

THE TRIUNITY OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

- If any doctrine could be said to be make Christianity distinctly Christian, it would be this one
- When we come to discuss the Trinity, we embark upon one of the greatest, but most glorious, mysteries of the Godhead
- It is a reality that cannot be comprehended by the human mind
- Augustine said, “In no other subject is error more dangerous or inquiry more labored, or discovery of the truth more profitable”
- Calvin said, “God is not truly known, unless our faith distinctly conceives three Persons in one Essence.”
- “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.”¹
- “The doctrine of the Trinity...is truth for the heart. The fact that it cannot be satisfactorily explained, instead of being against it, is in its favor. Such a truth had to be revealed; no one could have imagined it.”²
- The Triunity of God is a theological doctrine in that the word “Trinity” is not found in the Bible, yet the reality is there
- “Trinity” actually is not a good term for the plurality of the Godhead because the term can emphasize the state of being three but without any implication as to the unity of the three
- A proper understanding must include the distinctness and equality of the three persons but also the unity within the Trinity
- A better word would be “Triunity”
- Christianity is monotheistic...we believe in one God, not three...the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each fully God...each exists as a separate person with individual responsibilities within the Godhead
- Truly, herein lies one of the greatest mysteries of all revealed truth
- This mystery lies at the heart of the gospel...in fact, the good news of salvation is inseparably tied to the triunity of God
- The gospel is essentially Trinitarian in that every member of the Trinity performs a vital function in our salvation
- The gospel cannot be accurately explained apart from the doctrine of the Trinity, a reality that argues for its wonder and glory

Galatians 4:4-6

Ephesians 1:3-14

Titus 3:4-7

- Without the Trinity, the gospel disappears!...a gospel that denies the Trinity is a false gospel
- “Without God the Father, there would be no one to send the Son and Spirit into the world, to accept the Son’s sacrifice, or to hear the Spirit-wrought prayers of the redeemed. Without the obedience and sufferings

¹ A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 17.

² *Ibid.*, 23.

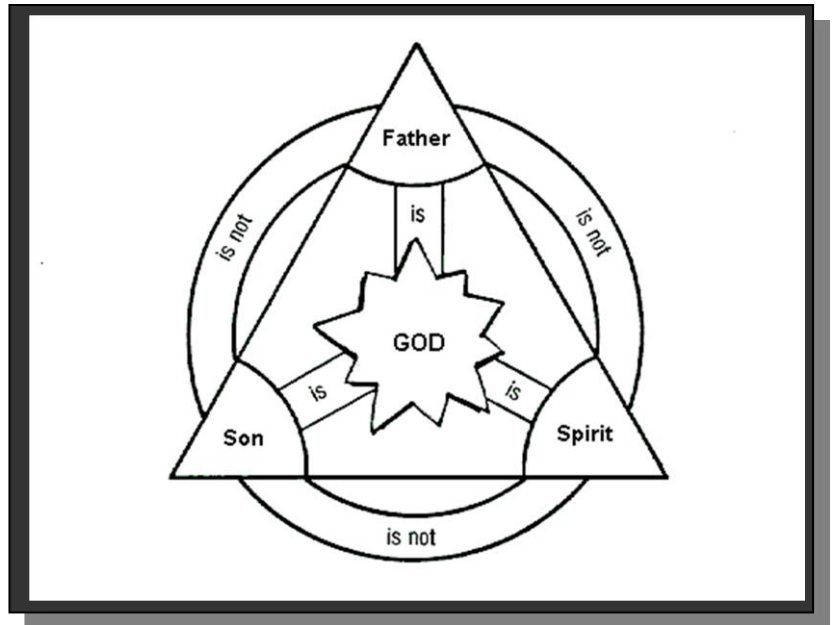
of God the Son, no one would escape God's curse or enjoy God's blessing in the Spirit. Without the renewing work and indwelling presence of God the Spirit, no one would benefit from Christ's redemptive work or have any assurance of being reconciled to God as his child."³

