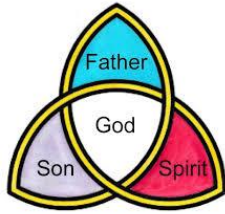


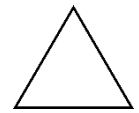
# The Christian Trinity – God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit



The Trinity (Triunity) is one of the most foundational doctrines of Christianity that many Christians rarely think or talk much about, but why? Perhaps, because of its uniqueness in the world around us. It has been said that it's impossible to be an Orthodox Christian without professing belief in the Triune nature of God. Yet the other major monotheistic faiths (Islam and Judaism), call it heresy.

Even though the word Trinity is not found directly in the Bible, there is no doubt that the Holy Scriptures teach the triune nature of God<sup>1</sup>. So, don't let the Trinitarian (The Holy Trinity) doctrine not be understood and shared, or just accepted as just a confusing mystery for our finite minds. Search for it in God's Word<sup>2</sup>, and try to use accurate illustrations, i.e.:

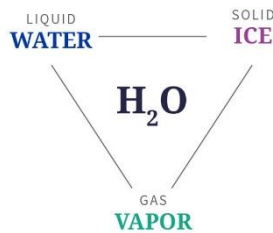
*Three in One* - Perhaps looking logistically at a simple geometric equilateral triangle<sup>3</sup> is a fairly straight-forward visual representation of the Trinity because of the simplicity of its three equal-sides that form one single regular triangle.



In math see - *One to the Power of Three* where  $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1^3 (= 1)$ , but not  $1 + 1 + 1 = 3 (\neq 1)$

***Do NOT be confused with some quite common (erroneous) analogies***

How have you heard the Trinity explained? Some have heard it said that the Trinity is like the chemical formula of H<sub>2</sub>O: it can be seen in three forms, water (liquid), gas (vapor), or solid (ice), but it's still water – “NO, that's a Modalism view!”



The H<sub>2</sub>O analogy is like the ancient heresy of modalism, it denies the three distinct Persons of the Trinity and claims that God is one Person who appears in different 'modes' at different times— the trinity is also NOT like— in the Old Testament God appeared as the Father; in the Gospels He appeared as the Son; and from Pentecost onwards He appears as the Holy Spirit, and each at different times.

So, in the H<sub>2</sub>O analogy, water appears in three different modes, that depend on the environment, and the three are not co-existing. Water can only ever be one form at a time. Scripture however, does not depict God this way. For instance, at the baptism of Christ, the Father, Son and Spirit are all distinctly present and interacting.

<sup>16</sup> And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; <sup>17</sup> and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3: 16-17 ESV).

*The error of modalism*—According to this view there is but one God who simply reveals Himself through three different modes, or roles. For example, a particular man could be considered a “husband” to his wife, a “father” to his children, and an “employee” to his boss, but not clearly represent the trinity. For without a wife, children, or a boss this analogy fails.

## ***Other poor representations of the Trinity:***

1. A three-leaf clover—Each leaf enjoys the same stem, but this is a poor illustration of the Trinity because these leaves can be separated one from the other.
2. The three-fold nature of man (body, soul, spirit)—Man possesses body, soul, and spirit, but they can be separated. At death the body is buried; the soul (the spirit) goes to be with the Lord.
3. The three parts of an egg (shell, white, yolk)—Again these three parts can be separated, thus making a bad representation.
4. A tree—A tree has roots, a trunk, and branches. But as in the above examples, these three entities can be separated.

***Perhaps we must be content to admit that we cannot simply or fully understand God's triune nature with our finite minds, but need to do the best we can!***

We do need to understand and accept that God's Word says that He exists eternally in one divine nature, substance, or essence, of three co-equal, co-eternal and consubstantial persons—God the Father, God the Son and the God the Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God, but is also distinct. Read the Scriptures that teach this triune (divine) nature of God.<sup>1&2</sup>. See also the [WCF Ch 2,1 – Of God and of the Holy Trinity](#)

Now may *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”* 2 Corinthians 13:14 ESV

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## **Footnotes:**

### **1 Holy Scriptures teach the triune nature of God**

Jesus is the divine Son of God. This does not mean that Jesus was created by God. We know this because Scripture states that Jesus has always co-existed with God (John 1:1-3). And while on earth, Jesus himself declared the same. Colossians 1:15-17 says, “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation. Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth...He existed before everything else began, and he holds all creation together.”

God the Holy Spirit is also deity. The Spirit has eternally co-existed with the Father and the Son and was present at creation (see Genesis 1:2). Jesus said of him, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate...He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth...When the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything I have told you” (John 14: 16, 26). Jesus called the co-existing Spirit holy because he is the Spirit of the Holy God, the third person of the triune Godhead. Rest assured that as you seek to know God, you will feel the presence and promptings of the Holy Spirit.

### **2. Other Biblical references from Gods Word**

- *The Trinity* (Ligonier Ministries) - <https://www.ligonier.org/guides/the-trinity>
- *25 Bible Verses About The Trinity* (ESV) - <https://reformedwiki.com/verses/the-trinity>
- *The Work of the Trinity* - <https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/chart-43-10/>

### **3. Equilateral-triangle (*regular*)**

In a regular triangle, all three sides ( $a$ ) have the equal length, and all three internal angles are also equal with each other at ( $60^\circ$ ). So, one can probably visualize that this can be a one of the simplest symbolic representations of the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost).

