

The Doctrine of the Trinity

The word “trinity” does not appear in the Bible. For this reason some have argued that the doctrine of a triune God is an erroneous concept. The fact that Jesus claimed to be God (Jn 14:7-11) is a mystery that exceeds human comprehension. We can’t understand how God the Father could be one and the same with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. God is a spirit, yet a person who exists above time and physical reality. Jesus is the temporal visible reality of the invisible God who was of the same substance and essence of God and was in fact God in human flesh, the Immanuel, literally the “with us God” (Heb 1:1-4). The Holy Spirit is the invisible person and power of God. He is called God in Acts 5:3-4. He interfaces with human beings to convict, direct, protect, and persevere in every individual believer to present them finally to God in glory (Jn 16:5-15). Believers are commissioned to make disciples of all nations “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19). This commission from the lips of Jesus clearly affirms the reality of the triune nature and person of God. The basic points of this doctrine are as follows:

1. **God is a unity of one.** The triune nature must be understood in the context of the fact that there are not three Gods, but one God who has revealed Himself to us as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4-7; Jn 17:11, 21).
2. **Each person of God’s tri-unity is deity.** The Son is qualitatively the same as the Father. The Son and the Holy Spirit are divine in the same way and to the same extent as the Father is divine (Mt 28:18-19; Acts 1:6-8).
3. **Each person of God’s tri-unity exists simultaneously.** God is not confined by space, time, locality or finite existence. Because we are finite and confined by locality, our minds cannot fully grasp this aspect of God’s omnipresence (Mt 3:16-17; Jn 1:48-50).
4. **Each person of God’s tri-unity is eternal.** God has always been God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Gen 1:1-2; Col 1:3-17; 1 Jn 5:7).
5. **Each person of the tri-unity is free to express or reveal themselves.** God has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Jn 14:15-21, 26-31; 16:1-15).
6. **God’s oneness and tri-unity is incomprehensible to the finite mind.** The tri-unity of God is a mystery that we cannot fully comprehend (1 Cor 2:6-16).

The New Testament writers give clear affirmation that God’s redemptive work rests in a threefold person who is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (see e.g. Heb 2:3-4; 6:4-6; 10:19-21; 1 Pet 1:2; 2:3-12; 4:13-19; 1 Jn 5:4-8; Jude 20-21; Rev 1:4-6).

Lamar E. Cooper, Sr.