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Basil of Caesarea On The Trinity

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May 26, 2010

Basil of Caesarea On The Trinity




Basil of Caesarea

In delivering the formula of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, our Lord did not connect the gift with number. He did not say “into First, Second, and Third,” nor yet “into one, two, and three, but He gave us the boon of the knowledge of the faith which leads to salvation, by means of holy names. So that what saves us is our faith. Number has been devised as a symbol indicative of the quantity of objects. But these men, who bring ruin on themselves from every possible source, have turned even the capacity for counting against the faith. Nothing else undergoes any change in consequences of the addition of number, and yet these men in the case of the divine nature pay reverence to number, lest they should exceed the limits of the honour due to the Paraclete. But, O wisest sirs, let the unapproachable be altogether above and beyond number, as the ancient reverence of the Hebrews wrote the unutterable name of God in peculiar characters, thus endeavouring to set forth its infinite excellence. Count, if you must; but you must not by counting do damage to the faith. Either let the ineffable be honoured by silence; or let holy things be counted consistently with true religion. There is one God, and Father, one Only-begotten, and one Holy Ghost. We proclaim each of the hypostases singly; and, when count we must, we do not let an ignorant arithmetic carry us away to the idea of a plurality of Gods.

(Basal of Caesarea, *On the Spirit*, Chapter 18 (44).)

Posted by John W. Reeve on May 26, 2010 in [Church History](#), [Historical Theology](#), [Quoteable](#) | [Permalink](#)
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Indeed! It is our measuring that will lead us to count not on the Spirit that performs the work beyond the perception of the senses but on our own selves the immeasurable definition of Holiness. It is our measuring that reveals our dependence on law, pre-supposition to things unseen, and judgment of what we would wrongly call good or bad that in the end leads only to death and the cursing of Christ Himself. Yes, put away the scales . . . they have no place in an intimate relationship with your creator.

Posted by: David de la Vega | [May 27, 2010 at 09:35 AM](#)

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