

e ssentials

Faith in One Accord

1) TITLE: We Believe In the Trinity, the Triune God—Part 2

2) INTRODUCTION

A. We continue our study on *"We Believe In the Trinity, the Triune God"* and our support Scripture texts for this lesson are the same as last week:

i. Matthew 28:18–20—*"[18] And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"*¹

ii. 2nd Corinthians 13:14—*"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*²

B. What we believe...

"We believe there is one living God who eternally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit" (GRCC Statement of Faith).

C. Last time we looked into if God is One, what is the Holy Trinity, the Triune God? We saw examples in understanding the Holy Trinity. And lastly the Trinity and our salvation. We learned that:

¹ All Scripture from the ESV—English Standard Version, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016)) unless noted.

² NIV—The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011)

- i. God the Father took on the role as the *initiator* in salvation.
- ii. Then God the Son was the One who *accomplished* the work of salvation as initiated by the Father.
- iii. And finally, the God the Holy Spirit at *work* in salvation.
- iv. As I noted before, for there is no gift of salvation without the Triune God, the Holy Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

3) KEY POINT

A. Our key point—

- i. The Holy Trinity defines the Christian understanding of one God existing eternally in three Persons: Father, Son, and Spirit.
- ii. These Persons are distinct yet inseparable, sharing the same essence (divine nature).
- iii. And in this study we will look into God's divine attributes equally shared among the Three Persons of the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

4) TRANSITION

- #### A. So, tonight we conclude our study of the importance of why believing in the One God who eternally exists as the Triune God is essential to our faith in Jesus Christ.

TEACHING

I. The Father is God, The Son is God, The Holy Spirit is God.

- #### A. In the Old Testament, there are many names given to God by which the children of Israel addressed God. For example:

1. El Shaddai (Lord God Almighty)
2. El Elyon (The Most High God)
3. Adonai (Lord, Master)
4. Yahweh (Lord, Jehovah)
5. Jehovah Nissi (The Lord My Banner)
6. Jehovah-Raah (The Lord My Shepherd)
7. Jehovah Rapha (The Lord That Heals)
8. El Olam (The Everlasting God)
9. Elohim (God)
10. Qanna (Jealous)
11. Jehovah Jireh (The Lord Will Provide)
12. Jehovah Shalom (The Lord Is Peace)
13. Jehovah Sabaoth (The Lord of Hosts) and there are many others.

B. But notice what Jesus does. When asked how to pray He begins with these words from what we call the Lord's Prayer—*"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name"* (Matthew 6:9 and Luke 11:2).

1. In the Old Testament, God is *seldom* addressed as Father. For example, Isaiah 63:16—*"For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel*

does not acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name."

- a). *"It is rare in the pages of the Hebrew Bible [Old Testament] to find the explicit statement of the Fatherhood of God, although it is often presented implicitly"³ [Parenthetical statement added].*
2. But Jesus comes along and addresses God the Father as something that ought to be normal.
3. And that's the beauty in what Jesus does here, that as God's children He personalizes God as our Father.
 - a). This was a big deal during Jesus's earthly ministry in personalizing and normalizing God as our Heavenly Father.
 - b). And that is the beautiful and wonderful privilege that we have in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, that we get to call God the Father, Abba-Father.
- C. But He is not done. Jesus takes it to another level. Read the astounding claim Jesus made about Himself in John 5:17-18 (CSB)—Jesus said, *"[17] My Father is still working, and I am working also.' [18] This is why the Jews began trying all the more to kill him: Not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God."*
- D. And if that was not enough (for Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving 😊)—He made one of the ultimate statements by not *only* equating Himself with God the Father, but called Himself the *I AM*, thus declaring that HE IS GOD!

³ Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Is 63:16.

- E. God's expression of Himself as *"The I Am"* is shared with the Son of God, Jesus, the second Person of the Trinity.
1. In John 8:58 (NLT) when He was confronted by the Pharisees and the religious leaders of His day, Jesus said—*"[58] I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!" [59] At that point they picked up stones to throw at him."*
 - a). The initial response of the Pharisees was correct for any person who claim to be God or equate themselves to be God, let alone be equal to God the Father—they were to be stoned to death for blasphemy.
 - b). But Jesus was not any other person, for He is fully God as He is fully Man.
 - c). And because He is fully God, He can claim and call Himself the I AM for He is one Person of three who shares the oneness of our One true God.
- F. But Jesus said more about Himself in what we call *the Seven I Am's of Jesus*—all found in the Gospel of John.
1. In John 6:35, Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life."* The physical bread Jesus miraculously provided for thousands of people perished, but the bread Jesus offered is eternal. Through Him we have eternal life.
 2. In John 8:12, Jesus said, *"I am the light of the world."* With Jesus on our side, we never ever again walk in darkness but with the light of Jesus Christ.
 3. In John 10:7-9, Jesus said, *"I am the door."* This speaks of the exclusivity of Jesus as the only way to eternal life.
 4. In John 10:11, Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd."* As the Good Shepherd, Jesus laid His life down that we may have eternal life.

