

The Shorter Catechism [A Baptist Version] Q&A: 6-7 - The Doctrine of the Trinity

● Definition/Foundations

- **Q6:** *Are there more Gods than one?* **A:** *There is but one only, the living and true God.*
- **Q7:** *How many persons are there in the Godhead?* **A:** *There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.*

● Summary/Scriptural Basis

○ Three foundations that summarize the Biblical teaching

■ 1. Monotheism: There is only one God

- Gen. 1:1 | Ex. 8:10; 9:14; 15:11 | Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4-5; 32:39 | 1 Sam. 2:2 | 2 Sam. 7:22; 22:32 | 1 Kings 8:23, 59-60 | 1 Chron. 17:20 | 2 Chron. 15:3 | Ps. 86:8-10 | Isa. 37:20; 40:18, 25; 43:10; 44:6-8; 45:5-6, 14, 21-22; 46:5, 9 | Jer. 10:6-7, 10 | Mic. 7:18 | John 5:44; 17:3 | Rom. 3:30; 16:27 | 1 Cor. 8:6 | Gal. 3:20 | Eph. 4:6 | 1 Tim. 1:17; 2:5 | 1 Thes. 1:9 | James 2:19 | Jude 25 | 1 John 5:20-21

■ 2. God is three persons (Father, Son, & Holy Spirit)

- **The fact that God is three persons means that each person of the Trinity is distinct from the other two persons.** Matt. 3:16-17; 11:27; 17:5; 28:19 | John 1:1-2; 3:35; 5:20; 12:28; 14:26; 15:9; 16:17; 17:1-3, 23-24 | Rom. 8:27 | 1 Cor. 12:4-6 | Heb. 7:25 | 1 John 2:1, 23

- **The Holy Spirit is a distinct person NOT just the power of God:** John 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14 | Acts 5:3; 8:29; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6-7 | 1 Cor. 2:10-11; 12:11 | Rom. 8:16, 26-27 | Eph. 4:4, 30 | Heb. 10:29

- These would not make sense if the Holy Spirit is just the “power of God”:
Luke 4:14 | Acts 10:38 | Rom. 15:13 | 1 Cor. 2:4 | 2 Cor. 3:17

■ 3. Each person is fully God (coequal and coeternal)

● The Father is God

- Deut. 31:6 | Ps. 89:26 | Isa. 63:16; 64:8 | Mal. 2:10 | Matthew 6:9 | John 6:27; 17:1-3 | 1 Cor. 8:6 | 2 Cor. 1:3 | Eph. 1:3 | 1 Peter 1:3
- This is clearly the case and has never been contested.

● The Son is God

- Isa. 7:14 (Matt. 1:23); 9:6; 40:3 (Matt. 3:3) | Mal. 3:1 | Matt. 26:63-65; 28:9 | John 1:1-3, 14, 18; 5:17-23; 8:58-59; 10:30-39; 17:3; 19:7; 20:28 | Acts 17:18; 20:28 | Rom. 9:5 | 1 Cor. 8:4-6 | Phil. 2:10-11 | Col. 1:16-17; 2:8-9 | 1 Tim. 6:14-15 | Titus 2:13-14 | Heb. 1:2-3, 6-12 (quoting Ps. 102:25-27) | 2

Peter 1:1 | 1 John 5:20 | Rev. 2:8; 22:13-16 (1:8, 17-18)

- **The Holy Spirit is God**

- Quotes by the LORD [Yahweh] in the Old Testament being attributed to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament: Acts 28:25-27 quotes Isa. 6:8-10 | Heb. 10:15-17 quotes Jer. 31:31-34
- Attributes of God: The Holy Spirit is creator [Gen. 1:2 | Job 33:4 | Ps. 104:30], eternal [Heb. 9:14], omnipotent [Mic. 3:8 | Acts 1:8 | Rom. 15:13, 19], omniscient [Isa. 40:13-14 | 1 Cor. 2:10-11], omnipresent [Ps. 139:7]
- Called God/Lord/Yahweh: Acts 5:3-4 | 1 Cor. 3:16 | 2 Cor. 3:16-18 | 2 Thes. 3:5

- **The doctrine of the Trinity is progressively revealed in Scripture (p. 226-231)**

- Partial Revelation in the Old Testament (OT)

