

## Week 8: "The Trinity"

**Memory Verse:** But then the right time came, God sent his Son. A woman gave birth to him. He was born under the authority of the law. He came to set free those who were under the law. He wanted us to be adopted as children with all the rights children have. Because you are his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. He is the Holy Spirit. By his power we call God "Abba." "Abba" means Father.

So you aren't slaves any longer. You are God's children. Because you are his children, he gives you what he promised to give his people. Galatians 4:4-7 NIRV

### Day One Sunday, December 8, 2002 "The Trinity"

**Read:** Acts 2:32-36 (p. 1236) and Commentary (p. 1237)

**Reflect:** Which person of the trinity do you find yourself praying to by name the most? Why?

**Dig:** Study Genesis 1:26-27 (p.3). Notice that there is a reference to "us" in verse 26 and how it is different from all the other references to creating in chapter one. Bible teachers refer to "the social analogy of the trinity." By that they mean we are hard-wired for being in relationship, in community. Can you see that truth hinted at in these verses? How?

Read John 16:12-15 (p. 1223). What is the role of the Holy Spirit? Based on this text, some have said that the Holy Spirit is the "shy" member of the trinity. Can you see why?

**Apply:** Pray a "Trinitarian" prayer to close off today's study: I suggest that you take out a piece of paper and make notes of how each member of the trinity affects your life...then pray prayers of adoration and thanksgiving to each one.

### Day Two Monday, December 9, 2002

## "I Am Who I Am"

**Read:** Exodus 3:13-15 (p. 64) and Commentary (p. 65)

**Reflect:** What effect does it have on you when you are called by name? What do we mean when we say that we "know someone on a first name basis"? Do you know God's personal name?

**Dig:** This revealed name was "Yahweh" to the ancient Israelites and comes out as "Jehovah" in older versions of the Bible. It was so precious to the people of God of the Old Testament that they would not even say it out loud. They said "Lord" instead. Turn to Psalm 8 and notice how the word "LORD" appears in all capitals and then in lower case. Whenever you see the word "lord" in all capitals in the Bible it is this precious name that is being translated.

How does this history (of not even saying the name) help you understand what happened to Jesus in John 6:48-59 (p. 12,13)?

What does this interchange in John 8 have to do with the Trinity?

**Apply:** Meditate on the fact that God has revealed his personal name to us. Not only does he know us by name, he allows us to call him by his "first name." I suggest that you use this revealed and very personal name of God in your prayer today. Formulate a prayer and use the ancient name "Yahweh" in your prayer. Ask Yahweh to bring you freedom in Christ just as he brought freedom to his people in the book of Exodus.

### Day Three

Tuesday, December 10, 2002

"God is Gracious and Kind"

**Read:** Isaiah 7:14 (p. 760) and Commentary (p. 761)

**Reflect:** C. S. Lewis once said that for God to become human would be like a human to become a slug. What other analogies could you come up with to describe what God did when he became a human being?

**Dig:** How was this prophecy fulfilled in part already in Isaiah's time? (hint, see Is. 8:6-10) How does John 1:1,14 (p. 1197) state the concept of "Immanuel" in different terms?

How does the doctrine and its meaning "Immanuel" set the Christian faith apart from other world religions?

Is Jesus still both fully human and fully divine? (Hint: think of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection and then his ascension)

**Apply:** How does the concept of God becoming human in Jesus bring you freedom and comfort?

**Day Four**  
**Wednesday, December 11, 2002**  
**"The Deity of Christ"**

**Read:** Philippians 2:6-11 (p. 1367) and Commentary (p. 1367)

**Reflect:** Which leader (person in authority) in your life has made the largest impact on you through their humility? What did you learn from them?

**Dig :** What is the major point of this passage (Phil. 2:6-11)? (hint, make sure that you check out the context and pay special attention to the word "therefore") Since this passage also makes the point that Jesus was in very nature God, how does his example make you free? Or to put it another way, what does Jesus' example inspire you to do?

**Apply:** The truly strong and free person can choose to do specific, unnoticed acts of kindness. Ask God for the eyes to see how you can specifically follow Jesus' example today and thank him for the inner freedom to do so.

**Day Five**  
**Thursday, December 12, 2002**  
**"The Holy Spirit"**

**Read:** Acts 1:2-11 (p. 1235) and Commentary (p. 1235) and

**Reflect:** How often do you compose a prayer specifically to the Holy Spirit? Why or why not? Do you know any songs that are actually prayers which are addressed to the Holy Spirit?

Do you treat Him as the third *person* of the Trinity?

**Dig:** Our commentary today says "the Holy Spirit is not a cosmic force; He is the third member of the Trinity." Study John 16:5-15 (p. 1222) and answer these questions: a) what evidence do we see here that the Holy Spirit is more than a "force"? The Holy Spirit is called the "shy" member of the Trinity. What in this

scripture might lead to that conclusion?

Since He is called "the Spirit of truth," how is that description so appropriate to the basic teaching of "Freedom in Christ"? See Appendix A p. 1507 under "The Battle for Your Mind."

**Apply:** : Compose a prayer to the Holy Spirit. You might especially focus on his role as Counselor and his desire for Truth in our lives.

You might close with the song:

*"Spirit of the Living God,  
Fall fresh on me (repeat)  
Break me, mold me, fill me, use me,  
Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me."*