

The Pursuit Of God

Session Twelve / September 7, 2016

The TRINITY

1
2 The famous Christian theologian, Augustine of Hippo (354-430 A.D.), was working on a
3 complicated dissertation on the Christian doctrine of THE TRINITY. One day he was
4 walking along the seashore when he noticed a small boy pouring sea water into a hole on
5 the ground. He asked the little fellow what he was doing and the boy replied, "I am
6 pouring the Mediterranean Sea into this hole." Augustine snorted, "Don't be stupid!
7 You can't fit the sea into that little hole! You are wasting your time!" "And so are
8 you," responded the boy, "trying to write a book about God!"
9

10 I rather feel like that, attempting a lesson the Trinity. Many of the works by brilliant
11 people concerning this subject write or state such things as, "The doctrine of the Trinity is
12 not a truth of natural theology, but of revelation." This old German has a very hard time
13 with that condensation of this extraordinary part of our PURSUIT OF GOD, although I'm
14 sure there is some truth to it. One theologian (Strong) put it, "Reason shows us the
15 Unity of God; only revelation shows us the Trinity of God." Another, (Thiessen) writes,
16 "Although the doctrine of the Trinity is not discoverable by human reason, it is
17 susceptible of a rational defense now that it is revealed." Pretty strong double negative
18 in that line! Rational defense but not discoverable by human reason? Now there's a
19 puzzle for you!
20

DEFINITION OF THE TRINITY

21
22
23 By "Trinity" we state there are three eternal distinctions in the one divine essence (divine
24 Being - God) and they are Father, Son and Holy Spirit. While they are three persons the
25 Bible teaches us they are to be considered as GOD (singular) for we do not have three
26 Gods.
27

28 This is a huge issue for it is this very stance that refrains our Jewish friends from
29 accepting the Christian doctrine of the deity of Christ and of the Trinity. My local
30 rabbinical friends look me in the eye and say, "You have three Gods!" And then they
31 cap their argument from Old Testament scripture which most surely is valid:

32 Deuteronomy 6:4: **Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:**
33

34 Other groups also reject the doctrine we hold forth of the Trinity such as Muslims and
35 Unitarians. Even in Pentecostal circles, The United Church Pentecostal church

1 categorically denies the reality of the Trinity. They would be among those we term
2 “One-ness” believers as opposed to Trinitarian.

3 4 WHAT WE IN THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD BELIEVE ABOUT THE TRINITY

5
6 From our inception in 1914, the Assemblies of God have strongly taught the Trinity of
7 God. Here is that doctrine, based solidly on Scripture:

8
9 The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally existent “I AM,” the Creator of
10 heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind.

11 12 Defining The Terms

13
14 The word “trinity” or even “persons” as that word relates to God, while not found in
15 Scripture, are words that “in harmony” with Scripture – that is they are not contradictory
16 but supportive. So when we refer to The Trinity - that is, God, the Father...God, the
17 Son...and God the Holy Spirit we are not making up scriptural truth. The concept of The
18 Trinity, however, is a very complicated subject. We find so many scriptural references
19 to the “triune God” or Trinity:

20
21 Luke 1:35 (Gabriel’s announcement to the virgin Mary that she will bear the Christ:

22 **And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,**
23 **and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing**
24 **which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.**

25
26 Matthew 11:25-27

27 **At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and**
28 **earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast**
29 **revealed them unto babes. [26] Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.**
30 **[27] All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son,**
31 **but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to**
32 **whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**

33
34 2 Cor. 13:14 Paul’s benediction to the Church in Corinth, Greece:

35 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of**
36 **the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.**

37 38 Christ’s “Unity” With His Father God in Scripture

39
40 Read carefully: There is that in the FATHER which constitutes Him the Father and not

1 the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and
2 there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the
3 Father or the Son. However, because these three PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD are in
4 a state of UNITY, there is but ONE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.

5
6 John 15:26 Jesus foretold the coming of the Holy Spirit Whom He would send:

7 **But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father,**
8 **even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:**
9 *There you have REPEATED the identities of all three Persons in the Trinity.*

10
11 Zech. 14:9 But the Word always emphasizes the Unity of the Godhead:

12 **And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord,**
13 **and his name one.**

14
15 We Should Never Confuse The Three Persons For They Are Distinctly Unique

16
17 The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not the “same.” Never identical. But they are
18 united in every purpose: The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to
19 relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship.
20 The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father as to AUTHORITY. The
21 Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son as to nature, relationship, cooperation and
22 authority. So – none of the three Persons in the Godhead exists or works separately or
23 independently of the others.