- The idea of oneness in the OT often carries a plural connotation:
 - Gen. 2:24, man and women are “one flesh”
 - The Hebrew *Elohim*, used for God 2,570 times in the OT, literally means “the powerful ones”
 - The Hebrew *Adonia*, used 449 times, means “my lords”
- Although not explicit in the Old Testament, several passages suggest or even imply that God exist as more than one person. Gen. 1:1-2, 26-27; 3:22; 11:7; 19:24 | Job 35:10 (Lit. “Makers”) | Eccl. 12:1 (Lit. “Creators”) | Ps. 45:6-7 (Heb. 1:8); 110:1 (Matt. 22:41-46) | Isa. 6:8; 9:6-7; 44:6; 48:16; 54:5 (Lit. “husbands” & “Makers”); 61:1 (Luke 4:18-21); 63:9-10 | Dan. 7:13-14 | Zech. 2:8-11 | Mal. 3:1-2 | Hosea 1:6-7
 - The Angel/Messenger of the LORD is called God or LORD (Yahweh): Gen. 16:13; 18-19:24 (John 8:56-59); 32:24-30 | Ex. 3:2-6; 23:20-22 (v. 21 “My name is in him”) | Num. 22:35, 38 | Judg. 2:1-2; 6:11, 14; 13:3-22 | Zech. 3

- More Complete Revelation in the New Testament

- Some of the clearer references to the “economical” Trinity (The Father, Son, and Spirit working / doing/ functioning together as One, doing things only God can do):

Text	Father	Son	Spirit
Matt. 3:13-17	v. 17	v. 16	v. 16
Luke 1:35	v. 35	v. 35	v. 35
Acts 2:33	v. 33	v. 33	v. 33
Rom. 5:1-6	v. 5	v. 1	v. 5
Rom. 8:3-4	v. 3	v. 3	v. 4
Rom. 8:8-9	v. 8	v. 9	v. 9
Rom. 8:15-17	v. 15	v. 16	v. 17
Rom. 8:26-30	v. 26	v. 29	v. 26
Rom. 15:16	v. 16	v. 16	v. 16
Rom. 15:30	v. 30	v. 30	v. 30
1 Cor. 2:2-5	v. 5	v. 2	v. 4
1 Cor. 6:11	v. 11	v. 11	v. 11
2 Cor. 1:21-22	v. 21	v. 21	v. 22
Gal. 3:1-5	v. 5	v. 1	v. 2
Gal. 4:4-6	v. 4	v. 6	v. 6
Eph. 1:3-14	v. 3	v. 7	v. 13
Eph. 2:18	v. 18	v. 18	v. 18
Eph. 2:19-22	v. 19	v. 20	v. 22
Eph. 3:16-19	v. 16	v. 17	v. 16
Eph. 4:5-6	v. 6	v. 5	v. 4
Eph. 5:18-20	v. 20	v. 20	v. 18
Phil. 3:3	v. 3	v. 3	v. 3
1 Thes. 1:3-6	v. 3	v. 6	v. 5-6
2 Thes. 2:13-14	v. 13	v. 14	v. 13
Titus 3:5-7	v. 5	v. 6	v. 5
Heb. 9:14	v. 14	v. 14	v. 14
Heb. 10:29-30	v. 30	v. 29	v. 29
1 Pet. 1:2	v. 2	v. 2	v. 2
1 Pet. 3:18	v. 18	v. 18	v. 18
1 Pet. 4:14	v. 14	v. 14	v. 14
1 John 4:2	v. 2	v. 2	v. 2

above chart taken from "The Trinity: Evidence & Issues" by Dr. Robert Morey (pg. 441-442)

- Though the word “Trinity” does not appear in the Bible, by presenting the Father, Son, and Spirit all doing what no one else ever does, (see above chart) gives us the raw material on which this doctrine is based. Observing what God says and does helps us to know Him, and observing which actions are done by which members of the Godhead helps us to see which roles they play.
- The “ontological” (nature / being / essence) Trinity is presupposed by the “economical” Trinity, but we do get some glimpses regarding the ontological Trinity (first note the reference above showing the Father, Son, and Spirit each as fully God): Baptism in the name of the Triune God [Matt. 28:19], ontological relationship between Father and Son [John 1:1; 10:30; 17 | Phil. 2:6], equality shown between Father and Son in salutations/prayers [Rom. 1:7 | 1 Cor. 1:3 | 2 Cor 1:2 | Gal. 1:3 | Eph. 1:2; 6:23 | Phil. 1:2 | 1 Thes. 1:1 | 2 Thes. 1:1-2 | 1 Tim. 1:2 | 2 Tim. 1:2 | Titus 1:4 | Philem. 1:3 | 2 John 1:3], closing/prayer to all three [2 Cor. 13-14]

Diagram showing the nature and relationship of the Father, Son, and Spirit:

