

THE TRINITY - Session 1

(Scriptures to memorize).

Genesis 1:26, Genesis 3:22, Matt 3:16-17, Matt 28:19, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, 1 Corinthians 8:6, James 2:19, Isaiah 45:5-6, John 1:1-2, John 16:7

The Doctrine of the Trinity is “God eternally exists as 3 persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God yet there is just one God.”

THINK ABOUT THIS:

Imagine if another believing Christian said to you, “You talk too much about Jesus.” You would think, “How ridiculous is that, can you talk too much about Jesus?”

I once had a Christian say to me, “Your church talks too much about the Holy Spirit, you should be spending more time talking about Jesus.” This comment caught me off guard. I love Jesus. I love talking about Him. I love what He did for me.

Was there something wrong with me talking “too much” about the Holy Spirit, is that even possible?

Of course, not.

This question is based on a misunderstanding of the trinity. This person is elevating the role and person of Jesus to higher importance to that of the Holy Spirit.

It is important to understand the trinity. We serve ONE God who exists in 3 persons, each part of the Trinity carries equal authority and holds equal power.

WHO IS GOD:

Meriam Webster defines God as the supreme or ultimate reality: such as, the Being perfect in power, wisdom, and goodness who is worshipped

We will be discussing the Doctrine of the God-head in this coming series. To expect that we will walk away with a complete understanding of God is not possible, and this is a good thing. If we could sum up God and understand Him completely, He would not be God. We have to accept that there are aspects of God that we will never know this side of Heaven.

Even though we cannot fully understand God it does not mean that we should not spend time learning about Him and His nature. Scripture says that “if you seek me, you will find me.”

Remember, we are not after mere knowledge to fill our heads. We are after an intimate knowledge of our creator. A knowledge that will pull us into deeper awe and wonder, so that our worship of Him will be fuller and richer.

GOD IS RELATIONAL:

The Trinity is an expression of one of God's core qualities. This quality is "God is relational" and we were created to be in relationship with him.

The Trinity is a perfect example of what the covenant relationship looks like. The relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit is: submitted, loving, undividable, and not jealous. There is no power play, no undermining, nothing hidden; totally and completely unified. This is what a true covenant relationship looks like.

Being created in His image (Genesis 1:27), we too were created to be in a relationship. God says in the beginning, "It's not good for man to be alone..." (Genesis 2:18). We were not created because God "needs" to be in a relationship with us, but because he "wants" to be.

The relationship was the original intent of the garden of Eden. He desired to walk in a relationship with us, nothing hidden, open, honest, pure, and undefiled.

Did you know God likes you? In fact, He loves you and longs to spend time with you.

THE TRINITY:

The Doctrine of the trinity is this:

"God eternally exists as 3 persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God yet there is just one God."

The word "Trinity" is never found in the Bible. The word means "tri-unity" or "three-in-oneness." This word is the best way to try to summarize that "God is three persons yet one God."

The Trinity is this:

1. God is three persons.
2. Each person is fully God.
3. There is one God.

A.H. Strong says:

“Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while equal in essence and dignity, stand to each other in an order of personality, office, and operation...”

The subordination of the trinity “the Father to be officially first, the Son second and the Spirit third is perfectly consistent with equality. Priority is not necessarily superiority ... We frankly recognize an eternal subordination of Christ to the Father, but we maintain at the same time that this subordination is a subordination of order, office, and operation, not a subordination of essence.”

There is an order of importance, authority, and “pecking order” this does not state that one is less than the other. Jesus submits to the authority of the Father. This enables them to complete their roles. Our God is a God of order.

“God eternally exists as 3 persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God yet there is just one God.”

We will break down the doctrine of the trinity into two statements,

1. God is one
2. 3 persons

1. ONE GOD:

Psalm 115:1, Isaiah 43:7, Isaiah 42:8, 1 Timothy 2:5, Isaiah 44:6, Deuteronomy 6:4, James 2:19, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Mark 12:29, Jude 1:25, John 10:30, Revelation 4:11

We are monotheists: We serve and worship one God and believe that to love Him is our greatest commandment.

