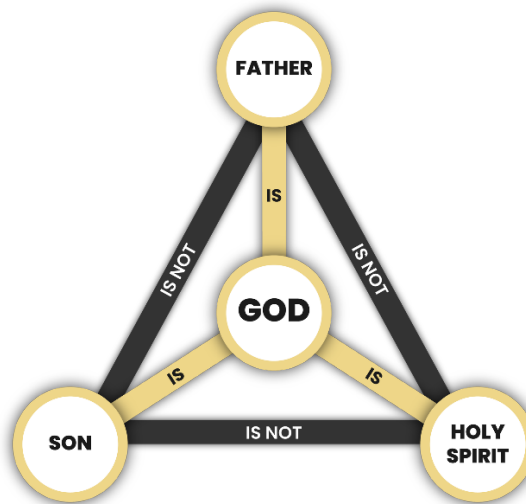


The Doctrine of the Trinity

The Trinity 101: What Every Christian Should Know

1

CHRISTOPHER KOU



What is the Trinity? We can define the “Trinity” or “Triune God” in this way:

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, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three distinct persons.

When we see these propositions, they may seem abstract, or even contradictory. As we dig further into the history of the doctrine of the Trinity, we encounter important questions:

- Is the Trinity biblical?
- Is it an abstract formula, perhaps a later accretion separated by centuries from the pure teaching of the apostles?
- Was it an invention of the emperor Constantine?
- Does it matter what we believe about the Trinity?

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The Doctrine of the Trinity

Here, we'll consider some of these questions, and perhaps open new avenues to understanding the Trinity, and most importantly, *knowing* the triune God.



James Jordan briefly explains how the three persons of the Trinity stand back to glorify one another.

The Christian faith is regarded as one of the great monotheistic religions, one of the three Abrahamic faiths that worships only one God. And yet, Christianity is different, set apart from all other monotheistic religions. While Judaism and Islam confess one God, Christianity is unique in confessing one God as Trinity.

We may sometimes think of God as some generic all-powerful being, more or less like the god of other monotheistic religions. When we think this way, we may begin to view God first as a “what” rather than in terms of “who,” and imagine God as an impersonal thing. However, God is not only personal. He is **one God in three persons**: the Trinity. How do we know this?

We must first understand how God shows himself as truly **personal**, then we can see how he shows himself as **Triune**.

GOD IS PERSONAL

Suppose someone were to ask you *what* your spouse is? (If you're unmarried, substitute any close personal relationship). Once you get past the initial shock of being asked such a rude question, you might answer that your spouse is a man or a woman, that he or she is of a certain ethnicity or has a particular vocation.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

How close have we come at this point to *knowing* your spouse? Not very close. We may feel we know someone because we know *about* them, but to really know someone we need to communicate with them. They have to disclose to us who they are and how they wish to be known.

Even in established relationships, there will always be a sense of mystery, even about your spouse or your close friends. Knowing someone completely is impossible—you will learn new things about them for as long as you know them. How much more mysterious must an invisible and infinite God be to us finite creatures?

And yet, we can know God. In the first chapter of the Bible, God shows himself as supremely personal:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth ... And God *said*, “Let there be light, and there was light.” (Gen 1:1–3)

God creates by *speaking*, something only a person does. He speaks to something that doesn’t yet exist—and the thing addressed responds by coming into existence. From the moment of creation, God is in a personal relationship with his creatures. This relationship is fully expressed when God says: “Let us make man in our image” (Gen 1:26).

No analogy from creation can fully describe God. However, we can consider human interpersonal relationships to learn about the personal nature of God because humanity is God’s image. This means that even our personal relationships must reflect something about him.

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF IN SCRIPTURE

How does God disclose or reveal himself to us?

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
(Ps 19:1)

God’s glory is reflected in the glory that we see in the blinding sun, or in a sky full of gleaming stars. The psalmist even calls this “speech.” And yet, this natural revelation isn’t enough for us to fully know our creator.

In human relationships, you may be able to learn *about* someone by observing their actions, but this alone won’t lead to a relationship. So also with God.

The psalm continues:

The Doctrine of the Trinity

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. (Ps 19:7)

Creation alone, although it teaches us about God, is incomplete. Nature is a kind of God's self-disclosure, but it's a little like gazing at someone from across a crowded room, wishing you could get to know them. God has given something more "perfect"—more *complete*—in his law and his testimony.

So, even though the infinite God is a mystery, we can know him because he speaks to us. He has revealed himself to us by his Word.

Psalm 19 teaches us that we can trust the Bible to be God's true revelation of himself to us. That must be our starting point. Since the Bible is the foundation for our belief in God, if the idea of the Trinity can't be found in the Bible, we shouldn't believe it.

However, as we will see, God's triune nature is found throughout Scripture. I list a lot of passages here. I encourage readers to use the "hover-over" function of this page to view the listed Bible references.

IS THE TRINITY BIBLICAL?

When getting to know someone in a new friendship, we have to trust what they say about themselves. In the same way, we need to trust God's word in Scripture. Otherwise, it would be impossible to know him.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (Heb 1:1–2)

If you do a Bible word search for "Trinity," you won't find it anywhere. Tertullian (c. AD 160–230) was the first to use the word (more on him later). However, this doesn't necessarily mean that the notion of the Trinity isn't biblical. The term, along with many found in Christian theology, was coined not to replace or add something new to the Bible, [but to describe the truths found in it](#).

In fact, it was *because* early Christians relied on and trusted Scripture that they formed new language to express what the Bible teaches. The new words they constructed to describe the mystery of God were the result of wrestling with the way God reveals himself.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

Just as the early Christians did, let's examine how the Bible progressively reveals our triune God.

THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD

The unity of God contrasts with ancient polytheistic nations who worshiped and served multiple gods. A single Assyrian city, for example, might have one temple to Ashur, another to Ninurta, and another to Ishtar.

Israel was different. Their confession, known as the *Shema* after the Hebrew word enjoining the people to “hear,” is one of the earliest foundational statements about who God is.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deut 6:4–5)

From this we learn there is only one God, and **this is something from which the Scripture never deviates.**¹

The so-called “gods” of the nations must not be confused with the one God who created heaven and earth (Deut 32:17).

Although there were many pretenders and would-be usurpers, Israel was to worship only the true God (Deut 4:35; 32:39; 33:26; Josh 22:22; 2 Sam 7:22; 1 Kgs 8:60; Isa 45:5, 22; 46:8–10; Mal 2:10).

The affirmation of God's unity continues into the New Testament as well (John 5:44; 17:3; 1 Cor 8:4–6; Gal 3:20; Eph 4:4–6; 1 Tim 1:17; Jas 2:19).

THERE IS PLURALITY IN GOD

Beside statements of God's unity, however, even the Old Testament suggests [God's plurality](#). We may notice first that *Elohim*, the Hebrew word for “God,” is plural. Then we witness his first act.

¹ Those who have been following Logos *Word by Word* for a while may be familiar with Michael Heiser's work on the divine council. This is the heavenly ruling body made up of [the spiritual beings or “gods.”](#) I agree with the late Dr. Heiser that the Hebrew Scriptures often refer to the created spirit beings as *elohim*, or “gods,” though I disagree on the interpretation of some cases, Psalm 82 being one example.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1–4)

This Gospel passage, you may notice, directly echoes Genesis, inviting us to take a closer look not only at the creation account, but also at the whole Old Testament, to reconsider it in light of the coming of Jesus.

Revisiting Genesis 1 reminds us that God *spoke* the world into existence. This helps us connect to what John says about [the Logos, the Word](#). We notice that God’s speech is present and active in every phase of creation.

In creation we also see God’s Spirit acting before the Word goes forth. Before God speaks, the Spirit is “hovering over” the face of the deep. So, God, Word, and Spirit are all engaged in the act of creation.²

These first hints of God’s plurality lead us to consider how he announces humanity’s creation as well. God summons, “Let us make man in *our* image!”³ The Bible immediately makes the connection between God’s plurality and humanity’s even clearer:

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created **him**;
male and female he created **them**. (Gen 1:27)⁴

There is a unity of humanity as one race, but that unity is expressed through relationship between multiple distinct persons. Since this passage is telling us that humanity is created as God’s image, it encourages us to understand human relationships as somehow representing God!

