

The Trinity 101



scan or click
me to watch
the video

Summary

The concept of the Trinity is hard to understand! It makes sense that we would struggle to fully comprehend Him when we consider that

God is:

all-knowing (omniscient)
all-powerful (omnipotent)
everywhere at all times (omnipresent)
infinite

We are:

limited in understanding
finite

Although we may not be able to fully understand God, we can still trust Him.

As a church, we believe in one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. He is totally loving and completely holy.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE TRINITY?

- The Bible tells us that there is one supreme God who exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (who became human as Jesus), and the Holy Spirit.
- This is not to be confused with God being three different Gods. He is one God in three persons.
- We often refer to this as the Trinity, the Godhead, or God as a triune being. Although these words do not appear in the Bible, the concept is found throughout Scripture:

(Elohim)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1 NIV

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in Our image, in Our likeness..."
Genesis 1:26a NIV

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."
Matthew 28:18-19 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.
2 Corinthians 13:14 NIV

TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE TRINITY

- It's impossible to fully wrap our minds around the concept of the Trinity. All our attempts to fully explain the mystery of who the Divine is, and how He operates and exists, ultimately fall short. Here are a few illustrations that attempt to help us understand:
 1. US!
Each of us plays multiple roles all at once, such as that of father/mother, son/daughter, employee, friend, etc... But this doesn't quite encapsulate the Trinity.
 2. WATER
Water can take the form of vapor, liquid, or ice. Again, this doesn't quite work because the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not different forms of God, they are all God, coexisting all at the same time.
 3. 3D SHAPE PASSING THROUGH A 2D PLANE
Check out this illustration in the BibleProject video, **God**, which is probably the most helpful of these illustrations. It gives us a picture of how our limited perspective (the 2D plane) might perceive God (the 3D shape). We would never be able to grasp all of Him at once, because our being is so fundamentally different than His.

3 PERSONS OF THE TRINITY

God the Father

- God the Father is the
 - » Source of life:

...yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord,

The Trinity 101



scan or click
me to watch
the video

Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.
1 Corinthians 8:6 NIV

Life comes from the Father Himself, and He has allowed the Son to have life in Himself as well.
John 5:26 NCV

» Creator of the universe:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1 NIV

*By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth.*
Psalm 33:6 NIV

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.
Hebrews 11:3 NIV

» Author of our salvation:

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.
John 3:16-17 NIV

God the Son

- John 1:1 refers to Jesus as “the Word” (originally “logos”, see definition below) and tells us...

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
John 1:1 NIV

- When Christ came to earth and took on human form as Jesus, He made it possible for us to see the character of God more clearly.

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.
Colossians 1:15a NLT

- Throughout the Gospels, we see that Jesus always prays to the Father, living a life of devotion and submission to God the Father.
- God works through Son to

» Bring life:

...yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.
1 Corinthians 8:6 NIV

» Create the universe:

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him.
Colossians 1:15-16 NIV

» Fulfill God the Father's salvation plan:

For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation...
Colossians 1:19-22 NIV

God, for whom and through whom everything was made, chose to bring many children into glory. And it was only right that He should make Jesus, through His suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation.
Hebrews 2:10 NLT

The Trinity 101

scan or click
me to watch
the video



God the Holy Spirit

- When Jesus left earth, He sent us the Holy Spirit.

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:7 NIV

- The Holy Spirit is our
» Helper:

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

Romans 8:26 NIV

- » Advocate, Counsellor, & Comforter:

And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever;

John 14:16 ESV

But the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthen, Standby), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will help you remember everything that I have told you.

John 14:26 AMP

→ Notice that these verses refer to the Holy Spirit as “paraklētos” in these underlined words. See definition below.

- » Empowerment:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 1:8 NIV

God the Father works through God the Son,
by the power of God the Holy Spirit.

- We see a beautiful example of all three persons of the Trinity present at Jesus’ baptism:

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 3:16-17 NIV

WHY IS THE TRINITY IMPORTANT TO US?

