

# H3

## Session 12 The Trinity

### Definition

Wayne Grudem – “God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God” (*Systematic Theology*, 226)

### Old Testament Indications

- Genesis 1:26
- Genesis 3:22
- Genesis 11:7
- Isaiah 6:8
- Psalm 45:6-7 (cf. Hebrews 1:8)
- Psalm 110:1 (cf. Matthew 22:41-46)
- Isaiah 63:7-14
- Isaiah 61:1
- Malachi 3:1-2
- Hosea 1:7
- Isaiah 48:16
- “The Angel of the Lord” passages (cf. H3 Session 8)

### New Testament Indications

- Matthew 3:16-17
- Matthew 28:19
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
- 2 Corinthians 13:14
- Ephesians 2:18,22; 4:4-6
- 1 Peter 1:2
- Jude 20:21

### The Bible affirms

- 1) God is three Persons. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are distinct Persons.  
Hebrews 7:25 The Son is not the Father  
John 14:26 The Father is not the Spirit  
John 16:7 The Son is not the Spirit
- 2) Each Person is fully God  
The Father is God  
The Son is God (cf. H3 Session 8)  
The Spirit is God (cf. H3 Session 10)
- 3) There is one God  
Deuteronomy 6:4-5  
1 Kings 8:60  
Isaiah 40-45 (see especially 45:5-7, 21-22)  
1 Timothy 2:5



### Trinitarian Illustrations?:

- 3-Leaf Clover
- Egg
- Dihydrous Oxide
- Person (fighter pilot, dad, husband)

### Trinitarian Errors/Heresies:

Modalism – agrees with Statements 2 and 3. Leaves out Statement 1. (also called Sabellianism or Modalistic Monarchianism)  
Adherents: Sabellius of Rome (early 3<sup>rd</sup> Century); United Pentecostal Church; Oneness Pentecostalism – TD Jakes.

Arianism – agrees with 1 and 3. Leaves out Statement 2.

Adherents: Arius, Bishop of Alexandria (condemned at Council of Nicea in 325); Jehovah's Witnesses.

Tritheism – agrees with 1 and 2. Leaves out Statement 3. Very few adherents through church history. Practical Tritheists: some Roman Catholics, some extreme Charismatics, some liberal theologies. Anyone who would by explicit statement or by implication or practice deny the essential unity and agreement of the Persons of the Trinity.

Patripassionism – the Father suffered on the cross. (Seen in some hymnology)

### Trinitarian Relationships and Roles:

#### Equality and Subordination

Ontological Trinity – the three Persons are equal in divinity, power, and glory.

Economic Trinity – subordination in roles: the Son submits to the Father; the Spirit submits to both.

This is functional subordination, not essential inferiority!

John 3:17

1 Corinthians 15:28

John 16:7; 20:22

#### Trinitarian Relationships and the Salvation of Man:

The Father: planned redemption (Ephesians 1:3-10), elected believers (John 6:65), sent the Son to the earth (John 3:16), crushed the Son at the cross (Isaiah 53:10), raised the Son from the dead (Acts 2:24), sent the Holy Spirit (John 14:16).

The Son: obeyed the Father (John 6:38), died as a substitute (1 Peter 3:18), satisfied the wrath of God (Romans 3:25); rose from the dead (John 10:17-18); raises believers from the dead (John 6:40).

The Spirit: raised the Son from the dead (1 Peter 3:18); regenerates (John 6:63), indwells (Romans 8:9-11), sanctifies (2 Corinthians 3:18), and seals (Ephesians 1:13) believers.

### The Practical/Personal Importance of the Trinity

A radical solution to the problem of human sin is required. If the Son be not God, there can be no atonement for sin.

Unity of Purpose requires equality of being in the Godhead. If the Spirit be not God, He would be unable to do the work that is claimed of Him, and who is to say that Father would approve of what He does? 1 Cor 2:9-13 (esp v11). The Holy



Spirit is the author of Scripture. "If the Holy Spirit doesn't share the divine essence with the Father and the Son, He is not in a position to know. The implications for our knowledge of God are staggering!"

