

The Biblical Trinity: Encountering the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in Scripture (Kitap İncelemesi)

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*Hassan Usman DINGYADI**

Trinitarian theology has been a subject of lively discussion and debate among Christians, both historically and today. This is partly because the doctrine is not explicitly laid out in Scripture. Nevertheless, influential works such as St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, and Scott R. Swain's *The Trinity: An Introduction* have greatly contributed to understanding the doctrine.

After reviewing various works on the Trinity, I selected Brandon D. Smith's *The Biblical Trinity: Encountering the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in Scripture* (Lexham Press, 2023) because of its strong focus on biblical teachings, engaging writing style, and practical applications of Trinitarian theology.

The Biblical Trinity: Encountering the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Scripture (Lexum Press, 2023), authored by Brandon D. Smith, is a book that provides a comprehensive explanation of Trinitarian theology. The word 'Trinity' never appears in the Scriptures. Smith's work aims not to prove the Trinity but to clarify basic theological principles for understanding the concept.

The book's main focus revolves around understanding the Trinity through biblical passages, emphasising the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This doctrine is critical not only for Christians but also for others interested in understanding Christianity.

Smith claimed that the doctrine of the Trinity could only be understood by following the logic and grammar of Scripture. He laid out four basic theological principles to help understand the Trinity from the Scriptures, including Nature, Relations, Inseparable operations, and Hypostatic Union, strengthening these with several quotations from the Scriptures.

Smith, in his attempt to demonstrate the Trinitarian theology, organised his book into seventeen chapters, under each chapter, a specific topic is supported with a shred of textual evidence from the Bible that strengthens the "Trinitarian theology". The author examines fifteen New Testament passages that shed light on the nature of the Triune God. He delves into several passages, such as Matthew 9:1-8, which illustrates Jesus' authority to forgive sins, and Matthew 28:18-20, which presents the Triune Commission, offering insightful analysis of each.

* İbn Haldun Üniversitesi, hassanusmandingyadi@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0000-6425-4446, Received/Geliş Tarihi: 31/08/2025, Accepted/Kabul Tarihi: 18/09/2025, Published/Yayın Tarihi: 18/09/2025.

Smith applied a canonical approach (Evangelical approach) where he utilises the key New Testament texts in conversation with Old Testament texts to signify the Trinitarian nature of God. This approach facilitates a comprehensive tracing of the natural progression of Trinitarian themes across the entirety of Scripture.

Smith's work is clear and easy, making complex theological concepts understandable. His style of connecting his thoughts with Biblical texts shows his commitment to reading the Scriptures and provides a broad understanding of the Bible. Praying at the end of each chapter stimulates a worshipful engagement with the material.

The book contributes significantly to the literature on the Trinity by shaping the understanding of Trinitarian theology. This paves the way for laypeople, including Christians, to deepen their understanding of Trinitarian theology.

One of the book's distinctive features is its portrayal of the Trinity not merely as a theological doctrine, but as a summons to worship, asserting that this doctrine is not a speculative abstraction, but a vital, living reality that shapes Christian faithfulness and practice. The author furthermore highlights the relational dynamics of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, illustrating both their unity and their distinct personhood.

As a result of the book, the concept of the Trinity becomes clearer, offering readers a richer explanation of the doctrine and emphasising both its biblical foundation and its significance in Christian theology. The book also encourages readers to create a deeper relationship with the Triune God. It also serves as a source for everyone interested in deepening their understanding of the concept of the Trinity.

One potential drawback of this book is its assumption of prior knowledge of theological terms such as 'hypostatic union' and 'inseparable operations,' which may confuse new readers. Additionally, the book oversimplifies complex ideas, such as the concept of 'person' in the Trinity, and relies too heavily on biblical texts without exploring the historical development of the doctrine. This approach may lead to eisegesis, where the author's theological assumptions overshadow the original intent of the texts. While the book references the Old Testament, the primary focus is on New Testament passages, potentially limiting a comprehensive biblical perspective. With the extensive explanation and strong evidence, the book could not end the vigorous debate on the Trinitarian theology.

In conclusion, the Biblical Trinity provides a brief explanation of the Trinity. Although it is an average book, it clarifies the subject in a way that should be known. This is commendable concerning Christianity. I recommend the book as a method and reference for students, researchers and others who wish to expand their knowledge in this field.