

# The Trínity — One God, Three Persons

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## Introduction: Why the Trínity Matters

If you've ever heard a Christian pray and mention "Father," then "Jesus," then "Holy Spirit"... you're not alone in wondering, "Wait, how many gods are there?"

The Trinity is one of the most essential — and misunderstood — teachings of the Christian faith. It can feel mysterious, even complicated. But it's also beautiful and deeply personal.

We believe in **one God**, eternally existing in **three Persons**:

**God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.**

Not three gods. Not one God who plays three roles.

**One God. Three Persons. Equal in essence. Distinct in relationship.**

This isn't just theology for theologians — it matters for your everyday faith:

- The Trinity shows us that God is, at His core, **relational**.
- The Trinity reveals that **love existed before creation** — within God Himself.
- The Trinity means **you were created for relationship** — with God and others.
- And the Trinity is the foundation of how we understand **salvation, prayer, mission, and spiritual life**.

Key Verse:

**"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."**

**— Matthew 28:19**

(Also see: 2 Corinthians 13:14 – Paul's blessing includes all three Persons.)

# Definition:

The Trinity is the **Christian belief that God is one in essence and three in person:**

- **One God** — (Deuteronomy 6:4 “The Lord our God, the Lord is one”)
- **Three distinct Persons** — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — each fully and equally God (not parts, not modes, not creations)

**God is not one person who appears in three forms.** That’s called modalism, and it’s a heresy the early church rejected. **God is not three separate gods.** That’s tritheism, which Christianity also rejects. Instead, **the Trinity means: One Being, three Persons — equal, eternal, united.**

Each Person of the Trinity is:

- **Fully God**
- **Not the same Person as the others**
- **Always working in perfect unity**

As the Athanasian Creed (early church statement of faith) says:

“We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the essence.”

# Where We See the Trinity in Scripture

While the word Trinity isn't used in the Bible, the truth of the Trinity is revealed from **Genesis to Revelation**. The Bible teaches that **God is Father, Son, and Spirit**, and all three are:

- Called God
- Attributed divine power, presence, and authority
- Active in the work of creation, salvation, and sanctification

## At Creation

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth... and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”  
— Genesis 1:1–2

God the **Father** initiates creation.  
The **Spirit** hovers over the waters.  
And the **Son** (Jesus, the Word) is also present:

“Through Him all things were made...”  
— John 1:1–3

## At Jesus' Baptism

“As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.’”

— Mark 1:10–11

Here we clearly see all **three Persons** of the Trinity:

- Jesus (the Son) is baptized
- The Spirit descends like a dove
- The Father speaks from heaven

## In Jesus' Teaching

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

— Matthew 28:19

Jesus doesn't say names (plural), but name (singular). One God. Three Persons.

## In the Letters of the New Testament

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

— 2 Corinthians 13:14

“To God the Father... through Jesus Christ... by the Holy Spirit.”

— Ephesians 2:18 (paraphrased)

The early church worshiped God as **triune** — not three gods, not one person in three roles, but **one God in three Persons**.

# The Roles of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that God is **one in essence** but exists eternally in **three Persons** — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are **co-equal, co-eternal, and completely united**, yet each plays a distinct role in God's work in the world. Understanding these roles helps us know **who God is** and how He moves in our lives.

## | God the Father — The Source and Initiator

- The Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1)
- The one who sent the Son into the world (John 3:16)
- The planner and initiator of salvation (Ephesians 1:3–5)
- The one we approach in prayer (Matthew 6:9 — “Our Father...”)

The Father is the **sovereign architect** of redemptive history. He lovingly sent the Son and gives the Spirit.

## | God the Son (Jesus) — The Redeemer and Revelation

- The Word made flesh who dwelt among us (John 1:14)
- Fully God and fully human (Colossians 2:9)
- The one who saves us through the cross and resurrection (Romans 5:8)
- The exact representation of God's being (Hebrews 1:3)

Jesus reveals the heart of the Father and makes a way for us to be saved and adopted into God's family. **He is both Lord and Savior.**

## | God the Holy Spirit — The Empowering Presence

- The Spirit of God who hovered over creation (Genesis 1:2)
- The one who empowered Jesus' ministry (Luke 4:1)
- The one who dwells within believers (Romans 8:11)
- Our Helper, Comforter, and Guide (John 14:26)

The Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to our lives. **He convicts, empowers, leads, and gives spiritual gifts** so we can walk in the fullness of life with God.

## | One God, Three Roles — Working in Unity

Here's how we often describe it at [Love Church](#):

- The Father initiates
- The Son accomplishes
- The Spirit applies

The Trinity is not three gods working independently — **it is one God, eternally unified** in love and purpose. As Augustine said:

| “The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God — and yet they are not three Gods, but one God.”

# What the Trínity Means for Us

Believing in the Trinity isn't just about getting theology right — it's about understanding who God is and how He invites us into relationship. **The Trinity reveals that God is love** — not just loving, but love itself (1 John 4:8). Why? Because for all eternity, before creation, there was relationship — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in perfect unity. That changes everything.

## 1. The Trinity Shows Us That God Is Relational

God has always existed in relationship. That means:

- You were created for connection. Not isolation. Not performance. But love.
- The invitation of the Gospel isn't just salvation from sin — it's adoption into God's family.

“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’”

— Galatians 4:6

## 2. The Trinity Grounds Our Worship

We don't just worship a distant deity — we worship the **Father who loves us, the Son who died for us, and the Spirit who empowers us**. Every time we pray, sing, or serve — we're stepping into the divine rhythm of the Trinity.