Jesus is said to be the Word of God, the image of God, the exact representation of His being (John 1:1-3; Heb1:3; Col 2:9; John 14:9; John 1:18). If Jesus be not coequal with God, our knowledge of Him is faulty from the start!

Creation, Salvation, and Revelation are the work of the whole Godhead.

An example for personal relationships, love, submission, equality of persons and diversification of roles.

Shai Linne

Father, Son and Spirit: three and yet one  
Working as a unit to get things done  
Our salvation began in eternity past  
God certainly has to bring all His purpose to pass  
A triune, eternal bond no one could ever sever  
When it comes to the church, peep how they work together  
The Father foreknew first, the Son came to earth  
To die- the Holy Spirit gives the new birth  
The Father elects them, the Son pays their debt and protects them  
The Spirit is the One who resurrects them  
The Father chooses them, the Son gets bruised for them  
The Spirit renews them and produces fruit in them  
Everybody's not elect, the Father decides  
And it's only the elect in whom the Spirit resides  
The Father and the Spirit- completely unified

Questions for Thought:

Is there contradiction in Trinitarian theology?

Is the Trinity completely understandable?

Is the Trinity completely inexplicable?

How does the difference between ontological equality and economic subordination affect our views about gender and role relationships between men and women?

**Resources:**

*Systematic Theology* Wayne Grudem 226-261.

*Knowing God* J.I. Packer 65-72.

*Systematic Theology* Robert Duncan Culver 104-121.

*No One Like Him* John Feinberg 437-498.



Shai Linne "Triune Praise"

Praise God the Father, the Immortal Creator  
For Your glory you made us, You're the Sovereign Orchestrator  
All that You decree will most surely come to happen  
You're awesome as can be and Your glory none can fathom  
Nothing could ever stain You, the heavens can't contain You  
We thank You for sending Your Son to explain You  
Otherwise we would have remained in the dark  
but You sent Your Holy Spirit to spark a change in our hearts  
According to Your eternal purpose and will  
You determined to reveal Yourself to those who deserve to be killed  
Those of us whom You foreknew adore You  
We praise You that You predestined us to be conformed to  
The image of Your Son who's the radiance of Your glory  
When I meditate on it, the weightiness of it floors me  
So Father, we'll praise you over and over again  
Because You sent Your only Son to atone for our sins

Chorus

Glory to the Father, Glory to the Son,  
Glory to The Spirit- Three and Yet One  
One in Your essence, Three in Your Person  
The same in Your nature, distinct in Your working  
Oh my soul- behold the wonder of the Trinity  
Blessed be the Trinity, Oh, what a mystery!  
I'll stand amazed for the rest of my days  
Pouring out my heart in Triune praise

Praise God the Son, Second Person of the Trinity  
You're distinct from the Father, yet you share in His divinity  
Fulfilling an eternal covenant- You came through  
To planet earth to save who? All the Father gave You  
You became a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief  
For the glory of Your Father You extinguished the beef  
That stood between us at the cross- the Father's anger released  
The Shepherd slain for the sheep, the situation is deep  
I can't find the right language to speak, in fact it's making me weep-  
Just the thought of You saving this creep  
You're risen from the dead, I still can't get this in my head,  
How the Judge could leave the bench and go to prison instead  
Lord Jesus, you're amazing, Your bleeding is what saved men  
It's the reason why we're praising, can't wait to see Your face  
In the meantime, please help us to see You as colossal  
And by the Spirit live lives worthy of the gospel

Praise God the Holy Spirit, 3rd person of the Trinity  
Distinct from Father and Son, yet share in Their divinity  
Holy Spirit we praise You, You don't like the spotlight  
You'd rather point away from yourself and give props to Christ  
But yet because You're God, You deserve veneration  
And You're the One responsible for our regeneration  
You apply the finished work of Christ to all the elect  
Your call is effectual- You haven't lost one yet  
You comfort us when sin, Satan and the world got us bothered  
And it's only by You that we cry out "Abba Father"  
You're the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of Truth,  
You graciously provide Your people with the gifts and the fruit  
You help us kill sin and dis-attach us from our idols  
If it wasn't for You, we'd never understand the Bible  
Because You wrote it- For our life it will surely suffice  
Amazingly, You do it all for the glory of Christ!

