

**I. Introduction.****A. Why study the Trinity?**

1. Nothing is more important than to know, worship and love God as He truly is.
2. The work of salvation is grounded in the work of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Denial of the Trinity is spiritually fatal. **1**
3. Many Christians claim to believe in the Trinity but can't defend this doctrine from Scripture, making them vulnerable to savage wolves. **15** Acts 20:28-31

**B. How do we approach the study of the doctrine of the Trinity?**

1. We can only know this truth through special revelation.
2. This is a systematic topical study of the overall teaching of Scripture. **2**

**II. God's triune nature is progressively revealed throughout the entire Bible.****A. What is progressive revelation? I Pet. 1:10-12 I Cor. 13:12**

1. Truths which are partially revealed earlier in Scriptures are made more clear as redemptive history unfolds.
2. For example, the gospel of Christ is contained in Genesis, but becomes much more plain as God's revelation unfolds. Gen. 3:15,21 4:4 15:6 Heb. 1:1-2

**B. God's triune nature is partially revealed in the Old Testament. **3****

1. The unity of God. Dt. 6:4 *Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!*
2. The plurality of God. Gen. 1:26 3:22 Isa. 6:8
  - a. *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..."*
  - b. *Behold the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil..."*
  - c. *Then I heard the voice of the Lord...whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?*
3. The Angel of the LORD (a pre-incarnate manifestation of the Son?). Gen. 16:7 18:1ff 19:1ff 31:11,13 Ex. 3:1-6 Judges 2:1-5 6:11-12 13:3,17-22 Zech. 12:8 13:6 *Now the LORD appeared to him... We will surely die, for we have seen God.*
4. The distinction between the Father and the Son (Messiah). Psalm 45:6-7 110:1 2:7,11-12 Isa. 7:14 9:6 Mt. 22:44-45 1:23 Heb. 1:5,8-9,13
  - a. *Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; ... Therefore God, Your God has anointed You with the oil of joy above Your fellows.*
  - b. *The LORD says to my Lord; Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for your feet.*
  - c. *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.*
5. The Holy Spirit. Psalm. 139:7 Neh. 9:20 Gen. 1:2 Job 33:4 Ps. 104:30 33:6 Isa. 63:10 Num. 11:17 Mic. 3:8 Ezek. 2:2 II Pe. 1:20f Joel 2:28 Ezek. 36:14ff
  - a. *And the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters...*
  - b. *But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit...*
  - c. *It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind...*
6. The Father, Son and Spirit all in the same text! Isa. 48:16 *Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit.*

**C. The doctrine of the Trinity is more fully explained in the New Testament.**

1. The incarnation of the Son. John 1:1-3,14 3:16 Gal. 4:4 Heb. 1:1-2,6 I Jo. 4:9
2. The outpouring of the Spirit. John 14-17 Acts 2:4 Ro. 8:9-11 I Cor. 3:16 Ga. 4:6

- D. The New Testament contains many explicitly Trinitarian statements. **4** Matt. 3:16-17 28:19 John 14:15-23 II Cor. 13:14 Eph. 3:14-19 II Th. 2:13-14 I Pe. 1:2 Rev. 1:4-5
1. *After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
  2. *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*
  3. But not I John 5:7-8.

