

# ***The Discovery Class***

## ***A Course On New Testament Discipleship***

### ***Topic #5***

## ***THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY***

***Objectives:*** As a result of the study of this topic we want to be able:

1. To have a clear understanding of what is meant by the triunity of God.
2. To be able to defend the equality of each member of the Trinity.
3. To be able to refute those who deny the personality of the Spirit by reducing Him to a force or a concept.
4. To be able to defend scripturally that the God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as co-equal and co-eternal members of one another.
5. To be able to present some helpful illustrations in communicating the triunity of God.
6. To memorize one verse of Scripture affirming the Trinity of God.

### ***Introduction***

*It has well been said, “If you try to understand the doctrine of the Trinity you will lose your mind. If you deny the doctrine of the Trinity, you will lose your soul.” The most difficult aspect about the Christian concept of the Trinity is that there is no way to adequately explain this revealed truth. The Trinity is a concept that is impossible for any human being to fully understand, let alone explain. However, that should not surprise us that finite minds cannot fully comprehend and explain the infinite God. We should not expect to be able to fully understand Him. With that said, there are many truths about the Trinity that God has plainly revealed. Though some truths concerning the Trinity may be incomprehensible to us, this does not mean they are not true or not based on the teachings of the Bible.*

### ***I. Evidence for the Oneness of God***

#### ***A. The Old Testament teaches the oneness of God.***

1. Both the Old & New Testaments affirm that there is only one true God, with Deuteronomy 6:4–5 standing as *the most frequently recited passage* in the Old Testament by the Jewish people, repeated \_\_\_\_\_ Sabbath.

***4 “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.***

2. This verse is famously known \_\_\_\_ the “**Shema**” (*Hebrew for hear*) and as the “**Great Commandment**” (Matthew 22:40) representing Israel’s confession of faith as to who God is & what our duty is towards Him.
3. When Moses records, “**The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!**” he is first telling us that Yahweh (**the LORD**) is the \_\_\_\_\_ God and that He alone is to be worshipped, thereby rejecting polytheism & henotheism.
4. Polytheism is the belief that there are many gods to be worshipped, while henotheism worships just one \_\_\_\_\_ while acknowledging the existence of other \_\_\_\_\_ that others may choose to worship.
5. However, beyond general revelation that reveals this truth, this verse & the whole of Scripture hinges on the fact that there is just \_\_\_\_\_ God.
6. In fact, **the oneness of God** points to the truth that there is only **one way of salvation**—for if other gods existed, then Jesus Christ would not have needed to die — for there would be — many \_\_\_\_\_ leading to heaven.
7. Moses makes it clear that that Yahweh (**the LORD**) is the only God, and therefore, “**the LORD**” is to be the \_\_\_\_\_ object of Israel’s worship and — their allegiance and — their affection.
8. In fact, the Hebrew is difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ capture in English and so some translations render the verse, “**The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!**” placing emphasis on the fact that there is & can be *one & only* one God.
9. While other translations render the verse, “**The LORD our God, the LORD is one**” (ESV, NKJV) placing the emphasis \_\_\_\_ the truth that God is a unity or whole—that He is one unified & complete person.
10. Both truths are brought out in the original and serve as an affirmation of God’s Triunity, which we \_\_\_\_\_ examine in detail in this handout.
11. The Old Testament clearly affirms God’s oneness, and so Solomon can pray on the day he dedicated the Temple to just one \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Kings 8):

59 “And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires, 60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else.

61 “Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day.”

12. Sadly, in the thinking of \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish people today, verses that teach, “**that the LORD is God; there is no one else,**” for them this disqualifies the New Testament teaching of one God existing in three Persons.

**B. The New Testament teaches the oneness of God.**

1. Christians need to affirm *the biblical revelation* of the unity of God for we worship one God, existing in \_\_\_\_ persons, not three separate gods.
2. Christians must come to a renewed understanding of the unity of \_\_\_\_, so that we can also biblically & accurately represent God’s Triunity.
3. We must affirm the truth, “**The LORD is our God, the LORD is one**” & \_\_\_\_ three — as 1 Corinthians 8:6 says, “**yet for us there is one God.**”
4. At the same time, *we must affirm* that the statement, ‘**the LORD is one**’ does \_\_\_\_ contradict the truth of the Trinity, but in fact, establishes it.
5. Interestingly—when the Bible says God is “**one**” as in the “**Shema**,” of Deuteronomy 6:1 — the Hebrew word for “**one**” — is “**echad**” which most literally is \_\_\_\_\_ to speak of a “**compound unity**.”
6. Instead of using the Hebrew word “**yacheed**” — which speaks \_\_\_\_ an ‘**absolute unity**’ or ‘**singularity**’ (Gen. 22:2 & Ps. 25:16), God chose to describe Himself with “**echad**” which speaks of a ‘**compound unity**.’
7. The very \_\_\_\_\_ use of “**echad**” in the Bible is in Genesis 1:5:  
  

**5 God called the light day, and the darkness He called night.  
And there was evening and there was morning, one (~~778~~) day.**
8. Even here, we see a unity “**one day**” — with the idea of plurality—made \_\_\_\_ of “**evening and morning**.”
9. Likewise, Genesis 2:24 uses **echad** in saying the \_\_\_\_ shall “**become one flesh**” where there is *the idea of* a **unity (one flesh)**, making a **plurality**.
10. There are many examples that we could cite (e.g., Exodus 26:6&11; Ezekiel 37:17), but what is clear from each is that the word “**one**” in \_\_\_\_ way has the exclusive idea of an “**absolute singularity**.”
11. The idea of \_\_\_\_ God in Three Persons coincides with the term ‘**echad**.’
12. Whether in the “**Shema**” (Deuteronomy 6:4)—or in the opening verse of the Bible (Genesis 1:1)—there even the name of “**Elohim**” for **God** is grammatically—a “**plural noun**” used \_\_\_\_ if it were a “**singular**.”

13. While it is not obvious from English, the first indication of there being a plurality in God — is found in the very \_\_\_\_\_ verse of the Bible, where in Genesis 1:1 — the noun for “**God**” — is in the plural.

**1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

14. The Hebrew word translated “**God**” is the word “**El**” — but when it is in the plural \_\_\_\_\_ in this verse — it is the word “**Elohim**” (אֱלֹהִים).
15. The plural nature of God — is further supported — by the fact that the plural “**Elohim**” is accompanied \_\_\_\_\_ the singular verb “**created**” such that in the 1st verse both the plural & singular nature of God is found.
16. So, while God in His essence is Father, is Son, and is Spirit, it is God who created the heavens & the earth & not \_\_\_\_\_.
17. The fact that God can be \_\_\_\_\_ God and can also be three, is not a New Testament doctrine for at the end the sixth day of creation, when God makes Adam — we are told in Genesis 1:26-27:

**26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.**

18. While these verses — do not explicitly teach the Trinity in full, neither do these verses deny the Trinity, as they are consistent with the progressive revelation \_\_\_\_\_ has given of Himself.
19. The New Testament—with its \_\_\_\_\_ revealed teaching on the Trinity is is entirely consistent with God’s oneness, so that James can say (2:19):

**19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.**

20. Jesus Christ likewise affirms ‘**the oneness**’ of God—when being tested \_\_\_\_\_ one of the scribes as to, “**What commandment is the foremost of all?**” (Mark 12:28) — to which He responded by quoting the **Shema**:

**29 Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; 30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’ (Mark 12:29–30)**

21. In addition, the Apostle Paul — in verses like 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, also clearly taught that God is “**one**” — while at the same time mentioning the Lord Jesus as the Creator of the world, a work only God can \_\_\_\_.

