

St Aidan's Homeschool



All About the
Shamrock 7
The Holy Trinity

A Scientific & Fact Book For Senior & Mature Students

Presented by Donnette E Davis
www.staidenshomeschool.com

The **shamrock**, a symbol of Ireland and a registered trademark of the Republic of Ireland, is a **three-leafed old white clover**, sometimes of the variety *Trifolium repens* (a white clover, known in Irish as *seamair bhán*) but today usually *Trifolium dubium* (a lesser clover, Irish: *seamair bhuí*).

The diminutive version of the Irish word for "clover" ("seamair") is "seamróg", which was anglicised as "shamrock", representing a close approximation of the original Irish pronunciation. However, other three-leafed plants — such as black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), and Common wood sorrel (genus *Oxalis*) — are sometimes designated as shamrocks. The shamrock was traditionally used for its medical properties and was a popular motif in Victorian times. It is also a common way to represent St. Patrick's Day. Shamrocks are said to bring good luck.

Badge of Ireland

The shamrock is also informally used as a badge for sports teams, state organisations, and troops abroad from Ireland: The IRFU, Shamrock Rovers FC, Panathinaikos FC, Aer Lingus, IDA Ireland, University College Dublin, University of Notre Dame, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Fáilte Ireland use it as part of their identity, but it should be noted that according to the Constitution, the Gaelic or Celtic harp (or often called "Brian Boru's Harp"), is the primary symbol for Ireland, appearing on postage stamps, government insignia, armed forces insignia and the coat of arms of the President, or Uachtarán. It is registered with the World Intellectual Property Organization as a symbol of Ireland. According to what the Oxford English Dictionary calls "a late tradition" (first recorded in 1726), the plant was used by Saint Patrick to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity. The posthumous timing of this legend (coming 1200 years after his death), and the lack of supporting evidence found in St. Patrick's writings have caused some to question its authenticity. It has subsequently become an emblem of Ireland, and is a registered trademark of the Irish government along with the official emblem of the Republic of Ireland, the harp. The English word comes from Irish *seamróg*, meaning *young clover*.

The shamrock is featured on the passport stamp of Montserrat, many of whose citizens are of Irish descent. In addition, the Shamrock

is frequently used as a name and symbol for Irish pubs throughout the world.

Flags

The flag of the city of Montreal, Canada has a shamrock in the lower right quadrant. The shamrock represents the Irish population, one of the four major ethnic groups that made up the population of the city in the 19th century when the arms were designed.

The coat of arms on the flag of the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation is cradled in a wreath of shamrock.

The Erin Go Bragh flag uses an angelic Cláirseach, a medieval harp in Ireland, cradled in a wreath of clover. A very symbolic flag of Irish nationalism, it's often seen on St. Patrick's Day, usually displayed during the parades.

Boat Names

- Shamrock V was a J Class sloop. Shamrock V was built in 1930 for Sir Thomas Lipton's fifth and last America's Cup challenge. Designed by Nicholson, she was the first British yacht to be built to the new J Class Rule and is the only remaining J to have been built in wood. After launch she was continually upgraded with changes to hull shape and rudder. The rig was also modified to create the most effective racing sail plan but she was no match for the faster US design "Enterprise". It underwent a major refit in 1967.
- Shamrock is also the name of a 1971 C&C 35 which has actively raced in the Detroit, Michigan region since 1976. Hull number 37, sail no. 11166. Shamrock is a member of the C&C 35-1 Association of Detroit. Named after L boat # 39
- Shamrock is also the name of a wooden steam launch on Windermere. Owned by the steam engineer Roger Mallinson who restored her back to working condition in the late seventies and went on to make the engine for the steam yacht *Gondola*.

The Four-Leaf Clover

The four-leaf clover is often confused with the shamrock. While the four-leaf clover is a symbol of good luck, the three-leafed shamrock is

mainly an Irish christian symbol of the Holy Trinity and has a different significance.