- For this reason, rather than viewing it as a cold, abstract doctrine that should be relegated to dusty shelves, we should fervently love the doctrine of the Trinity
- It should inform our minds and enflame our hearts as we consider the fact that the triune God is our Savior

EXPLANATION

Definition

- To put it simply, the doctrine of the Trinity is that God is absolutely and eternally one essence subsisting in three distinct persons without division and without replication of the essence
 - The positive statement ("God is absolutely and eternally one essence subsisting in three distinct persons) is necessary to state the core of trinitarian theology
 - The negative statement ("without division and without replication of the essence") is necessary "to prevent people from thinking that the three persons each have either a third of the divine essence (partialism) or a full divine essence that is distinct from the full but identical essences of the other two persons (tritheism). If the essence were divided among the three persons, none of the persons would be divine. And if the essence were replicated in the three persons, the result would be three gods."⁴
- There is but one essence in the Godhead and this one essence wholly and equally pervades each of the three persons in the Godhead without division or multiplication
- God is three persons in one essence...the divine essence subsists wholly and indivisibly, simultaneously and eternally, in Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Seven key statements summarize the essence of trinitarian theology:
 1. There is only one God
 2. The Father is God
 3. The Son is God
 4. The Holy Spirit is God
 5. The Father is not the Son
 6. The Son is not the Holy Spirit
 7. The Holy Spirit is not the Father
- The Athanasian Creed puts it this way: "Now this is the catholic faith: That we worship one God in trinity and the trinity in unity, neither blending their persons, nor dividing their essence. For the person of the Father is a distinct person, the person of the Son is another, and that of the Holy Spirit, still another. But the divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal."



³ Joel Beeke and Paul Smalley, *Reformed Systematic Theology*, 879.

⁴ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*, 189.

Substantiation

- The two key words that help unpack the meaning of the Trinity are “essence” and “persons”
- God is one essence, but he exists as three distinct persons
 - “essence” refers to the same fundamental makeup
 - “existence” refers to three persons or subsistences
- The word “persons” tends to detract from the unity of the Trinity in that it is an inadequate term to describe the relationships within the Trinity
- The word “subsistence” is slightly better – it’s not three separate individuals as we would think of as being separate from one another
- John Calvin said, “By person, then, I mean a subsistence in the Divine essence, a subsistence which, while related to the other two, is distinguished from them by incommunicable properties.”
- The term “persons” is nonetheless helpful inasmuch as it emphasizes not only a manifestation but also an individual personality, each with intellect, emotion, and will
- In suggesting God is three with respect to His Persons it is emphasized that (1) each has the same essence as God and (2) each possess the fullness of God
- In God, there are not three individuals alongside of and separate from one another, but only personal self-distinctions within the Divine essence...therefore He is not one and yet three, but one in three
- “Theologians use these terms [“essence” and “persons”] because they are trying to find a way to express the relationship of three beings that are equally and uniquely God, but not three Gods. That’s why we get the tricky (but learnable) language of essence and persons. We want to be true to the biblical witness that there is an indivisibility and unity of God, even though Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can all be rightly called God. The Persons are not three gods; rather, they dwell in communion with each other as they subsist in the divine nature without being compounded or confused.”⁵

Trinitarian Heresies to Avoid

- Although many well-meaning attempts have been made to illustrate the reality of the Trinity, they all fall significantly short of describing this mystery and usually inadvertently result in a wrong view of the Godhead
- It is almost impossible to find a good illustration to depict that God is one God but that he exists in three persons
- It is impossible because it is a mystery that is unparalleled in our experience
- It is a mystery that cannot be comprehended by human reason but is only understood by faith

The Trinity Illustrated

All Are Inadequate!

Egg - Shell, yoke, white. (Tritheism).
 Water - Ice, liquid, steam. (Modalism).
 Person - Husband, father, son. (Modalism)
 Man - Spirit, soul, body. (Tritheism)
 Apple - Meat, peel, seed. (Tritheism)
 Time - Past, present, future. (Modalism)
 Music - Rhythm, harmony, melody. (Tritheism)

Modalism

- “Modalism is an ancient heresy that denies the Trinity by denying that God exists at all times in three distinct persons.”⁶
- Modalism claims that there is one person who appears in three different forms (modes)

⁵ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-devyoung/the-doctrine-of-the-trinity-no-christianity-without-it/>

⁶ <https://michaelrjones.wordpress.com/2012/01/12/what-modalism-is-why-its-wrong-and-why-its-dangerous/>

- *Old Testament*: God appeared as “the Father”
- *Gospels*: God appeared as “the Son”
- *Post-Pentecost*: God appears as “the Spirit”
- It denies the individual persons of the Trinity, instead viewing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as mere modes of manifestations of the one God
- It says that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are different names for the same God acting in different roles or manifestations (i.e. liquid, vapor, ice)
- It is often referred to as Sabellianism after Sabellius, an early third-century teacher from Rome who popularized this view (who was condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD)
- It is also sometimes called “modalistic monarchianism” which views the Son and the Spirit as impersonal attributes of the divine essence, but not distinct and divine persons
- Groups today who embrace modalism:
 - United Pentecostal Church (i.e. Oneness Pentecostals) – TD Jakes⁷ (“There is one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in three manifestations: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”)⁸
 - Stephen Furtick⁹
 - Witness Lee/The Local Church¹⁰
 - Philipps, Craig and Dean: “We believe in one God who is eternal in His existence, Triune in His manifestation, being both Father, Son and Holy Ghost AND that He is Sovereign and Absolute in His authority.”¹¹
- A Response to Modalism: It denies the personal relationships within the Trinity

John 17:22-24 ~ The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

Arianism

- Arius (c. 336) taught that God the Son was created by the Father and thus not fully equal to him...he denied the full deity of Christ (Arius was condemned at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD)
- This false doctrine relies heavily on texts that refer to the son being called “begotten” or “first born”

John 1:14 ~ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 3:16 ~ For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

1 John 4:9 ~ By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

- A number of modern cults are Arian in their doctrine (Jehovah’s Witnesses) – they deny the deity of Christ
- A Response to Arianism: When Christ is said to be the “first-born” (*prototokos*) this means that He has the privileges of authority and rule, the privileges belonging to the first born

⁷ https://thecripplegate.com/modalism_oneness_and_td_jakes/

⁸ <https://www.thepottershouse.org/explore/belief-statement/>

⁹ <https://930amtheanswer.com/movies/blogs/religion-today-blog/is-megachurch-pastor-stein-furtick-denying-the-traditional-view-of-the-trinity>

¹⁰ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Witness-Lee-local-church.html>

¹¹ <https://www.aomin.org/aoblog/general-apologetics/the-phillips-craig-dean-controversy-revisited/>

- The term “only-begotten” (*monogenes*) does not suggest a beginning point in time but rather means that Jesus as the only-begotten Son of God is “singularly unique...the only one of its kind...the only example of its category”
- “only-begotten” is used to mark out Jesus uniquely above all earthly and heavenly beings
- It does not suggest a coming into existence, but rather it expresses the uniqueness of the person
- Christ was unique as the Son of God, sent by the Father from heaven

Tritheism

- This view holds that there are three different Gods found in the three persons of the Trinity
- This is the viewpoint of Mormons who teach that the three members of the Godhead are three distinct beings/gods
- Sometimes evangelicals unintentionally tend toward this view by emphasizing the distinct personhood of the Trinity, but seldom emphasizing the unity of God as one undivided being

