

# HARD QUESTIONS

THE TRINITY

JULY 16, 2025

## NOTES

### DEFINITION. THE TRINITY IS ONE GOD [BEING], ETERNALLY EXISTING IN THREE PERSONS

1. God-the-Father
2. God-the-Son (Jesus Christ)
3. God-the-Holy Spirit

**Takeaway: 1 God eternally exists in 3 Persons (Father, Son, and Spirit).** Our God is Triune (from Tri-Unity) or Tri (3) United (1).

This has been the historic orthodox position in Scripture and Christianity since both began. The Trinity has been progressively revealed by God throughout His Word and history, and clearly articulated in God's finished Word. Key church councils confirmed it repeatedly as false religions and cults continued to question, undermine, or deny the Trinity. Each attempt always was accompanied by questioning the deity of at least one of the members of the Godhead. These blasphemous attempts to undermine a Person in the Trinity, always denied the true doctrine of God, the Trinity.

Though not stated in Scripture, often the members of the Trinity are referred to as the 1st Person (Father), the 2nd Person (Son), and the 3rd Person (Spirit) on our 1 God. Some do not even like to think about this mystery, as it seems to confuse the perfect unity, harmony, and oneness with thoughts of rank or superiority. Scripture demonstrates that each Person has their orderly role and submits to each other. The 3rd submits bringing focus and glory to the 2nd, the 2nd to the 1st, and all to each other (cf. John 5:20-30; 14:28; 17:2-5; Eph. 1:17, 20-21; Php. 2:7-11; 1Co. 11:3; 15:27-28). Interestingly, different religions or denominations have often historically placed greater emphasis on one member of the Trinity. Catholics and Presbyterians frequently have a high view of, or seem to primarily worship God-the-Father. Baptists and Bible churches often focus on Jesus Christ—the Word and Savior. And, the Charismatic and Pentecostals have often focused on the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit. Ideally, all should focus on God, which includes all three Persons in the Trinity.

### FALSE DEFINITIONS OR MISUNDERSTANDINGS

The Trinity or Trinitarianism is NOT:

1. **1 initial God, now with 2 later (created), lesser gods (non-eternal) in a pseudo-trinity** - There is only 1 eternal God, with 3 co-equal eternal Persons. Jesus is "from everlasting" (Micah 5:2), "created all things" (Eph. 3:9; Rev. 4:11), and appeared before the incarnation in the OT as a Theophany/Christophany. The Holy Spirit is "the

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eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14). Jesus and the Spirit were not created by God; they eternally existed as God.

2. **3 Gods (Tritheism, polytheism, or social trinitarianism)** - There is only 1 God, not 3 (not  $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ , but  $1 * 1 * 1 = 1$ ).
3. **3 parts, %s, or pieces of God** - God is 100%, wholly, fully, completely God, not 1/3 God. This heresy called partialism (not  $1/3 + 1/3 + 1/3 = 1$ ).
4. **3 roles or functions of God** - Most difficult to understand. This is wrong as it makes each person the same person with different roles/functions, some of the time. No, the Trinity is 3 distinct persons. Our 1 God is all 3 Persons simultaneously, functioning with 3 distinct roles, all the time (for all eternity).
5. **3 forms or modes of God** - God does not change (He is immutable) form or modes to become a different person. He does not change back and forth between each member of the Trinity. He is eternally the triune God. The Athanasian and Nicene Creeds (4th century AD, both historically accepted by all churches) defended the Trinity, rejected modalism (1 person in 3 modes), and Arianism (denied Christ's deity).

**Takeaway: 1 God exists in 3 co-equal, co-eternal Persons; not 1 alone or 3 of anything.**

## SOMETIMES HELPFUL ANALOGIES

Everyone and everything limited when compared to God:

- **Egg** (1 egg has a shell, egg-white, and yolk; 1 egg with different parts/pieces) - No, each Person is 100% God, NOT a different part, NOR mere piece of God, NOR with different attributes of God. Each Person is 100% God, through and through.
- **H<sub>2</sub>O** (Liquid [Water], Solid [Ice], Gas [Steam]; all the 1 compound, but in different forms, modes, or states) - No, our 1 God is all 3 persons, in perfect unity, all the time (not tri-schizophrenic in state, form, mind, or action).
- **Father, Son, and Brother**- If 3 separate persons, then NOT 1. If 1 person with different roles/functions evidenced some of the time, then NOT 3 persons. God is all 3 Persons, with 3 distinct roles, all the time (for all eternity).
- **Triangle** (Each corner has the same angle, is part of the 1 triangle, distinct, identical, and united)- But each Person in the Godhead is 100% God, not divided into separate parts or in their own corner.

**Takeaway: There is nothing comparable to our unique awe-inspiring God.** There is no one and nothing (material or immaterial) anywhere like our triune God. He is unique, and greater than anyone or anything. That makes it impossible for us to compare Him; and should inspire us to ponder, wonder, and worship.

## SCRIPTURAL BASIS

7 Biblical reasons in the OT and NT for the Trinity:

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## 1. There is 1, and only 1 God; monotheism (Deu. 6:4; Isa. 44:6-8; 45:5; 1Ti. 2:5; 1Co. 8:4).