Clover (*Trifolium*), or **trefoil**, is a genus of about 300 species of plants in the pea family Fabaceae. The genus has a cosmopolitan distribution; the highest diversity is found in the temperate Northern Hemisphere, but many species also occur in South America and Africa, including at high altitudes on mountains in the tropics.

They are small annual, biennial, or short-lived perennial herbaceous plants. The leaves are trifoliate (rarely 5- or 7-foliate), with stipules adnate to the leaf-stalk, and heads or dense spikes of small red, purple, white, or yellow flowers; the small, few-seeded pods are enclosed in the calyx.

Other closely related genera often called clovers include *Melilotus* (sweet clover) and *Medicago* (alfalfa or 'calvary clover'). The "shamrock" of popular iconography is sometimes considered to be young clover.

The scientific name derives from the Latin *tres*, "three", and *folium*, "leaf", so called from the characteristic form of the leaf, which has three leaflets (trifoliate); hence the popular name trefoil. Clovers are used as food plants by the larvae of some Lepidoptera (butterfly and moth) species; see list of Lepidoptera that feed on clovers.

Selected Species

• Trifolium africanum	☐ Trifolium eriocephalum	☐ Trifolium olivaceum
• Trifolium albopurpureum	☐ Trifolium fragiferum	☐ Trifolium ornithopodioides
• Trifolium alexandrinum	☐ Trifolium friscanum	☐ Trifolium owyheense
• Trifolium amabile	☐ Trifolium fucatum	☐ Trifolium parryi
• Trifolium ambiguum	☐ Trifolium glomeratum	☐ Trifolium pinetorum
• Trifolium amoenum	☐ Trifolium gracilentum	☐ Trifolium plumosum
• Trifolium andersonii	☐ Trifolium gymnocarpon	☐ Trifolium polymorphum
• Trifolium andinum	☐ Trifolium haydenii	☐ Trifolium pratense
• Trifolium angustifolium	☐ Trifolium hirtum	☐ Trifolium productum
• Trifolium arvense	☐ Trifolium howellii	☐ Trifolium purpureum
• Trifolium attenuatum	☐ Trifolium hybridum	☐ Trifolium pygmaeum
• Trifolium aureum	☐ Trifolium incarnatum	☐ Trifolium reflexum
• Trifolium barbigerum	☐ Trifolium jokerstii	☐ Trifolium repens
• Trifolium beckwithii	☐ Trifolium kingii	☐ Trifolium resupinatum
• Trifolium bejariense	☐ Trifolium lappaceum	☐ Trifolium rollinsii
• Trifolium bifidum	☐ Trifolium latifolium	☐ Trifolium rueppellianum
• Trifolium bolanderi	☐ Trifolium leibergii	☐ Trifolium scabrum
• Trifolium brandegeei	☐ Trifolium lemmonii	☐ Trifolium semipilosum
• Trifolium breweri	☐ Trifolium longipes	☐ Trifolium siskiyouense
• Trifolium buckwestiorum	☐ Trifolium lupinaster	☐ Trifolium spumosum
• Trifolium calcaricum	☐ Trifolium macraei	☐ Trifolium squamosum
• Trifolium campestre	☐ Trifolium macrocephalum	☐ Trifolium stoloniferum
• Trifolium carolinianum	☐ Trifolium medium	☐ Trifolium striatum
• Trifolium cernuum	☐ Trifolium michelianum	☐ Trifolium subterraneum