**4 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.**

**5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, 6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.**

## ***II. Evidence for the Threeness of God***

*To emphasize the oneness of God without emphasizing the three-ness of God, is a common characteristic of the cults (Unitarians, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witness, etc.). The Bible teaches the oneness of God and the three-ness of God and thus the Trinity of God. Christians have affirmed, dating back to the earliest centuries that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each God. Even so, the various creeds written in the history of the Church have affirmed this truth when it came under attack. Ever before the first creed was written, those who affirmed this truth reached their conclusions based on the Bible. That is to say, the Bible was & is the final authority for this dogma.*

### **A. The Father is recognized as God.**

1. The Bible asserts the deity of each person in the Godhead, and unequivocally declares that the Father is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The fact that the Bible teaches the Father is God, is so well received that virtually — no one ever denies this \_\_\_\_\_.
3. For instance, in 1 Corinthians \_\_\_\_ Paul states, “**for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him.**”
4. The Lord Jesus when praying to the Father stated \_\_\_\_ John 17:3, “**This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God.**”
5. Likewise, in support of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Father, 1 Peter 1:2 informs us our salvation it happened by, “**the foreknowledge of God the Father.**”
6. Paul breaks out into a benediction in his letter to Timothy saying:

**17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy \_\_\_\_)**

7. When Paul was defending \_\_\_\_ apostleship, he stated in Galatians 1:1:

1 Paul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead),

8. That there is, “one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:6) is almost \_\_\_\_\_ disputed from the Bible.
9. In describing the Father as \_\_\_\_\_, the Lord Jesus said in John 6:27:

27 “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”

#### B. The Son is recognized as God.

1. A rejection of the deity of Christ is often the issue that keeps someone from becoming a Christian—this teaching is so \_\_\_\_\_ important we will spend an entire handout on this topic—later on in this course.
2. With that said, in both the Old Testament & the New Testament, God’s word affirms that Jesus the Messiah \_\_\_\_ God the Son.
3. Old Testament passages such as Isaiah 9:6 teach that when the Messiah came from heaven to earth, He would be both \_\_\_\_\_ and man.

6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

4. “For a child will be born to us” & then “a son will be given to us.”
5. Understand, that is not just a repeat of the same thought for there—are two \_\_\_\_\_ that—are unfolded here.
6. “For a child will be born to us” — speaks of the humanity of Jesus, while “a son will be given to us” — speaks of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.
7. Isaiah announces that—the child to be born—will be this \_\_\_\_\_ given.
8. This idea, is also explained by Paul—“In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman” (Galatians 4:4) — for the Lord Jesus was not only “born” into the world, but He was \_\_\_\_\_ into the world.
9. Because Christ was not only “born” into the world but was also sent, the *Apostle’s Creed* reads that \_\_\_\_\_ was, “**begotten not made.**”
10. Reading further in Isaiah, “His name will be called . . . Mighty God.”

11. Not \_\_\_\_\_ was Messiah to be called, “**Wonderful Counselor**,” but Isaiah also predicted that He would also be called “**Mighty God**.”
12. Every time Isaiah — uses the term “**God**” (**El**) — he means deity & so as he just stated in Isaiah \_\_\_\_\_, He is “**Immanu-El**” — “**God with us**.”
13. This title, no matter \_\_\_\_\_ it might be translated, would be too generous for a mere human—but Messiah is no mere mortal—He is “**Immanuel**.”
14. The Bible is clear, that the Messiah will also be “**a Son**” that is “**given**” because Jesus’ life did \_\_\_\_\_ start in Bethlehem but as Micah 5:2 states:

2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”

15. In describing the Messiah — the Prophet Micah predicted that His coming \_\_\_\_\_ the world would stem from “the days of eternity.”
16. In the New Testament, in his prologue to his gospel, the Apostle John asserts that the Son is both with God & that \_\_\_\_\_ is distinct from God.

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 (John 1:1-2).

17. In fact, in the next verse John tells us “**All things came into being by Him** (the Word), **and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being**” showing the critical role the Lord Jesus had \_\_\_\_\_ creation with the Father, an obvious reference to Genesis 1:1.
  18. We know that the Word refers to the Son because just a few verses later, the Apostle John records \_\_\_\_\_ us (John 1:14):
- 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
19. Jesus claimed for Himself that He is God, when in passages like John 8, He identified Himself — as the great “**I AM**” — which of course Jesus’ enemies understood — to be a \_\_\_\_\_ of equality — with the Father.

58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.” 59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

20. Describing His divine-human person, Paul wrote to the Colossians, “**For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form**” (2:9).



### C. The Spirit is recognized as God.

*Typically, when people think of the Holy Spirit, they think of Him in a distorted manner. They tend to either deny His personality, reducing Him to a force or a concept. Or they deny His deity, typically absorbing Him into the Father and thus denying His existence as a separate person of the Godhead.*

1. The Bible asserts the deity of each person in the Godhead, and unequivocally declares—that the Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_.
2. While the scope of this handout is to demonstrate the Spirit is God, we need to ask, “Why do \_\_\_\_ refer to the Holy Spirit as a person?”
3. The Spirit is a person with \_\_\_\_ the attributes of personality, which is why Jesus never used the pronoun “it” when referring to the Spirit.
4. In John chapters 14, 15 & 16, Christ spoke of the Holy Spirit as “**He**” revealing to us — that He is \_\_\_\_ a force or a thing — but a person.
5. In John 15:26 Jesus said, “**When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.**”
6. The pronoun “**He**” in this verse is very significant because it is a “**masculine pronoun**” in the original Greek, while the word “**Spirit**” is a “**neuter**” \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Normally in Greek & in other case languages around the world, a pronoun — must \_\_\_\_\_ with the noun — that it modifies.
8. For example, if there is a masculine noun being used, then a masculine pronoun is used to modify a given \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Even in English, though not nearly as precise a language as Greek, we follow the same basic \_\_\_\_\_ of grammar.
10. If I said, “**John has a book, and he loves the book,**” very clearly the pronoun “**he**” refers \_\_\_\_ John.
11. We would not say, “**John has a book, and it loves the book,**” but rather — we would say — “**\_\_\_\_ loves the book.**”
12. If I said, “**The book is red, and it is a bright red**” — once again the identity of the pronoun “**it**” clearly refers \_\_\_\_ the book!

