



The Trinity

Ephesians 3:14-21 and others

[based on the sermon preached on 12.6..22 – available on the [church app](#) or at <https://lwac.org.au/sermons>]

KEY IDEAS

1. The Trinity is a challenging concept to explain, with many models or examples actually being tritheism (multiple gods, or three gods) or modalism (only one person of the Godhead at any given time: only the Father, or only the Son, or only the Holy Spirit).
2. The orthodox, correct understanding and confession of the Trinity, based on Scripture is: God is three persons with one being or nature. God is always simultaneously Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three persons with one essence.
3. God did not reveal himself as the Trinity in the Old Testament to prevent the Israelites (and the surrounding nations) from confusing God as the Trinity with the other, pagan polytheistic deities.
4. Many passages in the New Testament testify to the Trinitarian nature of God
5. The Trinity is difficult to grasp and due to our finiteness, we will never fully understand it, but that is okay. God does not expect us to understand it fully, just accept it.
6. Because God as a Trinitarian God has an internal relationship with himself among the three persons of the Trinity, God can have a relationship with us and calls us into relationship with him. God also then calls us into loving relationships with others.

CONNECT

- Have you ever felt overwhelmed by trying to understand some deep truth about God? What was that like? How did it make you feel? Did you ever find the answer or truth you were seeking? Or did you end up having to, by faith, confess and trust without knowing the full answer?

STUDY

Read Deuteronomy 6:4

- Do you think this strong emphasis on the oneness of God (from the time of Moses onward) made it more difficult for the Jews to later accept that Jesus was God and that God is a Trinity?

Read Matthew 3:13-17

- Jesus' baptism is one of the first times when all three persons of the Trinity appear in the same scene: Jesus is actually present, the Spirit (as a dove) actually descends, and the Father actually speaks. Matthew does not tell us, but what do you suppose was the response of those who were there at the River Jordan that day? Do you think they were excited? Afraid? Surprised? Perplexed? Do you think they were drawn to Jesus because of this, or repelled by him out of fear?

Examine John 17

- Jesus' Sermon on the Mount contains many references to God as "Father," but in a general sense, as if God is a Father to all who serve him. But in John 17, Jesus prays to God specifically as his Father, implying a special relationship with him, that God is his Father and he is his Father God's Son.
- What unique features of Jesus' relationship with the Father are evident in John 17?

Read 2 Corinthians 13:14

- Does the Apostle Paul make any effort to explain what he means by his description of God as three persons of Jesus Christ, God (Father) and Holy Spirit?
- What conclusions might we draw from this passage in the way it associates grace with Jesus, love with the Father, and fellowship with the Holy Spirit?

Read I Peter 1:1-2

- What are the three roles or responsibilities of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Peter identifies in this passage?
- Can you see how these three roles imply that the three persons of the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - are working together, because they are in close relationship with one another?

Read Ephesians 3:14-17

- Here also, in his prayer for the Ephesians, Paul identifies each of the three persons in the Godhead and associates them with fairly specific roles. Can you see the close relationship which would need to exist among them in order for this to all happen?

- Have you ever thought of God as a Trinity of three persons with one essence or nature - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - but also as a God who thus has a deep personal relationship with himself?
- And, as one God in personal relationship with himself, can you see how God also would want to be in personal relationship with us, his creation?
- Does realizing God is by his very nature a personally relational God change the way you see him? Might this realization change the way you respond to him?
- What might an authentic relationship with our Trinitarian God look like? What might it entail?
- Might this also be the basis for God's calling us into authentic, loving relationships with others? What might such relationships look like?

APPLY

- Which aspect of this study has struck you the most and why? What are you going to do as a result ?
- Identify one or more ways in which you can enter into deeper relationship and fellowship with God.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- Identify one or more ways in which you can enter into more authentic relationships with others around you (family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors, ec.)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH AND FOR ONE ANOTHER

- According to need.