

GREAT BIBLE TRUTHS

23. The Trinity (Part 2)



An Introduction

Christians often speak of the Trinity. Although it is a word not used in the Bible, it describes who God is. God is one, and yet in that Oneness, he is three persons: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In our previous study we saw that this truth is taught in both the Old and New Testaments. In this study we will learn that each person takes part in the same activities and has the same divine characteristics.

TRINITY SEEN IN THE ACTIVITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

1. Activities of the Triune God

Although the three persons of the Godhead act as one, they also have their own tasks. As you look up the verses given below, see if you can distinguish the work of each person of the Godhead.

- Creation: Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-4, Job 33:4
- Salvation: Ephesians 1:3, 5-7, 13
- Redemption: Romans 3:24, 25, Hebrews 9:14
- Prayer: Matthew 6:6, 9, John 16:23, Romans 8:26-27
- Revelation: Deuteronomy 29:29, John 5:39-40, John 16:13
- Growth of believers: Ephesians 3:14-19
- Judgment: John 5:22, 16:7-11, Revelation 19:1-2

2. Characteristics of the Triune God

- Holiness: Exodus 15:11, Acts 1:5, Acts 2:27
- Love: John 3:16, Romans 5:5, Ephesians 3:19
- Omnipotence: Job 42:2, Isaiah 9:6, 1 Corinthians 2:4, Romans 1:4
- Omniscience: John 21:17, 1 Corinthians 2:10, Hebrews 4:13
- Omnipotence: Psalm 139:7-10, Jeremiah 23:23-24, Matthew 28:18

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

1. Order within the Trinity

The first person of the Godhead is the Father (John 5:26-27), the second is the Son (John 3:16, Hebrews 1:5, 1 John 4:14) and the third is the Holy Spirit. (John 15:26, John 20:22). The Father is the fount from whom the Son was begotten and sent, and from whom the Holy Spirit proceeds. This doesn't mean that that Son is second rate and the Holy Spirit third! They are all equally and fully divine, but have different functions, and yet there is a sense in which there is subordination.

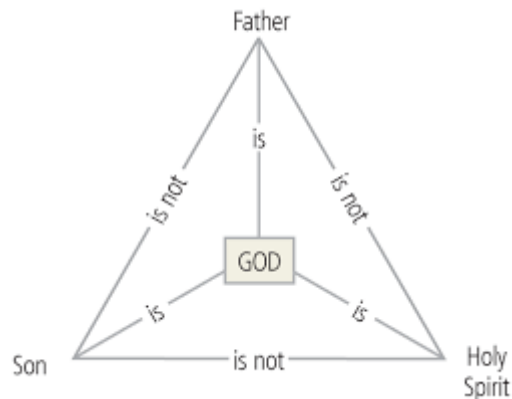
2. Meaning of Subordination

This subordination does not mean that there is an inferiority of nature between members of the Godhead, rather there was a voluntary subordination within the triune God as an expression of love to us, enabling our redemption. Philippians 2:5-11 Passages that speak of Christ depending on the Father must be understood in this way. Christ wasn't inferior, but submissive to his Father's will. John 5:19, 30, John 6:57, John 8:28

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE TRINITY

No illustration can prove the Trinity, or even adequately describe such an amazing concept, but they can help us understand in part.

1. Water - comes in three forms but each is water: solid (ice), liquid and gas.
2. The Sun - there is the sun, which is a planet we can't actually look at, the rays of the sun which we see, and the warmth of the sun that we feel.
3. A triangle - One area with three equal sides.



4. Three different ways of describing God's saving work: The Love of God, the Grace of the Lord Jesus and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Each describes God's saving work, and yet you can't divide that saving work.



What would you say to a person who says he believes in God, but he doesn't believe in the God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Can a person believe in a triune God but not the deity of Christ?



We cannot adequately explain the Trinity. It is not against reason, it is above reason! Our God is infinitely greater than we are and so it is difficult for us to grasp these truths. However the Holy Spirit will reveal to us that this is true.