13. The word “**Spirit**” is a “**neuter noun**” in Greek & so typically you would use a “**neuter pronoun**” to modify that \_\_\_\_\_.
14. However, the word “**Spirit**” is modified in this verse with a masculine pronoun, breaking the \_\_\_\_\_ of Greek grammar & not by accident.
15. God the Son \_\_\_\_\_ emphasizing the “**Personhood**” of the Holy Spirit.
16. For an *in-depth* study on the *Personhood of the Spirit* you might want to consider the course in the *Institute of Biblical Studies* — Pneumatology.
17. There we examine how the Spirit’s attributes confirm \_\_\_\_\_ personality.
18. In Scripture, He is seen as displaying **intellect** (1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Romans 8:27), **emotion** (Romans 5:5; Romans 15:30 Ephesians 4:30), \_\_\_\_\_ **will** (Acts 16:6; Romans 8:27; 1 Corinthians 12:11).
19. Since the Holy Spirit — has the attributes of a person — and has the ministries — that only a person can have — as we will see in our next handout—we should relate to Him as a \_\_\_\_\_.
20. I hope when you think of the Holy Spirit, that you will not think of Him \_\_\_\_\_ an **influence**, or as a **force**, or a **floating fog**, or as a **cloud**, or as a **ghost**, or as a **bird**, or as some **empowerment**, like energy in a battery.
21. He is \_\_\_\_\_ of these — He is a person — He is our **friend** — He is our **teacher** & He is the One who makes Jesus Christ real to us in our lives.
22. It is important that we understand *the Personhood of the Spirit* because He is the Person who regenerates us — who bears testimony to us that we are Christ’s & He is the One who is heart-broken when we \_\_\_\_\_.
23. When you understand the Spirit is a person, then you will interact with Him in that way — realizing how sacred your own person has become \_\_\_\_\_ His divine presence (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?  
 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

24. In understanding—the Spirit is a person—you \_\_\_\_\_ be grateful to Him, often thanking Him that He is the One securing you for Heaven in spite of all of your inconsistencies (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 2 Corinthians 5:5).

25. When you understand the Spirit is a person, you will acknowledge that He is the One strengthening you to live a godly life & you will give Him the credit & \_\_\_\_\_ take it yourself (John 7:37-39; 14:16-18; Gal. 5:16).

26. When you understand that the Spirit is a person, you will acknowledge that He alone can produce spiritual life in and through you, and that anything of any eternal value, must have its \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

63 “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life (John 6:63).

4 Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. 5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:4–6).

27. The Holy Spirit is not a **force** that you use, or some **energy source** for your own personal gain, He is a **Person** who is to be submitted to and the One who wants to glorify Christ through \_\_\_\_\_ (John 16:14).

14 “He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.

28. However, demonstrating the personality of the Holy Spirit does \_\_\_\_\_ include the proof that He is co-eternal & equal with the Father & Son.

29. While certainly the reverse is true, because if you can prove His Deity, since God is a person — then He \_\_\_\_\_ be a person — as God is.

30. Throughout the history of the Christian Church, both the personality and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit — have gone hand in hand.

31. Every \_\_\_\_\_ or deviation from orthodox Christianity that rejects that the Spirit is a person, always follows, by rejecting His Deity.

32. Those who accept Him as a person, virtually always accept His Deity & those who have rejected His Deity, virtually always reject \_\_\_\_\_ person.

33. Though, in the history of Christianity there have been a \_\_\_\_\_ false teachers who have believed He is a person without believing He is God.

34. A careful study of Scripture reveals these truths stand & \_\_\_\_\_ together.

35. In a number of Old Testament passages—the Spirit of God is identified as “**Lord**” or “**Adonai**” — in places like \_\_\_\_\_ **6:1-13** — where we find Isaiah’s vision of God and God’s direct commissioning of Isaiah.

36. In this prophecy by Isaiah, we are told in Isaiah 9:8, that he, “**heard the voice of the \_\_\_\_\_**” (Isaiah 6:8 cf. Isaiah 6:1).
37. The name that Isaiah uses for God in Isaiah 6:1 is “**Lord**,” the Hebrew word “**Adonai**” (אֲדֹנָי), the \_\_\_\_\_ of God that means “**Lord**” or “**Master**” — meaning the One to whom we bow down & serve.
38. In Acts chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Paul when under house arrest in Rome, references the encounter Isaiah had with “**the Lord**” (Acts 28:26-27).
39. The original reference that the Apostle Paul quotes \_\_\_\_\_ Isaiah 6:8-10.

8 Then I heard the voice of the **Lord**, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!” 9 And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.’ 10 “Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Lest they see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed” (Isaiah 6:8-10).

40. Very clearly, when Isaiah introduces verses 8-10, the identical section that the Apostle Paul quotes in Acts 28, we are told by the prophet Isaiah that this \_\_\_\_\_ what was spoken by “**the Lord**” (**Adonai**).
41. Yet, when the Apostle Paul cites this quotation from Isaiah the sixth chapter, he does so \_\_\_\_\_ saying, “**The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to you fathers**” (Acts 28:25).
42. In one passage — “**the Lord**” is credited with this statement, and yet in the Book of Acts, the “**Holy Spirit**” is credited with this statement, therefore giving — a clear affirmation — of the Spirit’s \_\_\_\_\_.
43. In addition, sometimes the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ expressly called “**LORD**,” a name that can be used of no one but of God Himself, and the name by which God identified Himself to Moses (Exodus 3:13-16).
44. This name of God (**LORD**) is made up of \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew consonants (**Yod-Heh-Waw-Heh**) & occurs over 6,800 in the Old Testament.
45. These \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew consonants known as the “Tetragrammaton,” was once translated as “**Jehovah**”—which is a Latinization of the Hebrew (יהוה) (William Tyndale Bible, Geneva Bible, ASV, YLT).
46. Prior to the time of Christ, the Hebrew people came to believe that YHWH, the divine name of God, was too sacred to be spoken, and so, this sacred \_\_\_\_\_ of God stopped being vocalized.