5. In John 11:25-26, Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life."* Jesus's victory over sin and death through His resurrection gives us assurance of the eternal life promised to us.
 6. In John 14:6, Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life."* Jesus, the Son of God assures us of eternal life He promised to us.
 7. And in John 15:1, Jesus said, *"I am the true vine."* Jesus sustains us as we stay connected to Him this side of eternity until we are ushered into eternal life.
- G. Jesus, who is the full physical manifestation of God in the flesh, used the title "I Am" to signify His equality with God, who existed with Him in all eternity and gives us understanding of His ministry here on earth as the full physical revelation of the God of the Old Testament and the God of Eternity.
1. Therefore, Jesus shares the same attribute of God's aseity as One who self-existed with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.
 2. Jesus is God! John 1:1-3—*"[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God. [3] All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."*
- H. Lastly, the Holy Spirit is God—referred to as the Third Person of the Trinity and He is fully God. The biblical foundation for the divinity of the Holy Spirit can be traced through both the Old Testament and New Testament.
1. In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God is depicted as active in creation (Genesis 1:2), empowering individuals for specific tasks (Judges 14:6), and inspiring the prophets (Ezekiel 2:2).

2. In the New Testament, the identity and divinity of the Holy Spirit become more explicit. Jesus promises the coming of the Holy Spirit, referring to the Spirit as "another Advocate" or "Comforter" (John 14:16-17).
 - a). This suggests a distinct personhood of the Spirit while affirming the continuity of divine presence in His one essence with the Father and the Son who is portrayed as a guide and teacher empowering the believers in Christ Jesus.
3. The pivotal event highlighting the divinity of the Holy Spirit is Pentecost, as narrated in the Book of Acts (Acts 2:1-4).
 - a). The Spirit descends upon the apostles in the form of tongues of fire, empowering them to speak in different languages.
 - b). This transformative event signifies the beginning of the Spirit's work in the Christian community and underscores the Spirit's divine nature.
4. What are the implications for us today? As we desire to understand the Holy Spirit, He holds profound theological implications for Christian belief and practice.
 - a). The Spirit is not an impersonal force but a distinct person within the Trinity, participating fully in the divine essence.
 - b). This understanding enriches the Christian concept of God's immanence—God's active presence in the world.
5. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit facilitates the believer's relationship with God the Father.

- a). The Holy Spirit serves as the believer's advocate and intercessor (Romans 8:26-27), fostering communion with God.
 - b). The Holy Spirit also distributes spiritual gifts to believers, empowering them for service within the Christian community (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).
 - c). One of the most significant names that we as followers of Jesus can utter from our mouth is Abba Father.
 - (i) Though we are to maintain an air of holiness and awe of our Heavenly Father, we have been given the right and privilege to call Him Abba Father.
 - (ii) Jesus addressed the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane as Abba Father in Mark 14:36.
 - (iii) In Galatians 4:6, Jesus the Son of God is equated to God the Holy Spirit.
 - (iv) And because we are now adopted into His family, we now have this intimacy, a personal relationship with God the Father who placed the Spirit of His Son Jesus within our hearts through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we can cry out *"Abba! Father!"* (Romans 8:15).
6. In ecclesiology (the study of the Church), the Holy Spirit is recognized as the unifying force within the body of believers.
- a). The Spirit imparts diverse gifts, fostering unity amid diversity (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Ephesians 4:3).

b). The Church, as the indwelling place of the Holy Spirit is called to bear witness to God's presence and point people to Jesus, while the Holy Spirit convicts the people in the world of their sins (John 16:8).

(i) *"The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by declaring Him or making Him known. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to throw light on Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God. Christ is to be on center stage; that is the desire of both the Father and the Spirit."*⁴

7. Therefore, the recognition of the Holy Spirit as God is an essential component of Christian theology, embedded in the doctrine of the Trinity.

a). Grounded in Scripture, articulated through historical creeds, and bearing significant theological implications, this knowledge shapes the Christian understanding of God's nature and engagement with the world.

b). The Holy Spirit, as a distinct person within the Trinity, continues to inspire, guide, and empower believers on their spiritual journey.

II. Shared Attributes of Our Triune God.

A. What are God's attributes that can help us understand who He is? We've established that He is the self-existing God who is the Uncaused Creator of the universe and everything in our life.

