

KNOWING GOD

THE HIGHEST PRIORITY IN LIFE

Lesson 2: GOD IN TRINITY

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14)

I. Introduction

II. The Trinity seen in the Old Testament

- The oneness of God

Deut. 6:4, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one”

- The tri-unity of God

Gen. 1:26, God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

Gen. 3:22, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good from evil.’

Psalms 110:1, David says, “The LORD says to my lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’” (Matt. 22:41-46)

Other passages: Ps. 45:6-7 (Heb. 1:8); Is. 63:10; Hosea 1:7; Is. 48:16

III. The Trinity seen in the New Testament

Matt. 3:16-17: Baptism of Jesus

Matt. 28:19: The great commission

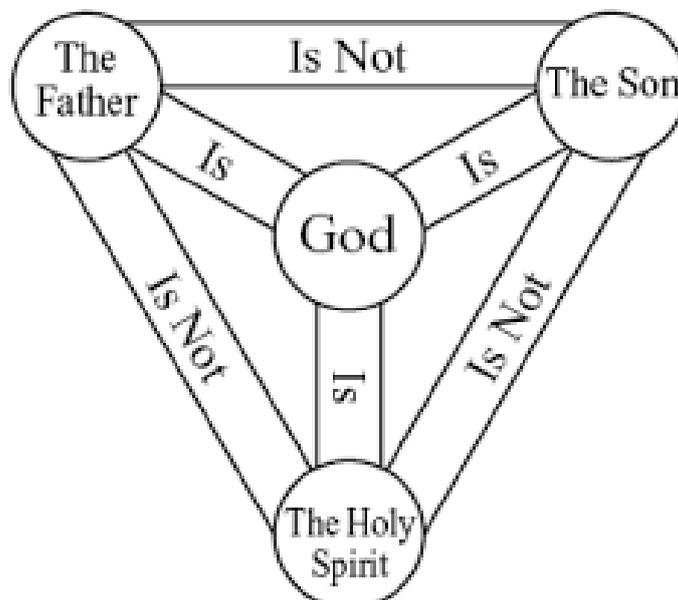
1 Cor. 12:4-6: Seen in relation to spiritual gifts

2 Cor. 13:14: Seen in the Doxology

1 Peter 1:2: In relation to a person's salvation

IV. The Trinity in Church History

- The first person to describe the Godhead as a “Trinity” was Tertullian in the year 215AD.
- The Council of Nicaea affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity in the year 318AD.
- God is _____ persons (John 1:1-2; 17:24; Rom. 8:27)
- Each _____ is fully God (Jesus: John 1:1-4; 20:28, 29; Spirit: Acts 5:3-4; Ps. 139:7-8)
- There is _____ God (Deut 6:4)



V. The Implications of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Life

- God in Trinity does not exist _____, but in _____
- Relationship is seen from the beginning: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1)
- Since we are made in the image of God we are made to function in personal relationship

(a) Relationship with God

Deepening of friendship with God is the object of our spiritual life

Matt 22:35-38, And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment.

We participate in the Trinitarian community because we are united to Jesus by the Spirit

(b) Relationship with others

Humanity was created in the image of God to have fellowship with one another

Matt 22:39-40, And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

We are to imitate God in being absolutely other-person-centered, without any trace of self-centeredness – this is true spirituality!

To function in a Trinity, and in any personal relationship, four essential things are required:

(1) Other-person-centeredness

- Other-person-centeredness is displayed perfectly in the Trinity

Father to the Son

John 5:26, ... For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

John 3:35, The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand

John 5:20, For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing

Son to the Father

John 5:30, I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me

John 14:31, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father

John 8:28, I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me

Spirit to the Father and Son

John 16:13, When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come

- **Other-person-centeredness makes personal knowledge possible**

John 10:15, The Father knows me and I know the Father

Matt 11:27, ... no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

- **Other-person-centeredness is active**

Toward His creation

Ps. 145:9, The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made

Luke 6:35, ... he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil

Toward His people

Rom. 5:8, God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us

John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son

(2) Communication

- **Philip Jensen**, *“Unless we have a high view of Scripture then it is not possible to be a Christian, that is, to have fellowship with God through knowing Him, to submit to the Lordship of Christ and so be*

saved, to live the life of faith, and to have a sure and steadfast hope, for it is only through God communicating with us that we can know Him personally.”

(3) Faithfulness

(4) Order

The Father, the Son, and the Spirit share one essence but are distinct

Difference in sex – male and female

Difference in personhood

Order in the Trinity

Order in marriage

VI. Conclusion

Garden of Eden - Results

(1) They became self-centered

- They blamed another for their own sin
- They lost their other-person-centeredness

(2) They withdrew communication

- They hid from God

(3) Faithfulness to the prior relationship was broken

- They disobeyed God and served themselves rather than God

(4) The order was reversed

- Instead of God, man, woman, animal, the priority became animal (the serpent), woman, man and God

- God is ultimate reality and the revelation that His nature is Trinitarian brings us the knowledge that personal relationships are ultimate reality
- When we understand God's relationship within Himself we can then understand our relationships with Him and others
- Our humanness demands and depends upon relationships. Christ has reversed the curse so that others-centered-relationships are possible, thereby fulfilling the image for which we were created

The Nicene Creed

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.*

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit

*he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.*

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.*

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.