- The truth of how the Trinity operates in perfect harmony and unison to outwork God’s plan and purposes in the world is true in our personal lives too!
- God is our source of life, our creator, and the author of our salvation. It is through Jesus Christ that we access God the Father. And it is by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can live in the resurrection life (where sin left us for dead, He’s given us new life!) that He’s called us to.
- God the Father works in our lives personally through God the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit.

HOW DOES THE TRINITY RELATE TO THE GOSPEL?

- It’s through Jesus Christ that God demonstrates His LOVE for the world.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 NIV

The Trinity 101



scan or click
me to watch
the video

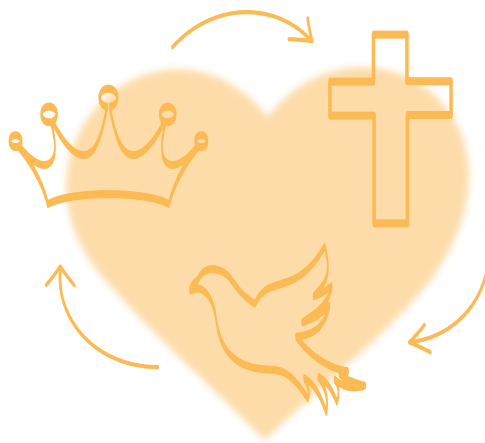
But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8 NIV

- 1 John 4:16 summarizes who God is by stating simply:

God is love.
1 John 4:16b NIV



- Love exists in the relationship between more than one person. The Trinity relationship reveals that God has eternally been, and will always be, a God of LOVE, as embodied in the loving relationship between God the Father and God the Son, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, and God the Holy Spirit and God the Father.



- LOVE is the foundation of who God is, and the Gospel (aka “good news”) is based on this God of Love.
- As children and followers of God, we too are called to love, and to be known by our love for one another, as God the Father works in our lives, through God the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.
John 13:35 NIV

Definitions

‘ēlōhīm: Hebrew noun that is the plural form of ‘ēlōha, meaning god or God. Therefore, ‘ēlōhīm can denote gods, rulers, judges, divine ones, or the supreme “God”, who we believe is trinitarian in nature.

λόγος

logos: Greek noun translated in the Bible as word, saying, account, Word, and Christ. It refers to God’s divine revelation of Himself to us. This revelatory Spirit of Christ was embodied and became human in the person of Jesus.

omnipotent: all-powerful

omnipresent: everywhere at all times

omniscient: all-knowing

παράκλητος

paraklētos: Greek noun used in all these verses to refer to the Holy Spirit. It describes someone who pleads another’s cause, or an intercessor, and is often translated as comforter, advocate, helper, and counselor.

The Trinity: the Christian belief in one God in three persons

The Trinity 101

scan or click
me to watch
the video



Let's Discuss...

- We'll talk more about our initial conceptions of the Trinity in **Let's Discuss...The Trinity PART 1_Illustrations that Fall Short**, but for now, what draws you to want to learn more about the Trinity?
- James talks about how God is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and infinite – while we as humans have limited knowledge. Why should we even bother trying to understand a concept like the Trinity, or any aspect of God for that matter, when we know we'll never fully be able to?
- When John says "God is love" in 1 John 4:16b NIV, does this line up with everything else we see in Scripture about God? Are there any contradictory qualities of His character? Does this statement line up with your experience?

Let's Pray...

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in Our image, in Our likeness..."
Genesis 1:26a NIV

- Take a moment to meditate and imagine the scene depicted in this verse in your mind's eye. All three members of the Trinity present, at the dawn of creation, deciding to create YOU in His/Their image. As you reflect on this, sit in silence for a few moments and step into the scene yourself. What do you want to say to the triune God?

Let's Go Deeper...

- **God** by BibleProject [video]
- **Our Statement of Beliefs** by Hillsong Church [article]
- **Delighting in the Trinity** by Michael Reeves [book]
- **God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life** by Catherine LaCugna [book]
- **The Trinity** by In Our Time: Religion [podcast]
- **Yoke | Darrell Johnson** at Hillsong Church [video]