

## What is the Trinity?

**Answer:** God in past days revealed Himself to man. To this very day He is continually revealing Himself to His beloved Creation. God has made certain that we can FULLY UNDERSTAND what is CRITICALLY IMPORTANT to know about Him for the Salvation of our eternal souls.

With this undeniable, unassailable truth firmly fixed in our minds and hearts, we are left to grapple with a great truth: Finite human beings cannot possibly understand all about an infinite God which we might like to know. This is true because we have been created with an insatiable desire to KNOW GOD, but we have only limited capacity. Finite beings can never understand the infinite because our CAPACITY to understand is limited.

There exists and there will always exist a separation between God and His creatures.

The simple handheld calculator is designed to have basic computing capacity to add  $2 + 2 = 4$ . The handheld calculator does not have the super computing **capacity** to produce the necessary calculations to accurately program a rocket ship to land on the moon. A higher and more complex capacity is required before the handheld calculator could do the work [i.e., "to be able to understand"] and be able perform the calculations necessary for the flight of the rocket ship.

This simple illustration is rather weak but perhaps can be somewhat effective to explain the vast difference between the Infinite and the Finite.

God, our Creator, in His perfect infinite wisdom created man with an incredible capacity to learn and to accomplish work. God created man as a three part being, body, soul and spirit. The body was created as a "temporary dwelling" for the "eternal" soul and spirit. Thus, we are made of both "material" and "immaterial" parts. The material parts were designed originally as "finite" with the capacity to become "infinite" based upon Adam and Eve's choice to love and obey their Creator.

Adam and Eve, sadly to the hurt of all their offspring, chose to disobey God which produced the "sin virus" which immediately attacked their body and soul. This sin-virus attack triggered the guarantee made by God that, if Adam and Eve disobeyed His command, the result would be "you shall surely die" (Gen 2:17). Death meant their bodies would return to dust and the soul and spirit would face the possibility of being eternally separated from Holy God.

What about their immaterial parts, their souls and spirits? God made the soul and spirit "in his image" to be eternal. To complete the Greatest Love Story Ever Told!, God set in motion His eternal plan to redeem and reconcile fallen, sinful mankind back to Himself. How was this accomplished?

God the Son, the infinite Creator Being came to earth by taking on human flesh, born of a virgin, being a perfect Man, and living a perfect life of complete obedience to God the Father. He voluntarily offered Himself in death for the just payment of the sins of mankind. This gift is available for all people who would simply believe, trust and love Jesus Christ.

The great truths above are incomprehensible to our human minds. Why? Because humans were designed to have **only a finite**, not **infinite** capacity of knowledge. Basically we are "handheld calculators" with very limited knowledge. We will never be God! We will never be able to fully comprehend the infinite, eternal attributes of God, our Creator, who is the **one and only** omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Being.

Humanity, though, was created to want to know their Creator! All mankind is given a "hunger and thirst" to know God. With this hunger and thirst, we immediately begin to understand the

truth that we cannot know God completely. As infinite God, there MUST BE things about Himself which He alone can know as the finite simply CANNOT understand the infinite.

At our earliest childhood days our hunger to understand God begins and we look up to the sky asking: "Father, how can there be an innumerable amount of stars in an infinite amount of space?" More unknowable mysteries are continually forced upon us like: "How are babies made? How do they come from non-existence into existence where untold billions of necessary simultaneously occurring events are necessary? How can there be an infinite number of fingerprints where no two fingerprints of all humanity are ever repeated? How can there be an infinite variety in snowflakes, where no two are alike? How can a caterpillar wrap itself up in its own cocoon/coffin, then die and yet emerge as a totally different creature, a butterfly? . . etc., etc."

God designed all these infinite mysteries for one reason: To reveal Himself to His human creation so that they would "want to know Him and pursue after Him" in love and adoration.

We have chosen to use this preamble to set up the answer to your question concerning the Trinity, God the everlasting eternal uncreated sovereign Ruler of the universe has declared: "I AM that I AM!" - Ex 3:14. God is and He consists of three indivisible yet inseparable parts.

This information CANNOT be fully understood by the finite mind because it is unknowable due to the limitations of our minds. This information is true because God declared it true, but it can only be acquired through the gift of faith in Jesus Christ.

