

What The Bible Says About ---

Wednesday, July 8, 2015

Part Two

G O D - part 2 - T H E T R I N I T Y

1 Several weeks have passed since we studied part one together. I recommend you go over
2 your notes from two weeks ago again as they give you a foundational and scriptural basic
3 study on God.

4
5 Tonight we consider "The Trinity," that is, God the Father, God the Son and God the
6 Holy Spirit. Here is a song we often sing:

7
8 *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;*
9 *Holy, Holy, Holy, Merciful and mighty! God in three persons blessed Trinity.*

10
11 We joyfully sing this song about The Trinity even though both Old and New Testaments
12 testify over and over we have but one God:

13
14 **Deut. 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:**

15
16 There are several wide barriers between Christian theology and that of Judaism; this is
17 certainly one of them. Jews - and Moslems as well - do not accept the Christian doctrine
18 of the deity of Jesus Christ or of the Trinity.

19
20 This doctrine is very hard to define without falling into efforts that border on heresy.
21 Strong's concordance reads: *Reason shows us the Unity of God; only REVELATION*
22 *shows us the Trinity of God.* Dr. Henry Thiessen, one of the finest theologians echoes
23 that statement: *The doctrine of the Trinity is not a truth of natural theology, but of*
24 *revelation.* While I understand the basic thinking of this statement, it causes me pause,
25 for if we cannot reason the Trinity then are we not susceptible to fables and old wives'
26 tales?

27
28 Let's begin our discussion by contemplating the Assemblies of God official position on he
29 Trinity. This is Point # 2 in the 16 cardinal doctrines of our fellowship.

30
31 2. The One True God

1 The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator
2 of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as
3 embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

4 Deut. 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:

5 Isaiah 43:10-11 Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have
6 chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there
7 was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. [11] I, even I, am the Lord; and beside
8 me there is no saviour.

9 Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the
10 Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

11 Luke 3:22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a
12 voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

13
14 (a) Terms Defined

15
16 The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures,
17 are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate
18 understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from
19 "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our
20 God, who is One Lord, as a trinity or as one Being of three persons and still be absolutely
21 scriptural. Examples:

22 2 Cor. 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion
23 of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

24 John 14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that
25 he may abide with you for ever; [17] Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot
26 receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth
27 with you, and shall be in you.

28
29 (b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

30
31 Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms
32 of relationship, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but that this distinction and relationship, as
33 to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible because it is unexplained.

34 Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon
35 thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing
36 which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

37 Matthew 11:25-27 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of
38 heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast
39 revealed them unto babes. [26] Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. [27] All
40 things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father;

1 neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will
2 reveal him.

3 1 John 1:3-4 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may
4 have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son
5 Jesus Christ. [4] And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

6
7 c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son and Holy Ghost
8

9 Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes Him the Father and not
10 the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and
11 there is that in the Holy Ghost which constitutes Him the Holy Ghost and not either the
12 Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter, the Son is the Begotten, and the
13 Holy Ghost is the One proceeding from the Father and the S on. Therefore, because these
14 three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty
15 and His name one.

16 Zech. 14:9 And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one
17 Lord, and his name one.

18 John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the
19 bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

20
21 (d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead
22

23 The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are never identical as to person; nor confused as
24 to relation, nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed to cooperation. The Son is
25 in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father
26 and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the
27 Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son
28 proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence no person in the
29 Godhead either exists or works separately of the others.

30 John 5:17-18 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

31 John 5:30-32 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is
32 just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. [31]
33 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. [32] There is another that beareth
34 witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

35
36 SIMPLY PUT, THE TRINITY:
37

- 38 • ...is an eternal truth about who God is
- 39 • ...the fact that God exists as three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
- 40 • ...these three Persons eternally exist as one God

- 1 • ...the reality that since the three Persons of the Trinity share precisely the same
- 2 attributes (the qualities that comprise God and His personality), whatever may be
- 3 said of one Member of the Trinity may be said of the other Two
- 4 • The Members of the Trinity are equal in every respect
- 5 • All three members of the Trinity have always existed
- 6

God exists in three Persons:

1. The Father Who is the Creator
2. The Son Who is the Redeemer
3. The Holy Spirit Who is the Empowerer

But here again this is oversimplified because all three Persons are involved in each of those bullet points.