• <i>Trifolium ciliolatum</i>	? <i>Trifolium microcephalum</i>	? <i>Trifolium suffocatum</i>
• <i>Trifolium cyathiferum</i>	? <i>Trifolium microdon</i>	? <i>Trifolium thompsonii</i>
• <i>Trifolium dalmaticum</i>	? <i>Trifolium minutissimum</i>	? <i>Trifolium tomentosum</i>
• <i>Trifolium dasyphyllum</i>	? <i>Trifolium monanthum</i>	? <i>Trifolium trichocalyx</i>
• <i>Trifolium dedeckerae</i>	? <i>Trifolium mucronatum</i>	? <i>Trifolium uniflorum</i>
• <i>Trifolium depauperatum</i>	? <i>Trifolium nanum</i>	? <i>Trifolium variegatum</i>
• <i>Trifolium dichotomum</i>	? <i>Trifolium neurophyllum</i>	? <i>Trifolium vesiculosum</i>
• <i>Trifolium douglasii</i>	? <i>Trifolium nigrescens</i>	? <i>Trifolium virginicum</i>
• <i>Trifolium dubium</i>	? <i>Trifolium obtusiflorum</i>	? <i>Trifolium willdenowii</i>
• <i>Trifolium echinatum</i>	? <i>Trifolium oliganthum</i>	? <i>Trifolium wormskioldii</i>

Cultivation

Several species are extensively cultivated as fodder-plants. The most widely cultivated clovers are White clover *Trifolium repens* and Red clover *Trifolium pratense*. Clover, either sown alone or in mixture with ryegrass, has for a long time formed a staple crop for soiling, for several reasons: it grows freely, shooting up again after repeated mowings; it produces an abundant crop; it's palatable to and nutritious for livestock; it grows in a great range of soils and climates; and it's appropriate for either pasturage or green composting.

In many areas, particularly on acidic soil, clover is short-lived because of a combination of insect pests, diseases and nutrient balance; this is known as "clover sickness". When crop rotations are managed so that clover doesn't recur at shorter intervals than eight years, it grows with much of its pristine vigour.

Clover sickness in more recent times may also be linked to pollinator decline; clovers are most efficiently pollinated by bumblebees, which have declined as a result of agricultural intensification. Honeybees can also pollinate clover, and beekeepers are often in heavy demand from farmers with clover pastures. Farmers enjoy the benefits of increased reseeding that occurs with increased bee activity, which means that future clover yields remain abundant. Beekeepers benefit from the clover bloom as clover is one of the main nectar sources for honeybees. *T. repens*, White or Dutch clover, is a perennial abundant in meadows and good pastures.

The flowers are white or pinkish, becoming brown and deflexed as the corolla fades. *T. hybridum*, Alsike or Swedish clover, is a perennial which was introduced early in the 19th century and has now become naturalized in Britain. The flowers are white or rosy, and resemble those of the last species. *T. medium*, meadow or zigzag clover, a perennial with straggling flexuous stems and rose-purple flowers, is of little agricultural value. Other British species are: *T. arvense*, Hare's-foot trefoil; found in fields and dry pastures, a soft hairy plant with minute white or pale pink flowers and feathery sepals; *T. fragiferum*, Strawberry clover, with densely-flowered, globose, rose-purple heads and swollen calyxes; *T. procumbens*, Hop trefoil, on dry pastures and roadsides, the heads of pale yellow flowers suggesting miniature hops; and the somewhat similar *T. minus*, common in pastures and

roadsides, with smaller heads and small yellow flowers turning dark brown. The last named is often called Shamrock.

Clovers are a valuable survival food, as they're high in protein, widespread, and abundant. They are not easy to digest raw, but this can be easily fixed by juicing them or boiling them for 5-10 minutes. Dried flowerheads and seedpods can also be ground up into a nutritious flour and mixed with other foods. Dried flowerheads can also be steeped in hot water for a healthy, tasty tea.

Symbolism and mythology

Shamrock, the traditional Irish symbol coined by Saint Patrick for the Holy Trinity, is commonly associated with clover, though also sometimes with *Oxalis* species, which are also trifoliate (for example they've three leaves).

Clovers occasionally have leaves with four leaflets, instead of the usual three. These four-leaf clovers, like other rarities, are considered lucky. Clovers can also have 5, 6, or more leaves, but these are more rare. The world record, according to Guinness, is 18.