THE UNITY OF THE GODHEAD

- As Christians, we are monotheists, believing in one God
- God is not a composite and He is not susceptible to division because there is only one divine nature or essence
- There is but one God and his divine nature is undivided and indivisible...although the unity of God allows for the existence of personal distinctions in the divine nature, God is numerically and eternally one
- There is only one God, not many
- Numerous passages speak of God’s oneness

Testimony of the Old Testament

- As the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, Moses stressed the truth of monotheism in contrast to the polytheism of the inhabitants of Canaan
- Because there is only one divine essence, God’s nature distinguishes him from all others

Deuteronomy 4:34-35, 39 ~ Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35 To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him...39 Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.

Deuteronomy 5:7 ~ You shall have no other gods before Me.

- The first commandment “is not just God’s jealous wish for exclusive devotion...but God’s assertion of a sacred right that is his because he alone is God.”¹²
- The pinnacle of God’s oneness and uniqueness in the OT is evidence in the great *Shema*, which reveals not only that the Lord is the only true God, but that he is also a fully unified being without inward division

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 ~ Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the

¹² Beeke and Smalley, *Reformed Systematic Theology*, 880.

way and when you lie down and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- This means all three Persons possess the summation of the divine attributes but yet the essence of God is undivided
- Oneness in essence also emphasizes that the three Persons of the Trinity do not act independently of one another
- It has been argued that the *Shema* argues against the oneness of God, “[but] in this very verse the word for ‘one’ is *echad* which means not one in isolation but one in unity. In fact, the word is never used in the Hebrew Bible of a stark singular entity. It is the word used in speaking of one bunch of grapes, for examples, or in saying that the people of Israel responded as one people.”¹³

Isaiah 44:6 ~ Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

Isaiah 45:5, 21-22 ~ I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides Me...21 Declare and set forth your case; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me. 22 Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.

Isaiah 46:9 ~ Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me

Zechariah 14:9 ~ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

Testimony of the New Testament

- The NT repeats the testimony concerning God’s oneness and uniqueness

Mark 12:29-30 ~ Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; 30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’

John 10:30 ~ I and the Father are one.

1 Corinthians 8:4, 6 ~ Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one...6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

Galatians 3:20 ~ Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one.

Ephesians 4:6 ~ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

1 Timothy 1:17 ~ Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 2:5 ~ For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

James 2:19 ~ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

- God's unity demands that all love and devotion must be for Him alone

THE PLURALITY OF THE GODHEAD

- Not only is God indivisibly one with a singular divine essence, he is also three persons who are coeternal and coequal with one another...He is one but exists as three distinct persons

¹³ James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, 111.

Testimony of the Old Testament

- The OT does not contain a full revelation of the Trinity, but it does contain several indications of it and does give indications of the plurality of the Godhead
- While there is no definitive or explicit statement in the OT affirming the Trinity, it is fair to say that the OT implies that God is a triune being in a number of passages

Plural titles are used (i.e. Elohim...singular God expressed as a plurality)

Genesis 1:1 ~ In the beginning God (plural) created the heavens and the earth.

Job 35: 10 ~ But no one says, ‘Where is God (plural) my Maker, Who gives songs in the night,

Psalms 149:2 ~ Let Israel be glad in his Maker (plural); Let the sons of Zion rejoice in their King.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 ~ Remember also your Creator (plural) in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, “I have no delight in them”;

Isaiah 54:5 ~ For your husband is your Maker (plural), Whose name is the LORD of hosts;

Plural pronouns are used of God

Genesis 1:26 ~ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

Genesis 3:22 ~ Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—

Genesis 11:7 ~ Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.”

Isaiah 6:8 ~ Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I”

Plural verbs are used

Genesis 20:13 ~ and it came about, when God caused (plural) me to wander from my father’s house, that I said to her, ‘This is the kindness which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, “He is my brother.”’”

Genesis 35:7 ~ And he built an altar there, and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed (plural) Himself to him, when he fled from his brother.