## 3. The Trinity Shapes Our Community

The early church fathers described the Trinity as **perichoresis** — mutual indwelling. A divine dance of love, unity, and oneness. That's what the church is meant to reflect: diverse, but united. Many members, one body. The Trinity reminds us that we belong to each other.

## 4. The Trinity Empowers Our Daily Life

- The Father gives us identity and provision
- The Son gives us grace and leadership
- The Spirit gives us power, wisdom, and presence

When you know who God is, you start to walk in who you are — a beloved child of the Father, saved by Jesus, filled with the Spirit.

# Common Heresies About the Trinity

## (And Why They Matter)

Throughout church history, people have wrestled with the mystery of the Trinity — and sometimes, in trying to simplify it, have wandered into error. These errors (called **heresies**) distort who God is and ultimately lead people away from the Gospel. Here are the most common ones:

### 1. Modalism (Also called Sabellianism)

**What it says:** God is one person who shows up in different “modes” or forms — sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son, sometimes as the Spirit — but never all three at once.

**Why it's wrong:** This denies the distinctiveness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. At Jesus' baptism, all three are present at once: the Father speaks, the Son is baptized, and the Spirit descends like a dove (Matthew 3:16–17).

**Why it matters:** God is not playing roles — He is three distinct Persons in eternal relationship. Love has always existed within the Trinity.

### 2. Arianism

**What it says:** Jesus is not fully God — He was created by the Father and is subordinate in nature.

**Why it's wrong:** John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Colossians 1:15–20 and Hebrews 1 also affirm Jesus' divinity.

**Why it matters:** If Jesus isn't fully God, He can't save us. Only God can forgive sins and conquer death. This heresy is still echoed today in teachings from groups like Jehovah's Witnesses.

### 3. Partialism

**What it says:** The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each “1/3 of God,” and together they make up the whole.

**Why it's wrong:** Each Person of the Trinity is fully God, not a piece of Him. The Trinity is not God divided into parts — but one God, three Persons.

**Why it matters:** God isn't incomplete without one Person. Each is fully divine, eternally God, and equally worthy of worship.

### 4. Tritheism

**What it says:** The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three separate gods who work together.

**Why it's wrong:** Scripture is clear: “The Lord our God, the Lord is one” (Deuteronomy 6:4). Christianity is monotheistic — one God in three Persons, not three gods.

**Why it matters:** God's unity is essential to His nature. The Trinity is not three beings — it's one divine essence shared by three Persons.

## | 5. Adoptionism

**What it says:** Jesus was just a man who became “God’s Son” when He was baptized or resurrected.

**Why it's wrong:** Jesus has always been the Son of God (John 1:1–3, John 17:5). He wasn't “adopted” into divinity — He is divine.

**Why it matters:** This view undermines the incarnation — **that Jesus is fully God and fully man** from the moment of His birth.

## | Why Knowing This Matters

We don't study heresies to be judgmental — we study them to be faithful.

## | Knowing the real God protects us from counterfeit versions of Him.

The Trinity is a sacred mystery, yes. But it's also the foundation of our worship, our salvation, and our identity. When we get the Trinity right, we get the Gospel right.



# How the Trínity Shapes Our Everyday Faith

The Trinity isn't just a theological box to check — it's the relational heartbeat of our faith. At the center of Christianity is not just a God who rules from afar, but a God who invites us into His life of love. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in perfect unity — and they've welcomed us in.

Because of the Trinity:

- **You are fully loved by the Father who created you with intention.**
- **You are rescued by the Son who laid down His life to bring you home.**
- **You are empowered by the Spirit who lives in you and walks with you daily.**

Your salvation is:

- **Planned by the Father**
- **Purchased by the Son**
- **Personalized by the Spirit**

You don't walk alone. The God who is Three-in-One is with you — always.

**"The Trinity is not an abstract puzzle but the oxygen of our faith.  
We are saved by the Trinity, we pray in the Trinity, we live in the Trinity."**

**— Michael Reeves, Delighting in the Trinity**

# Why the Trinity Matters for You

We don't believe in the Trinity just because it's a theological box to check — we believe it because it **reveals the heart of God**. The Trinity isn't a doctrine for seminary students. It's a beautiful invitation into divine relationship.

## The Trinity Means...

- **You were created out of love, not loneliness.** God didn't make us because He needed something — the Father, Son, and Spirit were already in perfect relationship. He made us so we could share in that love.
- **Your salvation was initiated by the Father, accomplished by the Son, and sealed by the Spirit.** The Trinity shows us that God is for us — from beginning to end.
- **Your life is meant to reflect the image of a relational God.** You were made for community, unity, and love — not isolation, division, or self-sufficiency.

## Trinity = Love in Action

As C.S. Lewis put it:

**“All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that ‘God is love.’ But they seem not to notice that the words ‘God is love’ have no real meaning unless God contains at least two persons... If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love.”**

Our God has always been love — because He has always existed in relationship.

## Further Reading + Tools

- **“Delighting in the Trinity”** by Michael Reeves
- **“The Deep Things of God”** by Fred Sanders
- **“Simply Trinity”** by Matthew Barrett

# Final Thought

You don't have to fully understand the Trinity to worship the God who is Trinity.

But the more you press in, the more you'll discover:

**This isn't just deep theology — it's deeply personal.**

God — Father, Son, and Spirit — is inviting you into the eternal dance of love, grace, and life.