7 Challenges To The Doctrine

- 8
- 9 1. The word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible.
- 10
- 11 2. The Trinity is not easily understood.
- 12

13 But it is helpful to our understanding to recognize that you and I live in a three-

14 dimensional world. All physical objects have a certain height, width and depth. God,

15 however, lives without the limitations of a three dimensional universe. He is Spirit, Jesus

16 taught.

17

18 Critics of the Trinity doctrine say we have three gods: God, the Father, Son and Holy

19 Spirit. They say this is $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$. However, it would be better stated: $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$.

20

21 We sometimes use the phrase "triune God." The first part "tri" means three. And "unity"

22 means "one." God is therefore three "persons" who have the same essence of deity.

- 23 That is:
- 24 • God the Son (Jesus) is fully, completely God.
 - 25 • God the Father is fully, completely God.
 - 26 • God the Holy Spirit is fully, completely God.
 - 27

28 Note carefully Genesis 1:26: And God said, Let **US** make man in our image, after **OUR**

29 likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air,

30 and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon

31 the earth.

32

33 On pages 2 and 3 I listed numerous scriptures that teach (1) the Unity of God and (2) the

1 Trinity of God.

2
3 WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT THIS CONFUSING DOCTRINE OF TRINITY?
4

5 1. It helps us be aware of the uniqueness of the One-in-Three and Three-in-One by
6 giving us a balanced view of all three Persons of the Trinity. Without it, we could easily
7 develop concepts of God that are more “man-made” than Scripturally-documented.
8

9 2. How so? If we emphasized only God from the Old Testament without the counter-
10 balancing teachings of Jesus from the New Testament, we could have a picture of God
11 only as a god of wrath and judgment with no compassion. However, if we emphasize the
12 person of Jesus to the exclusion of God the Father and the Holy Spirit, we miss out on the
13 fact that God sent Jesus because He so loved the world. If, as Pentecostals, we
14 emphasize the Holy Spirit only along with the charismatic experiences and gifts of the
15 Spirit, it is easy to lose sight of God as Creator, Son as Redeemer, and the role that the
16 Holy Spirit plays in both of these aspects of God’s work.
17

18 3. We find in the doctrine of the Trinity a model for Christian community. It has been
19 observed that “as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit relate to one another,
20 demonstrate love for each other and work in concert to accomplish the purpose of God in
21 the world, we get the idea of community.”
22

23 4. The Trinity also enforces our commitment to evangelism. Jesus said to His disciples,
24 “As the Father has sent me, so send I you.” Just as God the Father sent Jesus into the
25 world, so Jesus sends us into the world to do the Father’s work, equipped and
26 accompanied by the Spirit of God.
27

28 DETRACTORS OF THE DOCTRINE
29

30 Obviously not everyone believes in the Trinity. Jews and Muslims do not, nor do
31 Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, Unitarians, New Agers or those involved in Christian
32 Science. One theologian observed, “*Sometimes a doctrine is known by its enemies as
33 well as by its friends.*”
34

35 Why is this doctrine so important to us from a practical standpoint?
36

37 1. It tells us what God is like. The Trinity tells us that God is personal. It reveals that
38 God loves fellowship. *Before God created the universe, the Godhead worked together in
39 perfect harmony. God did not create man because He was “lonely.” The world was
40 created because God wanted the human race to share the perfect fellowship with Him*

1 *that He had from all eternity within His own being.*

2
3 2. The Trinity teaches us what the death of Christ Jesus means. How else could we
4 conceive of One dying for the sins of the world?

5 ▶ If Jesus was not fully God, then His death is not a substitution for the sins of
6 mankind. If He were merely human, or even slightly less than fully God, His
7 death is nothing more than a martyr's death, the sad story of a good man who meant
8 well but came to a bad end.