A common idiom is "to be in clover", meaning to be living a carefree life of ease, comfort, or prosperity.

The cloverleaf interchange is named for the resemblance to the leaves of a (four-leafed) clover when viewed from the air.

In the late 1970's and 80's drug tests became very accurate and could detect the tiniest traces of Morphine. Clover has a small amount of morphine which is eaten by Cattle Cows and ends up in bottled milk. Eating Clover can set off Morphine Blood and urine analysis drug tests.

Holy Trinity

The **Trinity** is a Christian doctrine, stating that God is one being who exists, simultaneously and eternally, as a mutual indwelling of three persons: the Father, the Son (incarnate as Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. Since the beginning of the third century the doctrine of the Trinity has been stated as "that the one God exists in three Persons and one substance, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit".

Opposing nontrinitarian positions held by some groups include Binitarianism (two deities/persons/aspects), Unitarianism (one deity/person/aspect), the Latter Day Saints view of the Godhead as three separate beings, one in purpose, and Modalism (Oneness).

The doctrine of the Trinity was of particular importance historically. The conflict with Arianism and other competing theological concepts during the fourth century became the first major doctrinal confrontation in Church history. It had a particularly lasting effect within the Western Roman Empire where the Germanic Arians and the Nicene Christians formed segregated social orders.

Etymology

For the concept the word "Trinity" (in Latin, *Trinitas*) began to be used around the year 200. This Latin word means "the number three, a triad", an abstract noun formed from the adjective *trinus* (three each, threefold, triple), as the word *unitas* is the abstract noun formed from *unus* (one). The Greek term used for the Christian Trinity, "Τριάς" ("Trias", gen. "Triados") means "a set of three" or "the number three", and has given the English word *triad*. The word "trinity" itself isn't found in the Christian Bible, any more than is the word "monotheism", but Christians in general believe that what is meant by these two words is taught in the Bible.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the result of continuous exploration of the Bible by the church, argued in debate and treatises. The concept was expressed in early writings from the beginning of the second century forward.

The first recorded use of the word "Trinity" in Christian theology was in about AD 180 by Theophilus of Antioch who used the corresponding word in Greek (Τριάς) to refer to "the Trinity, of God, and His Word, and His wisdom", of which he considered the first three days of creation to be types. He didn't apply the word to the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Tertullian, a Latin theologian who wrote in the early third century, is credited with using the words "Trinity", "person" and "substance" to explain that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were "one in essence – not one in Person".

About a century later, the First Council of Nicaea (325) established the doctrine of the Trinity as orthodoxy and adopted the Nicene Creed that described Christ as "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father".

Trinity in Scripture

Neither of the words "Trinity" nor "Triunity" appear in the Old Testament or New Testament. Various passages from both have been cited as supporting this doctrine, while other passages are cited as opposing it.

The Old Testament refers to God's Word, his Spirit, and Wisdom. These have been interpreted as adumbrations of the doctrine of the Trinity, as have been also narratives such as the appearance of the three men to Abraham in . However, it's generally agreed that it would go beyond the intention and spirit of the Old Testament to correlate these notions directly with later Trinitarian doctrine. It required reflection by the earliest Christians on the coming of Jesus Christ and of what they believed to be the presence and power of God among them, which they called the Holy Spirit; and it associated the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in such passages as the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" and Apostle's blessing: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all", while at the same time not contradicting the Jewish Shema Yisrael: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord"

The diverse references to God, Jesus, and the Spirit found in the New Testament were later systematized into the idea of a Trinity – one God subsisting in three persons and one substance – in order to combat heretical tendencies of how the three are related and to defend the church against charges of worshipping two or three gods. The doctrine itself wasn't explicitly stated in the New Testament and no New Testament writer expounds on the relationship among the three in the detail of that later writers do. Thus, while Matthew records a special connection between God the Father and Jesus the Son (for example 11:27), he falls short of claiming that Jesus is equal with God. (cf. 24:36) .

