‘Trinity’: Where Does It Come from?

2 Corinthians 13:14 (New American Standard Bible)

*The grace of the Lord Jesus* ***Christ****, and the love of* ***God****, and the fellowship of the* ***Holy Spirit****, be with you all.*

**Introduction**

This year’s motto is to ‘know your God.’ As part of our ongoing effort to know our Father in Heaven, for the next four Sundays, I will preach a four-part series on the ‘Trinity.’

Now, before we make any attempt to understand God’s attributes, purpose, plan, and design of the world, we must stay humble and acknowledge God’s sovereignty, wisdom, and right to keep some things hidden from human eyes. Not that He hides everything from us. On the contrary, God revealed Himself over the years in many ways and different times (Hebrews 1:1). However, there are things that will remain unrevealed from us. E.g., *He* (Jesus) *said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority*; (Acts 1:7). *“But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the****Father*** *alone*” (Matthew 24:36).

‘Trinity’ is one of God’s mysteries. Who did start this? Jesus did. Although He never named it ‘Trinity,’ His teachings on God, Himself, and the Spirit of God culminate in the understanding of God, which we call, the ‘Trinity.’ As complex and mysterious as it was from the beginning, even after 2,000 years of numerous studies, debates, investigations, and council decisions, it still remains a mystery to us. So will it be until Christ comes and answers all our questions.

**Content**

With that understanding, I would like to share with you what I have discovered in the Scripture regarding the ‘Trinity’: God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Please pay attention to what God’s Word says about the trinitarian concept. Please follow my sermon along with the handout this morning. Each reference will shed a little more light on our understanding of the ‘Trinity.’ First, there are

1. God and Jesus
2. God calls Jesus His Son.

*You are My beloved* ***Son*** *in whom I am well pleased* (Mark 1:11).

1. Jesus calls God His Father and Himself Son.

*Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “****Father****, the hour has come; glorify Your* ***Son****, that the Son may glorify You* (John 17:1).

1. Jesus does nothing unless it is something He sees the Father doing. *Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing;* (John 5:19).
2. God and the Holy Spirit

*Now the* ***Lord*** *is the Spirit, and where the****Spirit****of the Lord is, there is liberty* (2 Corinthians 3:17)*.*

1. Jesus and the Holy Spirit
2. The Holy Spirit comes in Jesus’ name. He reminds us of Jesus’ teaching. *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you* (John 14:26).
3. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and testifies about Jesus. *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the****Spirit****of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,* (John 15:26).
4. The Holy Spirit (the Spirit of truth) doesn’t speak on His own initiative. He only does what He hears from the Father. *But when He, the****Spirit****of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come* (John 16:13).
5. The ‘Trinity’ is not polytheism, but monotheism. It is not three gods. It is one God. It is also not one God in three modes (modalism). Three beings in one God. Three in One. The Father-the Son/Word/Logos- the Holy Spirit.

*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).

Also, three are One: *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one* (1 John 5:7-8, KJV).

1. The Son and the Father. They are equal.

*He who has seen Me has seen the Father;* (John 12:45, 14:9).

*who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard****equality*** *with God a thing to be grasped,* (Philippians 2:6).

*For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself* ***equal with God*** (John 5:18).

*“Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can****forgive****sins but God alone?”* ---***10the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins***” (Mark 2:7,10)

1. Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

***15*** *He is* ***the image of the invisible God****, the firstborn of all creation.****16****For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.****17****He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together* (Colossians 1:15-17).

Christ was *‘****God revealed in flesh’*** (1 Timothy 3:16).

***9****For* ***in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form****,****10****and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;* (Colossians 2:9-10).

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and****the Word was God*** (John 1:1).

*1* ***What was from the beginning,*** *what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—****2****and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us* (1 John 1:1-2).

***7****If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”****8****Philip \*said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”****9****Jesus \*said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip?****He who has seen Me has seen the Father****; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?* (John 14:7-9)

1. The Lord and the Spirit

*Now the Lord is the****Spirit****, and where the****Spirit****of the Lord is, there is liberty* (2 Corinthians 3:17).

*But we all, …, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the****Spirit*** (2 Corinthians 3:18).

1. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit were together from the beginning and still are.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and****the Word was God*** (John 1:1).

*The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the****Spirit****of God was moving over the surface of the waters* (Genesis 1:2).

***10****Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the* ***Spirit*** *like a dove descending upon Him;****11****and a voice came out of the heavens: “You are My beloved* ***Son****, in You I am well-pleased”* (Mark 1:10-11).

1. The order of the ‘Trinity’ (Father-Son-Holy Spirit)

*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the****Father****and the* ***Son*** *and the* ***Holy Spirit*** (Matthew 28:19),

1. The Son submits Himself to the Father.

*And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My****Father****, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”* (Matthew 26:39).

*The Father is greater than I* (John 14:28).

1. The Holy Spirit comes in Jesus’ name. He reminds us of Jesus’ teaching and testifies about Jesus.

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you* (John 14:26).

*“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the****Spirit****of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,* (John 15:26).

1. The Holy Spirit doesn’t speak on His own initiative. He only does what He hears from the Father.

*But when He, the****Spirit****of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come* (John 16:13).

**Conclusion**

How do we understand the mystery of the ‘Trinity’ and the biblical references on Jesus Christ in relation to God the Father?

Many references state that God is the Father and Jesus is the Son. Also, Christ Jesus was man (1 Timothy 2:5).

However, in the Gospel according to John and other Pauline letters, we also find references on the Son that He is equal to God and was with God before Abraham (John 8:58). He was with God in the beginning, and He was God (John 1:1).

How do we reconcile such seemingly contradicting statements? ‘Father/Son’ at the same time ‘One and Equal’? I can use a simple analogy to explain the mystery of ‘Three in One.’ E.g. I have three parts in me: spirit, soul, and body. They all belong to one person. I can say ‘three are one.’ I also can say that they are equal but separate, because their functions are different. Therefore, they are three. ‘Three in one’ person. But it is never enough to explain the ‘Trinity’ with this analogy (or any human analogy). Again, some people use ‘water’ analogy as ‘vapor-liquid-ice” (I don’t recommend this one because three elements cannot exist at the same time. Each exists in one form at a time.)

We have two choices on Jesus’ own claim, that is, fully divine and fully human. Either we reject it as insanity (e.g., ‘equal to God’, ‘with God in the beginning’ and so forth), therefore, call Him a lunatic. Or take it as truth and call Him a God. The worst thing is to stand in the middle saying, I believe some part of His claims true (e.g., God’s Son, …) yet reject other parts (e.g., equal to God). That would make Him a liar.

As for me, I have made up my mind to believe in His claim as truth, therefore, I take Him as God and human.

Jesus was fully human and fully divine. Both divine and human attributes were fully realized and dwelt in the person of Jesus Christ. Still lingering questions? Let us leave them to God who will help us understand in due time.

Diagram

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Amen.