



The Trinity

Key Doctrines for Starting and Finishing Strong

LESSON 4



"A true and accurate knowledge of the Trinity is a blessing in and of itself...the Trinity is the highest revelation God has made of Himself to His people. It is the capstone, the summit, and the brightest star in the firmament of divine truths."

JAMES WHITE

In this lesson, we will study two essential subjects:

- **What is the Trinity?**
- **What is the Role of the Trinity in Creation, Salvation, Commissioning, Intercession, Inspiration, and Baptism?**

Are the following statements true or false? (circle one)



- God is three gods who act as one. T F
- There are other gods, but God is the highest of them all. T F
- You can be wrong about the Trinity and still be saved. T F

Be on the lookout for the answers to these questions as we study the Word of God.

What is the Trinity?

Tertullian, one of the early church fathers, was right in affirming that *the doctrine of the Trinity must be divinely revealed, not humanly constructed*. It is so absurd from a human standpoint that no one could have invented it. True Christians do not hold to the doctrine of the Trinity because it is *self-evident* or *logically cogent*; we hold to it because God has revealed that this is what He is like. Someone has said: *Try to explain it, and you'll lose your mind; but try to explain it away, and you'll lose your soul*.

Here is a working definition of the Trinity—

Within the One Being that is God, there exists eternally three *co-equal* Persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which are *one in essence* and *distinct in personality*.

This definition tells us several important things about the Trinity:

- A. The doctrine of the Trinity rests upon the truth that there is only one God.
- **1 Timothy 2:5**—“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”
 - **Ephesians 4:6**—“one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”
 - **Isaiah 45:5a, 6**—“I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides Me there is no God...That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other.”
 - **Isaiah 43:10b**—“Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me.”
 - **Isaiah 44:6, 8b**—“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me...Is there any God besides Me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none.’”
 - **Deuteronomy 6:4**—“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!”

The biblical and historical belief held by Christians and Jews is called Monotheism, which is the belief in One God.

- B. This definition of the Trinity insists that there are three divine persons. We are NOT saying that there are *three divine beings who make one divine being*; that would be contradictory. The Bible teaches that each person within the Godhead has divine attributes and the three are qualitatively the same.
1. According to John 6:27, who is recognized as God? _____ (See also Romans 1:7; Galatians 1:1)
 2. According to Titus 2:13, who is recognized as God? _____ (See also Romans 9:5; John 1:1,14)
 3. According to Acts 5:3-4, who is recognized as God? _____
- C. Our definition tells us that the relationship among these divine persons is eternal. There was never a time when the Father was not the Father. There was never a time when the Son was not the Son. There was never a time when the Spirit was not the Spirit.

The Trinity in Creation

- A. According to Genesis 1:1, 1 Corinthians 8:6, and Hebrews 1:2, which person of the Godhead created the heavens and the earth?
- _____
- B. According Genesis 1:2, who else was involved in the creative work?
- _____
- C. What does John 1:1-3 claim about Christ?
- _____ (See also Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 1:2)
- D. According to Genesis 1:26, who created man? _____

The Jews were monotheists (belief in one God), therefore, the use of the word "Us" cannot refer to multiple Gods. Theologians believe that the use of the word "Us" is a reference to *the Triune God* who is *One in essence* made up of *three distinct persons*.

The Trinity in Salvation

A. According to Ephesians 1:4, what part of salvation does God the Father have?

B. According to Ephesians 1:7, what part of salvation does God the Son have?

C. According to Ephesians 1:13, what part of salvation does God the Spirit have, according to?

It can be said that:

- The Father *thought it, or planned* our redemption.
- The Son *bought it, or purchased* our redemption.
- The Spirit *wrought it, or personalized* our redemption.

The Trinity in Commissioning

Throughout the Bible, we see God commissioning or sending people out to do a spiritual work. Let's consider how the Trinity is involved in commissioning.

A. Read Isaiah 6:1-8. What three words did the Seraphim use to describe God?

This three-fold antiphonal cry (*Trisagion*) from the Seraphim is what most believe to be an acknowledgment to each person in the Godhead. Holy is the Father! Holy is the Son! Holy is the Spirit!

B. After Isaiah's revelation (vv.1-4) and restoration (vv.6-7), who commissioned him to preach to Israel? (v.8) _____

C. Who commissioned the disciples to preach in John 20:21?

_____ (See also John 15:16)

D. Who commissioned Barnabas and Saul for the work of church planting? (Read Acts 13:1-3)

The Trinity in Intercession

Since our God is One God who has revealed Himself in three persons, *to which One must we pray?* Here are just a few passages that show how the entire Trinity is involved in *prayer*. Identify and circle each person of the Godhead.

