

Adult Sunday School Class 12 Proofs That Jesus Is God

Lesson 3: The Doctrine of the Trinity

Introduction

“The doctrine of the Trinity...is truth for the heart. The fact that it cannot be satisfactorily explained, instead of being against it, is in its favor. Such a truth had to be revealed; no one could imagine it.” A.W. Tozer

Trinity Definitions

- ~ One God, same in essence, different in function (Father, Son, Holy Spirit).
- ~ The unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three persons in one Godhead.
- ~ One God who eternally exists as three distinct Persons — the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ~ One God existing in three Persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit).
- ~ All three Persons of the one triune God possess the complete attributes of deity. All three Persons are truly divine, yet eternally distinct from one another.

Trinity Challenges

1 + 1 + 1 = 3 Gods

1 + 1 + 1 = 3 persons, 1 God

- ~ Monotheism (One True God) vs. Tritheism (Belief in 3 Gods)
- ~ Trinitarian (One True God, Three Distinct Persons)
- ~ Trinitarians support Monotheism and reject Tritheism
- ~ Trinitarianism is the teaching that God is triune, that He has revealed Himself to be three co-equal and co-eternal Persons.

*Person can be defined as “a center of self-consciousness.” A person has a mind, emotions, and a will, can communicate with others, and is capable of performing actions. When we speak of the concept of personhood as it relates to the Trinity, we are describing self-distinctions in God.

All three Persons of the one triune God possess the complete attributes of deity. All three Persons are truly divine, yet eternally distinct from one another. The divine Persons can and do communicate with each other.

Essentially, God has three centers of self-consciousness. Yet this one Being (the triune God of Scripture) possesses one indivisible essence. There is only one Being that is God, and this one Being is tri-personal, with each of the three Persons having full possession of the divine nature.

*<https://www.gotquestions.org/Tritheism-Trinity.html>

*Trinity Diagram



*<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/using-a-diagram-to-illustrate-trinitarian-relationships/>

Trinity Biblical Evidence

IS

- Biblically, it is true that there is only one God (Isa. 44:6; 45:18; 46:9; John 5:44; 1 Cor. 8:4; James 2:19), however, it is also true that three persons are called God in Scripture:
- The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God.
Father (1 Pet. 1:1-2) Jesus (Son) (Heb. 1:8) Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4)
- Each of these three possesses the attributes of deity—including omnipresence (F Jer. 23:23-24; S Matt. 28:20, HS Ps. 139:7), omniscience (F Ps. 147:5; S John 16:30; HS 1 Cor. 2:10-11), omnipotence (F Jer. 32:17; S John 2:1-11; HS Rom. 15:19)
- Each of the three are involved in doing the works of deity—such as creating the universe: the Father (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 102:25), the Son (John 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2), and the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30).

IS NOT

The Father is not the Son.
The Son is not the Father.

The Father is not the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not the Father.

The Son is not the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not the Son.

The Father, Son, and Spirit are not the same person.

Examples

- *The Father is never “sent” in Scripture. The Father is not incarnated or poured out at Pentecost.*
- *The Son is one with the Father, but he is not the Father. The Son is obedient to the Father.*
- *The Spirit does not die on the cross for our sins. The Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.*

IS IN

The Father is in the Son.

The Son is in the Father.

The Father is in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is in the Father.

The Son is in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is in the Son.

- This IS IN aspect is called mutual indwelling. PERICHORESIS (John 14:10-11, Colossians 1:19)

*The mutual indwelling of *perichoresis* means two things.

1. First, the three persons of the Trinity are all fully in one another.
2. Each person of the Trinity is in full possession of the divine essence.

“Each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all are one.”

Augustine (early church father 354-430 AD)

*<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/theological-primer-perichoresis/>

GLORIFIES

- Each of the three persons in the one being of God glorify one another.

Examples

Father glorifies the Son, and the Son glorifies the Father (John 17:1)

The Spirit glorifies the Son (John 16:14)

Early Church Trinity Quotes

The early church was trinitarian because the Bible is trinitarian.

- There are groups who deny the Trinity and state that the doctrine was not mentioned until the 4th Century until after the time of the Council of Nicea (325).

- The following quotes show that the doctrine of the Trinity was indeed alive-and-well before the Council of Nicea.
- ~ *Justin Martyr (100–165) described the typical baptismal routine for his readers: “In the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water”
- ~ ** Polycarp the bishop of Smyrna (69–156) demonstrated his trinitarian consciousness before his martyrdom: “I glorify you, through the eternal and heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, through whom to you, with him and the Holy Spirit, be glory both now and for the ages to come.”
- ~ Tertullian (160-215 AD) First one to coin the phrase, Trinity.
“We worship unity in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the person nor dividing the substance. There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.”
- *<https://carm.org/doctrine-and-theology/early-trinitarian-quotes-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity/>
- **<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/trinitarianism-in-the-early-church/>

Current mainstream rejection of the Trinity

Mormons

- *Mormon doctrine denies the Trinity, teaching that the Father, Son, and Spirit do not comprise one God. According to Mormonism, Jesus is a created being, the first spirit to be born of the Father and a celestial mother. Therefore, Jesus could not be the eternal God or part of an eternal Trinity. Mormons also teach that both the Father and the Son are men with bodies of flesh and bone as two separate people, the Father and the Son cannot be considered “one.”
- *<https://www.gotquestions.org/Mormons-believe-Trinity.html>

Jehovah Witnesses

- Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the Trinity is unbiblical because the word is not in the Bible and because the Bible emphasizes that there is one God. This One-Person God is called Jehovah.

Unitarians

- Regarding the Trinity, Unitarianism believes God is one singular Person. Unitarians reject the triune nature of God and argue that the Bible teaches Jesus was not a divine Person but is simply the one Lord Messiah (a human being).

State of Theology Survey

3,000 evangelicals were surveyed about various beliefs.

The survey categorized people as having evangelical beliefs if they strongly agreed with the following four statements:

- *The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.*
- *It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.*
- *Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.*
- *Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.*

Almost half (44 percent) say that Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God.

- Arianism, a Christian heresy that declared that Christ is not truly divine but a created being is making a comeback.

The relationship between the Trinity and the denial of the Deity of Christ.

- A denial of the Deity of Christ dismantles the doctrine of the Trinity.
- A denial of the Trinity impacts the following Christology doctrines.
- To deny the Trinity undermines the Incarnation.
- To deny the Trinity distorts the Gospel message.

“When thou sayest, 'Savior,' remember there is a Trinity in that word — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, this Savior being three persons under one name. Thou canst not be saved by the Son without the Father, nor by the Father without the Son, nor by Father and Son without the Spirit.” Spurgeon

“The Trinity is the basis of the gospel, and the gospel is a declaration of the Trinity in action.” J. I. Packer

- To deny the Trinity is to promote a false assurance of salvation.
- To deny the Trinity impacts our worship.

Book Resource

100 Proofs That Jesus Is God (Curt D. Daniel) Chapters 24 & 25