

A Lesson on The Trinity

Imagine if you will a typical church-going family man. Every weekday, this man works at the local bank as a branch manager. His work week is filled with all the responsibilities that go with being a branch manager. When he arrives home, he transforms into a loving husband and a father of three who thoroughly enjoys the time he spends with his family. Every Tuesday evening, he volunteers at the local Hope Pregnancy center as a mentor for guys who are going to soon be fathers. So this one man is a branch manager, a father and husband, and a mentor. Are his duties and responsibilities the same for each of his identities? Do his relationships differ among the people whom he comes into contact with for each of his identities? Or does he treat his wife the same way as he treats a branch employee?

The Trinity, much like this one man with different identities, consists of one God who can simultaneously express Himself through three different identities each of which have specific roles, responsibilities, and relationships. This is different from polytheism in that there is only one God present rather than multiple gods of differing wills and agendas. Ephesians 4:4-6 indicates that there is *“one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”* (Both Malachi 2:10 and John 17:3 support the statement that there is only one God.)

The Trinity is most clearly seen in Scripture at Jesus' baptism when all three members of the Godhead (or Trinity) are present). Matthew 3:16-17 says the following, *“After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’”* (Mark 1:10-11 and Luke 3:21-22 also describe this event.) We see Jesus who is the Son of God, we see the Spirit of God descending as a dove and we hear the Father making a declaration about Jesus. So we

have seen the three members of the Trinity in this Scripture, but how do we know that each of them are God? Where is that in Scripture?

The first member of the Trinity to be examined is the Father. In John 6:27 and 1 Corinthians 15:24, He is referred to simply as "*God the Father.*" Additionally, Ephesians 4:4-6, which was referenced earlier, indicates there is "*one God and Father.*" Thus, it is simple to conclude the Father is part of the "one God" or Godhead. Scripture also indicates some of the characteristics or duties the Father has: He sent Jesus (John 14:24), the Spirit of God is from the Father (John 15:26), He is deserving of worship (John 5:18), He is "*over all and through all and in all*" (Eph. 4:6), He is the Creator (Deu. 32:6), He is in heaven (Mark 11:25), He forgives (11:25).

The second member of the Trinity to be examined is Jesus Christ. The clearest indication of His deity (or being God) is found in John 1. In this passage, Jesus is identified as the Word made flesh (or human) who is God (v. 1; 14). Additionally, Jesus is identified as being equal with God by His actions in John 5:18. John 1:3 indicates that Jesus also was the Creator. Luke 5:17-26, Mark 2:1-12, and Matt. 9:1-8 indicate the Jesus also had the power to forgive sins. Luke 19:10 indicates that one of Jesus' missions was "to seek and to save that which was lost." John 5:19-30 indicates that Jesus is the Judge of mankind and that He does the will of the Father. John 14:6 indicates that He is the only way to the Father. John 17:11;12 indicates that Jesus and the Father are one. Thus, the position of Christ in the Trinity is firmly established within Scripture.

The third member of the Trinity to be examined is the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of God (these names are synonymous). To begin with, Malachi 2:10, Isaiah 45:18, and Genesis 1:1 indicate that the one God is the Creator of all things. Genesis 1:2, Job 33:4, and Psalm 104:30 indicate that the Spirit played a role in creation; thereby, making Him God as an immediate result of His involvement in creation. Additionally in Matthew

28:19, the Holy Spirit is elevated to the same status as the Father and the Son (or Jesus) giving Him the status of God by implication. The Spirit is the giver of gifts (1 Cor. 12), the seal of Salvation (2 Cor 1:22), access to the Father and intercessor for us (Ro. 8:26; Eph 2:18), sent by Christ from the Father to testify of Christ (John 15:26), and will teach the believer all things and remind them of Christ (John 14:26).

As a side note: in Genesis 1, the Hebrew word used for God is plural indicating as shown that all members of the Godhead played a role in creation.