

# Who Is God?

Wednesday, July 3, 2019

## THE TRINITY

In our first two studies in this series, we have explored the *attributes* of God, which include:

- Omnipresence - He is everywhere
- Omniscient - He is all-knowing
- Omnipotent - He is all-powerful
- Immutable - He never changes - for either better or worse
- He is Holy - the word “holy” is derived from *halig* - “Well or Whole”
- God is sovereign - He can do anything at any time anywhere to anyone as long as that action is consistent with His divine nature
- God is good
- God is love
- God is benevolent
- God is merciful

That short list is only a start on the magnificent attributes of God - an attribute is a characteristic of someone or something.

## DO WE WORSHIP ONE GOD - OR THREE GODS?

Deut. 6:4

**Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:**

The Book of Deuteronomy (fifth in the canon of scripture) is defined as a “review” of the law of Moses. “*Deutero*” is a Greek word that means “two” while “*nominion*” refers to “law.” So Deuteronomy is not repetition of the first four books in Scripture (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers), but a recapitulation. It was given us by the Holy Spirit through God’s servant Moses.

In the verse printed on line 22 of this page, Moses reminds the people of Israel (who are on journey to the Promised Land of Israel) that God is one God.

*Israel lived in a world of idolatry. The nations were polytheists who worshiped many gods. The message that the nation Israel was to give to the whole world was the message of the unity of the Godhead, the oneness of the Godhead.*

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1 Israel was blessed by God for this stance until the leaders started marrying pagan women,  
2 bringing them into roles in Jewish society, vis-a-vis David and especially his son,  
3 Solomon. Now many gods entered into Israeli society and God would not have it!  
4 First, the country was split in two over the issue of excessive taxation, spearheaded by  
5 Solomon's son Rehoboam. The northern kingdom had 19 kings over its 200-year  
6 history, all of them bad rulers. The Assyrians conquered them in 721 BC. The  
7 southern kingdom, which retained Jerusalem as its capital, lasted longer before being  
8 annihilated (literally) by the Babylonian Empire in 586 B.C. It had 20 kings with 7 of  
9 them being somewhat worthwhile. The lesson: disregard God's edicts and pay the  
10 consequences!

11  
12 So...when we say we believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, are  
13 we mocking God? Do we believe there are THREE Gods?

#### 14 IS THE WORD 'TRINITY' EVEN FOUND IN SCRIPTURE?

15  
16 I have not found the word. Have you? But that does not mean the "Trinity" is not a  
17 Biblical teaching or doctrine. Historically, the Church has believed that God exists in  
18 Holy Trinity. This is exclusively a Christian doctrine and a truth in and of Scripture.  
19 This doctrine, this theology of God, is another Biblical revelation that teaches us so much  
20 about God.  
21

22  
23 Many will not preach or teach this doctrine because - face it! - it is very complicated.  
24 But there is strong merit in turning the spotlight upon it.  
25

26 The late outstanding teacher, Dr. Walter Martin, pointed out: *"No man can fully explain*  
27 *the Trinity, though in every age scholars and propounded theories and advanced*  
28 *hypotheses to explore this mysterious Biblical teaching. But despite the worthy efforts of*  
29 *these scholars, the Trinity is still largely incomprehensible to the mind of man."*  
30

31 Is this concerning us? To some degree, probably so. Then we remember Isaiah 55:8-9  
32 **For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the**  
33 **Lord. [9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than**  
34 **your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.**  
35

36 The Apostle Paul ministered in Corinth, Greece, an ancient city known for its bronzed  
37 mirrors. Those mirrors were good for that day but we would have pitched them, as Paul  
38 wrote: 1 Cor. 13:12 **For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face:**  
39 **now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.** Do I have a  
40 comprehensive understanding of the Trinity? No, I do not. But do I believe it? Yes.

1 Let's examine reasons why we believe in the Trinity and sing from our souls, "Praise  
2 Father, Son and Holy Ghost!"

3  
4 Webster defines the Trinity thusly: *The union of three divine persons, the Father, Son  
5 and Holy Spirit, in one divinity, so that all the three are one God as to substance, but  
6 three Persons as to individuality.* We appreciate Webster, but no matter who writes a  
7 definition, it seems lacking. Someone else made this effort: *The doctrine of the  
8 Trinity states that there is one God who is one in substance (or essence ) but three in  
9 personality. This does not mean three independent Gods existing as one, but three  
10 Persons Who are co-equal, co-eternal, inseparable, interdependent and eternally united  
11 in one absolute Divine Essence and Being.*

12  
13 So if the Trinity is this hard to define or comprehend, why do we believe in God in this  
14 way?