When a finite man believes and trust in Jesus Christ as His Savior, Jesus becomes that man's friend and Jesus sends His Holy Spirit to indwell that man/woman giving him/her the capacity, by faith to trust in the things God **has revealed** as being true and to be followed.

Let us start with truths vitally important to UNDERSTAND. We do have the capacity to understand many, many things about Almighty Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent Holy God.

Among the most important which we must understand is God's Redemption / Reconciliation / Salvation Plan for lost, hopeless humanity. The redemption, reconciliation and salvation of lost eternal souls back into the loving eternal embrace of their Creator **was accomplished by God Alone, with no help or assistance from His creatures.**

Redemption = The Price Paid to bring sin-filled human beings back to Holy God was the death required from God the Son on an execution cross of death some 2000 years ago outside of Jerusalem on a little hill called Calvary. This redemption price came down to mankind from the heart of God; Father Son and Spirit, This love of God the Father flowed out of His infinite heart of love and mercy and was accomplished by God the Son THROUGH the power provided by God the Spirit.

- Hebrews 9:14 . . . how much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who **through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God**, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this reason **He is the Mediator** of the new covenant, **by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions** under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Salvation = Redemption appropriated by faith! Salvation is something that takes place and becomes known inside of us, in our innermost beings which we refer to as our hearts.

- Hebrews 11:1 Now **faith** is the substance of things **hoped for**, the **evidence of things not seen**.

- Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved **through faith**, and that not of yourselves; **it is the gift of God**.

Jesus left us three parables to help explain the process of Redemption and Salvation of lost humanity which was initiated and completed by the **three-in-one being, Holy God**, we refer to as **the Trinity**.

These parables represent Holy God, Father Son and Spirit at work in the “impossible-except-for-God” who does the impossible. What did He do? The Uncreated died for the Created and brought those rebellious sin-filled creatures back to Himself through the blood sacrifice of God the Son through the power of the God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus explained [paraphrased] to His hearers: “This is why I eat with sinners. I AM the Son, the Shepherd, looking for My lost sheep. My Father is looking for His lost boy. The Holy Spirit is looking for His missing piece of silver.”

To us these wonderful illustrations illuminated by the Holy Spirit to our hearts, we finite creatures can come to understand the Trinity. We can now understand the love of Holy God, Father Son and Spirit.

The Son of God gave the divine offering of Himself, the Holy Spirit conveyed it and God the Father received it!

The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit “the divine Trinity” are completely and in total unity committed to seeking and saving lost men and women!

Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit would be pleased to reveal these great truths to your own hearts so that you would appropriate by faith their power to save your eternal soul.

### **The Parable of the Lost Sheep**

Luke 15:1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. 2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “**This Man receives sinners and eats with them.**” 3 So He spoke this parable to them, saying: 4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them [THE TRUE SHEPHERD JESUS who loves His sheep] does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘**Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!**’ 7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

### **The Parable of the Lost Coin**

8 “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? [THE HOLY SPIRIT is the ILLUMINATOR of truth] 9 And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘**Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!**’ 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

### **The Parable of the Lost Son**

11 Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. 13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."' "

20 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, **his father [God the Father] saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.** 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 **for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.**' And they began to be merry.

We can be brought nearer to Jesus our Creator as we think deeply about eternal infinite things. Because of this we have included a few searching thoughts which have helped us over the years to understand the "infinite gap" between the Uncreated [God] and His creatures [mankind].

These thoughts have helped us draw near in adoring worship in our own pursuit of God. Our hope would be that some of these thoughts will likewise be a blessing for you to also grapple with understanding the mysteries of God.

The greatest mystery of all would surely be this: *"How could Holy God love me? I am unholy and rebellious by nature and by choice. I deserve eternal punishment for my rebellion against Holy God, my Creator, how could Holy God love me so much that He would die in my place and accept the just punishment for my sins which I deserve? Why would Jesus love Me so much that He would voluntarily accept "eternal death for a finite period of time" in my place for my sins?"*

Jesus, the Innocent One died for the Guilty ones [you and me] so we Guilty ones could be forgiven and live! Truly, it is the **Greatest Love Story Ever Told!**

'Was It For Me, the Savior died? Yes, it was for me!'