24
25 John 5:17-30

26 **But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. [18]**
27 **Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the**
28 **sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. [19]**
29 **Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can**
30 **do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he**
31 **doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. [20] For the Father loveth the Son, and**
32 **sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than**
33 **these, that ye may marvel. [21] For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and**
34 **quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. [22] For the Father**
35 **judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: [23] That all men**
36 **should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the**
37 **Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. [24] Verily, verily, I say unto**
38 **you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting**
39 **life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. [25]**
40 **Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall**

1 **hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. [26] For as the Father**
2 **hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; [27] And hath**
3 **given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. [28]**
4 **Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves**
5 **shall hear his voice, [29] And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the**
6 **resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of**
7 **damnation. [30] I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my**
8 **judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which**
9 **hath sent me. KJV**

10
11 The Message may help us here: John 5:17-30

12 **But Jesus defended himself. "My Father is working straight through, even on the**
13 **Sabbath. So am I."**

14 **[18] That really set them off. The Jews were now not only out to expose him; they**
15 **were out to kill him. Not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was calling God**
16 **his own Father, putting himself on a level with God.**

17 **[19] So Jesus explained himself at length. "I'm telling you this straight. The Son**
18 **can't independently do a thing, only what he sees the Father doing. What the Father**
19 **does, the Son does. [20] The Father loves the Son and includes him in everything he**
20 **is doing.**

21 **"But you haven't seen the half of it yet, [21] for in the same way that the Father**
22 **raises the dead and creates life, so does the Son. The Son gives life to anyone he**
23 **chooses. [22] Neither he nor the Father shuts anyone out. The Father handed all**
24 **authority to judge over to the Son [23] so that the Son will be honored equally with**
25 **the Father. Anyone who dishonors the Son, dishonors the Father, for it was the**
26 **Father's decision to put the Son in the place of honor.**

27 **[24] "It's urgent that you listen carefully to this: Anyone here who believes what I**
28 **am saying right now and aligns himself with the Father, who has in fact put me in**
29 **charge, has at this very moment the real, lasting life and is no longer condemned to**
30 **be an outsider. This person has taken a giant step from the world of the dead to the**
31 **world of the living.**

32 **[25] "It's urgent that you get this right: The time has arrived—I mean right**
33 **now!—when dead men and women will hear the voice of the Son of God and,**
34 **hearing, will come alive. [26] Just as the Father has life in himself, he has conferred**
35 **on the Son life in himself. [27] And he has given him the authority, simply because**
36 **he is the Son of Man, to decide and carry out matters of Judgment.**

37 **[28] "Don't act so surprised at all this. The time is coming when everyone dead**
38 **and buried will hear his voice. [29] Those who have lived the right way will walk out**
39 **into a resurrection Life; those who have lived the wrong way, into a resurrection**
40 **Judgment.**

1 **[30] "I can't do a solitary thing on my own: I listen, then I decide. You can trust**
2 **my decision because I'm not out to get my own way but only to carry out orders.**

3
4 The Names or Titles of Jesus in Scripture That Bear Witness to His Place In The Trinity

5
6 The Title: Lord Jesus Christ. This is a proper name and is never applied in the New
7 Testament to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. That title is used exclusively to Jesus, the
8 Son of God:

9
10 **2 John 1:3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from**
11 **the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.**

12
13 Here is yet another Biblical title granted to only Jesus:

the Lord Jesus Christ, God with Us.

14 **Matthew 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and**
15 **they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.**

16
17 These and so many other scriptures testify of the deity of Jesus and His relationship in all
18 eternity with the Father.

19
20
21 THE TEACHING OF THE TRINITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

22
23 Do we find scriptures there in that say, "There are three Persons in the Trinity? God the
24 Father, Son and Holy Ghost?" No. But the Trinity is clearly represented and we are told
25 that the Three are recognized as God and work in Unity and purpose.

26
27 1. The Father is recognized as God.

28
29 **John 6:27 for him hath God the Father sealed.**

30
31 **Romans 1:7 Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus**
32 **Christ.**

33
34 2. The Son (Jesus) is recognized as God.

