

The Trinity

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In this lesson we are going to consider the doctrine of the Trinity. This doctrine was not a new revelation given to the apostle Paul, but it was more fully revealed to him concerning the roles of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in this Church Age. On our website (agfwheatridgeco.com) we have a brief statement of faith that declares that we are Trinitarian. Our faith in a Triune Godhead is based on the revelation throughout the Bible that God consists of three, distinct persons who are one in nature and purpose. This truth was hidden in the Old Testament, though it was hinted at throughout the Old Testament. When we come to the New Testament, the Gospel of Jesus Christ reveals clearly the distinct persons and roles of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Many attempts have been made to explain the oneness of God in three persons. All attempts fall woefully short of adequately explaining the infinite God with finite terms. I will add my feeble attempt to try to help our finite minds comprehend the infinite God. In the human experience we are familiar with the concept of a ruling congress. We refer to congress in the singular. The US has only one congress though it is made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate and each of the two houses are made up of many different individuals. There is only one God made up of three divine persons. Unlike our congress, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are always in agreement and always work together to execute the same plan. All three possess the same divine nature and attributes that make them God.

One God

The doctrine of the Trinity seems to be in direct contradiction to the revelation of God to the nation of Israel and yet we Christians claim to worship the God of Israel.

Deuteronomy 6:4

4 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!

NKJV

“*Lord*” in the Hebrew is Jehovah, the One who exists in and of Himself. “*Our God*” in the Hebrew is actually plural: “*elôhîym.*” The word “one” means united. It’s the same word used to describe the union of Adam and Eve “*and they shall be one flesh*” in ***Genesis 2:24***. Clearly, the union or oneness of Adam and Eve consisted of two individuals.

There is no contradiction between the Old Testament revelation and the New Testament revelation. The revelation of the New Testament is simply more complete and expounds on the oneness and uniqueness of God.

It was necessary for Israel to understand the uniqueness of their one God in contrast to the many different idols of their heathen neighbors. Heathen idolatry and mythology are the product of the vain imaginations of the human heart and mind corrupted by sin. Satan not only didn’t mind men being religious, he actually promoted it because it kept them from honoring and giving glory to their true Creator. In contrast to the vain imagination of man’s sinful heart, the revelation of the One true God was given to Abraham and his descendants. Abraham was called out of idolatry to serve the One True God instead of worshipping many different gods, each with his or her own agenda, purposes and standards.

Isaiah 42:8

*8 I am the Lord, that is My name;
And My glory I will not give to another,
Nor My praise to carved images.*

NKJV

Isaiah 44:8

*8 Do not fear, nor be afraid;
Have I not told you from that time, and declared it?
You are My witnesses.
Is there a God besides Me?
Indeed there is no other Rock;
I know not one."*

NKJV

There is no other God. Jehovah alone is God and He alone is able to declare and accomplish His purposes and therefore is worthy of worship and service. That truth revealed in the Old Testament does not contradict the truth of a Triune God; it simply lays down the foundation for the unity of purpose and nature of the Godhead.

The idolatry of the nations led to vain, vile and self-destructive practices. Their loyalties and trust were divided among many different gods which many times contradicted one another. To please one god meant many times displeasing another. You could do and say anything you wanted to and find some god, somewhere that was said to bless such actions. Satan had the human race blinded to the self-destructive power of sin and the lust of the flesh until God called Abraham and revealed Himself to him. Jehovah is God and He is One. Creation has only one Creator. Man owes his beginning and existence to One Source. There is only One Power that rules and overrules all others and is above all others. There is only One Deity that exists apart from any other source and is eternal. Therefore, there is only One God that is worthy of our undivided, unconditional worship and service. He is Jehovah the God of Israel.

Modern day humanism and evolution are simply another variation of ancient idolatry that has been imagined by sinful man in an attempt to deny his Creator and rebel against the Sovereignty of the One True God. There is only One True God. On that firm foundation of the oneness of the God of Israel the full revelation of the Trinity of the Godhead could be revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, there were clear hints of the Trinity given in the O. T.

One of the Names of God in the Hebrew is Elyoim which is the plural form of the word.

Genesis 1:26

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;..."

NKJV

Psalm 33:6

6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,

And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. NKJV

These verses attribute creative powers to God's word and speak of His "Breath" or Spirit. Isaiah speaks of the Servant of Jehovah that would bring deliverance and righteousness to Israel and be the Light to the Gentiles. Clear reference is made to the deity of this coming Messiah.

Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For unto us a Child is born,

Unto us a Son is given;

And the government will be upon His shoulder.

And His name will be called

Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and peace

There will be no end,

Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,

To order it and establish it with judgment and justice

From that time forward, even forever.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

NKJV

Many references are made to the Spirit of God in the Old Testament beginning with "the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters" in **Genesis 1:2**.

1 Samuel 16:13

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

NKJV

The God of Israel, the Servant of the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord are always in agreement, working together to accomplish the same purposes. They are unified, they are one.

New Testament

When we come to the New Testament the Trinity is more clearly revealed. The roles and responsibilities of each member of the Godhead are more openly revealed to us. Each is clearly revealed to be Deity, but each fulfills different functions in the execution of the Divine will.

Deity – Father & Son

John 8:54-59

54 *Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God.*

55 *Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.*

56 *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."*

57 *Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"*

58 *Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."*

59 *Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*

NKJV

John 1:1-5

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 nothing was made that was made.*

4 *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

5 *And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

NKJV

John 1:14

14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

NKJV

These and many other verses make it clear that the Son and the Father are two different and distinct members of the Godhead.

Deity – Holy Spirit

Matthew 12:31-32

31 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.

32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

NKJV

That's a remarkable statement by the Son of God who died for the sins of the world. It's impossible to understand that statement unless you understand the Deity of the Holy Spirit and His specific role and ministry in Trinity.

Acts 5:3-4

3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?

4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

NKJV

1 Corinthians 2:11

11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

NKJV

The Spirit knows the things of God, because He is God.

Same Attributes, Same Purposes, Distinct Responsibilities and Roles

The Father gave His Son for my salvation, but He did not die for my sins. Jesus gave His life a ransom for all and the Father has given Him a name above all others, but He returned

for a time to Heaven and is right now making intercession for us at the right hand of the Father in His glorified body. It is the Holy Spirit that was sent to dwell with us on earth, till Jesus' return, to be our Advocate, Comforter and Guide.

Paul puts it this way in –

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

NKJV

Father – Author of all the works, operations or activities of heaven and earth.

Son – Administrator and Executor of the will of the Father and director of all ministries that honor God.

Holy Spirit - The Enabler and Giver of Gifts that bring the will of God to bear on mankind and enables us to serve God.

This is the Triune God that we serve and worship. What a glorious truth to know that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are faithfully channeling all their power and resources to fulfill their purposes of grace in my life.

John 10:27-30

27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.

30 I and My Father are one."

NKJV

Paul adds that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. Blessed assurance is ours! We now go on to spiritual maturity by casting our cares on the Father in Jesus' name and by being led by the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 13:14

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. NKJV

In Paul's Epistles we find the fullness of the revelation of what the grace of Jesus Christ has afforded us, of how the love of the Father is manifested to us and what it means to have communion with the Holy Spirit. Without an understanding of and submission to Paul's teaching we cannot worship the Triune Godhead in spirit and in truth. What a privilege, what joy and peace to understand that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are for me and not against me.