47. Because written Hebrew contained consonants but no vowels, today it's unknown exactly how YHWH was *pronounced* by ancient Jews, though most Hebrew scholars believe it should \_\_\_\_\_ vocalized as "**Yahweh**."
48. The very fact that the Holy Spirit is attributed with this same proper name is a clear & an unarguable affirmation that He too is \_\_\_\_\_.
49. An example of the Holy Spirit being referred to as "**Yahweh**" is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34 — the occasion when God makes the promise of a \_\_\_\_\_ covenant to the nation of Israel (cf. Jeremiah 31:27-34).
50. Once again, Jeremiah the prophet introduces this section of Scripture with the words, "**Behold, days are coming,**" declares the **LORD** (31:\_\_\_).
51. In Jeremiah 31:27, \_\_\_ uses the noun **YHWH**, the sacred covenant name of God, expressing God's closeness to humans, like in Genesis 2:7 when the **LORD**, "**breathed into his** (Adam's) **nostrils the breath of life.**"
52. When this passage from Jeremiah is \_\_\_\_\_ in Hebrews chapter ten, it is introduced with the words, "**And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying, 'THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL ...'**" (10:15-17).
53. These \_\_\_\_\_ passages taken together teach the Holy Spirit is **LORD** too (2 Samuel 23:2-3 cf. Acts 1:16; Psalm 78:17-23 cf. Isaiah 63:10).
54. Another Old Testament example affirming the Deity of the Spirit, can be seen on the occasion just before Moses \_\_\_\_\_ on top of Mount Nebo — when he gathered the children of Israel together and recounted — God's faithfulness — to them as a nation.
55. When he recalls Jacob's experience, he writes in Deuteronomy \_\_\_:

8 "**When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel.** 9 "**For the LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance.** 10 "**He found him in a desert land, And in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.** 11 "**Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.** 12 "**The LORD alone guided him, and there was no foreign god with him.**

56. Moses plainly stated when Yahweh found Israel \_\_\_ the desert of Egypt that He protected him — "**as the pupil of His eye**" (*lit. the little man of the eye*) — and that "**the LORD alone guided him.**"

57. And yet, when Isaiah describes God's protective care, he tells us in Isaiah \_\_\_\_\_ that it was "the Spirit" who did this.

14 As the cattle which go down into the valley, The Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So You led Your people, To make for Yourself a glorious name (Isaiah 63:14).

58. Once again, putting these truths side by side — it is \_\_\_\_\_ that as God progressively revealed the Trinity, that the Spirit is equal to the LORD.
59. The Spirit is expressly called \_\_\_\_\_ in the New Testament Scriptures.
60. A simple straight forward passage affirming the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit is found in Acts 5:1-6.

1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? 4 "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed His last; and great fear came over all who heard of it. 6 The young men got up and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him.

61. Ananias' was guilty of the sin of lying, by seeking to deceive the Christians in Jerusalem, by trying to gain a reputation \_\_\_\_\_ greater generosity than he deserved.
62. Ananias' sin was in "misrepresenting" his gift by claiming that he was giving the total amount that he had received, when in reality — it was only a portion — of the \_\_\_\_\_.
63. Rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to \_\_\_\_\_ him—as had been the consistent witness of the Church (cf. Acts 2:4; Acts 4:8; Acts 4:31), Ananias had allowed Satan to control his heart.
64. This passage has been abused by some to teach socialism — but the gift they gave was \_\_\_\_\_ mandated for they could have kept it for themselves.
65. However, this passage does very clearly teach that by deceiving God's people Ananias was deceiving the Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ indwells the Church.
67. Christians today can lie to the Holy Spirit by pretending a devotion that is not theirs—or a surrender of life they have \_\_\_\_\_ really made.

68. Ananias' sin resulted \_\_\_\_\_ what the Apostle John calls a “**sin leading to death**” — premature “**physical death**” (1 John 5:16; 1 Cor. 11:30).
69. While a believer can \_\_\_\_\_ commit a sin leading to “**physical death**,” there have been times when God will act very “**seriously**” in order to set an example — so that we might know — how He thinks.
70. Jude 7 tells me that God destroyed Sodom & Gomorrah “**as an example**” of how He feels — concerning the sin of sodomy when He left — the twin cities — in smoking \_\_\_\_\_.
71. In 1 Corinthians 10:6, we are told that God judged with \_\_\_\_\_, the sins of the children of Israel as an example for us to avoid.
72. I suppose that if God acted today as He did in the early church then funeral homes — would have much more work — than they \_\_\_\_.
73. God had revealed to Peter—what Ananias had done—which no doubt crushed Ananias because he expected praise for his spectacular \_\_\_\_.
74. Because his sin of seeking the praise of men was a public sin, it was appropriate that his \_\_\_\_\_ be exposed publicly.
75. This illustrates the biblical principle that secret sins should be dealt \_\_\_\_\_ secretly, private sins privately, and only public sins, publicly.
76. When Peter told Ananias, “**Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit**,” he was \_\_\_\_\_ accusing Ananias of lying to the Church or to the Apostles, but to the Holy Spirit Himself.
77. As noted earlier in this handout — the Holy Spirit exhibits the qualities of personhood, because one can only \_\_\_\_ to a person.
78. But also note the identification of the Spirit as \_\_\_\_\_ in these verses.
79. When the Apostle Peter follows his accusation that Ananias had lied “**to the Holy Spirit**” with the words — “**You have not lied to men, but to God**,” he is giving a clear affirmation of the Spirit’s \_\_\_\_\_.
80. This is one of the simplest New Testament passages to \_\_\_\_\_ that the Holy Spirit is God — because if lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God — it necessarily follows — that the Spirit must be God.
81. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit can also be defended by comparing passages like 1 Corinthians 3:16 — with 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

82. In 1 Corinthians 3:16, twice over believers in Christ are referred to as, “**the temple of God**” and the reason given in this verse as to why God \_\_\_\_\_ this designation is because, “**the Spirit of God dwells in you.**”
83. In addition, to being called “**the temple of God**” in 1 Corinthians three, God’s people are also referred to as — “**the temple of the Holy Spirit**” in 1 Corinthians 6:19, again making the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
84. To refer to God’s people as \_\_\_\_\_, “**the temple of God**” & “**the temple of the Holy Spirit**” — is to affirm that — the Holy Spirit is God.
85. The same argument could be made from 2 Corinthians 6:16 where the Apostle Paul writes, “**For we are the temple of the living God.**”
86. Once again, to be “**temple of the Holy Spirit**” and “**the temple of the living God**” is to directly teach that the Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_.
87. Another example we could cite to demonstrate the Holy Spirit is God, concerns the occasion when Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was filled \_\_\_\_\_ the Holy Spirit and prophesied (Luke 1:67).
88. In Luke 1:67-69, Luke records for us what happened \_\_\_\_\_ days after John was born — when God restored Zacharias’ — ability to speak.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant—70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old—71 Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; 72 To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, 73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, 74 To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear,

89. While “**filled with the Holy Spirit**” — Zacharias “**prophesied**,” making him a living conduit of God’s Word & God’s \_\_\_\_\_.
90. While prophesying he stated specifically that the, “**God of Israel**” was the \_\_\_\_\_ who, “**spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old.**”
91. Similarly, when the Apostle Peter writes of the *Old Testament* prophets, he tells us in 2 Peter \_\_\_\_\_, “**for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**”
92. So, we are \_\_\_\_\_ that when Zacharias “**prophesied**” like all of the “**holy prophets of old**” & that when this happened it was God who “**spoke.**”



93. Yet, the Apostle Peter plainly states the same truth telling us that when all the prophets “spoke from God” they were able to do so as they were “moved by the Holy Spirit” & so making the Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

94. Also, 2 Corinthians 3:17 directly refers \_\_\_\_\_ the Spirit as “the Lord.”

**17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**

95. Dozens of other passages also demonstrate the Spirit’s deity in that He has the characteristics that \_\_\_\_\_ God can possess.