B. But moreover, as one Bible teacher pointed out, Pastor Tony Evans writes, *"God possesses a number of attributes or essential qualities that are inherent in his*

⁴ Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997), Jn 16:14.

essential being. These attributes are eternally held by the Triune God and are true of each member of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit."⁵

C. So, here are some divine attributes that the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit all share:

1. *The Transcendence of God:* God is before, above, and totally distinct or transcendent from his creation. God is unique, one of a kind. No comparison can be made between God and any portion of his creation because there is nothing or no one to compare him to (Is 6:1; 40:18; 55:8–9).
2. *The Infinity of God:* God is eternal with no limitations except those imposed by his own nature. He is not bound by the succession of events. Jesus claimed eternity in his dealings with the Jews. The Bible also calls the Holy Spirit "eternal" (Ps 90:2; John 8:56–58; Heb 9:14).
3. *The Self-Existence of God:* God does not depend on anyone or anything outside of himself for his life. He is the ground of existence in himself. God is independent in his Being and in everything else—his virtues, decrees, and works. He also causes everything in creation to depend on him (Ps 50:12; Jer 10:10–13).
4. *The Self-Sufficiency of God:* God is totally and absolutely complete within himself. Jesus claimed his self-sufficiency in predicting his death, making it clear that he retained complete control over his life (Ps 23:1–6; John 10:17–18; Acts 17:24–25).
5. *The Holiness of God:* God's intrinsic and transcendent purity is the standard of righteousness to which the whole universe must conform. God's holiness is the

⁵ Tony Evans, *The Tony Evans Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible, 2019), 1556.

key to understanding everything else about Him; this attribute infiltrates all the other attributes. Jesus is called holy, and the Holy Spirit's name reveals his divine character (Isa 6:1–3; Luke 1:35; Acts 1:8; 4:27–30; 1 Pet 1:13–19; Rev 4:8).

6. *The Sovereignty of God:* God rules and controls all of his creation, including human affairs. God sits on the universe's throne as Lord. Everything that happens comes about because he either directly causes it or permits it to occur. Nothing enters into history or could ever exist outside of history that does not come under God's absolute control (Job 23:13; 42:2; Ps 115:3; 135:6; Dan 4:28–37).
7. *The Glory of God:* God's glory is the visible manifestation of his attributes. The word translated "glory" in the Old Testament means "to be weighted, to be heavy." When we discuss God's glory, we mean someone with an awesome reputation because he has awesome splendor (Exod 33:12–23; Ps 29:3; Luke 2:9; 1 Tim 6:15–16; Rev 21:23).
8. *The Omniscience of God:* God has intuitive knowledge of all things both actual and potential. This word is a compound of two words: *omni*, which means "all," and *science*, which has to do with knowledge. There is absolutely nothing God doesn't know (Ps 139:1–6; 147:5; Isa 40:13–14; Heb 4:13).
9. *The Omnipresence of God:* God's complete essence is fully present in all places at all time. There is no place in creation where God does not exist in all his divine fullness. God's presence is in the sphere of immensity and infinitude. Infinitude (or infinity) means that which is without limit. Immensity refers to that which cannot be contained (1 Kgs 8:26–27; Ps 139:7–12).
10. *The Omnipotence of God:* God is all-powerful. But his omnipotence involves more than just raw power. Rather, it involves the exercise of his prerogative to use his unlimited power to reflect his divine glory and accomplish his sovereign

will. The unlimited power of deity is also ascribed to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit (Ps 62:11; 147:5; Matt 19:26; Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 2:4; Eph 3:8–21).

11. *The Wisdom of God:* God has the unique ability to so interrelate his attributes that he accomplishes his predetermined purposes by the best means possible. God's ability to use his attributes in perfect wisdom is unique because no one else can accomplish this (Ex. 31:1–5; Dan 2:19–20; Rom 11:33; 16:27; Jas 3:13–18).
12. *The Goodness of God:* This attribute describes the collective perfections of God's nature and benevolence of his acts. God is good by nature and good in what he does. The goodness of God is the standard by which anything called good must be judged. Jesus was also called "good teacher" (Ps 107:1–15; 119:68; Mark 10:17–18; Jas 1:17).
13. *The Wrath of God:* God's wrath is his necessary, righteous retribution against sin. God's wrath is not an easy subject to consider, but it is as integral to his nature as any of his other perfections. The Bible has more to say about God's wrath than about his love. God's wrath against sin arises by necessity because of the justice of his law and the righteousness of his character. God must judge sin, although he takes no pleasure in punishing the unrighteous (Exod 34:7; Deut 32:41; Ezek 33:11; Rom 5:8–9; 11:22).
14. *The Love of God:* God's love is his joyful self-determination to reflect the goodness of his will and glory by meeting the needs of mankind. God did not become love after he made the world and mankind. God's love is eternal. In and of himself, God is love. God's love is also inextricably tied to his own glory (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Eph 1:4–6; 1 John 4:7–21).
15. *The Grace of God:* Grace is God's inexhaustible supply of goodness that does for mankind what they could never do for themselves. God has supplied every true

believer with a magnificent provision of grace. We can't earn it and we don't deserve it, but he has made it abundantly available to all mankind in general (common grace) and to believers in particular. God's endless supply of grace also means that it is sufficient for our every need (2 Cor 9:8; 12:9; Eph 2:1–10; 1 Tim 4:10; Heb 4:16).

