

# \*The Heights Baptist Church \* Sermon Series: Doctrine\*

## \* Topic: The Trinity \* Various Verses \* 3/29/26 \*

### MAIN POINT

“We believe in the one living and true God, eternally existing in perfect unity as three equally and fully divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although each member of the Trinity serves different functions, they each possess equal power and authority.” (The Heights website, under “Beliefs”)

### INTRODUCTION

#### **How would you explain the Trinity to a child in Sunday School, or to someone from another faith?**

Perhaps the reason that Christians today do not speak a lot about the Trinity is because our finite minds can't really comprehend it. The Trinity might be the most complex truth of the Christian faith. It is also, however, one of the most essential. If we hope to grow in our relationship with God, we must get to know the true God rather than a god of our own flawed understanding.

### UNDERSTANDING

*Note to study leader:* Make a list on the white board as people come up with attributes of God based on the following verses.

### ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES

#### **What attributes of God are mentioned in these verses?**

- **Deuteronomy 6:4:** There is one God
- **Isaiah 44:6:** There is one God
- **1 John 3:1:** God is our Father, and we are His children.
- **Matthew 6:6-9:** God is our Father
- **John 1:1, 14, and 18:** Jesus is God the Son
- **Acts 5:3-4:** The Holy Spirit is God
- **1 Corinthians 2:11:** The Holy Spirit is God
- **Matthew 28:19:** God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

#### **How would you combine these truths into one doctrine about who God is?**

- There is only one God.
- God is made up of three different persons.
- Each of these persons is fully God. (Each of these persons The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Are Each Called God, have Attributes that belong to God alone, and do things only God can do.)

### IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

#### **What do these verses say about the importance of worshipping the one true God?**

- **Exodus 20:3-5:** Worshipping other gods is not another way to worship God. It is idolatry.
- **Deuteronomy 32:17:** Worshipping other gods is not another way to worship God.
- **1 Corinthians 10:20:** Worshipping idols is worshipping demons.
- **John 8:19, 24, and 54-59:** If you don't believe Jesus is God, you cannot be saved. Note that in these verses, Jesus calls himself, “I AM”, which is the name God gave himself to Moses.
- **Mark 3:28-30:** Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

## How would you combine these truths about the importance of directing our worship to the one true God?

The doctrine of the Trinity is an essential part of the Christian faith. Deviating from these truths causes a denomination to no longer be Christian, but a cult.

- Unitarian Universalists believe worshiping any god is worshiping the true God.
- Jehovah's Witnesses believe Jesus is a created being, not God.
- The Way International believes the Holy Spirit is just a gift, not a member of the Trinity.

Because of their false doctrines, three "churches" are not actually churches, but cults.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2-4

Paul is concerned that false teachers are leading the Corinthian church astray from their devotion to Christ. And he ties this to the work of Satan when he deceived Eve. What three false doctrines does Paul specifically tie to this deceit?

1. A false Christ.
2. A false Holy Spirit
3. A false gospel (Something other than being saved by grace alone through faith in Christ).

## FLAWED VIEWS OF THE TRINITY

Understanding the triune nature of God is beyond our human capability to comprehend it. As we try to wrap our minds around this, we can easily fall into doctrinal pitfalls. Here are some of them.

*Note to study leader:* As you describe these views, write them on the white board. This will help people remember the flawed views when they analyze the flawed analogies that will be discussed next.

- **Modalism:** The flawed view that God is one person acting in three different roles. This denies the fact that each member of the Trinity is a distinct separate person.
- **Partialism:** Each of the three persons of the Trinity is one third God. This denies the fact that each member of the Trinity is fully God.
- **Tritheism:** The Trinity is three separate gods. This denies the fact that together all three persons of the Trinity are together one God.
- **Arianism:** Jesus is a created being, inferior to God the father and not fully divine. This denies the fact that God the Son is fully God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

## FLAWED ANALOGIES OF THE TRINITY

Whenever we try to explain the Trinity using an analogy, it will come up short. It may be the best way to help someone understand the Trinity, but we need to realize where these analogies fall short.

### What is the weakness with each of these analogies?

- God is like a human, consisting of a body, mind, and spirit: **Partialism.**
- God is like a three-leaf clover: **Partialism.**
- God is like the sun, consisting of the sun, light, and heat: **Arianism.**
- God is like an egg, which consists of a yolk, a white, and a shell: **Partialism.**
- God is like water existing as solid, liquid, and vapor at the same time: **Modalism.**

An expression that might come up often as we study doctrine is, "The comfort in the not fully understanding." Infinite God is beyond our finite human ability to understand. And yet we are called to come to God as little children, accepting the truths about God by faith.

## CONCLUSION

- God is one God: One divine being, one divine essence, one divine nature.
- The one God consists of three distinct persons.
- The three persons of the one God are co-equal and co-eternal.
- The three persons of the one God each have all of the divine attributes, such as holiness, love, justice, and righteousness.
- The three persons of the one God have different roles.

*Note to study leader:* Seven lessons in this doctrine series are scheduled to look at the different roles of three persons of the Trinity.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ GENESIS 1:1-2 and 26-27; 1 COR. 8:6; AND JOHN 1:1-3 and 14

### **How is the triune nature of God revealed at creation?**

God the Father created all things. Through Jesus the Son all things were created. The Holy Spirit was present at creation. The word used for God here is “Elohim”, for which the tense is “plural intensive, singular meaning” (Blue Letter Bible). God went on to say, “Let us make man in our image (plural)” (Gen. 2:26), and immediately following, “So God made man in His own image (singular).”

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ LUKE 3:21-22, JOHN 10:30, AND JOHN 14:8-10

### **How is the triune nature of God revealed at Jesus’ baptism?**

At Jesus’ baptism, God reveals something about who He is, revealing the triune nature of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the Father gives audible approval of Jesus as His beloved Son. The Spirit took on the visible form like that a dove demonstrating The Spirit’s presence coming to reside with Jesus in a special way as Messiah. The Father sends the Son whom He loves in the power of the Holy Spirit, reflecting the eternal relationship among the three Persons of the one Triune God.

### **How does verse 21 highlight Jesus’ willingness to identify with common people?**

John the Baptist preached repentance and righteousness to the crowds who came to be baptized by him (see Luke 3:7). Therefore, as people came to John for baptism, they were acknowledging themselves to be sinners in need of repentance. Jesus came to John for baptism as did those seeking repentance. Hence, in being baptized, Jesus identified Himself with sinful people. Jesus, however, was uniquely sinless unlike the people (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15). He is the Son in whom the Father is well-pleased (Luke 3:22). Ritual washings in ancient Israel were also used to commission a priest for priestly duty.

## APPLICATION

**Based on today’s study, how important is it to check out a specific church’s statement of beliefs before joining that church?**

**How would you respond to someone who believes Jesus is a great teacher but not truly God?**

## PRAYER

We praise You God for Your divinity, and for the fact that You are above us as the heavens are above the earth. Thank You that You chose to love us, even though nothing about us merits your love.

*Note to study leader:* Since this lesson is comprised of many individual passages from scripture rather than one larger chunk of scripture, the usual Commentary section is not included in this lesson.