9 ▶ But if Christ was God incarnate (God in human flesh), then an only then could He
10 redeem the fallen human race. Can you even begin then to comprehend the
11 passion of Jesus' cry from the cross, "My God - my God - why have You forsaken
12 Me?"

13
14 3. The Trinity is a showcase for the life of a believer. We learn from the Trinity that
15 our God is a personal God who is able to have rich personal fellowship within His own
16 Being. That's what the Christian life is all about - an invitation to rich personal
17 fellowship with the Triune God. Note 1 John 1:3 **That which we have seen and heard**
18 **declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our**
19 **fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.** This is powerful for it
20 presents fellowship on four glorious levels:

- 21 ▶ fellowship among believers
- 22 ▶ fellowship with the Father
- 23 ▶ fellowship with the Son
- 24 ▶ fellowship with the Holy Spirit

25
26 In Conclusion:

27
28 The study of the Trinity is not an easy one. But it is not irrational or illogical. It
29 certainly is not unimportant. It is the truth of the Word of God. So again we sing:

30 Holy, holy, holy - Lord God Almighty -
31 Early in the morning our songs shall rise to Thee!
32 Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty -
33 God in three Persons, Blessed Trinity.

34 35 36 **THE DECREES OF GOD**

37
38 What are the purposes of God? At this point we come to the study of God's decrees -
39 that is, the timeless thoughts and activities of God. There are no restrictions or
40 limitations for Him and His activities. God is the author of all law. God is not "above

1 law,” He IS law. Amazing - truly amazing - that God Who in His majesty and glory is
2 represented as “seated on a throne,” high and lifted up, yet is with US day and night in
3 fatherly love and care. I love this teaching from Dr. Evert J. Blekkink:

4
5 *The chief fault for our failure to think of God, as He is in His thinking and acting, is due to*
6 *the fact that we endeavor to measure Him by our little yardstick of space and time. We*
7 *mistakenly hold that God has forethought, foreknowledge and plans, the same as we have*
8 *in a limited and inadequate degree; but unlike ours that frequently fail, His are realized*
9 *with absolute authority. But God’s foreknowledge and plans differ greatly from those of*
10 *men. All of man’s plans are cast in the mold of space and time: whereas those of God are*
11 *independent of both. He is spaceless and timeless in His being and in all His activities.*

12 THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD / BLEKKINK/ EERDMAN PUBLISHING / P. 21

13
14 The decrees of God are God’s eternal purpose. Thiessen observes: *God does not make*
15 *His plans or alter them as human history develops. He made them in eternity and they*
16 *remain unaltered.* Let’s examine just a few of those decrees:

17
18 1. GOD DECREED TO CREATE THE UNIVERSE AND MANKIND. Psalm 33:6-11

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

26
27 2. GOD DECREES THE LENGTH OF HUMAN LIFE. Job 14:5 **Seeing his days are**
28 **determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds**
29 **that he cannot pass...** We do not have the right to take our own lives or those of others.
30 This decree does not eliminate the possibility of capital punishment.

31
32 3. GOD DECREED THAT MANKIND SHOULD HAVE FREE MORAL WILL, THAT
33 IS, THE ABILITY TO PICK AND CHOOSE GOOD OR EVIL. He is not the “Author”
34 of evil; mankind through Adam and Eve chose to follow the design of Satan, the
35 Destroyer. James 1:13-15 **Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of**
36 **God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: [14] But**
37 **every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. [15] Then**
38 **when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth**
39 **forth death.** Critics of the Bible sometimes teach that God created sin. That isn’t even
40 logical, let alone scriptural. How could God be the author of sin and then condemn man

1 to an endless hell for doing what He caused to do? God decreed to allow sin to come,
2 even though He knew what He would have to do to redeem His human creation from the
3 choice to pursue evil, that is, send His own Son to the Cross.

