

Blessed Trinity

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God is love

- "God is love" (1 John 4:16), even apart from any angels or humans He created.
- "Love is something that one person has for another person. If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love." (C.S. Lewis)
- God is love because God is Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three Persons united in mutual, eternal love.
- God created other beings out of a surplus of love and life and joy, not a shortage.

Blessed Trinity

1. God forever exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. Each person is fully God.
3. There is one God. (*Wayne Grudem definition*)

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and yet they are not three Gods but one God. (Athanasian Creed)

Old Testament hints

- Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” (Genesis 1:26)
- From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit. (Isaiah 48:16)
- The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” (Psalm 110:1)

New Testament makes clear

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17)

New Testament makes clear

- **Trinitarian baptizing:** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt 28:19)
- **Trinitarian blessing:** May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor 13:14)
- **Trinitarian praying:** in the Spirit, through Jesus, to the Father

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Jesus is God

- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us (John 1:1,14).
- “Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mark 2:7)
- "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)

Holy Spirit is God

- Jesus promised “another Counselor” (John 14:16)
- Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to men but to God.” (Acts 5:3-4)
- Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? (1 Cor. 3:16)

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One God

- Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deut 6:4)
- I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. (Isaiah 45:5)
- There is only one God. (Romans 3:30)

Oneness (not tri-theism)

- **Equality:** not a #1 god like Zeus, Jupiter, or Odin. Role difference doesn't mean less value.
- **Unity:** not squabbling gods. Trinity is always one in purpose. Jesus did not have to change the Father's mind about us. The Father always loved us, and sent his Son for us.
- **Authority:** not specialized gods of war, sex, wisdom, etc. Not various territories or terrains. Yahweh is God in hills or valleys. (1 Kings 20)
- **Being, personality, mind:** always on same page (like identical triplets, longtime spouses)

False denials of Trinity

- **Arianism:** Arius claimed that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are not fully God. (Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Unitarians)
- **Modalism:** Father, Son, and Spirit are different roles or phases, not distinct persons.
 - ✦ **Roles:** Creating role, saving role, purifying role
Dave to friends, Dad to kids, Pastor to others
 - ✦ **Phases:** Father era, Jesus era, Spirit era
(Obama as Professor, Senator, President)
- **Tri-theism:** There are three separate gods who are not unified as one Being.

Doctrine of the Trinity

Three Persons who are
distinct but not divided.

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Blessedness of Trinity

- Trinity is like sun: we can go blind staring at it, but it enlightens and warms everything else.
- Surplus, not shortage, of life and love.
- More than personal, not less than personal.
- When we are in Christ and the Spirit is in us, the Father loves us and delights in us just as he does in His Son. (John 17:23,26)
- Calling on God's name: baptizing, blessing, praying, and singing in the Trinitarian Name
- "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4)