- **Romans 15:30**—“*Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.*”
- **2 Corinthians 13:14**—“*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*”
- **Ephesians 2:18**—“*for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.*”

A. According to Romans 8:26-27, what role does God the Spirit have in our prayer life?

B. According to Hebrews 7:22-25, what role does God the Son have in our prayer life?

C. Why did Jesus say that we can have confidence when we pray, according to Matthew 6:26-32?

D. Read Luke 11:13. Of what can we be assured, since God the Father knows our needs?

It is appropriate to *direct prayers of thanks and petition* to each member of the Trinity, as well as to all of them collectively. However, we are instructed from the Scriptures that prayers are to be offered according to the merits of Jesus (*John 14:13-14; 16:24*).

The Trinity in Inspiration

A. According to 2 Timothy 3:16, by whom are the Scriptures inspired?

B. What role did God the Spirit have in the writing of the Bible? (*Read 2 Peter 1:20-21*)

C. Who did Jesus say the Bible testifies about? (*Read John 5:39*)

The Trinity in Baptism

Read Matthew 3:16-17 and identify each person within the Godhead at the baptism of Jesus.

A. _____ (*v.16a*)

B. _____ (*v.16b*)

C. _____ (*v.17*)

As you can see, the doctrine of the Trinity is all over the pages of Scripture. Although the word "*Trinity*" is not used, it is nevertheless *undeniable*. Because this doctrine is so deep in mystery, some try to use analogies to help explain it. However, every human analogy breaks down at some point because you cannot use anything in *time* to fully explain that which is *eternal*.

Reflection:

How can we apply this teaching about the Trinity? There are many things that we can do, like *seek to know Him more in study or obey His commands as revealed in the Bible*. However, one of the greatest ways to apply theology is to worship or to praise God in adoring praise!

Reginald Heber wrote a hymn that beautifully sums up the doctrine of the Trinity in song. Let's use our imperfect voices to lift up praise, acapella in style.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning, our song shall rise to Thee,
Holy, Holy, Holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and Seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and evermore shall be.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Tho' the darkness hide Thee,
Tho' the eye of sinful man, Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy! There is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

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!

Closing:

Application questions: Being a Doer of the Word

- **2 Timothy 3:16**—*"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching [what is right], for reproof [what is not right], for correction [how to get right], for training in righteousness [how to stay right]; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."*
1. What did I learn ("teaching")?
 2. Where do I fall short ("reproof")?
 3. What do I need to do about it ("correction")?
 4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life ("training")?

Answer Key:

Are the following statements true or false?

- F
- F
- F

What is the Trinity?

B.

1. the Father
2. Christ
3. the Holy Spirit

The Trinity in Creation

- A. the Father
- B. the Holy Spirit
- C. He is God and was present at creation
- D. Us

The Trinity in Salvation

- A. He chose us
- B. He purchased us
- C. He sealed us

The Trinity in Commissioning

- A. holy, holy, holy
- B. the Trinity
- C. Jesus
- D. the Holy Spirit

The Trinity in Intercession

- A. He intercedes for us
- B. He makes intercession for us
- C. He knows our needs and will provide for us
- D. He will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him

The Trinity in Inspiration

- A. God
- B. inspired man to write
- C. Himself

The Trinity in Baptism

- A. God the Son
- B. God the Holy Spirit
- C. God the Father

Holy Habits Weekly Devotion



This week's memory verse: **2 Corinthians 13:14**—*"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."*

This week's holy habit: **Service**

Jesus Christ is the quintessential servant leader. He provides a pure and beautiful example of serving alongside the brethren with an abundant, unceasing spirit of love and humility. He truly *"gave His life as a ransom for many"* (Matt.20:28). Through His life and death, His followers in the world have been forever changed. In turn, their adoration for the King and the indwelling Spirit compels them to follow the example of service to the body. Our God-given talents and gifts become tools of worship as we minister to and serve others. Edifying others glorifies the Father. Not only is the Gospel spread through service, it is demonstrated in how we live. He is the loving *Light* that illuminates our light and draws followers to respond in faith and obedience.

DAY 1 Read 1 Peter 4:10.

- Self-reflect on these two questions: Are you using your gifts and talents for the Lord? How can you be using them for His highest good?

DAY 2 Romans 12:9-13.

- Pray specifically for an opportunity to practice hospitality or serve someone in a way that is not part of your regular routine.

DAY 3 Read 2 Chronicles 15:7.

- Service requires sacrifice and putting God's will above our wants and comfort. Take note of the obstacles and challenges that affect your service. Pray for the removal of these hindrances and/or for physical assistance.

DAY 4 Read Galatians 5:13.

- Pray for and seize the opportunity to serve brothers and sisters without expecting or accepting anything in return.

DAY 5 Read 1 Samuel 12:24.

- Pray for someone who needs some encouragement. Make it a point to reach out and contact that person.

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