What will you do with this knowledge of such an unfathomable love? Will you believe, trust and love God? Will you choose to give back to God your life which is rightly His by the purchase price of His very own shed blood in death?

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Excerpts from The Knowledge of the Holy, AW Tozer [1987-1963]

### **One and Three**

God of our fathers, enthroned in light, how rich, how musical is the tongue of England! Yet when we attempt to speak forth Thy wonders, our words how poor they seem and our speech how unmelodious. When we consider the fearful mystery of Thy Triune Godhead, we lay our hand upon our mouths. Before that burning bush, we ask not to understand, but only that we may fitly adore Thee, One God in Persons Three. Amen.

To meditate on the three Persons of the Godhead is to walk in thought through the garden eastward in Eden and to tread on holy ground. Our sincerest effort to grasp the incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity must remain forever futile, and only by deepest reverence can it be saved from actual presumption. Some persons who reject all they cannot explain have denied that God is a Trinity. Subjecting the Most High to their cold, level-eyed scrutiny, they conclude that it is impossible that He could be both One and Three. These forget that their whole life is enshrouded in mystery. They fail to consider that any real explanation of even the simplest phenomenon in nature lies hidden in obscurity and can no more be explained than can the mystery of the Godhead. Every man lives by faith, the nonbeliever as well as the saint; the one by faith in natural laws and the other by faith in God. Every man throughout his entire life constantly accepts without understanding. The most learned sage can be reduced to silence with one simple question, What? The answer to that question lies forever in the abyss of unknowing beyond any man's ability to discover. "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof," but mortal man never.

How great is God—beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out.  
— Job 36:26

### **Three Person, Coeternal, Together and Equal**

The Nicene Creed also pays tribute to the Holy Spirit as being Himself God and equal to the Father and the Son:

I believe in the Holy Spirit  
The Lord and giver of life,  
Which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and Son together  
Is worshipped and glorified.

Apart from the question of whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone or from the Father and the Son, this tenet of the ancient creed has been held by the Eastern and Western branches of the Church and by all but a tiny minority of Christians. The authors of the Athanasian Creed spelled out with great care the relation of the three Persons to each other, filling in the gaps in human thought as far as they were able while staying within the bounds of the inspired Word. "In this Trinity," runs the Creed, "nothing is before or after, nothing is greater or less: but all three Persons coeternal, together and equal." How do these words harmonize with the saying of Jesus, "My Father is greater than I"? Those old theologians knew, and wrote into the Creed, "Equal to His Father, as touching His Godhead; less than the Father, as touching His manhood," and this interpretation commends itself to every serious-minded seeker after truth in a region where the light is all but blinding. To redeem mankind the Eternal Son did not leave the bosom of the Father; while walking among men He referred to Himself as "the only begotten son which is in the bosom of the Father," and spoke of Himself again as "the Son of man which is in heaven." We grant mystery here, but not confusion. In His incarnation the Son veiled His

deity, but He did not void it. The unity of the Godhead made it impossible that He should surrender anything of His deity. When He took upon Him the nature of man, He did not degrade Himself or become even for a time less than he had been before. God can never become less than Himself. For God to become anything that He has not been is unthinkable.

"You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I."  
— John 14:28

### **Jesus and the Father Are One**

Christ did not hesitate to use the plural form when speaking of Himself along with the Father and the Spirit. "We will come unto him and make our abode with him." Yet again He said, "I and my Father are one." It is most important that we think of God as Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. Only so may we think rightly of God and in a manner worthy of Him and of our own souls. It was our Lord's claim to equality with the Father that outraged the religionists of His day and led at last to His crucifixion. The attack on the doctrine of the Trinity two centuries later by Arius and others was also aimed at Christ's claim to deity. During the Arian controversy, 318 Church fathers (many of them maimed and scarred by the physical violence suffered in earlier persecutions) met at Nicaea and adopted a statement of faith, one section of which runs:

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, The Only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of Him before all ages, God of God, Light of Light,

Very God of Very God,  
Begotten, not made,  
Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made.

For more than 1,600 years, this has stood as the final test of orthodoxy, as well it should, for it condenses in theological language the teaching of the New Testament concerning the position of the Son in the Godhead.

"My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them from out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."  
— John 10:29–30

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