15  
16 1) Evangelicals (those who believe in God's Word entirely and truly) have believed in  
17 the doctrine of the Trinity because of the teaching of the Bible as a whole (Old and New  
18 Testaments) - and not because of one or two particular passages. THE WHOLE OF  
19 SCRIPTURE SUBSTANTIATES THIS DOCTRINE.

20  
21 2) Believing in God's Word, we find many specific passages of Scripture that teach of  
22 three distinct Persons who possess deity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy  
23 Spirit. Underlining these passages is the assurance that comes with equal emphasis that  
24 there is but ONE true God or one Divine Essence and Being.

25  
26 3) We learn in Scripture:  
27 – the unity of God, one Divine Being and Essence and  
28 – this unity possesses absolute deity  
29 – and stressing the Trinity remains ONE GOD

30  
31 I have sometimes taught in all sincerity that we can learn something from our national  
32 government. It has three branches:

- 33 – Executive - that's the President
- 34 – Legislative - that's Congress
- 35 – Judicial - the courts

36 Each of these three is federal. Three distinct functions. Three separate responsibilities.  
37 But still just ONE federal government. (Thank goodness - we couldn't afford a second  
38 one!) But even while using that analogy, I am keenly aware, it's a pathetic one and  
39 cannot even begin to describe the mystery, majesty and reality of God's Trinity. But...  
40 we continue to try!

1 NEW TESTAMENT VERSES THAT VERIFY THE REALITY OF THE TRINITY

2  
3 While we have many questions regarding the Trinity, the Scriptures verify clearly the  
4 reality of the Godhead.

5  
6 1. At Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River: Matthew 3:16-17

7 **And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo,**  
8 **the heavens were opened unto him, and he (Jesus) saw the Spirit of God descending**  
9 **like a dove, and lighting upon him: [17] And lo a (God's) voice from heaven, saying,**  
10 **This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**

11  
12 In one distinct place and time, there was a manifestation of the Trinity: 1) Jesus  
13 emerging from the Jordan; 2) The Holy Spirit descending upon Him like a dove's  
14 landing; (Note: nowhere in scripture are we told the Holy Spirit is a bird!) 3) God's  
15 voice commending His Christ.

16  
17 2. One of Jesus' prayers: John 14:16-17

18 **And I (Jesus) will pray the Father (God), and he shall give you another Comforter,**  
19 **(the Holy Spirit) that he may abide with you for ever; [17] Even the Spirit of truth;**  
20 **whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but**  
21 **ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.**

22  
23 3. The verbal formula at water baptism: Matthew 28:19

24 **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,**  
25 **and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**

26  
27 4. Paul's teaching on the combined work of the Godhead: 1 Cor. 12:4-6

28 **Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. [5] And there are**  
29 **differences of administrations, but the same Lord. [6] And there are diversities of**  
30 **operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.**

31  
32 5. The benediction: 2 Cor. 13:14

33 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of**  
34 **the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.**

35  
36 AT CREATION

37  
38 In the process of creating all that exists, God made this statement: Genesis 1:26

39 **And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them**  
40 **have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the**

1 **cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the**  
2 **earth.**

3  
4 There can be no question from Holy Scripture that the Godhead is the “three-in-one,”  
5 Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Until we stand before Him, there will be multitudes of  
6 questions that we will ponder about the Trinity. But we know the reality of this ONE  
7 GOD for He dwells within us.

## 8 9 **THE DECREES OF GOD**

10  
11 To this point, we have studied THE PERSON of God. We come now to His purposes or  
12 decrees.

13  
14 God did not “make these up” as He went along. Just as eternity as no beginning or end,  
15 or just as God Himself has no starting or ending point, so His purposes or decrees have  
16 been from everlasting to everlasting. As one theologian points out, God made these  
17 decrees in eternity and they remain unchanged!

18  
19 Since God is omnipotent, He knows what is best. He is absolutely holy so He would  
20 never decree something immoral or sinful. His attributes, which we have shown, form  
21 the bases of His decrees. **A decree is an official order issued by a legal authority.**  
22 That authority is God. Let’s take a look at some of orders:

### 23 24 1. God decreed the universe and humans.

25  
26 Psalm 33:6-11

27 **By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the**  
28 **breath of his mouth. [7] He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he**  
29 **layeth up the depth in storehouses. [8] Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the**  
30 **inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. [9] For he spake, and it was done; he**  
31 **commanded, and it stood fast. [10] The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to**  
32 **nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. [11] The counsel of the**  
33 **Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.**

34  
35 Isaiah 45:18

36 **For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the**  
37 **earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be**  
38 **inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else.**

39  
40 No matter how much we attempt to explain the universe and everything in it, the bottom

1 line, the prime mover, is God! Psalm 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all  
2 generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

3  
4 2. God decreed that He would never again use a universal flood to destroy mankind.  
5 **Genesis 9:8-17**

6 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, [9] And I, behold, I  
7 establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; [10] And with every  
8 living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the  
9 earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. [11] And I  
10 will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the  
11 waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. [12]  
12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you  
13 and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: [13] I do set my  
14 bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.  
15 [14] And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow  
16 shall be seen in the cloud: [15] And I will remember my covenant, which is between  
17 me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more  
18 become a flood to destroy all flesh. [16] And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will  
19 look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every  
20 living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. [17] And God said unto Noah, This  
21 is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that  
22 is upon the earth.

