



## FBC Nacogdoches – Sunday, September 17, 2017

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Ask any child who has been faithful in VBS and Sunday School through the years, “how many Gods there are,” and you will hear them express much confusion. They want to say there is one God because that is what they have been taught. But they also want to say that there are two Gods because they have also been taught that Jesus is God. Some more precocious kids will say there may be three Gods as they consider the divinity of the Holy Spirit. What if you ask an adult who has been a long-time church attender? Well, often you hear the same confusion just with better language and a more nuanced (and guarded) reply. So, what does the Bible actually teach about the Trinity? In the normal way of counting, how many Gods are there? Why is this not more straight forward? And what do the answers tell us about God’s nature and our relationship with him? In this Bible study we will search for the answers to these questions and discover the amazing Bible truth of the Trinity.

### **Why is the doctrine of the Trinity so important?**

- A. Because God is our sole object of worship.
  
- B. The Trinity is necessary for salvation.

C. Confusion about the Trinity and the relationships between its members is the source of many cults and false religions.

The basis for our understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity is the Scripture.

We can't completely comprehend God's nature.

Two errors people make in studying doctrines about the nature and behavior of God.

A. Some believe it is necessary to completely remove mystery from our understanding of doctrines.

— What is a contradiction?

— What is a mystery?

B. Some people arrogantly believe we can fully comprehend God's nature.

— **Isaiah 55:8-9** | *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways.” This is the LORD’s declaration. “For as heaven is higher than earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (CSB)*

— **Job 38:1–7** | *Then the LORD answered Job from the whirlwind. He said: Who is this who obscures my counsel with ignorant words? Get ready to answer me like a man; when I question you, you will inform me. Where were you when I established the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who fixed its dimensions? Certainly you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? What supports its foundations? Or who laid its cornerstone while the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?* (CSB)

— **Job 38:25–30** | *Who cuts a channel for the flooding rain or clears the way for lightning, to bring rain on an uninhabited land, on a desert with no human life, to satisfy the parched wasteland and cause the grass to sprout? Does the rain have a father? Who fathered the drops of dew? Whose womb did the ice come from? Who gave birth to the frost of heaven when water becomes as hard as stone, and the surface of the watery depths is frozen?* (CSB)

## The Trinity

### I. There is only one God.

#### Scriptural Support (*a sampling*)

— **Genesis 1:1** | *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* (CSB)

— **Deuteronomy 6:4** | *“Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.* (CSB)

— **Isaiah 43:10** | *“You are my witnesses”— this is the LORD’s declaration— “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. No god was formed before me, and there will be none after me.* (CSB)

— **Isaiah 44:6** | *This is what the LORD, the King of Israel and its Redeemer, the LORD of Armies, says: I am the first and I am the last. There is no God but me.* (CSB)

— **1 Corinthians 8:4–6** | *About eating food sacrificed to idols, then, we know that “an idol is nothing in the world,” and that “there is no God but one.” For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth—as there are many “gods” and many “lords”—yet for us there is one God, the Father. All things are from him, and we exist for him. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through him, and we exist through him. (CSB)*

## Logical Support

A. God is infinite, therefore there can be only one God.

B. God is perfect, therefore there can be only one God.

## II. God exists in three Persons of the same Essence.

What is a person?

What is essence?

Scriptural Support (*a sampling*)

— **Genesis 1:26** | *Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.” (CSB)*

— **Genesis 3:22** | *The LORD God said, “Since the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever.” (CSB)*

— **Isaiah 6:8** | *Then I heard the voice of the Lord asking: Who should*

*I send? Who will go for us? I said: Here I am. Send me. (CSB)*

— **John 1:1** | *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (CSB)*

— **Matthew 28:19** | *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, (CSB)*

— **1 Corinthians 12:4–6** | *Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord. And there are different activities, but the same God produces each gift in each person. (CSB)*

— **2 Corinthians 13:13** | *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (CSB)*

— **1 Peter 1:1–2** | *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ: To those chosen, living as exiles dispersed abroad in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient and to be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ. May grace and peace be multiplied to you. (CSB)*

— **Jude 20–21** | *But you, dear friends, as you build yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting expectantly for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life. (CSB)*

## **Illustrations of the Trinity**

No illustration is perfect (and some are really bad).

But illustrations can still be helpful.

— **Romans 1:20** | *For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse. (CSB)*

## List of Illustrations

### Water as Solid, Liquid, and Gas

— Why this is a poor illustration...

— Why this is a helpful illustration...

### Chain in Three Links

— Why this is a poor illustration...

— Why this is a helpful illustration...

### Time as Past, Present, and Future

— Why this is a poor illustration...

— Why this is a helpful illustration...

### Triangle with Three Sides

— Why this is a poor illustration...

— Why this is a helpful illustration...

## Man as Father, Husband, and Son

— **Isaiah 63:7-10** | *I will make known the LORD's faithful love and the LORD's praiseworthy acts, because of all the LORD has done for us— even the many good things he has done for the house of Israel, which he did for them based on his compassion and the abundance of his faithful love. He said, "They are indeed my people, children who will not be disloyal," and he became their Savior. In all their suffering, he suffered, and the angel of his presence saved them. He redeemed them because of his love and compassion; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of the past. But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he became their enemy and fought against them.* (CSB)

— Why this is a poor illustration...

— Why this is a helpful illustration...

— Space as Height, Width, and Depth

— Why this is a poor illustration...

— Why this is a helpful illustration...

— The best way to view this is Father, Son, Spirit.