96. For instance, He exhibits **omniscience** (1 Corinthians 2:10; John 14:26; Isaiah 40:13-14; Isaiah 46:10; Acts 1:16).

97. The Spirit also exhibits **omnipresence** (Jeremiah 23:23–24; Psalm 139) He exhibits **omnipotence** (Psalm 62:11; Isaiah 40:28; Luke 1:35), and \_\_\_\_\_ exhibits **eternality** (Hebrews 9:14).

98. The Spirit’s deity is seen in that He has the infinite attributes of God, and it is seen in that He does the works that only God \_\_\_\_\_ perform.

99. The Holy Spirit was involved \_\_\_\_\_ **creating** the world (Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 104:30; Job 26:13; Job 33:4), in the **incarnation** (Luke 1:35), & in the **inspiration** of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

100. In addition, the Holy Spirit is involved in our salvation, as seen in our **justification** (John 16:9-10), in \_\_\_\_\_ **sanctification** (1 Peter 1:2) & in our **glorification** (Romans 8:11) when our salvation is completed.

101. As we studied earlier in this section, if the worship of the Lord Jesus & His acceptance of that worship is a \_\_\_\_\_ if His Deity (Matthew 14:33; Matthew 28:9)—even so the worship of the Spirit is proof of His deity.

102. When the disciples are worshipping God in Acts chapter 4, the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit, was included in their prayer of praise (Acts 4:24-31):

103. In addition, we find the Spirit worshipped in a benediction as that found in 2 Corinthians 13:14, a prayer addressed to the Father & to the Son & the Spirit—with all \_\_\_\_\_ being equally worshipped.

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

### *III. Evidence for the Trinity of God*

*Keep in mind when studying this subject, that the word “**Trinity**” is not used anywhere in Scripture. This is a term that is employed in an attempt to describe the Triune God, namely that there are three co-equal, co-existent, co-eternal persons that make up God. Understand, Trinitarianism is NOT in any way suggesting that we worship three Gods. The doctrine of the Trinity taught biblically says that there is one God made up of three Persons.*

*Some, who have denied the doctrine of the Trinity, have been quick to point out that this term is not found in the Bible & so it must not be true. Though the term “**Trinity**” is nowhere found in the Bible, there is nothing wrong with using the term. It is a “**theological word used to summarize a biblical doctrine.**” It is shorter to say the word, “**Trinity**” than to say, “**three co-equal, co-existent, co-eternal Persons making up one God.**” If this presents a problem to you, consider that you will not find such words as, “**eternal security, sovereignty, or original sin**” in the Bible. Yet very few debate these theological truths to be taught in God’s word. Even so, just because the word “**Trinity**” is not found in the Bible, does not mean that the doctrine of the Trinity is not taught. What is clearly taught and found in the Bible is the concept that is represented by the word Trinity.*

#### *A. The doctrine of the Trinity as seen historically.*

1. The doctrine of the Trinity is central to the uniqueness of Christianity, and so, it not surprising, then, that the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most disparaged & attacked beliefs \_\_\_\_\_ those outside the faith.
2. Mormons & Jehovah’s Witnesses reject this central tenet, and when you encounter them, you soon discover how much time & energy they use to teach against this—so as \_\_\_\_\_ make the rest of the Christian faith untrue.
3. When you encounter a Jehovah’s Witness, they begin their dismantling of Trinitarian theology—by trying to convince others—that Christ is a created being who did not exist in eternity past & so is \_\_\_\_\_ fully God.
4. Mormons have no problem with Jesus being “**God**” for the simple reason that they make “**godhood**” available to all who follow the teachings \_\_\_\_\_ the Church of Latter-day Saints.
5. They say Jesus is a created being, the first spirit to be born of *the Father* (*Mormon Doctrine, p.129*) & *a celestial mother* (*Mormon Doctrine, p.516*), teaching He cannot be the eternal God \_\_\_\_\_ part of an eternal Trinity.
6. A common refutation used by those who reject Trinitarianism, is that this teaching was \_\_\_\_\_ part of the early church.

7. It is argued that the teaching of the Trinity was invented & imposed \_\_\_\_\_ the church by the *Emperor Constantine* at the *Council of Nicea* (324AD).
8. However, a careful study of church history indicates that the doctrine of the Trinity did \_\_\_\_\_ come through political pressure or by man-made originality, but is revealed in Scripture & held by the early Christians.
9. The Council of Nicea, only codified what the church had always \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Historically—around 110 AD Ignatius (c. 35–c. 110), a pastor from Antioch, affirmed God’s Triunity in a letter to believers in Ephesus, where he described \_\_\_\_\_ fellow Christians as:

*“stones of a temple, prepared beforehand for the building of God the Father, hoisted up to the heights by the crane of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, using as a rope the Holy Spirit” (Letter to the Ephesians 9.1).*

11. Ignatius’ Trinitarian beliefs are seen throughout \_\_\_\_\_ writings.
12. Polycarp, who served as a pastor in Smyrna (69–156), also demonstrated he believed this truth, when just before \_\_\_\_\_ martyrdom, he wrote:

*“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” (Martyrdom of Polycarp, 14).*

13. Athenagoras of Athens a Christian apologist (c. 133–190) wondered:

*“Who would not be astonished to hear men who speak of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and who declare both their power in union and their distinction in order, called atheists?” (A Plea for the Christians, 10).*

14. Many other historical examples from the early church could \_\_\_\_\_ cited.
15. What becomes clear is that the early church, nearly \_\_\_\_\_ years before the Council of Nicea, affirmed a clear belief in the Triune God as seen in its recorded prayers, its worship books and its early apologetics.
16. One creates a “**straw man**” to argue \_\_\_\_\_ the Emperor Constantine imposed the doctrine of the Trinity on the church because the doctrine of the Trinity was a widely held belief prior to the Council of Nicea.
17. The early Church asserted the deity & unity of each Person in the Godhead because the Bible clearly reveals this to be \_\_\_\_\_.

**B. The doctrine of the Trinity as seen operationally.**

1. So far, we've observed several texts that indicate the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God—and we have looked at several verses of Scripture that affirm only \_\_\_\_\_ God exists.
2. Now we want to dig deeper into the “**threeness**” of God \_\_\_ observing from the Bible the manner in which each Member functions together.
3. The Doctrine of the Trinity is seen in the way in which each Member, Father, Son and Spirit work in coordination with \_\_\_\_\_ another.
4. The way each Member functions in relation to one another shows that within the unity of the one Godhead there are three separate Persons, who are co-equal, co-existent \_\_\_\_\_ co-eternal Persons.
5. In many instances, all three Persons of the Trinity are mentioned \_\_\_ either the same verse or in the same event or in the same action & so for instance, God's Triunity is revealed **in the creation of the world**.
6. When the world was made, the Bible tells us emphatically that God the Father created the world, God the Spirit created the world and God the Son created the world — each \_\_\_ credited with creation.
7. The Bible credits the creation of the world to **God the Father** Himself in the opening verse \_\_\_\_\_ the Bible stating, “**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**” (Genesis 1:1):
8. Likewise, when Moses gives the nation of Israel a rationale for giving special honor to — one \_\_\_\_\_ in seven — he wrote in Exodus 20:11:

**“For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.**

9. In giving glory **to God** for His creation, King David wrote in Psalm \_\_\_\_:

**1 The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their  
expanse is declaring the work of His hands.**

10. The Apostle John in the prologue to his gospel attributes the creation \_\_\_ the world **to the Son** when he writes of the Word, the Lord Jesus (1:1-3).

