

CAN I ASK THAT? | FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 26 | TRINITY SUNDAY

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE: "CAN ONE GOD REALLY BE A 'TRINITY'?"

As the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit "God is infinite, and we are finite; there will always be more of his character to discover; more of his love to experience and more of his power to use for his purposes." (Francis Chan)

OPENING PRAYER

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. We praise you God, our Father for creating us, loving us, and providing for us. **I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.** We praise you Lord Jesus Christ, for coming to earth to live, die, and rise again so we could experience forgiveness and new life. **I believe in the Holy Spirit.** We praise you Holy Spirit for living in us and shaping us into the image of Christ. In the triune name of God we pray, Amen.

CONNECTING QUESTION

Discuss the opening prayer. What thoughts or questions do you have about the Trinity – God being One in Three and Three in One?

SCRIPTURE READING

Read Aloud & Meditate on God's Word: Colossians 1:3-6a, 9-14; Matthew 28:16-20

WATCH VIDEO

Video Presenter: Pastor Mike Curtis

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead as you work through the questions in this guide. Cover what your time allows and encourage everyone to finish the guide on his or her own.

1. God relates to the world in three different ways: God the Father: the source and origin of life. He loves and invites you into a relationship with him. (See I John 3:1) God the Son: God in the flesh as Jesus. By his death and resurrection, Jesus brings you into a relationship with God by removing the barriers of sin and rebellion. (See John 3:16-17) God the Holy Spirit: God's Spirit living in you makes this relationship a reality and gives you power to live the Christian life. (See Ephesians 3:16-17a). In which one or all three of these ways do you want to relate to God, in what situation?
2. Read Colossians 1:3-6a, 9-14. While Paul does not use the term "Trinity," he weaves concepts that reflect Trinitarian theology into his letter. How do you see the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit referenced in this passage? How do you see the work of the Trinity in the following scriptures: Matthew 3:16-17; Romans 8:9-11; Galatians 4:4-6; 1 John 4:13-15?
3. In Colossians 1:3, Paul distinguishes the Father as a distinct person and underscores His paternal relationship with Jesus Christ. In Colossians 1:13-14 the redemptive work of the Son is described. What does Jesus do? How is the Spirit's activity described in Colossians 1:9?

4. God is three distinct persons, and one in essence, nature, and action. God's plan of salvation to restore you into a right relationship with him was carried out by Christ and meant to be understood and lived out through the power of the Spirit, under the will of the Father. (See Ephesians 1:3, 13). What different roles do you see enacted?

5. What does Jesus instruct his disciples to do in Matthew 28:16-20? In whose name? The use of the word "name" in the singular rather than "names" suggests a unity of essence among the three persons. Why does this matter as Jesus gives you a mission also? How is Jesus' promise to be with you always carried out?

6. God the Father's plan of salvation can be seen throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament, his priority was explaining to his people that he is ONE God (See Deuteronomy 6:4). In the next steps of his progressive revelation, God the Father sent his Son to earth to dwell among his people (See John 1:14). He then sent his Spirit to dwell within his people (See John 14:26; Romans 5:5) (Tara-Leigh Cobble - "Joy of the Trinity") What are his expectations of you? How does God revealing himself and meeting you where you are increase your trust and worship of him?

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

God's ways are higher than your ways. Though he reveals himself using the Scriptures, you cannot fully grasp who he is. A mathematical illustration may help you understand. You trust it is true, even if it does not make sense.

The mathematical equation $1+1+1$ cannot equal 1. However, $1 \times 1 \times 1$ does equal 1. Just as multiplication is a higher form of math than addition, so God's ways are higher than yours. Your heavenly Father does not ask you to understand his triune nature. He asks you to trust in him and leave the details to him. As you ponder the mystery of who God is, also turn your attention to what he does. God has not revealed his triune nature to confuse you. He desires to show you the many aspects of the love and work of salvation. (Lutheran Study Bible)

How have you, or do you want to experience God's love in the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit?

SCRIPTURES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Ephesians 4:4-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17; 1 Peter 1:1-2

CLOSING PRAYER

We exalt you oh God – One in Three and Three in One. We don't understand the mystery of the Trinity, but we thank you for giving us life in your name. Praise you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for the work you do in us. In your almighty name we pray, Amen. (Close by praying 2 Corinthians 13:14 for the person on your right. If not in a group, speak it as a blessing over yourself.) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you _____. Amen.

Our Father ...

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