- Deu. 6:4—"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is **one LORD**."
- Isa. 45:5—"I am the LORD, and **there is none else**, there is **no God beside Me**: I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me."
- John 10:30—"I [Jesus] and My Father are one."
- John 14:7-11—"7If ye had **known Me** [Jesus], ye should have **known My Father also**: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. 8Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? 10Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. 11Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake."
- 1Ti. 2:5—"For there is **one God**, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

## 2. Only 3 Persons (Father, Son, and Spirit) are fully God (some good OT references: Isa 9:6; 48:16; 59:19-20; 63:9-10).

- **Father** (called "**God the Father**" 12 times, Joh. 6:27; Gal. 1:1, 3; Eph. 6:23; Php. 2:11; 1Th. 1:1; 2Th. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; 1Pe. 1:2; 2Pe. 1:17; 2Jo. 1:3; Jude 1:1): Rom. 1:7—"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from **God our Father**, and the Lord Jesus Christ."
- **Son** (called "**Son of God**" 48 times, "**the Son of God**" 45 times, and "**the only begotten son of God**" in John 3:18): John 1:1, 14—"1**In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. 14And **the Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of **the only begotten of the Father**,) full of grace and truth." Heb. 1:8—"But unto **the Son** He saith, 'Thy throne, O **God**, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.'"
- **Spirit** (called "**Spirit of God**" 26 times, "**the Spirit of God**" 25 times, "**the Spirit of the Lord**" 31 times, "**Holy Ghost**" or "**Holy Spirit**" 97 times): Acts 5:3-4—"3But Peter said, 'Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to **lie to the Holy Ghost**, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast **not lied unto men, but unto God**.'" 1Co. 2:10—"But **God** hath revealed them unto us by **His Spirit**: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

## 3. All 3 Persons are co-equal (in baptism and benediction).

- Mat. 28:19 – "Baptizing them in the name of the **Father**, and of the **Son**, and of the **Holy Spirit**."
- 2Co. 13:14—"The grace of **the Lord Jesus Christ**, and the love of **God**, and the communion of **the Holy Ghost**, be with you all. Amen."

## 4. All 3 Persons (simultaneously) are eternally distinct (not the same person).

- Mat. 3:16-17—"16And **Jesus**, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw **the Spirit of God** descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: 17And lo a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is **My** beloved Son, in Whom **I am** well pleased.'"
- Luk. 1:35—"And the angel answered and said unto her, 'The **Holy Ghost** shall come upon thee, and the power of **the Highest** shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the **Son of God**.'"
- Joh. 15:26 (cf. John 12:28; 14:16-17)—"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from **the Father**, even **the Spirit** of truth, which proceedeth from **the Father**, He shall testify of **Me** [the Son]."

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## 5. God's plural names, pronouns, and repeated reference imply the Trinity.

- **"Elohim"** (is the plural name for God, found 2,601 times. Elohim and plural pronouns for God are found in the 1st verse, and in the 1st chapter of Scripture). Deu. 6:4—"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our **God** is **one** LORD." (Here plural "God" context is contrasted with "one.")
- **"Us" and "Our"** (are the plural pronouns for God): Gen. 1:26-27—"26And God said, 'Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27So **God** created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Gen. 3:22—"And **the LORD God** said, 'Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever..." Isa. 6:8—"Also I heard the voice of **the Lord**, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then said I, 'Here am I; send me.'"
- **"Holy, Holy, Holy"** (repeated attribute only for our triune God): Isa. 6:3—"And one cried unto another, and said, '**Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD** of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.'" Rev. 4:8—"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, '**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty**, which was, and is, and is to come.'"

## 6. Only 3 equally have God's glory, exact "image," attributes, and names/titles (Names and titles like God [see #2 above], "Almighty," "Lord of Lords," "I am" (Exo. 3:14; Joh. 8:58), etc. The Trinity perfectly possesses all attributes like: Self-Existence [life], Eternality, Spirituality, Immutability, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Omniscience, Love, Grace, Mercy, Holiness, Righteousness, Justice, Unity, Truth, etc.). Yes, man can imperfectly share some, but only God can share the incommunicable attributes; and only God can perfectly demonstrate them all (and equally in all His actions). That is why some call God's attributes "perfections."

**Big worshipful thought.** The Trinity uniquely and perfectly portrays a non-communicable attribute of God, self-sufficiency. The Trinity always has each Person in the Godhead eternally expressing every attribute perfectly in complete unity. Thus, each Person always gives and receives the intimacy of that oneness, in each and every one of God's attributes. The Triune God has never needed anyone or anything, He's never been lonely, never had a need. Pondering one attribute (unconditional love), the Triune God always was intimately personally loved, never separated (except at the cross). He did not need to create man or angels, but delighted to share Himself and His glory that we might experience Him. Selah.

- John 17:5—"And now, O **Father**, glorify thou **Me** [Jesus] with Thine own self with the **glory** which **I** had with **Thee** before the world was."
- Heb. 1:2-3—"2Hath in these last days spoken unto us by **His Son**, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; 3Who **being the brightness of His glory**, and **the express image of His person**..." ("the express image" is Greek "charakter"-engraving [character], figure stamped, exact copy, representation; not the normal Greek "eikon" for mere "image." )
- 2Co. 4:4, 6—"4In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of **Christ, Who is the image of God**, should shine unto them. 6For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of **the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ**."
- Col. 1:15, 19—"15[Jesus] Who is **the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of every creature. 19For it pleased the Father that **in Him should all fulness dwell**."
- Col. 2:9—"For **in Him** [Jesus] **dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead** bodily."
- Heb. 9:14—"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through **the eternal Spirit** offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

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## 7. All 3 perform Divine acts or works (some cited below).

Act or Work	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Creating Universe	Gen. 1:1; Psa. 102:25	Joh. 1:3	Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13
Creating Man	Gen. 2:7	Col. 1:16	Job 33:4
Resurrection	Act. 13:30; Rom. 6:4	Joh. 2:19; 10:17-18	Rom. 8:11
Indwelling	1Jo. 4:12, 15-16	Rom. 8:9-10	2Ti. 1:14
Sealing	Joh. 6:27	Eph. 3:17	Eph. 4:30
Miracles	Act. 2:22; 19:11	Joh. 2:11	Gal. 3:5

- **Creation:**

- o **Father:** Gen. 1:1—"In the beginning **God created the heaven and the earth.**"
- o **Son:** Joh. 1:3—"All things were made by Him [Jesus]; and without Him was not anything made that was made." (Shows the unity of the Trinity.)
- o **Spirit:** Job 26:13—"By His **Spirit** He hath **garnished the heavens**; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent."

- **Resurrection:**

- o **Father:** Acts 13:30—"But **God raised Him** [Jesus] **from the dead.**"
- o **Son:** John 10:17-18—"17Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My [Jesus'] life, that **I might take it again.** 18No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and **I have power to take it again.** This commandment have I received of My Father."
- o **Spirit:** Rom. 8:11—"But if **the Spirit** of Him that **raised up Jesus from the dead** dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

- **Miracles:**

- o **Father:** Acts 19:11—"And **God wrought special miracles** by the hands of Paul."
- o **Son:** John 2:11—"This beginning of **miracles did Jesus** in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him."
- o **Spirit:** Gal. 3:5—"He therefore that ministereth to you **the Spirit**, and **worketh miracles** among you, doeth He it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

**Takeaway: The Bible clearly teaches the Trinity in 7 indisputable ways.** 1—There is 1, and only 1 God (monotheism). 2—All 3 Persons (Father, Son, and Spirit) are fully God. 3—All 3 Persons are co-equal. 4—All 3 Persons are (simultaneously) eternally distinct (not the same person). 5—God's plural names, pronouns, and perfections (repeated reference) proves 3 Persons are in the Trinity. 6—All 3 Persons equally have God's glory, exact "image," attributes, and names/titles. 7—All (only) 3 Persons perform Divine works ("Acts of God").

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## CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION

Personalizing The Trinity in your life:

In conclusion, God, the Trinity, or the Godhead is a divine mystery. One God or Being, yet three Persons, co-equal, co-eternal, and unified in essence, but distinct in personhood and role. What a mystery; by faith I embrace and worship the Trinity with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.

- 1. KNOW better the Triune God.** “That I may know Him” (Php. 3:10). You do not have to understand it all (no one does); believe and grow in your knowledge and understanding of our God. *Will I experience the Trinity more intimately and passionately in my life?*
- 2. PRAY better to the Triune God.** Pray to “Our Father” (Mat. 6:9; Luk. 11:2), in Jesus’ name (He’s the 1 mediator (1Ti. 2:5) and promises to answer anything asked in His name/authority-John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24), through or always in the Holy Spirit (Eph. 6:18). *So, will I pray/communicate appropriately with our Triune God?*
- 3. WITNESS better of the Triune God.** The eternally lost Blaspheme God-the-Spirit’s drawing; reject their only Savior, God-the-Son (denying His Deity); and suppress the truth of God-the-Father, so remain lost. It is eternally important to apologetically defend; “let God be true, but every man a liar” (Rom. 3:4). The Deity of Christ is a fundamental of the Faith, a requirement to be eternally saved. A big reason Jews and Muslims reject Christianity is they are monotheistic, and reject the Trinity and Deity of Christ. Hindus and Mormons are polytheistic (believe in many gods), so they misunderstand the Trinity and believe we are Tritheists, or think we worship 3 Gods. Jehovah’s Witnesses and Christian Scientists deny the Trinity altogether. Oneness Pentecostals believe in Modalism. Knowing the truth of the Trinity and false counterfeit claims of other religions and cults, better enables us to explain and share God. *So, will I (in the power of the Spirit) seek to be a better witness of the Trinity?*
- 4. WORSHIP better of the Triune God.** “Worship Him in Spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). *Will I consciously worship all 3 Persons in our 1 wondrous God?*

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