

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

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The first and most essential thing that every person must believe in order to be a Christian and enjoy Christ's benefits is 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.

Now the Devil is a sneaky snake. He might say things like: "God is God – and a good God at that- but there is no Son and there is no Holy Spirit. Or he might say: "Jesus is a son of God," or "The Spirit is a force of God." **In doing this, he wants you to love a generic god but reject the Trinity – which belief is essential.** He knows you would reject a direct attack against God, but he knows you are likely to listen **if he twists the details about God.** So learn about his deceptions...as you will have to deal with Jehovah's Witness, Muslims, Mormons, Unitarians, Jews, etc. And God wants you to have the answers to help those who are deceived.

So today you will hear God's Words regarding the **work and nature of the Trinity.**

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 worked 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 you. God 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. The Bible explicitly says they were.

Jesus was the Creator.

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 the Creator, hovering over the waters and working to separate them.

But the Father determined to create. And you know the Father 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.

The must make you ready to worship.

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

This must make tell everyone about who your Father is!

2. God the Son redeemed you. He had to redeem you because you fell into sin and misery. And you know the Son through his work...his work 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.

But there is more: He **taught you** what you needed to know and believe as your prophet, **he died for**

you as the once-for-all-times-sacrifice that you needed as your high priest, and **he rules over you and keeps you safe** as your king. Yes, 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 stops you in your tracks... he pulls you back when you stray, (the Bible uses the word "draws") he opens your eyes, ears, and hearts so that you believe. He then gives you confidence in the true God so that you cry out "Abba, Father." And he gives 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 believe in 3 gods...as Muslims say you do. God does not have 3 aspects of his being. God does not have 3 forms. Look at what the Bible says: 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, that the word "**one**" is "**echhad**" (**one**) 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 else 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. Since there is a clear distinction of the persons of the Trinity, this means that Hindus' gods aren't real.

Muslims' god isn't real... nor the Buddhists god.

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**.

All other religions are really led by demons or figments of men's imaginations. Only Jehovah is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. No other one can be what God is. 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 this must motivate you to love the lost and to take the Gospel to them.

3. Look at when Jesus was baptized, and when he was going back up into heaven. All 3 persons of the Godhead were represented 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."

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. **Isaiah** spoke of the 1 in 3.

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;

4. And of course if you take the time to look through John 1, you will see that the Apostle taught this distinction of the Godhead and the unity of the Godhead. 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.'

5. What about when the Bible say that Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit? Doesn't this mean that he was less than God and therefore needed strengthening? Or doesn't this mean that the Son and the Holy Spirit were mixed?

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. (Notice the mode of baptism!)

6. So when you say: "I believe in God" you know that you are speaking of "three in one." Jehovah is not the god of false Judaism or Islam. He is not the false god of the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, or Unitarians. And he certainly is not the same god as the Hindus worship. Sadly, when Christians get into doctrinal trouble **it is often about some aspect of the doctrine of the Trinity**. So get it right now.

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 that 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 that 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 the doctrine they will be lost! Help save them.

Finally: Unless you believe that God the Son 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.