² In a similar way the dove flies over the face of the waters after the flood (Gen 8:6–11) and the Holy Spirit descends like a dove over the waters of Jesus’s baptism (Matt 3:16).

³ This summons is sometimes understood as an address to the divine council. However, those being addressed are implied to be co-referent of the “image” with the summoner. Since man is the image of God, not of angels, it cannot be to creatures, but only by creator to creator, that this summons may be spoken.

⁴ Karl Barth’s discussion of the image of God in *Church Dogmatics III.1* is helpful for expounding how man’s plurality reflects that of God’s, though his relational view of the image of God is probably not exhaustive of what it means to be the image. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation*, Part 1 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 195.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

THE ANGEL OF YAHWEH

Hints at plurality in God continue throughout the Old Testament.

“Yahweh,” the Hebrew word often translated with the all-caps “LORD,” is the covenant name by which God revealed himself to Israel. But we also find the Bible speaking of someone called the “**Angel** of Yahweh.”



The word “angel” simply means “messenger,” but what is especially striking is that the Angel of Yahweh is identified *as* Yahweh and as God.

On Mount Moriah when Abraham was willing to offer his son Isaac, he was obeying God’s command. Yet we read:

[T]he **angel of the LORD** called to him from heaven ... He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now **I know that you fear God**, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, **from me**.” (Gen 22:11–12)

The **Angel of Yahweh** appeared also to Moses in the burning bush, and yet it is God who speaks.

And the **angel of the LORD** appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush ... And he said, “**I am the God** of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look **at God**. (Exod 3:2–6)

THE WORD OF YAHWEH

The “Word of Yahweh” is another entity who is identified as God. The appearance of this Word is most often followed by direct speech of God in the first person.

Performing a search in the Logos Bible app for the phrase “word of the Lord” in close proximity to the word “came” (within three words) yields 240 results in the ESV. ([Get it free](#) to try a search like this yourself.)

This helps us consider how the Word functions in each of these passages. For now, I’ll highlight just three:

1. In the Pentateuch, the Word of Yahweh comes to Abram through a vision and says “I am your shield” (Gen 15:1).

The Doctrine of the Trinity

2. In the former prophets, the Word says to Samuel, “I regret that I have made Saul king” (1 Sam 15:10).
3. In the latter prophets, the Word says to the prophet Ezekiel, “I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel” (Ezek 3:16–17).

In each case, the Word speaks in the first person, ascribing acts of God to himself.

Now we can better understand what John means by *Logos*. There is a distinction between Yahweh and his Word, and yet a unity as well. This Word was the one John says was in the beginning “with God,” or perhaps even “*toward* God.”⁵

This gives a picture of face-to-face orientation between the Word and God, a personal relationship between them.

And this Word *was* God, the creator, along with the Spirit.

Psalm 33:6

By the **word** of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the **breath** (or Spirit) of his mouth all their host.

This Word who created all things became flesh to dwell with us and to show us God’s glory (John 1:14).

We can find many more connections like these, which hint at a “plurality in the unity” of God in the Old Testament. If you’re interested in digging deeper into these, take a look at the Logos course on “[The Jewish Trinity](#)” and John B. Metzger’s *Discovering the Mystery of the Unity of God*.

Proverbs 30:4

Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son’s name? Surely you know!

⁵ From the Greek preposition *pros*. This describes relational orientation rather than spacial proximity or direction. See Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 67; Murray J. Harris, *John, Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015), 18. Cf. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 116.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The God of the New Testament is the same God as that of the Old. The New Testament doesn't undermine what we have already learned about God, but it sheds new light. It illuminates and clarifies the hints of God's plurality that were present in the Old Testament only in shadowy forms.



This is because Jesus Christ is the revelation of God to us. Jesus is God's self-disclosure, his speech, his **Word**. Though he sometimes appeared to people in the Old Testament, it isn't until he was made flesh that he came to live among us.⁶

Before Jesus was born, there was a distance between God and humanity. But when God the Son took on bodily form and human nature, uniting it to his own divine nature, God not only drew near to us, but joined humanity to himself in Jesus Christ. God the Father sent his beloved Son to become man *because he wants us to know him* and have life in him (John 17:3).

