*. But don't let that Greek word frighten you. You don't have to say, "It's all Greek to me!", for our English word "choreography" --- the art of dance movement --- helps explain it. You see, those Greek-minded apologists said the three persons of the Trinity --- Father, Son and Spirit --- have been forever together in one intimate, rhythmic and flowing dance of love between themselves.

However, *perichoresis* involves more than choreography. Whilst including the synchronised movement of dance, *perichoresis* involves "mutual indwelling". Hilary the Bishop of Poitiers (c.310-c. 367), in his *Concerning The Trinity (3:1)*, says each person of the Trinity "reciprocally contains the others, so that one permanently envelopes and is permanently enveloped by, the others whom he yet envelopes." (Now that is a "mouth full of Greek"!) Thus, when it involves "the triune God", *perichoresis* describes "the eternal movement of Love or the Communion of Love which the Trinity is forever within himself." ¹

Here's how one modern Christian apologist writes about the love-dance of the Trinity;

"The inner life of the triune God ... is characterised not by self-centredness but by mutually self-giving love. When we delight and serve someone else, we enter into a dynamic orbit around him or her, we centre on the interests and desires of the other. That creates a dance, particularly if there are three persons, each of whom moves around the other two. So it is, the Bible tells us. Each of the divine persons centres upon the others. None demands that the others revolve around him. Each voluntarily circles the other two, pouring love, delight and adoration into them. Each person of the Trinity loves, adores, defers to and rejoices in the others. That creates a dynamic, pulsating dance of joy and love." ²

Timothy Keller who wrote that description of the dance of God is the pastor of an inner-city church in New York City, the Redeemer Reformed Church. Keller is one of the leading Christian apologists of this generation and, according to Billy Graham, is leading "a generation of seekers and sceptics toward belief in God". His many books and sermons are used by countless numbers of ministers and pastors of all denominations around the world. In support of this eternal dance of "the Three who are God", Keller quotes another exponent of *perichoresis*;

"The Father ... Son ... and Holy Spirit glorify each other ... At the centre of the universe, self-giving love is the dynamic currency of the Trinitarian life of God. The persons within God exalt, commune with, and defer to one another ... When early Greek Christians spoke of 'perichoresis' in God they meant that each divine person harbors the others at the centre of his being. In constant movement of overture and acceptance each person envelops and encircles the others." ³

Did you note the candid acknowledgement that it was the "early Greek Christians [who] spoke of *perichoresis* in God"? You won't find this kind of talk in the First Century Christians' vocabulary or in the Bible. This kind of admission is alarming. More on this soon.

If you still haven't 'got' all this Greek philosophy, don't worry --- at least you can play Zorba the Greek in the background and immerse yourself in Greek theology with lively accompaniment! Anyway, to continue. Keller also quotes the great C.S. Lewis himself in support of the Divine dance, the *perichoresis* within the Godhead,

"In Christianity God is not an impersonal thing or a static thing --- not even just one person --- but a dynamic pulsating activity, a life, a kind of drama, almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of

¹ As quoted by Timothy Keller in his Endnotes in *The Reason For God: Belief in An Age of Scepticism*, Hodder & Stroughton, UK 2008, p 280

² *Ibid*, Timothy Keller, *The Reason For God*, p 214-215

³ Platinga, Cornelius, *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning and Living*, Eerdmans, 2002 as quoted in *The Reason For God*, p 215

dance ... The pattern of this three-personal life is ... the great fountain of energy and beauty spurting up at the very centre of reality.”⁴

No wonder Keller feels the need to say this doctrine “overloads our mental circuits”. He urges us to not worry so much about the “cognitive difficulty” here, but to just accept that, “this astonishing, dynamic conception of the triune God is bristling with profound, wonderful, life-shaping, world-changing implications.”⁵

Keller goes so far as to suggest that if He is only a unipersonal being, “then until God created other beings, there was no love, since love is something that one person has for another. This means, that a unipersonal God was power, sovereignty and greatness from all eternity, but not love.”⁶