The Gospel of John does suggest the equality and unity of Father and Son. ("I and the Father are one"). This Gospel starts with "the affirmation that in the beginning Jesus as Word "was with God and ...was God" and ends with Thomas's confession of faith to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" .

Furthermore, the fourth Gospel elaborates on the role of Holy Spirit being sent as an advocate for believers.

Scriptural texts cited as implying support

To support Trinitarianism, Bible exegetes cite references to the Trinity, to Jesus as God, and both to God alone and to Jesus as the Saviour.

References to the Trinity

A few verses directly reference the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

- : "As soon as Jesus Christ was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and landing on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I'm well pleased.'" (also ; ;)
- : "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (see Trinitarian formula).
- : "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."
- : "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." (This is the controversial Comma Johanneum, which didn't appear in Greek texts before the sixteenth century.)
- : "The angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.'"
- : "How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"

Jesus as God

Many verses in John, the epistles, and Revelation imply support for the doctrine that Jesus Christ is God and the closely related concept of the Trinity. The Gospel of John in particular supports Jesus' divinity. This is a partial list of supporting Bible verses:

- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." together with "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." and "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known."The Bible says "God the One and Only" in NIV.
- "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he's pleased to give it."
- : "But he continued, ' You are from below; I'm from above. You are of this world; I'm not of this world. I told you that you'd die in your sins; if you don't believe that I'm [the one I claim to be], you'll indeed die in your sins.'"
- "I tell you the truth", Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"
- : "I and the Father are one."
- : "But if I do it, even though you don't believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."

□ : "Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him."—As the context shows, this implied the Tetragrammaton in refers to Jesus.

□ : "Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'"

□ : "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, didn't consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

□ : "He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God"

□ : "For by him [Jesus] all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him."

□ : "He [Jesus] is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

□ : "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form"

□ : "while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

□ : "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

□ : "But about the Son he [God] says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom."

□ : "We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we're in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life."

□ : "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I'm the First and the Last. I'm the Living One; I was dead, and behold I'm alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades." This is seen as significant when viewed with : "This is what the says—Israel's King and Redeemer, the Almighty: I'm the first and I'm the last; apart from me there's no God."

The Bible also refers to Jesus as a man, which is in line with the Trinitarian concept that Jesus was fully human as well as fully divine which is expressed through the theological concept of kenosis.

God alone is the Saviour and the Saviour is Jesus

The Old Testament identifies the as the only saviour, and the New Testament identifies Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. These verses are consistent with Trinitarianism, as well as various nontrinitarian beliefs (binitarianism, modalism, the Latter-Day Saints' Godhead, Arianism, etc.)

- : "I, even I, am the, and apart from me there's no saviour."
- : "and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way that'll make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive."
- : "But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared", in regard with:
 - : "Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he's Christ the Lord."
 - : "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - : "while we wait for the blessed hope-the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ"
 - : "They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we've heard for ourselves, and we know that this man [Jesus] really is the Saviour of the world."
 - : "whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour"

History

The Origin of the Formula

The basis for the doctrine of the Trinity is found in New Testament passages that associate the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Two such passages are Matthew's Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" and St Paul's: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all"

In 325, the Council of Nicaea adopted a term for the relationship between the Son and the Father that from then on was seen as the hallmark of orthodoxy; it declared that the Son is "of the same substance" (ὁμοούσιος) as the Father. This was further developed into the formula "three persons, one substance". The answer to the question "What is God?" indicates the one-ness of the divine nature, while the answer to the question "Who is God?" indicates the three-ness of "Father, Son and Holy Spirit".

