

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST: THE TRINITY

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

1. Don't be afraid to _____.
2. Repent of _____.
3. Approach God with _____.

QUOTES

William G. T. Shedd, "Introductory Essay" in Philip Schaff, ed., *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series I (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 10–11.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the most immense of all the doctrines of religion. It is the foundation of the theology. Christianity, in the last analysis, is Trinitarianism. Take out of the New Testament the person of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and there is no God left. Take out of the Christian consciousness the thoughts and affections that relate to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and there is no Christian consciousness left. The Trinity is the constitutive idea of the evangelical theology, and the formative idea of the evangelical experience. The immensity of the doctrine makes it of necessity a mystery; but a mystery which like night enfolds in its unfathomed depths the bright stars—points of light, compared with which there is no light so keen and so glittering. Mysterious as it is, the Trinity of Divine Revelation is the doctrine that holds in it all the hope of man; for it holds within it the infinite pity of the Incarnation and the infinite mercy of the Redemption.

And it shares its mysteriousness with the doctrine of the Divine Eternity. It is difficult to say which is most baffling to human comprehension, the all-comprehending, simultaneous, successionless consciousness of the Infinite One, or his trinal personality. Yet no theist rejects the doctrine of the Divine Eternity because of its mystery. The two doctrines are antithetic and correlative. On one of the Northern rivers that flows through a narrow chasm whose depth no plummet has sounded, there stand two cliffs fronting each other, shooting their pinnacles into the blue ether, and sending their roots down to the foundations of the earth. They have named them Trinity and Eternity. So stand, antithetic and confronting, in the Christian scheme, the trinity and eternity of God."

Ian Murray, **Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography** (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 99–100.

Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate, but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to

walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love Him with a holy and pure love; to trust in Him; to live upon Him; to serve and follow Him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

TRINITY IS NOT IN THE BIBLE!

What about incarnation; monotheism; rapture; bible; omnipresent; omniscient; omnipotent, ...?

Trinity comes from the Latin *trinitas* which means _____.

NO ANALOGY WILL SUFFICE

Isaiah 40:13–18, 21–28 says, "*Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel? ¹⁴Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? ¹⁵Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust. ¹⁶Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering. ¹⁷All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness. ¹⁸To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? ... ²¹Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? ²²It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; ²³who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. ²⁴Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. ²⁵To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. ²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name, by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing. ²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? ²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable."*

THE THREE FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

There are three pillars of biblical truth that support this definition.

1. There is only one _____.
2. The _____ is divine. The _____ is divine. The _____ is divine.
3. The Father, Son, and Spirit are not _____.

1. There is Only One _____

_____ is the doctrine or belief that there is only one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4 says, "*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*"

Deuteronomy 10:14 says, "*Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.*"

Isaiah 43:10 says, "*‘You are my witnesses,’ declares the Lord, ‘and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.’*"

Isaiah 44:6–8 says, "*Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. ⁷Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. ⁸Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.’"*

Isaiah 45:21–22 says, "*Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. ²²‘Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.’*"

2. The _____ is God. The _____ is God. The _____ is God.

A. The Father Is God

John 6:27 says, "*Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.*"

John 20:17 says, "*Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’"*

Romans 1:7 says, "To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Galatians 1:1 says, "Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead"

1 Corinthians 8:6 says, "yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."

1 Corinthians 15:24 says, "Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power."

B. The Son Is God

John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"

John 1:18 says, "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

John 20:28 says, "Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!""

Romans 9:5 says, "To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen."

Titus 2:13 says, "waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"

2 Peter 1:1 says, "Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ"

Hebrews 1:8 says, "But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom" (quoting **Ps 45:6**).

C. The Spirit Is God

Acts 5:1–6 says, "But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ²and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."⁵When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. ⁶The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him."

1 Corinthians 3:16 says, "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"

2 Corinthians 3:17 says, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

Psalm 139:7–8 says, "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? ⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!"

1 Corinthians 2:10–11 says, "these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."

John 3:5–7 says, "Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, "You must be born again." (cf. **1 John 3:9**, "born of God")

3. The Father, Son, and Spirit are not _____.

Isaiah 48:16 says, "Draw near to me, hear this: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there." And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit."

Matthew 3:16–17 says, "And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 28:19 says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

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

Ephesians 4:4–7 says, "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."

1 Peter 1:2 says, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood"

Jude 20–21 says, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life."