



## Trinity – What does the New Testament say?

Although the word ‘Trinity’ never appears in the Bible, the idea that God is a plural unity is present in both Old and New Testaments. Certain verses clearly point to this. Isaiah 48.16, Matthew 28.19, Luke 3.21-22, John 14.26, 15.26, 16.13-15, Acts 10.38, 2 Corinthians 13.14, 1 Peter 1.2. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are three persons in one. Each has a work to do in relation to our salvation. The Father sends the Son into the world. The Son dies for our sins and rises from the dead. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the Son and indwells the believer. There is not an order of authority – 1. The Father, 2. The Son, 3. The Holy Spirit. Each one is God. They are equal, eternal and each one is separate but in union with the other. The fact that it is hard to understand should not put us off believing it. Who says we can understand God anyway? We can only understand what God chooses to reveal about Himself to us.

Many aspects of the created order reflect the triune nature of God. Human beings are body, soul and spirit. Time is past, present and future. We live in a three-dimensional world. Water comes as ice, liquid and steam. Because of the difficulty of understanding the concept of the Trinity, other faiths and the cults have made this their main line of attack on Christianity. Whatever cult you are looking at you can be sure that they will deny some aspect of God as a Tri-unity – Islam, liberal theology, JW's, Mormons, etc. Thus fulfilling 1 John 2.18-23, 4.1-4.

The Tenach (Old Testament) reveals that God appeared in human form to the Patriarchs, that many prophecies of the Messiah point to him being a divine person and how the words used to describe God often point to a plural unity rather than an absolute unity demanded by Judaism.

In the New Testament it is clear that Jesus has an extraordinary nature which means that He is God, not just a great man or even a messenger / angel of God.

John's Gospel is the one which emphasises most the divinity of the Messiah. John 1.1-14, John 5.22-30, 8.56-59, 10.30-33, 17.5. Jesus is the Word through whom creation came into being, He is the one who will judge all mankind, He is present before the creation of the world, He is one with the Father.

The Synoptic Gospels also clearly teach the divine nature of the Messiah. Examples: Luke 1.30-38. The annunciation to Mary by the Angel Gabriel points to the divine nature of the One to be born of her. Mark 2.1-12. This miracle clearly shows Jesus' authority to forgive sins, which only God can do. Matthew 26.63-66. Jesus' statement at his trial is interpreted by his enemies as blasphemy, so they understood that he was claiming to be equal with God.

Paul's letters teach that Jesus is God. Philippians 2.6-11, Colossians 2.9, 1 Timothy 3.16, Titus 2.13.

Jesus was worshipped on earth and in heaven. Matthew 2.11, 14.33, 28.9, John 20.28, Revelation 1.17, 5.8-14. He never rebuked anyone for worshipping Him. When anyone worships someone who should not be worshipped in the New Testament they are always told not to, because only God should be worshipped. Acts 13.8-18, Revelation 19.10, 22.8-9.

Although there are fewer scriptures which point to the Holy Spirit as God, it is clear that this is the teaching of the Bible. The Holy Spirit is a Person whom the Lord Jesus sends to dwell within and empower believers. Matthew 3.11, Luke 11.13, 24.49, Acts 1.8, 2.38. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the fact that we are children of God. Romans 8.16, Galatians 4.6, 1 John 3.24, 4.13, 5.6. The Holy Spirit is a person whom we can sin against. Isaiah 63.10, Matthew 12.31, Acts 5.3, Ephesians 4.30, 1 Thessalonians 5.19. The Holy Spirit guides believers. John 16.13, Acts 10.19-20, 13.2, 16.6, Romans 8.14. He gives spiritual life. John 3.5-8, 6.63, Romans 8.11, 2 Corinthians 3.6.