**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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.**

11. The Apostle Paul said of **Jesus** \_\_\_\_ the Colossian church (Col. 1:16):

16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

12. The writer to the Hebrews, in Hebrews 1:10 quotes Psalm 102:25, in order to give **God the Son** credit \_\_\_\_ creation when he writes:

10 And, “YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

13. The Bible very clearly ascribes **the creation of the world**—not just to **the Father** and to **the Son**, but also to **the Spirit**—and so Genesis 1:2 describes the Holy Spirit’s \_\_\_\_\_ in creating the world:

The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

14. In Psalm \_\_\_\_\_, the psalmist opens with the words, “Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great” and then he gives a very detailed description of God’s creation & the role of **the Spirit** (104:30):

You send forth Your Spirit, they are created (*the works of God described in the psalm*); And You renew the face of the ground.

15. It is an undeniable fact that **the Holy Spirit** is involved in the creation of the world & in creating us who walk on this \_\_\_\_\_ as Job writes (33:4):

The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

16. So first, **the work of creation** is a work *that only God* can do (Acts 17:24), and since the creation has been attributed to **the Father**, **the Son**, and **the Spirit** collectively, this forces us first to conclude that each is \_\_\_\_.

17. And second, since the Scripture asserts, “Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other” (Isa. 45:22), then we must conclude there \_\_\_\_ unity in Trinity & Trinity in unity.

18. The Trinity is also affirmed operationally in the **Incarnation**, as seen when the angel Gabriel appears to Mary, \_\_\_\_ are told (Luke 1:35):

35 The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

19. Since other passages like Deuteronomy 32:8 reveal that the term “**Most High**” refers to God the Father, we \_\_\_\_\_ here a concrete instance of Father, Spirit & Son *all being involved* in Jesus’ miraculous **Incarnation**.

20. Operationally, the Trinity is affirmed when Christ was **baptized**, for when Jesus was baptized & while \_\_\_\_\_ was praying (Luke 3:21–22):

“heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

21. The Trinitarian nature of God is seen for as Jesus is being **baptized** the Spirit is descending upon Him as a \_\_\_\_\_ and the Father audibly bears testimony as His voice speaks, “**You are my beloved Son**” (Lk. 3:22).

22. The **baptism** of Christ demonstrates that God \_\_\_\_\_ indeed three distinct Persons who operate concurrently to carry out the plan & will of God.

23. Please do not miss that on this occasion all three Members of the Trinity are present while being “**simultaneously**” distinct \_\_\_\_\_ one another.

24. A popular heresy against Trinitarian theology \_\_\_\_\_ known as “**Modalism**,” viewing God as one Person—instead of three Persons—teaching that the Father, Son & Spirit are different **modes** of the same divine Person.

25. “**Modalists**” falsely teach that God takes \_\_\_\_\_ different **modes** or forms, affirming “**the oneness**” of God while denying “**the threeness**” of God.

26. “**Modalists**” commonly say that during the Old Testament era God primarily manifested himself as the Father — then while on earth as the Son — and \_\_\_\_\_ after Jesus’ Ascension — as the Spirit.

27. A form of “**Modalism**” still exists today \_\_\_\_\_ Oneness Pentecostalism.

28. In oneness theology, which is anti-Trinitarian, there are \_\_\_\_\_ distinctions among the Persons of the Trinity & so they teach that the Son becomes the Father—or the Spirit becomes the Son—or the Son becomes, etc.

29. The problem with “**Modalism**” is that it ignores texts like Luke 3:21-22, which reveals all three Persons—existing simultaneously & relating to each other \_\_\_\_\_ once — showing that each are co-equal & co-eternal.

30. In Jesus’ upper room discourse He speaks of each Person of the Trinity when He makes a promise to His disciples \_\_\_\_\_ recorded in John 14:16-17:

16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

31. The Lord Jesus is seen here as praying to the Father, for the Spirit, and so, again His emphasis \_\_\_\_ the Triunity of God is very evident.

32. In John 14:26 & John 15:26, He uses the same pattern when mentioning the three Persons of the Godhead — thereby indicating their unity, not only in their purpose & will—but also \_\_\_\_ their basic nature.

33. The Triunity of God is also seen in **the baptismal formula** Jesus \_\_\_\_ us.

18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

34. Jesus commands us to baptize in \_\_\_\_\_ in the “**names**,” but in the “**name**” of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

35. In other words, when Jesus institutes baptism as an ordinance & tells us that it should be — done in Someone’s “**name**” — every Old Testament believer knew that \_\_\_\_\_ identifies Himself as “**Yahweh**” (Isaiah 42:8):

8 “I am the LORD, that is My name.” (NASB)

8 “I am Yahweh, that is my name.” (LEB)

36. This is \_\_\_\_\_ the words of Christ are so unbelievably striking in saying:

“baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

37. Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ at all concerned with the fact that the name of “**Yahweh**” is not being used—because for Him—naming the three Divine persons of the Trinity — is a perfect substitute — for the name “**Yahweh**.”

38. The Father, Son & Spirit share a common “**name**,” indicating common essence and equality & so both—plurality and unity are taught in that three Persons are mentioned — but all three share \_\_\_\_\_ name.

39. By the nature of this command, Christ Jesus also affirms that each are co-equals, for there is \_\_\_\_ hint that One is “**more God**” than the others.

40. The “**oneness**” & the “**threeness**” of God is also seen in **the resurrection of our Lord**—for it was Jesus who said to the \_\_\_\_\_ who opposed Him, “**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up**” (John 2:19).
  41. In that same chapter a few verses later, John reminds us that Jesus was speaking of the resurrection of His earthly \_\_\_\_\_ (John 2:21).
  42. So, while Jesus claims to be able to raise Himself (John 10:18), still other Scriptures teach that Christ was raised by the agency of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11), & Peter states that the Father raised the \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 3:26).
- 18 “No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father” (John 10:18).
- 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you (Romans 8:11).
- 26 “For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways” (Acts 3:26).
43. Again, while the Triune nature of God is in some respects beyond the comprehension of our finite minds — the Bible nonetheless affirms that \_\_\_\_\_ is “**one in nature**” but “**three in Person**.”
44. Likewise, the Apostle Paul definitely taught—the Triune nature of God, by including the Father, Son & Spirit together in **his benediction**, for in associating each Member together — he \_\_\_\_\_ saying they are co-equal:
- 14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all (2 Corinthians 13:14).
45. This **benediction** would be impossible for Paul to give, \_\_\_\_\_ the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit were not equal Persons within the Godhead.