With this new intimacy that Jesus brought between God and his creation, the differentiation of the three divine persons of God came into clearer focus through Jesus's teaching and work. He is the one who fully reveals God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—a triune God.

The Father is God

Not many people have doubts that the Father is God, but a few references to show it will be helpful. In the New Testament, God is frequently referred to as Father (Rom 1:7; 15:6; 1 Cor 8:6; 2 Cor 1:3; Gal 1:1; Eph 4:6; Jas 1:27; 1 Pet 1:2–3; 2 John 3; Jude 1).

The Son is God

If the Father is eternal God, then he must also have an eternally begotten, an eternal Son.⁷

We saw that the Word was present and active in God's acts of creation in the Old Testament, and Christ is that Word made flesh. The New Testament further shows us that the Son:

⁶ Many Christian writers believe that when the Angel of Yahweh or the Word of Yahweh are mentioned in the Old Testament, and where God "appears" or is in some way visible, these are references specifically to God the Son in pre-incarnate "theophanies"—appearances of God to humanity.

⁷ It is impossible that God could once have been *not* a Father, but *became* Father at some point, as Origen pointed out in *De princ.* 1.2.2.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

- Is eternal (Matt 22:42–45; John 1:2; 3:13; 5:46; 6:62; 8:58; Heb 7:3; Rev 1:17–18; 21:5–6).
- Is the full image of God in whom dwells all the fullness of God (Col 1:15–19).
- Was in the “form” of God (Phil 2:5–6).
- Is called “Lord,” which in the Greek often stands in for the Hebrew “Yahweh” (Acts 10:36; Phil 2:11; 1 Cor 12:3; Rom 10:9).
- Is called “God” (John 20:28; Acts 20:28).
- Receives worship (Matt 2:11; John 9:35–38; Phil 2:10–11; Heb 1:6; Rev 5:11–14; 22:3).

One of the things I find is most persuasive to show that the Son is God is that the New Testament authors apply to Jesus many Old Testament passages that speak about God. This is only a small sampling.

Deuteronomy 6:4	1 Corinthians 8:4–6
Deuteronomy 32:4, 15, 18	1 Corinthians 10:3
Psalms 45:6–7	Hebrews 1:8
Psalms 68:18	Ephesians 4:7–8
Isaiah 40:3	Mark 1:1–3
Isaiah 43:11	Acts 4:11–12

Finally, in Hebrews we find one of the most brilliant expressions of the eternal glory that the Son shares with the Father.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. (Heb 1:3)

The Doctrine of the Trinity

If the Son is the radiance of God's glory, then just as God's glory is eternal, so also must be its brightness.⁸

He is the light who shone into the darkness, whom the darkness was unable to overcome (John 1:5).

The Holy Spirit is God

New Testament references to the Holy Spirit are less frequent than those to the Son or Father. This is because the Scripture is itself produced by the Spirit as a witness to Jesus, the Word (John 14:26; 2 Pet 1:21; Eph 1:13; Heb 3:7).

The [video at the beginning of this article](#) explained that the triune persons don't primarily glorify themselves but serve one another. So the Holy Spirit speaks about the Son and Father, and is often content to remain invisible (John 15:26).

Because of his relative anonymity, there may be some who think of the Holy Spirit as a sort of "force," like the source of Jedi powers in Star Wars. However, the New Testament shows us that the Spirit is just as much God—and just as much a person—as are the Father and the Son.

The Spirit:

- Is called God (Acts 5:3–4) and Most High (Luke 1:35).
- Is a person who may be blasphemed (Matt 12:31), lied to (Acts 5:3–4), grieved (Eph 4:30), or insulted (Heb 10:29).
- "Wills" to give gifts to God's people (1 Cor 12:11).
- Bears witness (John 15:26; Rom 8:16; Heb 10:15).
- Speaks (Mark 13:11; Acts 21:11; Rev 2:7; 14:13) and cries out (Gal 4:6).
- Has knowledge of God (1 Cor 2:10–12).
- Is named with Son and Father in apostolic language about God (Rom 15:30; 1 Cor 1:4–6; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 2:18).