16. *The Veracity of God:* God is always reliable and completely truthful. He cannot lie. The first challenge Satan made against God was to question his truthfulness to Eve (Gen 3:1–5). Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are also called true and "the truth" (Num 23:19; Heb 6:16–18; 1 John 4:6; 5:20).

17. *The Immutability of God:* The immutability of God means he never alters his purposes or changes his nature. Immutability means not having the ability to change. As the eternal Son of God, Jesus also does not change (Mal 3:6; Heb 12:17; 13:8; Jas 1:17).⁶

a). Again, Pastor Tony Evans shared that *"Because human beings are uniquely created in God's image (Gen 1:26), we share some of his attributes such as love and anger. These are called God's communicable attributes. But God also possesses divine attributes that belong to him alone, known as his incommunicable attributes. These include perfections such as his eternity and absolute holiness."*⁷

III. The Unique God of Christianity.

A. Why is our One living God, the Triune God of Christianity unique among other religions of the world?

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1556

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1556

1. Our God who is one in essence with three distinct Persons of the Father, Son and Spirit is unique and to be adored and worshipped because out His love and grace, He desires to make Himself known to humanity—created beings uniquely made in God's own image.
 2. And in making Himself known, the apostle Paul writes in 1st Timothy 2:3-6 (NLT)—*"[3] This is good and pleases God our Savior, [4] who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. [5] For, There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. [6] He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time."*
- B. All other religions are working to get to some kind of god or to be a god. But the God of Christianity came to us, the human race, and Jesus, the Son of God became like us—human—without ever sinning.
1. Yet Jesus died for our sins that we may be forgiven of our sins and be free from the bondage of sin. And have a relationship with the self-existent Uncaused God of creation.
- C. The uniqueness of the God of Christianity in salvation stems from the Triune nature: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
1. Together in their divine essence and oneness work in unity to rescue sinners, ensuring a cohesive purpose and plan.
 2. This divine collaboration of the Father, Son and Spirit distinguishes Christianity, offering a singular path to redemption through the unified efforts of the Trinity, our Triune God of heaven and Scripture.

IV. CONCLUSION

A. In closing, understanding our One living God who eternally exists in three distinct Persons is essential to our Christian faith for:

1. *God the Father* desires that no one should perish but have everlasting life through...
2. *God the Son Jesus* who is the full bodily manifestation and divine being of the Father mediates between God and humanity...
3. ...for as new creation in Christ Jesus, human individuals are made spiritually alive through the power and help of *God the Spirit*, who dwells within every believer in Christ Jesus.

B. Reginald Heber (1783-1826) *"attended Brasenose College, Oxford, where he won a number of awards in English and Latin. He received a fellowship to All Souls College, and later became rector at Hodnet, Shropshire. In 1823, he became, somewhat reluctantly, Bishop of Calcutta (Kolkata), India. Most of Heber's hymns were published posthumously; 57 of them appeared in Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year (London: J. Murray, 1827)."*⁸

*"In death, Reginald's work carried on, for it turned out that during his time at the tiny church in Hodnet, Reginald had written a number of hymns. He never sought publication; perhaps too humble, or perhaps thinking his work was not good enough. But his wife saw the beauty in her husband's work, and she put a collection of her husband's hymns together and had them published. Fifty-seven hymns made up the collection, and all fifty-seven are still being used to this day. Of the collection, one stood out far above the others: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!"*⁹

⁸ http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/h/e/b/e/heber_r.htm

⁹ <https://www.hymncharts.com/2022/09/07/the-story-behind-holy-holy-holy/>

Stanza 4— *Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!*
 All Thy works shall praise Thy name
 In earth and sky and sea
 Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
 God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

1. Isaiah 6:3 says, *"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"*

a). Is declaring holy three times an indicator for our One living God's Triune nature? Just a thought.

2. 2nd Corinthians 13:14 (NIV)—*"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*

C. Therefore, this is what we believe...

"We believe there is one living God who eternally exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit" (GRCC Statement of Faith).

To God Be The Glory Forever and Ever. Amen!