

**MILILANI COMMUNITY CHURCH  
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL  
WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES  
February 2, 2003**

**LESSON 2: GOD: Part 2: THE TRINITY AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD**

THE TRINITY

1. The Bible teaches not only that there is one God, but also that there are three persons in the Godhead – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is a mystery to the human mind, but although it cannot be understood, it can be believed because God’s Word says it is so. The word “trinity” is not found in the Bible, but the truth of the Trinity is revealed in the Bible.
2. Definition of the Trinity: “God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.”
3. Meaning of the Word “Trinity”: The word “trinity” means “tri-unity” or “three-in-oneness.” It is used to summarize the teaching of the Bible that God is three persons, yet one God

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED IN THE BIBLE

1. Partial Revelation of the Trinity in the Old Testament

Genesis 1:26  
Genesis 3:22  
Isaiah 6:8  
Psalm 45:6-7 (Hebrews 1:8)  
Psalm 110:1 (Matthew 22:41-46)  
Isaiah 48:16 (If this is spoken by Jesus the Son of God, it refers to all three persons of the Trinity)  
Genesis 16:7-13 (verse 13)

2. More complete revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament

Matthew 3:16-17  
Matthew 28:19  
I Corinthians 12:4-6  
Ephesians 4:4-6  
Jude 20-21

THREE STATEMENTS SUMMARIZE THE BIBLICAL TEACHING ON THE TRINITY

To defend the biblical doctrine of the Trinity we must show that each of the following three statements is true:

- GOD IS THREE PERSONS
- EACH PERSON IS FULLY GOD
- THERE IS ONE GOD

## 1. GOD IS THREE PERSONS

### a. The Father is not the Son

John 1:1-2

### b. The Father is not the Holy Spirit and the Son is not the Holy Spirit

John 14:26  
Matthew 28:19  
John 16:7

### c. The Holy Spirit is a Distinct Person

Matthew 28:19  
John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7  
John 14:16  
Romans 8: 26-27  
I Corinthians 2:11  
I Corinthians 12:11  
Ephesians 4:30

## 2. EACH PERSON IS FULLY GOD

### a. The Father is God.

Genesis 1:1  
Romans 1:7

### b. The Son is fully God

John 1:1-4  
John 20:28  
Hebrews 1:3  
Hebrews 1:8; 1:10 (Psa. 102:25)  
Titus 2:13  
II Peter 1:1  
Romans 9:5  
Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 40:3 (Matt. 3:3)

### c. The Holy Spirit is fully God

Matthew 28:19  
Acts 5:3-4  
I Corinthians 3:16  
Psalm 139:7-8  
I Corinthians 2:10-11

## 3. THERE IS ONE GOD

Deuteronomy 6:4-5; I Kings 8:60; Isaiah 45:5-6; Isaiah 45:21-22;  
I Timothy 2:5; Romans 3:30; I Corinthians 8:6; James 2:19.

## DOCTRINAL ERRORS ABOUT THE TRINITY

In church history, the major errors about the Trinity that have arisen have come about through a denial of one or another of these three primary statements:

1. If we deny the first statement that GOD IS THREE PERSONS, we are left with the idea that God is only one person who appears to people in different forms or "modes" at different times – sometimes calling himself Father, sometimes calling himself Son and sometimes calling himself Spirit. This false teaching about the Trinity is called MODALISM. The United Pentecostal Church teaches this false view of the Trinity today.
2. If we deny the second statement that EACH PERSON IS FULLY GOD, then we are denying that some of the persons named in Scripture are really fully God, but only subordinate or created parts of God. Arius, a Bishop of Alexandria who lived in the fourth century, taught that God the Son was a supernatural heavenly being created by God the Father before the creation of the rest of the universe and "similar" to God in his nature, but not of exactly the same nature. His views were condemned at the Council of Nicea AD 325. The Jehovah's Witnesses hold this false view today.
3. If we deny the third statement that THERE IS ONE GOD, we end up with the belief that there are three gods, something clearly contrary to Scripture.

### THE NICENE CREED (AD 325)

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the Prophets. And one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Why is the church so concerned about the doctrine of the Trinity? Is it really essential to hold to the full deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit? Yes, it is, for in the doctrine of the Trinity, the heart of the Christian faith is at stake. For example, if Jesus is merely a created being, and not fully God, then it is hard to see how he, a creature, could bear the full wrath of God against all of our sins. Could any creature, no matter how great really save us? As Athanasius argued, in his debate with Arius: (1) The Bible teaches that only God can save. (2) Jesus Christ saves. (3) Therefore Jesus Christ is God.

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The attributes of God refer to the character of God. We must understand that each attribute is simply a way of describing one aspect of God's total character or being.

Each person of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) has all of the attributes of God, and no one person has any attributes that are not possessed by the others. Following are some of God's attributes:

1. God is OMNIPRESENT. This means that God is present everywhere at the same time (Jeremiah 23:24; Psalm 139:7-9). Another way of saying this is: HE IS HERE! Read Psalm 46.
2. God is OMNISCIENT. In other words, He knows all things. He knows every thought and deed of man (Proverbs 15:3). He knows everything that takes place in nature, including even the death of a sparrow (Matt. 10:20). Another way of saying it is HE KNOWS IT! (Psalm 139:1-6).
3. God is OMNIPOTENT. He has all power. He created the universe, and now controls it by His power. There is nothing that He cannot do (Matt. 19:26). Another way of expressing it is HE CAN DO IT! (Jeremiah 30:2).
4. God is INFINITE AND ETERNAL. This means that God is limitless. He is not limited by space or time. He is not subject to any of the limitations of humanity, or of creation in general. He has always existed and always will exist (Psalm 102:26-27; Psalm 90:2; Job 36:26; Isaiah 26:4). See also Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 33:11; Psalm 145:13.
5. God is IMMUTABLE. Another way of saying this is HE NEVER CHANGES! "I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi 3:6). He has never changed and He never will change (Psalm 102:25-27; James 1:17). His power cannot diminish. His glory cannot fade. He is unchanging in his purposes (Psalm 33:1) and unchanging in his promises (Numbers 23:19). "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever."
6. God is HOLY. He is absolutely pure and sinless. He hates sin and loves goodness (Proverbs 15:9, 26; Psalm 145:7; Isaiah 40:25). He must separate Himself from sinners, and must punish sin (Isaiah 59:1,2).
7. God is JUST. Everything He does is right and fair (Genesis 18:24-26). He fulfills all His promises (Psalm 119:137). The justice of God is revealed in his punishment of the wicked (Revelation 16:5-7); vindicating his people from evil doers (Psalm 129:1ff); forgiving those who confess their sins (I John 1:9); keeping His promises to His children (Nehemiah 9:7).
8. God is LOVE. Although God hates sin, yet He loves sinners (John 3:16). Hosea is the most dramatic Old Testament story about the love of God, especially God's love for his people. Hosea lavished his love on a worthless woman, and felt the bitterness of her desertion and adultery; yet his love still pursued her and took her back after it all.
9. God is FAITHFUL. God never forgets, he never falters, He never fails (Lamentations 3:22-23).