### III. How do we explain the Trinity?

- A. We need to be very careful because we don't want to misrepresent God. Ro. 11:33ff
1. Our inability, as finite creatures, to comprehend our infinite God is limited. **5**
  2. Is there any analogy which helps us understand this truth? **6**
  3. Is the Trinity a contradiction? God is not One in the same sense He is Three.
- B. God is One: There is only one God and He is of one indivisible Essence (Substance or Nature). **7** Deut. 6:4 4:35 I Kings 8:60 Ex. 20:3 Isa. 44:6 I Cor. 8:4 Eph. 4:6 James 2:19 John 10:30 14:9-10 17:11,21-23 I Tim. 2:5 Mark 12:29,32
1. *The LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him.*
  2. *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.*
- C. God is Three: God exists eternally as three distinct Persons, each of whom possesses the whole of the Divine Essence.
1. The divine Essence is fully in all 3 persons without being divided into parts.
  2. The Father is God. John 6:27 I Co. 8:6 Isa. 64:8 Deut. 32:6 Gal. 1:1 Mt. 6:9 7:21 *There is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things...*
  3. The Son is God.
    - a. He is explicitly called God. John 1:1,14 5:18 20:28 Col. 2:9 Isa. 9:6 Ro. 9:5 Titus 2:13 Heb. 1:8-10 Phil. 2:5-6 *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God....Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.*
    - b. He is eternal (pre-existent). **8** John 1:1-2 8:58 17:5 Col. 1:15-18 Heb. 13:8 *He was in the beginning with God....Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am...For by Him all things were created... all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.*
    - c. He exercises divine authority, does divine works, is given divine titles, accepts worship, and has divine attributes. Mt. 11:27 Mark 4:41 2:5-12 Jo. 20:28 1:49 5:20-23 Phil. 2:9-11 Heb. 13:8 Rev. 5:12-13
      - (1) *All things have been handed over to Me by My Father...*
      - (2) *Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?*
      - (3) *Who can forgive sins, but God alone? Mark 2:5-12*
      - (4) *At the name of Jesus every knee will bow of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
      - (5) *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*
      - (6) *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing. ....*
    - d. He also is fully man. John 1:14 Gal. 4:4 Col. 2:9 I John 4:2 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...*

4. The Holy Spirit is God.

- a. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as God. Acts 5:3-4 I Co. 3:16 2:10-11 Mark 3:29 John 15:26 II Co. 3:17-18 13:14 *Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to men but to God... Do you know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*
- b. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not just a force. **9** John 16:7-11 Mt. 12:31-32 Acts 15:28 Rom. 8:26 I Co. 2:11 Eph. 4:30 Ps. 139:7 Heb. 3:7  
(1) *I will send Him to you and He... will convict the world concerning sin...*  
(2) *The Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us...*

IV. What is the relationship among the Persons of the Trinity?

A. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are eternally in relationship with one

another. **10** Mt. 3:16-17 11:25-26 26:39 Jo. 3:16 5:22-23 8:54 14:16-17 15:26 17:1-5  
*Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

1. God is, always has been, and always will be triune. Heb. 13:8 9:14
2. Each of the Persons is distinct from the others.
3. God has never been lonely.

B. The order within the Trinity.

1. The Father sends His only begotten Son who does His will. Ps. 2:7 40:6-8

John 3:16 4:34 5:30 6:38 Gal. 4:4 Col. 1:15 Heb. 1:6 10:7 I Jo. 4:9 I Cor. 11:3

a. *I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.*

b. *Behold I have come... to do Your will, O God.*

2. The Father and the Son send the Spirit. John 14:26 15:26 16:7 Gal. 4:6

a. *The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things.*

b. *When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.*

3. The equality of the three Persons of the Trinity is not compromised by their having different roles. John 5:18 I Cor. 11:3 *Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.*

C. The particular works ascribed to each Person of the Trinity.

1. The Father is the Head and Designer.

a. Creation - Designer. Gen. 1:1

b. Revelation - Originator. Heb. 1:1-2a

c. Prayer - Object. Mt. 6:9 Eph. 3:14

d. Salvation - Planner. Eph. 1:3-6 Isa. 53:10 John 6:37-40 17:4-7

2. The Son is the Agent and Mediator.

a. Creation - Agent. John 1:3 Col. 1:16 Heb. 1:2b I Co. 8:6

b. Revelation - The Word. John 1:1,18 Heb. 1:2

c. Prayer - Mediator. John 16:23 Eph. 2:18 3:12 I Tim. 2:5 Heb. 4:14-16 7:25

d. Salvation - Redeemer. Eph. 1:7-12 Ro. 4:24-25 Jo. 10:15 14:6 I Pe. 3:18

3. The Holy Spirit seals and completes.

a. Creation - Breath. Gen. 1:2-3 Ps. 33:6 Job 33:4

b. Revelation - Inspiration and illumination. II Pe. 1:21 II Tim. 3:16 Heb. 3:7 Mt. 22:43 Rev. 2:7 Acts 1:16 28:25 I Co. 2:13-14

