

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

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WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE HOLY TRINITY

SERIES: The Foundations on Which We Stand – Why We Believe What We Believe!

Matthew 3:13-17; 28:18-20

Today we continue our series, “**Why We Believe, What We Believe.**” The purpose of this series is to reacquaint us with the fundamentals of our faith. This morning we share a message entitled, “*Why We Believe What We Believe – About the Trinity.*” First let me say that to preach on this important subject is an Impossible Task. How do you explain the Trinity? How does a human with limited intelligence comprehend the complexities of who God is? **John Wesley** said, “*Bring me a worm that can comprehend a man, and then I will show you a man that can comprehend the triune God.*”

Here are some preliminary points to frame our study.

1. The word trinity is not found in the Bible, but the truth of the Trinity is found throughout Scripture.
2. We’ll be doing some heavy lifting in the field of systematic theology. Simply put, systematic theology is the answer to this question: “What does the whole Bible say about a given topic?”
3. This topic will stretch our minds and that’s a good thing. Jesus summarized the first commandment in **Matthew 22:37**: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*”
4. The Trinity is one of the truly distinctive doctrines of Christianity. Actually, it is crucial for Christianity because it concerns who God is, what He is like, how He works, and how He is to be approached.
5. This sermon will not answer all your questions, but I hope you’ll grow in your awe of our awesome God.

Here’s the outline we’ll follow.

- **Exposition** – what does the Bible say about the Trinity?
- **Explanation** – how can we state the Trinity?
- **Illustrations** – how can we understand the Trinity?
- **Application** – how can we apply the doctrine of the Trinity today?

I. EXPOSITION – WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE TRINITY?

Some O.T. passages on the Trinity. **Genesis 1:1,26, 3:22, 11:7; Isaiah 6:8; 9:6**

N.T. passages: **Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 Peter 1:2, Jude 20-21**

Let’s consider three statements which summarize what the Bible teaches.

1. **There is One God.** The Bible is clear there is one and only one God. He is only one being, not three Gods. **Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6, Romans 3:30, James 2:19**
2. **God is Three Persons.** This means the Father is not the Son and not the Holy Spirit. The Son is not the Father and not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not the Father and not the Son. God is one in essence, three in Person. **John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26**
3. **Each Person is Fully God.** One isn’t the other, and each member of the Trinity is equal in rank, power, glory and majesty. **Malachi 2:10, John 20:28, Acts 5:3-4**

II. EXPLANATION – HOW CAN WE STATE THE TRINITY?

The doctrine of the Trinity comes directly from the pages of Scripture and the biblical authors were utterly captivated by our triune God.

Millard Erickson offers this helpful summary: “The doctrine of the Trinity must be divinely revealed, not humanly constructed. It is so absurd from a human standpoint that no one would have invented it... try to explain it, and you’ll lose your mind; but try to deny it, and you’ll lose your soul.”

Here’s how the doctrine of the Trinity is spelled out in our **BBC Doctrinal Statement**: “*That in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.*”

III. ILLUSTRATIONS – HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE TRINITY?

In an effort to understand the intricacies of the doctrine of the Trinity, a number of metaphors and analogies have been set forth, let’s keep **Romans 11:33** IN MIND. TIME – MATTER-WATER-MANKIND-EGG

IV. APPLICATION – HOW CAN WE APPLY THE DOCTRINE OF TRINITY

I want us now to focus on how this applies to our lives today.

1. The Trinity teaches us to treasure who God is.
2. The Trinity puts us in our proper place.
3. The Trinity gives us a model for unity and community.
4. Treasuring the Trinity helps us understand Christianity.
5. Understanding this doctrine enables you to spot error.
6. Delighting in the Trinity is a motivation for baptism.
7. A proper view of the Trinity teaches us how to pray.