The Council of Nicaea was reluctant to adopt language not found in scripture, and ultimately did so only after Arius showed how all strictly biblical language could also be interpreted to support his belief that there was a time when the Son didn't exist. In adopting non-biblical language, the council's intent was to preserve what the Church had always believed: that the Son is fully God, coeternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

The Confession of the Council of Nicaea said little about the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit was developed by

Athanasius (c 293 - 373) in the last decades of his life. He both defended and refined the Nicene formula. By the end of the 4th century, under the leadership of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus (the Cappadocian Fathers), the doctrine had reached substantially its current form.

Comma Johanneum

One explicit Trinitarian passage often quoted from the King James Version of is an addition to the original: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Though this passage, known as the *Comma Johanneum* is commonly found in Latin manuscripts, it's totally absent from the Greek manuscripts, except for a few late examples, where the passage appears to have been back-translated from the Latin. Erasmus, the compiler of the *Textus Receptus*, on which the King James Version was based, noticed that the passage wasn't found in any of the Greek manuscripts at his disposal and refused to include it until presented with an example containing it, which he rightly suspected was concocted after the fact. Although the Latin Church Father, Saint Cyprian, is thought to have referred to the passage, it's now considered not to have been part of the original text, and is omitted from modern translations of the Bible, even from the revision of the Vulgate that's now the official Latin text of the Roman Catholic Church.

Formulation of the Doctrine

The most significant developments in articulating the doctrine of the Trinity took place in the 4th century, with a group of men known as the Theologians. Although the earliest Church Fathers had affirmed the teachings of the Apostles, their focus was on their pastoral duties to the Church under the persecution of the Roman Empire. Thus the early Fathers were largely unable to compose doctrinal treatises and theological expositions. With the relaxing of the persecution of the church during the rise of Constantine, the stage was set for ecumenical dialogue.

Trinitarians believe that the resultant councils and creeds didn't discover or create doctrine, but rather, responding to serious heresies such as Arianism, articulated in the creeds the truths that the orthodox church had believed since the time of the apostles.

The Trinitarian view has been affirmed as an article of faith by the Nicene (325/381) and Athanasian creeds (circa 500), which attempted to standardize belief in the face of disagreements on the subject. These creeds were formulated and ratified by the Church of the third and fourth centuries in reaction to heterodox theologies concerning the Trinity and/or Christ. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, revised in 381 by the second of these councils, is professed by the Eastern Orthodox Church and, with one addition (Filioque clause), the Roman Catholic Church, and has been retained in some form in the Anglican Communion and most Protestant denominations.

The Nicene Creed, which is a classic formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity,

uses "homoousios" (Greek: of *the same* essence) of the relation of the Son's relationship with the Father. This word differs from that used by non-Trinitarians of the time, "homoiousios" (Greek: of *similar* essence), by a single Greek letter, "one iota", a fact proverbially used to speak of deep divisions, especially in theology, expressed by seemingly small verbal differences.

One of the (probably three) Church councils that in 264–266 condemned Paul of Samosata for his Adoptionist theology also condemned the term "homoousios" in the sense he used it. Fourth-century Christians who objected to the Nicene trinity made copious use of this condemnation by a reputable council.

Moreover, the meanings of "ousia" and "hypostasis" overlapped at the time, so that the latter term for some meant essence and for others *person*. Athanasius of Alexandria (293–373) helped to clarify the terms.

Because Christianity converts cultures from within, the doctrinal formulas as they've developed bear the marks of the ages through which the church has passed. The rhetorical tools of Greek philosophy, especially of Neoplatonism, are evident in the language adopted to explain the church's rejection of Arianism and Adoptionism on one hand (teaching that Christ is inferior to the Father, or even that he was merely human), and Docetism and Sabellianism on the other hand (teaching that Christ was an illusion, or that he was identical to God the Father). Augustine of Hippo has been noted at the forefront of these formulations; and he contributed much to the speculative development of the doctrine of the Trinity as it's known today, in the West; the Cappadocian Fathers (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory Nazianzus) are more prominent in the East. The imprint of Augustinianism is found, for example, in the western Athanasian Creed, which, although it bears the name and reproduces the views of the fourth century opponent of Arianism, was probably written much later.

