



# The Trinity

Matt 28:16-20, 2 Cor 13:11-14

various other NT passages

[based on the sermon presented on 4.6.23 – available on the [church app](#) or at <https://lwac.org.au/sermons>]

## KEY IDEAS

1. God reveals himself as a Trinity in many passages in Scripture.
2. Matt 28:19 & 2 Cor 13:14 testify to God being a triune God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. The classic formulation of the Trinity (developed by the early church fathers of the 3rd - 5th centuries) is: one in essence, three in persons, or one what and three whos.
4. The Trinity literally means “Tri-unity” or unity in diversity
5. The three persons of the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - have community or relationship with one another from all eternity. This eternal relationship within the Godhead allows God to be in relationship with us, and for us to have relationships with one another.

## CONNECT

- Think of one important relationship in your life. Why is it important? What are some key features of this relationship? Share about this as you are able.

## STUDY

### Read Matthew 28:16-20

- Verse 19 is the classic Trinitarian baptism formula. Notice that “name” here is singular, yet Jesus goes on to identify three names or persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is a reference to the unity in diversity of the Godhead.
- Think of some examples and illustrations of the Trinity you have heard. Do they tend toward tri-theism (3 separate Gods) or modalism (one God with three masks or roles)?

- How difficult is it to come up with an illustration of the Trinity which does a good job of explaining the doctrine? Does this difficulty lead you to frustration or humility at God's incomprehensiveness? (Remember that if we could comprehend God, he wouldn't be God.)

### **Read 2 Corinthians 13:11-14**

- Verse 14 is a wonderful benediction from the Apostle Paul in which he invokes all three persons of the Godhead, ascribing slightly different roles or characteristics to the three different persons. The characteristic associated with God is love, with Jesus, grace, and with the Holy Spirit, fellowship or community. This does not mean that the Father is not gracious, Jesus is not about fellowship and the Spirit does not love us. What it does mean is that each person of the Godhead is associated or identified primarily with a different feature of God's relationship with us in salvation.
- Paul clearly joins all three persons into the unified Godhead. We commonly worship and pray to God the Father, but, based on Paul's words here, does this mean we should worship and pray to Jesus and even the Holy Spirit as well? What do you think?

### **Read Matthew 3:13-17**

- These verses reveal that all three persons of the tri-unity which is God were present and involved in Jesus' baptism. Explain this involvement of all three persons in your own words.
- The close relational unity of the three persons of the Trinity is evident in this passage. Do you see relational unity in your relationships? In most of them, some of them or only a few of them? Consider Eph 4:1-16 where Paul states we should be in unity with one another just as there is unity in God: "one Spirit . . . one Lord . . . one God over all."

### **Read John 14:16-17, 26 & 16:13-15**

- In these verses Jesus is teaching both about his relationship with the Father and under whose authority and by whose direction the Holy Spirit comes to us, and the purpose for which the Holy Spirit comes.
- Why is it important that the Holy Spirit be under the authority of the Father and work only for the glorification of Jesus? What does this indicate about the unity of purpose of the three persons of the Trinity? What would result if each person of the Trinity had a separate agenda? If they did have separate agendas, would it still be a Trinity or would it be something else?

### **Read Acts 5:3-4**

- In these verses Peter is addressing Annanias after he sold a piece of property in order to donate the proceeds of the sale to the church but lied about the price received in order to make himself look good in front of others. At the beginning of verse 3 Peter declares that Annanias has lied to the Holy Spirit, but at the end of verse 4, he declares Annanias has lied to God. This indicates that the Holy Spirit and God are synonymous. Not because they are simply different words or names for the same being, but because the Holy Spirit is God.
- Why, in light of verses such as John 16:7-11, do you think Peter said that Annanias lied to the Holy Spirit? What does this indicate about the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

### **Read I Peter 1:1-2**

- Peter here includes all three persons of the Trinity in his description of God's activity in our salvation but ascribes to each of them slightly different roles. God the Father's role is his foreknowledge or plan to save us through Christ's atonement; God the Son's role is to shed his blood for us in order to atone for our sins and save us; God the Spirit's role is to sanctify us to conform us to the image of our savior, Jesus Christ.
- Again we see close relational unity in the complimentary work of the Godhead in and for our salvation. This relational unity shows us that all three persons of our Triune God are involved in salvation, but also sets a model for us of unity in our relationships. Based on this, what is one relationship in your life which would benefit from greater unity? What steps can you take to help this unity become a reality?

### **APPLY**

- What is one new understanding of the Trinity which you have gained from this study? How might this new understanding impact your life, even resulting in change?
- Which other aspect of this study has struck you the most and why? What are you going to do as a result ?
- Identify one or more truths from this study which speak to and can be applied in your life.
  - 1.
  - 2.

### **PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH AND FOR ONE ANOTHER**

- According to need.