

Dwell

How can I know God loves me?

[THE TRINITY - Part 1]

Who's this "God" you're chatting about?

"I like to think that God is..."

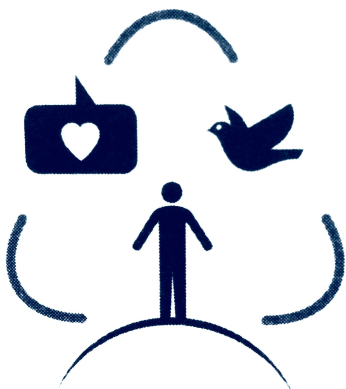
Need *revelation*: John 1:4-5,9,18; 1 John 1:5; Hebrews 1:1-3; Mark 1:9-11

What does Jesus reveal? (John 14:6-9)

1. Jesus is _____
2. He came from _____
3. In the power of _____ (14:26)

What was God doing before the creation of the world? (John 17:24-26; 1 John 4:7-9)

GOD IS...



Comprehension vs. Apprehension

Deut.29:29; cf. Col.1:25-27;2:2-3

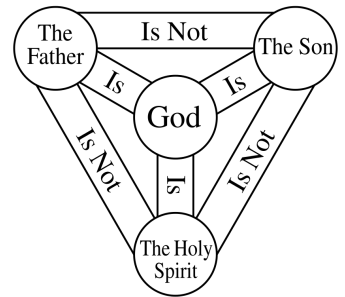


"God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God."

Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology (p.226)

(1) **God is three Persons**

The Father sent the Son. The Son obeyed the Father. The Spirit empowered the Son.



ERROR OF MODALISM:

God is one person who acts differently at different times (masks).

UNHELPFUL ANALOGIES:

The person who's a mother, a lawyer and a wife / H₂O



We can know God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit!

Father: "The Father himself loves you" (John 16:27; John 17:3; 1 John 3:1)

Son: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:27; Gal.2:20; John 17:3)

Spirit: "the Spirit ... is living in you" (Romans 8:11; John 7:38-39; Romans 5:5)

→ **DISCUSS:** Which Person do you most commonly relate to?

What difference might it make to you also to relate to the Others?

(2) **Each Person is fully God**

Father (Mathew 11:25; Ephesians 4:6); **Son** (John 5:16-27; 8:58-59; 2 Peter 1:1; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20); **Spirit** (Acts 5:3-4; Psalm 139:7-8; Matthew 28:19)

"All of God's attributes are true of all three persons, for each is fully God. Thus, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are also eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, infinitely wise, infinitely holy, infinitely loving, omniscient, and so forth." (Grudem, p.226)

ERROR OF ARIANISM (/ ISLAM):

The Son or the Spirit are subordinate beings to / created by the Father.

UNHELPFUL ANALOGY: the three-leaf clover / the tree

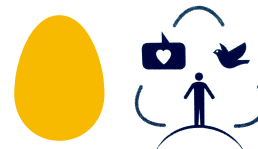


(3) ***There is one God***

Deuteronomy 6:4-5; 1 Kings 8:60; Isaiah 45:5-6

ERROR OF TRITHEISM: three gods

UNHELPFUL ANALOGY: the Egg



God is Father, Son & Spirit, united in love.

APPENDIX 1: Some verses to think about and enjoy!

There is one true God over all

Gen.1:1; Deut.6:4-5; Isa.45:5-7; Rom.3:29-30.

Old Testament: God's oneness is complex

1. Plural pronouns from God (Gen.1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa.6:8)
2. God and God (Ps.45:6-7; Heb.1:8; Ps.110:1; Matt.22:41-45)
3. Triple Lord (Num.6:24-26; Isa.33:22; Dan.9:19)
4. The 'angel of the LORD' / 'the LORD' (Gen.16:7-13; 28:10-17 & 31:11-13; 48:15-16; Ex.3:2-6; 13:21 & 14:19; 23:20-23; 33:14; Jos.5:13-15; Judg.6:11-24; 13:3-22; Zech.12:8; Mal.3:1)
5. God's *Word* and *Spirit* as co-causes with God (Gen.1:2; Ps.33:6; Isa.42:1)

*Clues in OT... Clarified in NT, after **INCARNATION** and **PENTECOST** .*

New Testament: God's threeness assumed

1. Jesus is distinct from God, and also God (cf. God's attributes, e.g. *wisdom, glory, word*)
Lk.1:43; 2:11; 3:4; Mk.1:1-3; Matt.9:13; Jn.1:1; 19:37; 20:28-29
2. Jesus himself explains the relationships of Father, Son and Spirit
Jn.5:19-23; Jn.14-17
3. New Testament teaches full deity and distinctness of Father, Son and Spirit
Matt.11:25; Eph.4:6; Jn.1:1,18; Ac.20:28; Rom.9:5; Ac.5:3-4; 2 Cor.3:17-18K

The Nicene Creed - C4th

I believe in one God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
Begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
Very God of very God,
Begotten, not made,
Being of one substance with the Father,
By whom all things were made;
Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man,
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered and was buried,
And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead:
Whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
The Lord and giver of life,
Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified,
Who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I look for the Resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Athanasian Creed - C6th

WHOSOEVER will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith.
Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
And the Catholick Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.
For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost.
But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.
Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Ghost.
The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate.
The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.
The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the Holy Ghost eternal.
And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.
As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.
So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the Holy Ghost Almighty.
And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty.
So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God.
And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.
So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord.
And yet not three Lords: but one Lord.
For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;
So are we forbidden by the Catholick Religion: to say there be three Gods, or three Lords.
The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.
The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.
The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.
And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another;
But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.
So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.
He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity.
Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
For the right Faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;
God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;
Perfect God, and Perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;
Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.
Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ;
One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God;
One altogether, not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.
For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ.
Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.
He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works.
And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
This is the Catholick Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.