So, says Keller and his mates, God *must* be three persons, otherwise a God who was “just” one person would be deficient in himself;

“If God is triune, then loving relationships in community are the ‘great fountain ... at the centre of reality’ ... [if God] “was just one person he couldn’t have been loving for all eternity ... for love is something persons do ... [God] is essentially, eternally, interpersonal love. Ultimate reality is a community of persons who know and love one another... When Jesus said you must lose yourself in service to find yourself (Mark 8:35), he was recounting what the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have been doing throughout eternity... according to the Bible, this world was not created by a God who is only an individual, nor is it the emanation of an impersonal force... We believe the world was made by a God who is a community of persons who have loved each other for all eternity.”⁷

For trinitarians then, God by definition must be multipersonal, a community, a fellowship, whose inner dynamic is mutual movement governed by mutual indwelling. To the modern Christian whose ears have from early childhood become accustomed to such talk, this all sounds delightfully mystical and faith-inspiring, even convincing.

Now, to be honest, there is an appealing element of truth in Keller’s reasoning, for in our human experience, nothing makes us more miserable than self-absorption. The most miserable people are those who are selfish and egotistical. It is a spiritual law that concentrating one’s attention on making others happy, ennobles, fulfills, and uplifts the one doing the loving, not to mention the blessing it brings to the one being loved.

So, since we were created by love and for love in community, doesn’t it stand to reason that God made us to join Him in the dance of love? We certainly have been created to love “God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul and with all your strength”, and “to love your neighbour as yourself.”

To borrow the present illustration, this means our chief aim and call in life is to join the LORD God in the dance of love. Metaphorically speaking, you and I are built for *perichoresis*! One of the apostle Paul’s favourite themes is that the Christian is “in Christ”. Through baptism, we have been “crucified with Christ”, united with him in his death, burial and resurrection. He who “joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him” (I Cor. 6:17). Indeed, our life “is hidden with God in Christ” (Col. 3:3). So, in a very real sense our entire lives are to be spent in getting into step with God. Love cannot long exist alone. Love seeks. So, yes there is an element of truth here.

But this is a far cry from the metaphysical speculations of rhythmic *perichoresis* within a community of three persons who are God. I want to suggest there are a number of fatal flaws in Keller’s proposition. I want to suggest that Keller and his trinitarian apologists step outside the Biblical revelation and dabble in the world of

⁴ C.S. Lewis, in “The Good Infection”, in *Mere Christianity* as quoted in *The Reason For God*, p 215

⁵ Op. Cit., p 215

⁶ One wonders how Keller can believe a unipersonal God can exist “as sovereignty and greatness from all eternity” before first creating anything, but why it cannot be that a unipersonal God could not eternally exist in his person as love, before He created other sentient persons? That is a *non-sequitur*. God by definition does not need a created universe to prove he is all-powerful or all-love. He just is. Indeed, His Name YaHWeH means “I WILL BE THAT WHICH I WILL BE”, or even as erroneously translated, “I AM WHAT I AM.” Yahweh God calls himself a person, an “I” which is a singular “me”.

⁷ Ibid, pp 216-217

[Greek] fantasies when talking about the *perichoresis* within the Trinity. I want to suggest that Keller actually contradicts the plain statements of Scripture when he claims that if God “was just one person he couldn’t have been loving from all eternity.”

THE TURRET

There are a number of ways we could approach this philosophical turret. We could just mount a full-on frontal assault. It would be easy to simply ask Keller, “Please show us just one Bible verse anywhere from the Old or New Testaments that teaches your doctrine of the dance within the Trinity. Indeed, show us just one verse anywhere in the Bible that teaches “God is One Being eternally existing in three Persons”, that God is “a multipersonal community”.