⁸ This last statement is one of the arguments employed by Athanasius ([Cont. Ar.](#) 1.12) against Arianism.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

Unity and distinction of divine persons

We see how the Bible shows that God is both unity and a diversity of three distinct persons. To be faithful to how God wants us to know him, it's important to hold to these two truths equally. We can't emphasize one while forgetting about the other.

The unity of God and the distinction of Father, Son, and Spirit are revealed through their actions, especially in relation to each other. We saw that as three distinct persons, God created by the speech of his Word, while the Spirit overshadowed and prepared for the work of the Father through the Son.

Jesus, in revealing God to us, shows us that he has fellowship with the Father by speaking to him in prayer (Matt 10:33; Mark 14:36; Luke 23:34; John 17:5). Jesus does not talk to himself. Father and Son are oriented toward one another in a fellowship of love.

The Holy Spirit is likewise distinct from both Father and Son. Jesus asks the Father to give the Holy Spirit, whom he calls "*another helper*" (John 14:16–17).

Other acts of God follow the same pattern:

- In Christ's incarnation, the Father sends the Son, and the Spirit overshadows so that Mary conceives (1 John 4:9; Matt 1:20; Luke 1:35).
- When Jesus is baptized, the Spirit descends upon him, while the Father speaks his approval from heaven (Matt 3:16–17).
- In the resurrection, Jesus takes up his life again (John 10:17) and is also raised by the Father and the Spirit (Acts 2:24; 5:30; Rom 4:24; 8:11).
- In our salvation, the Son mediates God's salvation by becoming man, and by his dying and rising (1 Tim 2:5–6); the Father saves by sending the Son into the world (John 3:16–17); and the Spirit saves by the regeneration and renewal of sinners (Titus 3:5), giving us life in Christ (Rom 8:9–11).

This is why Christians are baptized into God's *one Name*—the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19).

The Doctrine of the Trinity

Although each divine person acts in different roles, each is fully engaged in every act of God. A. W. Tozer said of the inseparability of God's attributes, "All of God does all that God does."⁹

James B. Jordan is fond of applying this adage to the interconnected actions of the divine persons as well, whose works are likewise inseparable.¹⁰

13

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRINITY

Now that we've seen what the Bible says about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we can better understand the Trinitarian debates of the first centuries.

The church walked a biblical line between two ditches. On one side was emphasis on the unity of God at the expense of the differentiation among persons (which is known as **modalism**). On the other was emphasis of the differentiation at the expense of God's unity (**tritheism**) or at the expense of the full deity of one or more of the persons (**subordinationism**).

Early church arguments for the deity of Christ were written as early as Justin Martyr in the middle of the second century in his *Dialog with Trypho* (*Dialog* 34, 56, 127, 128).

Irenaeus also adamantly defended the deity of Christ, the divine *Logos* (*Against Heresies* IV.6).

And, notably, Tertullian wrote *Against Praxeas* as a defense against modalism, which described the "Son" and "Spirit" as mere roles played by a singular entity of God, like one actor wearing three masks. To counter this, Tertullian expressed the biblical teaching of God as a "Trinity." Father, Son, and Spirit are not merely three masks, but are three distinct persons in one God. He described the unity of God as one "essence" common to all three persons.

These discourses illustrate a pattern. The church often formed and advanced Christian theology to respond to people who were challenging the biblical faith.

Related article: [Trinity or Triarchy? Is There Authority and Submission in the Godhead?](#)

⁹ A. W. Tozer, [The Attributes of God: A Journey into the Father's Heart](#) (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread, 2007), 71.

¹⁰ E.g. James B. Jordan, *From Bread to Wine: Creation, Worship, and Christian Maturity* (West Monroe, LA: Theopolis Books, 2019), 215.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

The Council of Nicaea

Arianism, the greatest challenge to the Trinitarian understanding of God, arose in the fourth century. Named after Arius (a presbyter of Alexandria, Egypt), Arianism, a form of subordinationism, insisted that the Son was not eternal, but was an exalted creature created by God. In fact, the Son was a different being from God the Father entirely. “There was when he was not,” went the Arian saying of the day.