These controversies were for most purposes settled at the Ecumenical councils, whose creeds affirm the doctrine of the Trinity.

According to the Athanasian Creed, each of these three divine persons is said to be eternal, each almighty, none greater or less than another, each God, and yet together being but one God, *So are we forbidden by the Catholic religion to say; There are three Gods or three Lords.*—Athanasian Creed, line 20. Modalists attempted to resolve the mystery of the Trinity by holding that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are merely modes, or roles, of God. This anti-Trinitarian view contends that the three "persons" are not distinct persons, but titles which describe how humanity has interacted with or had experiences with God. In the role of the Father, God is the provider and creator of all. In the mode of the Son, man experiences God in the flesh, as a human, fully man and fully God. God manifests himself as the Holy Spirit by his actions on Earth and within the lives of Christians. This view is known as Sabellianism, and was rejected as heresy by the Ecumenical Councils although it's still prevalent today among denominations known as "Oneness" and "Apostolic" Pentecostal Christians, the largest of these sects being the United Pentecostal Church. Trinitarianism insists that the Father, Son and Spirit simultaneously exist, each fully the same God.

The doctrine developed into its present form precisely through this kind of confrontation with alternatives; and the process of refinement continues in the same way. Even now, ecumenical dialogue between Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, the Assyrian Church of the East, Anglican and Trinitarian Protestants, seeks an expression of Trinitarian and Christological doctrine which will overcome the extremely subtle differences that have largely contributed to dividing them into separate communities. The doctrine of the Trinity is therefore symbolic, somewhat paradoxically, of both division and unity.

Trinitarian Theology

Baptism as the beginning lesson

Baptism itself is generally conferred with the Trinitarian formula, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". Trinitarians identify this name with the Christian faith into which baptism is an initiation, as seen for example in the statement of Basil the Great (330–379): "We are bound to be baptized in the terms we've received, and to profess faith in the terms in which we've been baptized." "This is the Faith of our baptism", the First Council of Constantinople also says (382), "that teaches us to believe in the Name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. According to this Faith there's one Godhead, Power, and Being of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." may be taken to indicate that baptism was associated with this Trinitarian formula from the earliest decades of the Church's existence. Some groups, such as Oneness Pentecostals, demur from the Trinitarian view on baptism. For them, the fact that Acts doesn't mention the formula outweighs all other considerations, and is a liturgical guide for their own practice. For this reason, they often focus on the baptisms in Acts, citing many authoritative theological works. For example, Kittel is cited where he's speaking of the phrase "in the name" (Greek: ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι) as used in the baptisms recorded in Acts:

» The distinctive feature of Christian baptism is that it's administered in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ), or in the name of Christ (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ). (Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 1:539.)

The formula (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι) seems rather to have been a tech. term in Hellenistic commerce ("to the account"). In both cases the use of the phrase is understandable, since the account bears the name of the one who owns it, and in baptism the name of Christ is pronounced, invoked and confessed by the one who baptises or the one baptised or both. (Kittel, 1:540.)

Those who place great emphasis on the baptisms in Acts often likewise question the authenticity of in its present form. A. Ploughman, apparently following F. C. Conybeare, has questioned the authenticity of, but the majority of scholars of New Testament textual criticism accept the authenticity of the passage, since

there are no variant manuscripts regarding the formula, and the extant form of the passage is attested in the Didache and other patristic works of the first and second centuries: Ignatius, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, and Gregory Thaumaturgus. The Acts of the Apostles only mentions believers being baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" () and "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (). There are no biblical references to baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit outside of, nor references, biblical or patristic, to baptism in the name of (the Lord) Jesus (Christ) outside the Acts of the Apostles. Commenting on, Gerhard Kittel states:

» This threefold relation [of Father, Son and Spirit] soon found fixed expression in the triadic formulae in 2 C. 13:13, and in . The form is first found in the baptismal formula in ; Did., 7. 1 and 3....[I]t is self-evident that Father, Son and Spirit are here linked in an indissoluble threefold relationship.