### C. The doctrine of the Trinity as seen relationally.

1. The early Church embraced the deity & unity of each Person in the Godhead because they believed the Bible revealed this to be true as seen in “**the relationship**” they share with \_\_\_\_\_ another.
2. The Trinity reveals that God is \_\_\_\_\_ loving or “**omnibenevolent**,” meaning that love has always been a part of His eternal nature.



3. \_\_\_\_\_ requires multiple persons who are in relationship to one another.
4. Therefore, if God is not a plurality of Persons—then we could only say that God is **omnipotent & omniscient & omnipresent** — but that He is \_\_\_\_\_ **omnibenevolent** meaning, He was incomplete until He created us.
5. Yet, the Scripture reveals that “**God is love**” (1 John 4:8, 16) which is not merely an attribute of God—but is \_\_\_\_\_ of His eternal makeup.
6. The fact of God’s Triunity is rooted in the truth that “**God is love,**” because by definition \_\_\_\_\_ requires a “**community of persons.**”
7. As noted earlier, \_\_\_\_\_ Member of the Godhead was involved in the **Incarnation** because it happened to the Son by the power of the Most High & through the agency of the Holy Spirit on Mary’s womb.
8. The very teaching that the eternal Son became a man through the virgin Mary in order to accomplish the redemption of fallen man — can make absolutely \_\_\_\_\_ sense at all apart from the Trinitarian nature of God.
9. Think about it—whose wrath was the Son bearing if He existed all by Himself & precisely who forsook Christ on the cross (Matthew 27:46) when He was dying, if God did \_\_\_\_\_ exist in a plurality of Persons?

46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?” that is, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?”

10. The Bible reveals that all three Members of the Trinity were present through the life of Christ and participated in carrying \_\_\_\_\_ God’s **plan of redemption** (Isaiah 53:6,10; Ephesian 5:2; Hebrews 9:14).

6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way;  
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him . . . 10 But the LORD  
was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself  
as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the  
good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand (Isaiah 53:6, 10).

2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us,  
an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma (Ephesians 5:2).

14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit  
offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience  
from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:14)?

11. The **Incarnation**, that led to the cross is the kingpin of Christianity and neither make \_\_\_\_\_ sense at all apart from a Trinitarian perspective.

12. In fact, the different roles in the Godhead as each relate to another does not deny the doctrine of the Trinity but requires “**the threeness**” of \_\_\_\_.
13. For instance, the Bible reveals there \_\_\_\_ subordination within the Trinity.
14. Jesus taught us — that He \_\_\_\_ positionally subordinate — to the Father.

28 “You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’  
If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the  
Father, for the Father is greater than I (John 14:28).

15. While we have already examined in this handout that the Son is as much God as the Father, yet between the Father & Son, the Father is greater in position—but He is \_\_\_\_\_ greater than the Son—in essence or being.
16. Jehovah’s Witness foster the heresy of third century Arianism saying that Jesus is \_\_\_\_ than God the Father & therefore created & not God.
17. However, from the opening verses of John’s Gospel, it \_\_\_\_ taught that the Father & the Son share the same essence & purpose (1:1-2; 14:9; 10:30).
18. It is essential to understand, that being under authority does not equal inferiority, for Jesus was totally under the authority the Father (John 5:19; 8:28), yet He is equally \_\_\_\_\_ (John 1:1, 8:58, & 10:30).
19. Likewise, the Apostle Paul affirmed this \_\_\_\_\_ truth to the Corinthians.

3 But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3).

20. When God calls women in the church to recognize the headship of men, it is not because women are unequal or inferior — but because there is an established God-ordained order of authority to \_\_\_\_ respected.
21. Just as a wife is \_\_\_\_ less of a person than her husband but submits to him (Ephesians 5:24), even so Christ’s subordination *is similar* to the Father.
22. Furthermore we learn that the Spirit is positionally subordinate to the Father as the Father sends Him to \_\_\_\_\_ (John 14:16&26).

16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever . . . 26 “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you (John 14:16, 26).

23. The Holy Spirit is also positionally subordinate to the Son in that He does not speak on His own initiative, but He receives from Christ what He is \_\_\_\_ reveal to the Apostles (John 16:13-14).

13 “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 “He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you (John 16:13-14).

24. To say that Christ’s or the Spirit’s subordination is a denial of their Deity is heresy and goes against the \_\_\_\_\_ teaching of Scripture.

25. Stated simply, *to subordinate* Jesus’ or the Spirit’s “**essence**” is heretical, but to subordinate Jesus’ or the Spirit’s “**office**” or “**role**” \_\_\_\_ biblical.

26. These verses are a wonderful example of the Trinitarian nature of God — woven \_\_\_\_\_ the fabric — of the New Testament.

27. The Lord Jesus was \_\_\_\_ trying to give us a complicated lecture on the Trinity, but was simply helping us to understand how the Persons of the Trinity interact and work for the good of His people & His plan.

28. If we say we love God, we should strive to know everything we can about Him even if it is difficult to grasp and we do not \_\_\_\_\_ understand.

29. It was important enough to God to reveal himself to \_\_\_\_ as a Trinity, and so, consequently if we love God, we should attempt to understand everything we are able to grasp on this biblical truth (Deut. 29:29).

30. We have seen that the Bible reveals that the Father, Son & Spirit are each God — but at the same time — there is only \_\_\_\_\_ God.

31. We must affirm the truth, “**The LORD is our God, the LORD is one**” & \_\_\_\_ three — as 1 Corinthians 8:6 says, “**yet for us there is one God.**”

32. At the same time, *we must affirm* that the statement, ‘**the LORD is one**’ does \_\_\_\_ contradict the truth of the Trinity, but in fact, establishes it.

33. And so, we studied from the opening verse in the Bible, “**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**” (Gen. 1:1), that the noun used for God’s name is \_\_\_\_\_ the plural.

34. Likewise, we saw the plurality of Persons in the Godhead is implied by the use of plural pronouns in connection with God, when He created man (Genesis 1:26) — or in \_\_\_\_\_ rebuke of man (Genesis 11:7).

35. When God said, “**Let Us go down and there confuse their language,**” (Genesis 11:7) if God were not a plurality of Persons, then the usage of this plural pronoun would be \_\_\_\_\_ wrong and deceiving.
36. That God \_\_\_\_ a plurality & a Trinity is taught in the whole of Scripture.
37. At first glance, may look like we are bad at math to say that there are three entities that are God — while there is only \_\_\_\_\_ God.
38. Yet, that is precisely what the Bible declares, that there is only one living God, who is comprised of \_\_\_\_\_ separate co-equal & co-eternal Persons.
39. So, on the one hand, the Bible reveals “**the Threeness of God**” and on the other hand it reveals, “**the Oneness of God**” & so \_\_\_\_ get the term “**Trinity**” & the term “**Tri-unity**” which simply means “**three in one.**”
40. Historically, through the study of Scripture the Church has always believed that — the Father is fully God — the Son is fully God, and the Holy Spirit is fully God — yet there is just \_\_\_\_\_ God.
41. Historically, the Church has always believed that the Bible also teaches that the Father is not the Son or the Spirit — the Son is not the Father or the Spirit — and the Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_ the Father or the Son.
42. Each Member of the Godhead is distinct & yet they \_\_\_\_\_ inseparable.
43. So, when we define the Trinity biblically, we are saying that there is one God who exists eternally as three distinct Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit & each of those Persons is \_\_\_\_\_ and equally God.