Many soundly credentialed Bible scholars admit this can’t be done. For example, the renowned champion of conservative Biblical scholarship, and from Keller’s own church denomination, Benjamin B. Warfield honestly writes,

“Certainly we cannot speak broadly of the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament. It is a plain matter of fact that none who have depended on the revelation embodied in the Old Testament alone have ever attained to the doctrine of the Trinity.”⁸

The NT scholar A.W. Argyle himself a staunch trinitarian agrees this is also the case in the New Testament,

“The fully developed Christian doctrine that God is three persons in one Godhead is nowhere explicitly stated in the New Testament.”⁹

Charles C. Ryrie, author of the Ryrie Study Bible, candidly admits the trinitarian formulation is absent in the Scriptures,

“But many doctrines are accepted by evangelicals as being clearly taught in Scripture for which there are no proof texts. The doctrine of the Trinity furnishes the best example of this. It is fair to say that the Bible does not clearly teach the doctrine of the Trinity. In fact, there is not even one proof text, if by proof text we mean a verse or passage that ‘clearly’ states that there is one God who exists in three persons.”¹⁰

Wow! What an admission: The doctrine of the Trinity is the best example of a doctrine not clearly taught in the Bible! Is this not a clarion call for a radical examination? Then there is this telling admission from another,

“No responsible New Testament scholar would claim the doctrine of the Trinity was taught by Jesus, or preached by the earliest Christians or consciously held by any writer of the New Testament.”¹¹

Such quotes could be multiplied. But I cannot resist one more from Millard Erickson, the distinguished Professor of Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and who is considered one of the best apologists for the doctrine of the Trinity in Protestant circles. Erickson writes that the Trinity,

“...is not clearly or explicitly taught anywhere in Scripture, yet it is widely regarded as a central doctrine, indispensable to the Christian faith. In this regard, it goes contrary to what is virtually an axiom of biblical doctrine, namely, that there is a direct correlation between the scriptural clarity of a doctrine and its cruciality to the faith and life of the church.”¹²

⁸ Warfield, Benjamin, B. in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, p 3012

⁹ Argyle, A.W., *God in the New Testament*, Lippincott, New York, 1966, p 173

¹⁰ Ryrie, Charles, C. *Basic Theology*, Moody Press, 1999. pp 89-90

¹¹ Hanson, A.T., *The Image of the Invisible God*.

¹² Erickson, Millard. *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 1995, p

Again, this is mind-boggling. It surely must be disconcerting for our trinitarian friends to read statements from their own that the doctrine of the Trinity is not explicitly stated anywhere in the Bible! They at least are honest enough to admit that it is an “inference” and a “construct” built layer upon layer of non-Biblical words and expressions found only in Greek metaphysics. But it doesn’t seem to bother them too much. Perhaps Zorba the Greek is playing too loudly in the background drowning out all clear thinking? It’s hard to think on the dance floor with music blaring!

It is also damning to realise that not one of the later so-called “orthodox” creeds from the early Church Councils has a single Bible verse to be found in any of them. I speak of the Nicene Creed of 325 AD, the Constantinople Creed of 381 AD and the Chalcedon Creed of 451 AD. But if they don’t cite one Bible verse, they are loaded with non-Biblical Greek words, such as “eternally begotten” (whoever heard of a beginningless beginning?), “God from God”, “begotten, not made”, “one essence”, “consubstantial”, “Hypostatic union” of the two natures”, etc. ¹³

Remember, there are approximately 11,000 texts in the Bible describing “God” as Elohim, YHWH, Adonai, *O Theos*, and not one of those texts ever means a triune God. Not one verse speaks of “God the Son”. Not one verse speaks of “God the Spirit”. Not one verse says “God is Three Persons in one essence”. Even in the New Testament 1,300 plus times God means God the Father. Never once does it mean three persons. Not once. But there are *hundreds* of texts that say God is a Single Deity, God is unipersonal, God is one Person. Pause and think!