c. Prayer - Intercessor. Rom. 8:26-27 Eph. 6:18 2:18 Jude 20

d. Redemption - Regeneration and Sanctification. Eph. 1:13-14 Jo. 3:6-8 16:7-11 I Th. 1:5-6 Gal. 5:22 I Co. 3:16 12:4-11 Ro. 8:11,14,16 Luke 1:35 3:22 12:12

**V. Conclusion: The practical importance of the doctrine of the Trinity. 11**

**A. The doctrine of the Trinity teaches us about relationships.**

1. We experience unity and diversity in loving human relationships: the family and the church. I Cor. 12:12ff Eph. 5:31 Matt. 19:6 Rev. 7:9
2. The relationship between the Father and Son Who, being equal, have different roles, illustrates how men and women can have different roles, while remaining equal, in the home and in the church. I Cor. 11:3
3. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit invite us into the loving united relationship They have shared for eternity. John 17:21 *That they may be one; even as You, Father are in Me and I in You, that they may also be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.*

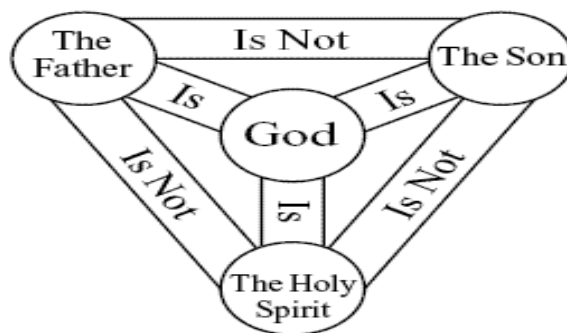
**B. We must be prepared to defend truth of the Trinity. Acts 20:28ff**

1. Cults, heretics and false religions typically deny either that God is One or that God is Three.
  - a. Modalism claims God is one Person who appears to us in three different forms.
  - b. Arianism denies the full Deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.
  - c. Tritheism denies that there is only one God.
2. Those who deny the Trinity do not know or worship the true God. 12

**C. The Trinity is central in worship and prayer. 13 Eph. 3:14-21 2:18 II Co. 13:14 John 4:24**

**D. The Trinity is essential to the gospel. 14**

Do you know the Triune God?



## TQ (Trinity Quotient) Quiz

*True or false. If false, explain why.*

1. Moslems, Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Oneness Pentecostals, and Unitarians all deny the doctrine of the Trinity.
2. The doctrine of the Trinity is unbiblical because the term *Trinity* is not found in the Bible.
3. The doctrine of the Trinity is not found in the Old Testament; therefore, it is completely a New Testament concept.
4. Which of the following properly completes Matthew 28:19  
*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them...*
  - a. *in the names of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*
  - b. *in the name of the father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*
  - c. *in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*
  - d. *in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*
5. The Trinity is a hard doctrine to grasp, but with enough study we can completely understand it.
6. It is impossible to adequately illustrate the Trinity (i.e. water, ice, and vapor).
7. Simply stated, the doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there are three divine beings.
8. The Father existed before the Son who became divine at the incarnation.
9. The Holy Spirit is an impersonal force from God.
10. The terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are simply modes or roles by which God who is one person reveals Himself.
11. Jews, Muslims, and Christians all worship the same God.
12. Because the doctrine of the Trinity is a deep theological concept, it is not of much practical importance.
13. In prayer and worship we should avoid ascribing the works of one of the Persons of the Trinity to other Persons (i.e. thanking the Father for dying on the cross).
14. To deny the Trinity is to deny the gospel.
15. There is one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in three manifestations: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.