

Heidelberg Catechism 24-25 – Work and Nature of the Trinity

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The first and most essential thing every person must believe in order to be a Christian and enjoy Christ's benefits is the doctrine of the Trinity. **You can't be a Christian and not believe in the Trinity.**

Yes, most people say they believe in God, **but they don't believe in Yahweh, God of the Bible. Allah, Vishnu, Krishna, Ram, Brahma** ...none of these is the God of the Bible. Even some who used the name Yahweh or Jehovah, like the **Jehovah Witnesses, the Jews, and the Unitarians**, do not believe in the God of the Bible.

These gods may be called gods, but there is no Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Those who reject the Trinitarian Covenant God of the Bible for a generic god have no salvation through Jesus. So learn today of **the work and the nature of the Trinity**- who is revealed in the one true Book, the Bible!

Our headings are:

Division of the Work of God

Distinction of the Persons of God

Our goals are: **That you properly understand who God is and how each person in the Godhead works together for your salvation.**

Division of the Work of God

Q&A 24 How are these articles divided?

A: Into three parts: **God the Father and our creation**; God the **Son and our deliverance**; God the Holy **Spirit and our sanctification**.

Q&A 25 Since there is but one God, why do you speak of three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

A: Because that is how **God has revealed Himself in His Word: these three distinct persons** are one, true, eternal God.

1. God the Father created man and everything man needed.

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

This does not mean the Son and the Spirit were not involved in the work of Creation. They were.

Jesus was the Creator also.

Colossians 1: 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

The Holy Spirit was Creator also. He hovered over the waters and worked to separate the upper waters from the lower waters. The Psalmist talked of his creative power!

But the Father determined to create, so creation is ascribed to him.

His work in creating was so clear you can know much of him through his work. It is a little like you might know an artist through his painting... God's work speaks more loudly and clearly about him.

This must make you ready to worship.

This must make you smile when you hear the evolutionists... or at least make you shake your head and pity them.

This must make you tell everyone about who your Father is! Who can remain quiet when your Father controls the world?

2. God the Son redeemed you.

Someone had to redeem you because you fell into sin and misery and you couldn't come out. So Jesus did.

And you know the Son through his work...his work in you! He walks and talks with you! He lives in you!

Titus 2: 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14** who gave Himself for us, that **He might redeem us from every lawless deed** and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

He **taught you** what you needed **to know and believe** as your prophet, **he died for you** as a once-for-all-times-**sacrifice that you needed** as your high priest, and **he rules over you and keeps you safe** as your king.

All 3 persons of the Godhead worked for your salvation, but it was **Christ distinctly** who was incarnate and who died on the cross-not the Father nor the Holy Spirit.

3. God the Spirit applied Christ's work to you and purified you from your sins.

He drew you to the Lord. He opened your eyes, ears, and hearts so you believed. He then **gives you confidence** in the true God so you cry out "Abba, Father." He **stops you in your tracks** when you sin. **He pulls you back** when you stray. And he **gave you a guarantee** in your heart that you are sons of God.

Titus 3: 3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. **4** But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, **5** not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and **renewing of the Holy Spirit...**

Ephesians 1: 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession...

4. Let's summarize the distinction of the members of the Trinity this way:

- a. The Father is God – who **willed your salvation**.
- b. The Son is God – who **worked for your salvation**.
- c. The Holy Spirit is God – who **washed you for your salvation and sealed you for eternity**.

Distinction in the Persons of God

1. As a Christian, you believe in one God- not in 3 gods...as Muslims say you do.

God does not have 3 aspects of his being. God does not have 3 forms. There is only one God.

Deuteronomy 6: 4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the **LORD is one!**

The Jews called this the Kiriathshema – and they read it twice per day. It is interesting to note, however, the word "**one**" is "**echhad**" which means a **great one** – not just an "ordinary one."

God is one **eternal, self-existent** being. He alone is God and there is none beside him. He is **omnipotent**, he alone. He is **omnipresent** – only he can be. He is **omniscient** – only he alone knows all things. He is **infinite, perfectly good, and he is self-sufficient**, not needing anything from man...

1Corinthians 8: 4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that **there is no other God but one**.

2. And this one God exists in 3 distinct persons.

Because God is a Tri-unity, the Hindus' gods, the Muslim's god, the Buddhist's god, and the Jehovah Witnesses' god are not real. (See how doctrines have implications?)

1Corinthians 10: 19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? 20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to **have fellowship with demons**.

Any other than the Triune God is an imitation of demons. This was made clear even in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 32:17 **They sacrificed to demons, not to God,** *To gods* they did not know, *To new gods,* new arrivals that your fathers did not fear.

Don't say this to bash other religions, but let this motivate you to love the lost and to take the Gospel to them. Speak so they can live! Remember, you would not know this one true God unless he revealed himself to you...through others. So give them a Bible. Invite them to church. Love them!

3. Look at the distinction of the persons of the Godhead when Jesus was baptized.

All 3 persons of the Godhead were present as different persons - not 3 parts, but 3 persons.

Matthew 3: 16 When He had been baptized, **Jesus came up immediately from the water;** and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the **Spirit of God descending** like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a **voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son,** in whom I am well pleased."

4. Look at the distinction of the persons when Jesus was going back to heaven.

Matthew 28: 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the **Father** and of the **Son** and of the **Holy Spirit,**

Even back in the Old Testament you see the same thing.

5. Look at the distinction of the persons even in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 61:1 "**The Spirit** of the **Lord GOD** is upon **Me**, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

6. Look at the distinction of the Divine persons as taught by Apostle John.

The Son was God but he was distinct from the Father. And the Son was distinct from the Holy Spirit – who also is God.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the **Word was with God, and the Word was God.** 2 He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, '**Upon whom you see the Spirit descending,** and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

7. What about when the Bible says Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit?

Doesn't this mean he was less than God and therefore needed strengthening? Or doesn't this mean the Son and the Holy Spirit were mixed? Look back at a verse we just read.

Matthew 3: 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he **saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove**, and lighting upon him:

As a man, Jesus needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit; he did not need to be filled with the Holy Spirit as God. But he had to subject himself to be baptized with water, for example, though he was perfect. **He did that because he represented mankind**.

Further, Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit, symbolizing the anointing with oil in the OT. He was consecrated to serve...just as Aaron was sprinkled with oil. (**Notice the mode of baptism!**) **We just recently examined that from Leviticus 8**. Look back at those notes for more information.

8. So when you say: "I believe in God" you know that you are speaking of "three in one."

Jehovah is not the god of Judaism or Islam. He is not the god of the Jehovah's

Witnesses, Mormons, or Unitarians. And he certainly is not the same god as Hindus worship.

When Christians get into doctrinal trouble it is often about some aspect of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Be warned against trying to be similar with those of other religions and say things like: "Well, we all worship the same God, but in different ways!" That's a lie.

Conclusion:

Each person of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit plays a specific role in your salvation. You must believe that truth to be saved. And at the same time, you must believe there is only one God with one person who chose you, one person who redeemed you, and one person who seals you.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. The Trinity is impossible to fully grasp. That is because there is nothing with which you can compare Yahweh. How can 3 persons be one God? You can't put into your finite brain that which is infinite.

2. But with your limited understanding, you can thank God each person did a job so you could have life and have it abundantly... even after you sinned in your parents and messed up the first life!

3. Teach this doctrine of the Trinity to the lost, and teach it to your children. Why is this so important? If they don't accept this doctrine they will be lost forever! Help save them.

Finally: Unless you believe Jesus' human body died on the cross for your sins, you have no hope but hell. You reject him, you lose. You hold on to him, you win. Make it a right choice. Make it today.