THE TUNNEL

But no, let’s adopt a more indirect approach to the turret. Let’s take this philosophical ‘stronghold’ by a less direct route. Remember David’s challenge to his army as they stood outside the walls of Jerusalem? Jerusalem seemed to be an impenetrable fortress. The Jebusites taunted David from their mighty elevated walls, “You won’t come up here! Even our blind and lame can beat you!”

Undeterred, David issues the challenge to his army, “Whoever leads the attack and whoever is the first up there into the city, I will promote to being captain over the army.” Joab was already the captain of the army, and he did not want to lose that place of honour. So Joab took action. But he did not directly scale the walls. He did not go for the turrets on the walls first. Joab led a band of men up through a secret water channel that the Jebusites themselves had dug under their own walls.

That tunnel channelled a hidden bubbling stream of fresh water from a continuous spring into the city. The Jebusites had covered that spring, believing no enemy would discover it. They had dug through the rock under their own walls so the waters could flow into a big underground cistern. David had discovered that hidden tunnel. And now Joab led his men through that shaft in the rock and surprised the Jebusites, and so Jerusalem became David’s capital (2 Samuel 5:6f; 1 Chronicles 11:6). ¹⁴ The Jebusites had engineered their own downfall.

So, let’s adopt this same strategy, shall we? Given that the doctrine of the Trinity is so widespread and popular, given that the doctrine of the Trinity is perched up in a high turret behind walls that reach into the fog of philosophical obfuscations that threaten anybody who disagrees with excommunication from the Church, let’s see if there isn’t a tunnel leading into the fortress of these man-made speculations.

Would you be surprised if I said there is such a tunnel? And guess who has dug it? Yep. The very ones who take cover behind their imagined impregnable man-made doctrine of the God who is three. It is trinitarians themselves who undermine their own philosophical barricades. We have already shown their frank admissions that the doctrine is not overtly taught in the Bible. Let’s see where their pontifications logically lead.

Keller wants us to believe that God cannot be unipersonal because by definition love needs community. It takes more than one to tango! Just so, Millard Erickson attempts to explain that each member of the Trinity needs the

¹³ I have set this out in detail in *They Never Told Me This In Church!* in the chapter titled, *Another God*.

¹⁴ Recent excavations by Kathleen Kenyon have found the actual shaft through which Joab entered the city. Another case of archaeology confirming the historicity of the Bible account.

other two persons in order to live! In their scheme, not only can a unipersonal God not be love, but he could not even exist alone. This leading exponent of the doctrine of the Trinity writes this startling admission;

“Each person of the Trinity ‘is essential to the life of the whole. God could not exist simply as Father, or as Son, or as Holy Spirit. Nor could he exist as Father and Son, as Father and Spirit, or as Son and Spirit, without the third of these persons in that given case. Further, none of these could exist without being part of the Trinity ... None has the power of life within itself alone. Each can only exist as part of the Triune God ... There would be no basis of life, apart from this union.”¹⁵

Don’t rush over this! Each person of the Trinity is essential to the life of the others. God the Father cannot exist by Himself and is dependant on the Trinity for His very existence! None of the three has the power of life within itself alone! Preposterous. I will comment more fully on this shortly, but see if you can pick up where he then contradicts himself. Erickson goes on to explain,

“This means that each of the persons of the Trinity is essential to the whole. Beyond that, each is essential to the others. Another way of putting it is that God could not be and not be triune. The triune nature of God is essential to his very being. He could not exist as something other than the Trinity. He could not be God, and could not even be, without being triune. There is no permanent distinction of one from the other in terms of origination. While the Father may be the cause of the existence of the Son and the Spirit, they are also mutually the cause of his existence and the existence of one another. There is an eternal symmetry of all three persons.”¹⁶

What kind of a god has Erickson manufactured where each person is the cause of the other’s existence? The Bible God is not caused. Furthermore, what kind of a god is that one who is “fully God” yet has no power of existence on his own outside the Trinity? His statement, “God could not exist simply as Father, or as Son, or as Holy Spirit,” even contradicts the trinitarian assertion that the Father is fully God, the Son is fully God, the Spirit is fully God.

Well might we ask, what kind of two-bit little god can’t exist in his own right? Erickson has proposed a god who can’t live as a person by himself even though that person is “fully God”. Huh?

James R. White, another modern “heavy weight” trinitarian, tries to explain;

“Within the one Being that is God, there exists eternally three coequal and coeternal persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”¹⁷

Like all Trinitarians, White justifies his trinitarian doctrine by creating the imagined distinction between “Being” and “Person”, so that God is three Persons, yet one Being. He attempts to explain it this way:

“When speaking of the Trinity, we need to realize that we are talking about one *what* and three *who’s*. The one *what* is the Being or essence of God; the three *who’s* are the Father, Son, and Spirit.”¹⁸

Even the spell-check on my computer won’t accept the grammar in this statement ... it keeps blaring red at me! Are we really to believe that the Living God is a “what” who is three “who’s”? In another place he wants you to

¹⁵ Quoted by Patrick Navas in *Divine Truth or Human Tradition?: A Reconsideration of the Roman Catholic-Protestant Doctrine of the Trinity in Light of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures*, Author House, 2007, pp 163 referencing Millard Erickson, *God in Three Persons*, pp 1, 310)

¹⁶ Ibid., *Divine Truth or Human Tradition?:* pp 163

¹⁷ White, James R., *The Forgotten Trinity: Recovering the Heart of Christian Belief*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1998, p 26 (White’s book is endorsed by the likes of J.I Packer, Gleason Archer, Norman Geisler, and John MacArthur, so carries a lot of oomph!)

¹⁸ Ibid, p 27

believe that “He are three, and they is one!” Which is to make the staggering claim that the God of the Bible is technically an “It” rather than a “He”, a “what” rather than a “who”! ¹⁹

Something is seriously wrong here. If our faith in God requires us to break all the rules of intelligent communication, then we might as well throw out the Bible as God’s serious attempt to reveal Himself to us. The trinitarian claim to monotheism is based on the philosophically created concept of “one Being” or “one essence” rather than the “one Person” who is God. The Jews knew God is one Person. The Greeks thought of God as impersonal “essence”. Who is right? But let’s let James White continue;

“The Father is not ⅓ of God, the Son ⅓ of God, the Spirit ⅓ of God. Each is fully God, coequal with the others, and that eternally.”

Stop! Red flag! Has White considered the conundrum he has just created? By definition any person who is “fully God” (White’s own description) must be fully self-sufficient, independent of anybody or anything else. Furthermore, unless we play fast and loose with the definition of “God”, anyone who is “fully God” would have to be all three, or else he would only be partially God, surely?

White asserts that God is not God by the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Spirit alone, but by all three together. ²⁰ What kind of a God are we fabricating when we say that “none of these could exist without being part of the Trinity”?

All of this highlights that trinitarians cannot explain their doctrine coherently, using Bible words to tell us who God is. The church father of the third century Origen, in his *Stromata*, gave the game away when he wrote,

“The source of many evils lies in adhering to the carnal or external part of Scripture. Those who do so shall not attain to the Kingdom of God. Let us therefore seek after the spirit and the substantial fruit of the word, which are hidden and mysterious ... The Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written.” ²¹

And that’s the underground tunnel right there: Don’t read the Scriptures “as they are written” or you shall not enter the Kingdom of heaven. Just seek out your own “hidden and mysterious” meanings. No need for sound exegesis. Just consign anything not revealed in the language of the Scriptures to “mystery turret”. What fanciful delusion is this?

On this method why not propose any fancy? How about a love dance within the God community? Why not suggest God the Father cannot exist apart from the Trinity, but all the same is really “fully God”? Why not imagine worshipping “three who’s in one what” or addressing him (or is it them?) as “He who are”, or “They who is”? Anybody who can believe these things is open to being suckered by any story.

Thus we see that just as the Jebusites undermined their imagined impregnability by digging underneath their own city walls, so trinitarians by their own admissions also lead to the tearing down of their philosophical turret. Or as the wise words of Jesus succinctly put it, “A house divided against itself cannot stand” (Luke 11:17).

When that Jewish scribe asked Jesus which is the first and greatest of all commandments, Jesus affirmed the unipersonal monotheistic creed of Moses, “Hear O Israel, the LORD is our God, the LORD is one” (Mark 12:28f). The careful reader will observe that *the numeral adjective “one” qualifies the word “LORD”*. Of course, in the Hebrew this means “one” qualifies God’s personal name, YaHWeH. Putting it negatively, the numeral adjective “one” does not qualify the word “God”! The Bible says “God” is “one Yahweh”, “one LORD”. It is a trick to think that “one God” can be “one Being” who is really three persons.

¹⁹ For a fuller exploration of this theme, I highly recommend Anthony Buzzard’s article “How Did We Get from the Original Teachings of Scripture to the Muddled Multi-Denominational Christianity of Today?” in his monthly *Focus on the Kingdom*, Vol. 18 No.10, July, 2016 edition.

²⁰ For a full exposure of White’s covert tri-theism see, Chang, Eric, H.H. *The Only Perfect Man: The Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*, EHC, 2014, pp 56-57

²¹ Quoted by Anthony Buzzard in *Focus on the Kingdom*, Op. Cit , p3

JESUS HAS THE ALMIGHTY GOD OVER HIM

Six times the New Testament speaks of “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” in one sentence.

“... with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 15:6)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies ...” (2 Cor. 1:3).

”The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever ... (2 Cor. 11:31).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ ...(Eph. 1:3).

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ...” (I Peter 1:3).

“He has made us to be a kingdom of priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory ...” (Rev.1:6).

And who is “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”? Paul says He is the “one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:6). In plain language (without any big Greek words) Paul says the one God is the Father of all. Therefore, **anyone who is not the Father of all, is not God!**

Even in trinitarianism Jesus is certainly not the Father. Therefore, Jesus who is not “the Father over all” cannot be the “one God”. Believers are never called “sons of Jesus”, or “sons of Christ”, or “begotten of Jesus”, nor do we pray, “Abba Jesus!”²² Jesus defined his Father as “the only true God”, and put himself in another category altogether as, “Jesus the Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

Now we need to focus. Take a break, get a coffee, stretch the legs, and turn Zorba the Greek right off!

Is the mind all clear? Good. Now observe carefully: Those 6 verses that speak of “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” *do not just say He is the God and Father of “Jesus”*. They all say the Father is the God of the “Lord Jesus Christ”. And when and how did Jesus get his title “Lord Christ” or “Lord Messiah”? The answer is when God the Father raised Jesus up again, and “made him both Lord and Christ --- this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:32f).

Exalted to the right hand of God in heaven the Lord Jesus at this very moment speaks of the LORD God as “My God and My Father” (Rev. 3:2,5; 3: 12, 21, etc.). This is the affirmation of the risen Christ in heaven right now.

The Bible says “God is the head of Christ” (I Cor. 11:3). Please observe Paul does not say the head of Christ is “God the Father”, but that the head of Christ is “God”. Christ is subject to God. It’s perfectly uncomplicated;

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ...” (1 Tim. 2:5).

Even though glorified and now living forever, the “man Christ Jesus” is in one category, that of men, albeit the first immortalised man. The “one God” is in another category. This is not “co-equality” of three persons as per trinitarianism.

THE GOAL OF JESUS

The risen Lord Jesus in heaven has one goal. To bring the entire universe into joyful submission and recognition of a universal Kingdom under the unitary monotheistic reign of the one God and Father of all. Jesus’ greatest joy will be the day when he presents himself as Lord of that united Kingdom over to God. What a “unique day” (see Zech. 12:7) that will be when Jesus himself confesses his Father to be the One God over all;

²² Hebrews 2: 13 is not an exception. Here the “children whom God has given me”, (i.e. given to Jesus) are those created by the preaching of the gospel word. Jesus’ gospel is “the seed” of the new birth of regeneration (Lk. 8:11). In the same way the apostle Paul can say he became the father of Timothy because Timothy responded to Paul’s message of Christ.