23  
24 3. God decreed the normal length of human life. Job 14:5 Seeing his days are  
25 determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds  
26 that he cannot pass;

27  
28 No matter how many doctors you seem, how many health premiums you pay, how many  
29 pills you consume, one cannot extend life beyond what God knows yours to be. Our  
30 problems is – we don't know that number, do we? Thus, it pays to be ready to meet God  
31 at any time!

32  
33 4. Because God wanted us to serve Him because we wanted to, not because we were  
34 some robots, we have free will. So God decreed to permit sin. Does that mean that  
35 God is “the author of sin?” No. If I have sinned today - or you have - it means I  
36 wanted to, or you wanted to. God did not make us sin. James 1:13-14 **Let no man**  
37 **say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil,**  
38 **neither tempteth he any man: [14] But every man is tempted, when he is drawn**  
39 **away of his own lust, and enticed.**

40 Sinning is a choice. You and I make the choice.

1 Psalm 78:29

2 **So they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;**

3 Psalm 106:15

4 **And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.**

5  
6 So, yes, God decreed to allow sin; but He didn't make anyone do it!

7  
8 5. God decreed that sin could be transformed into something good. Joseph's own life  
9 is proof of this and he verified it by his own summation: Genesis 50:20 **But as for**  
10 **you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is**  
11 **this day, to save much people alive.**

12  
13 There are many illustration of this in Scripture. When the Babylonian King  
14 Nebuchadnezzar determined to throw Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego into the furnace  
15 belching fire, he meant to destroy the faith of the Hebrews in captivity. Just the opposite  
16 happened: Daniel 3:19-28 **Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of**  
17 **his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he**  
18 **spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than**  
19 **it was wont to be heated. [20] And he commanded the most mighty men that were in**  
20 **his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the**  
21 **burning fiery furnace. [21] Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen,**  
22 **and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning**  
23 **fiery furnace. [22] Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the**  
24 **furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach,**  
25 **Meshach, and Abed-nego. [23] And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and**  
26 **Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. [24] Then**  
27 **Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said**  
28 **unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?**  
29 **They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. [25] He answered and said, Lo,**  
30 **I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the**  
31 **form of the fourth is like the Son of God.**

32 **[26] Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace,**  
33 **and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most**  
34 **high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego,**  
35 **came forth of the midst of the fire. [27] And the princes, governors, and captains,**  
36 **and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose**  
37 **bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were**  
38 **their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. [28] Then**  
39 **Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and**  
40 **Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him,**



Artist's concept of King Nebuchadnezzar startled to see FOUR men in the fire, not just three. Daniel 3

**and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.**

6. God has decreed His - the only - plan of salvation. God has taken the initiative in this matter: John 3:16 **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** Titus 2:11 **For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men** Romans 3:23 **For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; What is the glory of God? His Son, Jesus the Christ. John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh (Jesus), and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.**

7. God has decreed to reward those who love and serve Him and to punish those who do not.

Isaiah 62:11 **Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him,**



1 **and his work before him.**

2  
3 At no time was God “obligated” to implement salvation to the lost. He not only saves,  
4 but rewards those who love Him. We are not saved by “works,” but we are certainly  
5 rewarded for them. 1 Cor. 3:9-15 **For we are labourers together with God: ye are**  
6 **God's husbandry, ye are God's building. [10] According to the grace of God which is**  
7 **given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another**  
8 **buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. [11] For**  
9 **other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. [12] Now if**  
10 **any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;**  
11 **[13] Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because**  
12 **it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.**  
13 **[14] If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a**  
14 **reward. [15] If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself**  
15 **shall be saved; yet so as by fire.**

16  
17 That is a stunning passage! Paul taught that there will be saved people in eternity -  
18 saved but without rewards! Why? We are saved by the blood of Christ: Ephes. 2:9  
19 **Not of works, lest any man should boast.** Why are these things so? Because God has  
20 decreed them to be.

21  
22  
23 Next week we continue our study of *WHO IS GOD* by looking at the scripture to see His  
24 handiwork in creation.