#### **IV. Illustrations for the Trinity of God**

*None of the popular illustrations of the Trinity are completely accurate descriptions of the Godhead. We must keep in mind that while various illustrations may give us a glimpse of the Trinity, the illustrations are not entirely accurate. Just know that an infinite God cannot be fully described by a finite illustration.*

##### **A. The challenge of illustrating the Trinity.**

1. God is “**transcendent**” meaning — He is above us — He surpasses us and is independent from us and so by definition, God is the only One who is truly incomprehensible—and thus there is \_\_\_\_ one like Him.
2. However, besides being “**transcendent**” — the Bible teaches that God also possesses “**immanence**” or nearness — and it is in His “**immanence**” by which God — chooses to draw near to \_\_\_\_.

3. So, while on the one hand God wants us \_\_\_\_ seek to know Him, how can we as His finite creatures possibly know & understand the infinite when our minds & thoughts are so far beneath His thoughts (Isaiah 55:8&9):

8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. 9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

4. With God being so great — some would consider an attempt to illustrate the Trinity as an exercise in futility & yet we should attempt to develop a doctrinally sound illustration based on what God has revealed to \_\_\_\_.

5. But even after our best attempts, we should admit with the Apostle Paul:

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? 35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:33–36).

6. Another aspect of God’s transcendent nature, that places \_\_\_\_\_ beyond the reach of His creation is that—He is holy & righteous & without sin.
7. Yet, God’s love for His creation is so great that we see His “**immanence**” overshadowing His “**transcendence**” as \_\_\_\_ breaks through the barrier of sin & separation to draw all mankind back into a close relationship.
8. So, God is “**transcendent**” in that He is way above us, and yet God’s love for His creation is so great that we see His “**immanence**” overshadowing His transcendence — as He breaks past \_\_\_\_\_ fallenness through Jesus.
9. God’s desire—to be \_\_\_\_\_ us becomes clear in His incarnate Son, who came to provide forgiveness & to bring us back to Himself.
10. I say all this to say, that that nothing in our world can fully \_\_\_\_\_ adequately illustrate the Holy Trinity.

#### **B. Some common illustrations of the Trinity.**

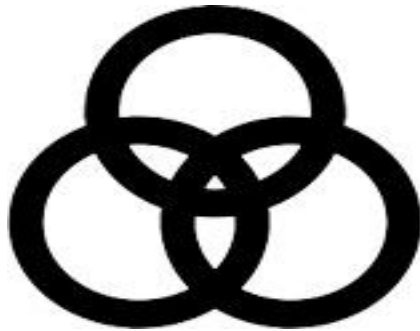
1. Nonetheless the attempts by pastors & Bible teachers & theologians to draw analogies from the creation & Scripture \_\_\_\_\_ be helpful.
2. One well-liked analogy to explain the unexplainable is to illustrate the Trinity with an egg that \_\_\_\_ made up of a shell, a yolk & an egg white.

3. The deficit of three “**parts**” making one unified single whole is that God cannot be divided into “**parts**” for the Father, Son, & Spirit are one in essence, but the same cannot \_\_\_\_ said for the shell, yolk, & egg white.
4. Another illustration — that is said to have been used in evangelizing the Irish was to take a single shamrock clover with its 3 leaves picturing the Triune God—though God obviously—cannot \_\_\_\_ divided into parts.

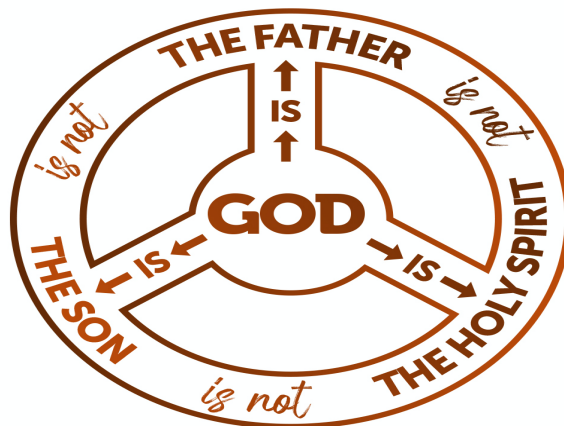


5. A very popular illustration for the Trinity is to use the different states that water can take as a solid, liquid or gas—while remaining \_\_\_\_.
6. While its chemical composition, remains the same, the problem with this illustration is that God does not switch modes or states where the Father becomes the Son or the Son becomes the Father, like H<sub>2</sub>O changes \_\_\_\_.
7. As noted earlier in our study, the idea that God manifests Himself differently at different times and in various “**forms**” or “**modes**” is called “**Modalism**” — which is a heresy — to \_\_\_\_ avoided.
8. Others, illustrate the Trinity using geometrical designs \_\_\_\_ the triangle, with its *three equal sides* conveying equality, while forming one complete whole and so — capturing some of what it means to be three in one.
9. Just as a triangle — has three distinct corners — yet is one triangle, for it could \_\_\_\_ be a triangle if the corners were separated from it, even so, there is a simultaneously “**threeness**” & “**oneness**” in God.
10. God is one in essence, but He has \_\_\_\_ distinct but inseparable Persons—God the Father—God the Son & God the Holy Spirit.
11. The geometric design using three overlapping or intertwined circles have been used to represent the \_\_\_\_ persons in the Godhead, in their equality — in their unity — and in their eternity.
12. Each of the three circles were of the same \_\_\_\_ to symbolize equality.

13. They were intertwined — in order \_\_\_\_ symbolize their “**unity**,” and because the design of a circle has no apparent beginning or end, it symbolized “**the eternal nature**” of the Godhead.



14. The circles are so arranged that if you take one away, then the other two will also separate — so this is thought to emphasize the interdependence \_\_\_\_\_ the indissolubility of the Triune nature of the Godhead.
15. Spatial relationships \_\_\_\_ illustrate the Triunity of God in that anything that you can measure consists of length, width & height—three in one.
16. And yet, the height is not the depth—and the depth is not the width, and the width is not the height — and if you were to take away any of these dimensions — then you would \_\_\_\_\_ longer have space.
17. Using the concept of time can be helpful in illustrating the Trinity in that time — consists of past, present, & future — three in \_\_\_\_.
18. And yet, the past is not the present & the present is not the future, and the future is not the past — each is distinct — while each is inseparable because you cannot have \_\_\_\_\_ without the other.



*Scripture Memory Verse: Matthew 28:18-20*

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