4
5 On the matter of free moral will: God could have made mankind an automaton, a robot,
6 but He preferred to make us capable of choosing whether or not we would obey and serve
7 Him.

8
9 4. GOD DECREED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN OUR SALVATION. In the very
10 beginning when Adam and Eve sinned, God acted first in the redemption process:
11 **Genesis 3:8-9 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in**
12 **the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the**
13 **Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. [9] And the Lord God called unto Adam,**
14 **and said unto him, Where art thou?**

15
16 I love the way Paul put it: Titus 2:11-15 **For the grace of God that bringeth salvation**
17 **hath appeared to all men, [12] Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly**
18 **lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; [13]**
19 **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our**
20 **Saviour Jesus Christ; [14] Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all**
21 **iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. [15] These**
22 **things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.**

23
24 5. GOD DECREED TO REWARD HIS SERVANTS AND TO PUNISH THE
25 DISOBEDIENT. It is a two-sided coin for even as He rewards, Isaiah 62:11 **Behold,**
26 **the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion,**
27 **Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before**
28 **him, He punishes: Psalm 37:20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the**
29 **Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume**
30 **away.**

31
32 6. GOD DECREED THAT ISRAEL AND THE JEWS WOULD BE SPECIAL:
33 Genesis 12:1-3 **Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country,**
34 **and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:**
35 **[2] And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name**
36 **great; and thou shalt be a blessing: [3] And I will bless them that bless thee, and**
37 **curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

38
39 Despite Israel's failings, God has not taken away His promise. Romans 11:23-24 (The
40 Message) **And don't get to feeling superior to those pruned branches down on the**

1 ground. If they don't persist in remaining deadwood, they could very well get grafted
2 back in. God can do that. He can perform miracle grafts. [24] Why, if he could graft
3 you—branches cut from a tree out in the wild—into an orchard tree, he certainly
4 isn't going to have any trouble grafting branches back into the tree they grew from in
5 the first place. Just be glad you're in the tree, and hope for the best for the others.

6
7 7. GOD DECREED THE FOUNDING AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH. Jesus
8 declared that He would build His church: Matthew 16:17-18 **And Jesus answered and**
9 **said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not**
10 **revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. [18] And I say also unto thee,**
11 **That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell**
12 **shall not prevail against it.** God's purpose now is to call out a people according to His
13 grace through which He will work out His redemptive plan on earth. When this purpose
14 has been completed, Christ will return to take His people home to Himself: 1 Thes.
15 4:16-18 **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the**
16 **voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise**
17 **first: [17] Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them**
18 **in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. [18]**
19 **Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

20
21 8. GOD HAS DECREED HIS FINAL TRIUMPH THROUGH HIS SON: Psalm 2:6-9
22 **Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. [7] I will declare the decree: the**
23 **Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. [8] Ask of**
24 **me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of**
25 **the earth for thy possession. [9] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt**
26 **dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.**

27
28 We could spend several days on this decree alone for it has so many facets of wonder. For
29 example: There will be a regeneration even of nature: Romans 8:19-22 **For the earnest**
30 **expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. [20] For**
31 **the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath**
32 **subjected the same in hope, [21] Because the creature itself also shall be delivered**
33 **from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. [22]**
34 **For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until**
35 **now. Isaiah 35:1-10 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them;**
36 **and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. [2] It shall blossom abundantly,**
37 **and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the**
38 **excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the**
39 **excellency of our God. [3] Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble**
40 **knees. [4] Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your**

1 **God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save**
2 **you. [5] Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be**
3 **unstopped. [6] Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb**
4 **sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. [7] And**
5 **the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the**
6 **habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. [8] And**
7 **an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the**
8 **unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though**
9 **fools, shall not err therein. [9] No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go**
10 **up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: [10] And**
11 **the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting**
12 **joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing**
13 **shall flee away.**

14
15 What a stunning decree of our great God! There are so many more of these decrees that
16 we could spend days pondering them all. We have but scratched the surface in this study
17 of what the Bible says about God. But we must hurry on.

18
19
20 Next week: WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ANGELS
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