14

Arianism arose in the aftermath of the Roman emperor Diocletian’s terrible persecution of Christians. Constantine had secured his position as emperor in AD 312. He attributed his ascendancy to the Christian God’s aid and declared religious freedom throughout the empire. For the first time in history, the Christian faith was legally allowed.

This newfound peace, however, revealed division in the church about God’s nature. The teachings of Arius began to grow in influence and popularity, creating conflict with those who believed that Jesus was eternal God the Son. The division became so pronounced that Constantine, concerned for the peace of the church and of the empire, convened a council. Almost three hundred leaders of the church from around the empire gathered at the Council of Nicaea to discuss Trinitarian doctrine.¹¹

The debate focused on one question: Who is Jesus? Is he an exalted creature, of **similar being** (*homoiousios*) as the Father as the Arians claimed? Or, is he the eternal Son, as Athanasius and others insisted, **same in being** (*homoousios*) with the Father, and himself true God?

The Trinitarian doctrine carried the day, and all but two of the bishops present affirmed the Creed of Nicaea. Still, a long hard road remained before the doctrine of the Trinity was acknowledged as the center of the biblical, and therefore orthodox, Christian faith.¹²

An expanded version of the Creed of Nicaea, known today as the **Nicene Creed**, was reaffirmed and ratified fifty-six years later at the Council of Constantinople.¹³

¹¹ On Constantine’s personal involvement in the Council of Nicaea, see Peter J. Leithart, *Defending Constantine: The Twilight of an Empire and the Dawn of Christendom* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2010), 164–89.

¹² *Orthodox*, from the Greek, means “right opinion.”

¹³ See [Historic Creeds & Confessions](#) for more on the Nicene Creed.

The Doctrine of the Trinity

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Why did the early leaders of the church fight so hard for this doctrine? What was at stake? Nothing but the very [identity of Jesus Christ](#), who is not only the Savior, but the self-revelation of God himself!

15

As we saw at the opening of this article, unless God reveals himself to us, we cannot know him. And if Jesus is not God, then God has not really revealed himself.

No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. (John 1:18)

If Jesus is not God, then we do not know God. If we do not know God, then we cannot even know ourselves, because we were created to be God's image.¹⁴

If Jesus is not God made human, then God has not healed our human nature.¹⁵ [15](#)

The deity of Christ is the bedrock of our salvation. Salvation is not only God's rescue of us from sin and death (Rom 5:12–17; 6:23), but his drawing of us into fellowship with the Father, so that we might know God. The Son can only draw us into this fellowship if he himself has eternally experienced that fellowship of love.

*Here is the crucial point: God is love (1 John 4:8),
and he draws us into his love through his Son.*

A monad—something that exists alone—would be incapable of love. But God has never been alone. He has eternally had the fellowship of love within himself, among Father, Son, and Spirit.

Because human beings are God's image, we are also created for love, not alone (Gen 1:27; 2:18), but a fellowship of humanity; one which Christ joined to himself in order to draw us also into the love and fellowship of God.

John 17:21–24

... that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory

¹⁴ John Calvin begins his [Institutes](#) with the knowledge of God as connected to that of self.

¹⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, in [Ep. 101](#), contends, "That which he has not assumed he has not healed."

The Doctrine of the Trinity

that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

16

Since there is only one God, and he has revealed himself to us as Trinity, we cannot, and dare not, conceive of a “God” that is not Triune. To be God *means* to be Trinity. And so, to be God’s people *means* to be the people saved by God through his Son our Lord Jesus Christ; sanctified by and filled with the Holy Spirit.

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Christopher Kou is a Pastoral Intern at Immanuel Reformed Church in Birmingham, AL, where he resides with his wife Ellyn and their four children, Stephen, Eliana, Beata and Claire. He holds a certificate in Biblical, Liturgical, & Cultural Studies from Theopolis Institute. He has been published in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (JETS). He is currently enrolled in the MABS program at Reformed Theological Seminary and holds a BS in History and Theology from Elmhurst University.

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