“Then the Son himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all” (I Cor. 15:28).

Once God the Father is recognized as the One Supreme person who is “God over all” the Son’s intermediary ministry will have been completed. We may then rightly say, the consummation of the ages ends in a dance of joy by all of creation under God.

So, when the Son surrenders all things to the One who subjected all things to him, God will be the One who is all in all. **The Son therefore is not God!** Clearly, those who wish to put Jesus as co-equal with his God and Father are in for a rude awakening. Keller’s “cognitive difficulty” and Erickson’s confusion in worshipping “three who’s in one what” is going to end. The prophet says,

“And the LORD (Hebrew, YHWH) will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD (YHWH) will be the only one, and His name the only one” (Zechariah 12:9).

I have some news for those who believe in the Three in One God. Better get with the programme! Better start listening to the prophets and apostles. More critically, better start listening to Jesus. The Father has commanded us to listen to His Son. A day is coming when Jesus the Son of God will acknowledge Father God as “the only one” who is the sovereign LORD God of all creation.

In the Bible, God the Father has no God. Why should He? If you are Almighty God you don’t need a God, nor do you have a God over you. If you have any needs, you are not the God of the Bible. If you have any deficiencies you are not God. But the Lord Jesus has a God.²³

CONCLUSION

So, does it really matter if we believe in *perichoresis*, the love dance of the Trinity? Our trinitarian friends may try to frighten us into submission. They continue try to scare us with threats that unless we subscribe to their “statements of faith”, that unless we believe God is three persons in one being, we will forever damn our souls. Does this question affect our eternal salvation?

The answer is NO ... if it doesn’t matter whether we listen to and obey the Lord Jesus’ own teaching or not (Matt. 7:21). NO ... if the First Commandment on which all the others “hang” is not really the first and the greatest of all the commandments (Matt. 22:38). NO .. if you want to create your own fanciful religion, with your own rules of grammar. NO ... if you think the Scriptures as they are written are of little use to you. NO ... if the one God and Father of all is unable to exist by Himself alone. NO ... if there really are two or three Yahwehs.

Timothy Keller may urge us not to worry about “the cognitive difficulty” of *perichoresis*, the love dance within the Trinity, even though he admits it “overloads our mental circuits.” But since when did God ever tell us to dismiss our brains? Is He not the One who commands us to love Him with “*all your mind*”? Are we not warned to be mature in our understanding so that we don’t get “tossed here and there by waves, and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (I Cor. 14:20; Eph. 4:14)?

Keller and his trinitarian friends have engineered the demise of their own philosophy. They have dug through their own defences. For when they speculate that Yahweh is a tri-personal “being” able to dance reciprocally, with each person containing the others, “so that one permanently envelopes and is permanently enveloped by the others whom he yet envelopes,” they really say that one who is “fully God” cannot even live by himself.

They therefore argue for a dependent God who ends up being a mere fraction of himself! Unable to exist by Himself, and depending on the other persons of the Trinity, the Father who is God is only 1/3 of “God”.

²³ The NT thus preserves the OT distinction between the LORD God (*Adonai*) who is the Father, and the lord messiah (*adoni*) who is never Deity. Psalm 110:1 lays this foundation forever, “The LORD (*Adonai*) said to my lord (*adoni*) ...” The God of Israel, the God of our messianic lord Jesus, is called the LORD God. Jesus is never called LORD God. Check it out.

My friend, you don't have to understand anything about *perichoresis* and the love dance of the Trinity. You don't have to study Greek philosophy to know who the God of the Bible is. The Father "who is over all" is "the only true God." He is your God and heavenly Father, too. Travel light. But you can still enjoy Zorba the Greek if you like!