“There is one God”, who is worthy to receive all glory, honor, and power (Revelation 4:11, Psalm 115:1) and we were created to bring Him glory (Isaiah 43:7).

The One-ness of God expressed in scripture:

(Deuteronomy 4:35,39, Isaiah 45:5-6, Mark 12:29, John 10:30, Romans 3:30, James 2:19)

Deuteronomy 6:4

“4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”

2. 3 PERSONS:

Genesis 3:22, Isaiah 6:8

While the “oneness” of God is clearly expressed, we can see in both the old and new testament reference to 3 distinct persons.

The Old Testament uses the plural pronoun “Elohim” to express this trinity such as “us” and “we”.

Genesis 1:26

“Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness,”

In the New Testament, we see the persons of the Father, Son, and Spirit specifically mentioned.

Matthew 3:16-17

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him, I am well pleased.’”

(Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14)

We see the trinity expressed in plural terms, in both the Old and New Testament. The Old Testament references are more general, but we will see later in the following series that these 3 persons of the trinity are seen throughout the Old Testament. The importance to note here is that 3 persons are acting together, all caring the same authority as deity.

THE ROLES:

1. God the Father:

- The creative voice, architect, who planned our redemption. (Gen 1)

2. Jesus the Son:

- The one who carries out the orders and physically accomplishes the work of the Father. (John 1:3, Col 1:16, Ps 33:6, 9; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 1:2)

- Head of the church (Colossians 1:16-20)

- Savior, Redeemer, Messiah, Coming King

3. Holy Spirit:

- Sustains and manifests God's immediate presence (Gen 1:2 Ps 33:6 Ps 139:7).
- The one who Regenerates (John 3:5-8), Sanctifies (Romans 8:13, 15:16, 1 Peter 1:2), and empowers the believer (Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11), Counselor

As we understand that each person of the trinity plays a role or has their part, we gain a more complete picture of who God is and how he works.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW THE GOD-HEAD WORKS TOGETHER:

THE WORKING TOGETHER OF THE TRINITY IN OUR REDEMPTION:

“God the Father planned redemption and sent His Son into the world. The son obeyed the father and accomplished redemption for us. God the Father did not come and die for our sin nor did God the Holy Spirit that was a particular work of the Son. Then, after Jesus ascended back into heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son to apply the redemption to us. In general, the work of the Holy Spirit seems to be to bring to completion the work that has been planned by God the Father and begun by the Son.”

THE WORK OF THE TRINITY IN OUR PRAYERS:

We pray to the Father (Matthew 6:9), through the Son, who intercedes on our behalf (Romans 8:34). We know this is possible because Jesus is the one who intercedes and judges. He is the only part of the Godhead that was tempted as a man (Hebrews 4:14-16). We also know that only the Spirit knows the thoughts of both man and God (1 Corinthians 2:11). This knowledge gives Him the ability to intercede for us in the things that our mouths and hearts cannot express. (Romans 8:26).

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW THE TRINITY WORKS SEPARATELY FROM EACH OTHER:

We can see that the Father does not reveal things to the Son (Matthew 24:36); but yet staying in perfect unity, the Son only does what He sees the Father doing (John 5:19, 8:28, 12:49).

We also see that God is not a man (Numbers 23:19), but Jesus took on the form of a man. (Philippians 2:7)

Also, no one can see the face of God (Exodus 33:20), but Jesus was seen during His earthy ministry.

THE TENSION:

In our minds, we have to hold a tension. We love and serve one God, but there are 3 persons to the God-head. Each person has a distinct role and are separate from the other persons, all while being completely the same. (confused yet?)

Understanding the 3 persons of the Trinity gives us a fuller view of who God is and how He works. It also tells us what role each person of the Trinity fulfills. Remember that God can do anything that He wants, but He does have ways in which He works. He is consistent in his work.

These few examples begin to show a richness that apart from the Trinity we could never see or understand.

Understanding the Trinity helps us understand:

-How we were created / How to live / How to love / How to pray / How to worship

(These are great homework, to dive into a deeper knowledge of our God)

We serve and worship One God that eternally exists as 3 persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God yet there is just one God.”

Clear as mud?...