35
36 Jesus Himself conceived of Himself that He was God. Matthew 22:41-46 The Message
37 **As the Pharisees were regrouping, Jesus caught them off balance with his own test**
38 **question: [42] "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said,**

1 **"David's son."**

2 **[43] Jesus replied, "Well, if the Christ is David's son, how do you explain that**
3 **David, under inspiration, named Christ his 'Master'?"**

4 **[44] 'God said to my Master,**
5 **"Sit here at my right hand**
6 **until I make your enemies your footstool." '**

7 **[45] Now if David calls him 'master,' how can he at the same time be his son?"**

8 **[46] That stumped them, literalists that they were. Unwilling to risk losing face**
9 **again in one of these public verbal exchanges, they quit asking questions for good.**

10
11 **Why would Jesus think He was divine? Because He had been with God from the**
12 **beginning:**

13
14 **John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the**
15 **Word was God. [2] The same was in the beginning with God.**

16
17 **At Jesus' baptism in the Jordan, the Father put His stamp of approval on Him: Matthew**
18 **3:16-17 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water:**
19 **and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending**
20 **like a dove, and lighting upon him: [17] And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is**
21 **my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**

22
23 **Note I have inserted a box on line 20 around the words "like a dove." So often the Holy**
24 **Spirit is made out to be a dove. He is not a bird. The phrase described only the gentle**
25 **way in which the Holy Spirit rested upon Jesus. The Holy Spirit is God - not a bird!**

26
27 **Jesus Himself again mentioned His divine and eternal past – Who He was in John**
28 **14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that**
29 **he may abide with you for ever; [17] Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world**
30 **cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for**
31 **he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.**

32
33 **Notice carefully how often the three members of the Godhead are noted in Scripture.**
34 **Unified in purpose – BUT THREE DISTINCT PERSONS.**

35
36 **The Baptism Formula**

37
38 **You will note when we baptize in water, the one doing the immersing will say, "I baptize**
39 **you in the Name (authority) of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Why do we say that?**
40 **Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name**

1 **of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**

2
3 The Three Persons in The Trinity Are Associated (Connected) In Their Work

4
5 1 Cor. 12:4-6 **Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. [5] And there**
6 **are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. [6] And there are diversities**
7 **of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.**

8
9 In these verses, the Apostle Paul taught the believers in Corinth, Greece, that while the
10 Holy Spirit had any number of divine ministry gifts He imparted to the saints, all those
11 gifts were INTERCONNECTED for the purpose of the Trinity. Line 5: Many gifts but
12 the same Spirit. Line 7: The same God.

13
14 In all of these references the Three members of the Trinity are recognized as God. Here
15 is a major difference - among so many - between Islam and Christianity: While Muslims
16 believe their founder Mohammed was a prophet, Christians believe our Founder was God.

17
18 **EQUAL? OR IN SOME RANKING ORDER?**

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are equal, even while we usually "list" them in that order. This is not a difference in glory, power or length of existence. No, it is simply one of order.

19
20 **THE TRINITY WAS PRESENT AT CREATION**

21
22 Genesis 1:26

23 **And God said, Let [us] make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them**
24 **have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the**
25 **cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the**
26 **earth.**

27
28 Here it is clearly revealed to us through Moses, by the Holy Spirit, that the Godhead
29 created mankind. We did not come about because of some explosion, but through a
30 sovereign act of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

31
32 **THE WORSHIP CRY OF THE SERAPHIM IS A CLUE TO THE TRINITY**
33 **(in my opinion)**

34
35 Isaiah 6:1-4

36 **In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high**

1 and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. [2] Above it stood the seraphims: each
2 one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his
3 feet, and with twain he did fly. [3] And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy,
4 holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. [4] And the posts of the
5 door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

6
7 I wonder if these massive angels are just repeating themselves (Holy, Holy, Holy) or are
8 they ascribing this attribute to each of the three Beings of the Godhead?

9 "Holy...is God.....

10 Holy...is the Son....

11 Holy....is the Spirit of God...."

12 HOW TO EXPLAIN THE TRINITY

13
14
15 I know of no way to adequately do so. Every explanation we conceive always comes
16 up hopelessly inadequate. Here is as close as I know:

17
18 Our United States government, established by Godly fathers several hundred years ago,
19 has a triune entity:

20 The Executive Branch – the President

21 The Legislative Branch – Congress

22 The Judicial Branch – the Courts

23 Each of these three IS the U.S. government, yet not all of the government. They do not
24 stand alone, yet each of the three can be said to be "government."

25
26 Yes, this explanation is inadequate. But thank God for the divine Godhead. All
27 blessings, earthly and eternal, flow from the throne of God.

28
29
30
31
32 Next week: More of the Pursuit of God