2 Samuel 7:23 ~ And what one nation on the earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem (plural) for Himself as a people and to make a name for Himself, and to do a great thing for You and awesome things for Your land, before Your people whom You have redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, from nations and their gods?

God's name is applied to more than one person in the same context

Psalms 45:6 ~ Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of joy above Your fellows.

Psalms 110:1 ~ The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand, Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

The name Yahweh is applied to the angel of the Lord (Theophany)

Genesis 22:11-12 ~ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” And he said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

Exodus 3:1-4 ~ And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush...When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush...

Judges 13:17 ~ And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that when your words come to pass, we may honor you?" But the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?"

There are passages that suggest "threeness" in the Godhead

Genesis 1:1-2 ~ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Isaiah 48:16 ~ Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit.

Isaiah 61:1 ~ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners;

Isaiah 63:7, 9, 10 ~ I shall make mention of the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, the praises of the LORD... 9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the angel of His presence saved them... 10 But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit

Yahweh is declared to have a Son

Psalms 2:7 ~ I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

Proverbs 30:4 ~ Who has ascended into heaven and descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has wrapped the waters in His garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name or His son's name? Surely you know!

Testimony of the New Testament

The Father is called God

Matthew 11:25 ~ At that time Jesus answered and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.

John 6:27 ~ Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal.

The Son is called God

Matthew 1:23 ~ Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, "God with us."

John 1:1 ~ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 20:28 ~ Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Romans 9:5 ~ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever.

The Holy Spirit is called God

John 14:16 ~ And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

Acts 5:3-4 ~ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied to men, but to God."

1 Corinthians 3:16 ~ Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Hebrews 9:14 ~ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The Father, Son and Spirit are associated as equals

Matthew 28:19 ~ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

- It is important to note that the word “name” in the Greek is in the singular form, indicating that there is one God, but there are three distinct persons within the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
- It doesn’t say, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, the name of the Son, the name of the Holy Spirit”
- Neither does it say, “In the names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit”
- This affirms that there is one God, but within the unity of the Godhead, there are three co-equal and co-eternal persons

2 Corinthians 13:14 ~ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

1 Peter 1:2 ~ according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.

Jude 20-21 ~ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 ~ But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

The Father, Son and Spirit are distinct personalities existing together

Matthew 3:16-17 ~ And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him,¹⁷ and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”

John 14:26 ~ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26 ~ When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me,

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 ~ varieties of gifts, same Spirit...varieties of ministries, same Lord...varieties of effects, same God

2 Corinthians 13:14 ~ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ~ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, ²² who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

Galatians 4:6 ~ Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

Ephesians 2:18 ~ for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

Ephesians 2:20-22 ~ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 3:14-17 ~ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love

Ephesians 5:18-20 ~ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father

The resurrection of Christ is attributed to each person of the Trinity

John 10:17-18 ~ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 “No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

Acts 2:32 ~ This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

Romans 1:4 ~ who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

There is an Order to the Trinity

- The different roles within the Trinity demonstrate the plurality of the Godhead
- The Scripture speaks of the “generation” of the Son by the Father and the “procession” of the Spirit from the Father and Son
- The order:

1. The Father sent the Son

John 3:17 ~ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.

1 John 4:10 ~ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

2. The Son sent the Spirit

John 15:26 ~ When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me

John 16:7 ~ But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

3. The Father also sent the Spirit

John 14:16 ~ And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

John 14:26 ~ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

- The Father sent Christ and both the Father and the Son were responsible in sending the Holy Spirit
- This order is never reversed...it is a working, functioning order
- The Father is not begotten nor does He proceed from any person; the Son is eternally begotten from the Father; the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son
- These relationships within the Trinity argue for three persons, but do not suggest inferiority of the persons to one another in any way
- The mystery of the Trinity, God is three in one and one in three, is an unfathomable truth in Scripture...and it proves that God is too big for our finite, human minds!
- If we are going to glorify God and enjoy him forever, then we must do so as one God in three persons!