In the synoptic Gospels the baptism of Jesus himself is often interpreted as a manifestation of all three persons of the Trinity: "And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, with whom I'm well pleased*".

One God

God is one, and the Godhead a single being: The Hebrew Scriptures lift this one article of faith above others, and surround it with stern warnings against departure from this central issue of faith, and of faithfulness to the covenant God had made with them. "Hear, O Israel: The our God is one " (the Shema), "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" and, "Thus saith the the King of Israel and his redeemer the of hosts: I'm the first and I'm the last; and beside me there's no God." . Any formulation of an article of faith which doesn't insist that God is solitary, that divides worship between God and any other, or that imagines God coming into existence rather than being God eternally, isn't capable of directing people toward the knowledge of God, according to the Trinitarian understanding of the Old Testament. The same insistence is found in the New Testament: "Why do you call me good? Jesus answered. No-one is good— except God alone", and "...there is none other God but one..." . The "other gods" warned against are therefore not understood as gods at all, but as substitutes for God, and so are, according to St. Paul, simply mythological .

In the Trinitarian view, the Father and Christ share the one essence, substance or being. The central and crucial affirmation of Christian faith is that there's one savior, God, and one salvation, manifest in Jesus Christ, to which there's access only because of the Holy Spirit. The God of the Old Testament is still the same as the God of the New. In Christianity, it's understood that statements about a solitary God are intended to distinguish the Hebraic understanding from the

polytheistic view, which see divine power as shared by several beings, beings which can, and do, disagree and have conflicts with each other.

God exists as three persons

God however exists as three **persons**, or in the Greek *hypostases*, but is one being. God has but a single divine nature. Chalcedonians—Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Anglicans and Protestants—hold that, in addition, the second person of the Trinity—God the Son, Jesus—assumed human nature, so that he's two natures (and hence two wills), and is really and fully both true God and true human. In the Oriental Orthodox theology, the Chalcedonian formulation is rejected in favor of the position that the union of the two natures, though unconfused, births a third nature: redeemed humanity, the new creation.

The members of the Trinity are said to be co-equal and co-eternal, one in essence, nature, power, action, and will. As stated in the Athanasian Creed, the Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated, and all three are eternal with no beginning. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that, in the sense of the Latin verb *procedere*, but not in that of the Greek verb $\kappa\pi\omicron\rho\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$, the Spirit "proceeds" from the Father and the Son (see Filioque).

It has been stated that because three persons exist in God as one unity, "The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" are not three different names for different parts of God but one name for God, because the Father can not be divided from the Son or the Holy Spirit from the Son. God has always loved, and there has always existed perfectly harmonious communion between the three persons of the Trinity. One consequence of this teaching is that God couldn't have created man in order to have *someone to talk to or to love*: God "already" enjoyed personal communion; being perfect, he didn't create man because of any lack or inadequacy he had. Another consequence, according to Rev. Fr. Thomas Hopko, an Eastern Orthodox theologian, is that if God were not a Trinity, he couldn't have loved prior to creating other beings on whom to bestow his love. Thus we find God saying in, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." For Trinitarians, emphasis in Genesis 1:26 is on the plurality in the Deity, and in 1:27 on the unity of the divine Essence. A possible interpretation of Genesis 1:26 is that God's relationships in the Trinity are mirrored in man by the ideal relationship between husband and wife, two persons becoming one flesh, as described in Eve's creation later in the next chapter. Some Trinitarian Christians support their position with the *Comma Johanneum* described above, even though it's widely regarded as inauthentic.

Mutually indwelling

A useful explanation of the relationship of the distinct divine persons is called "perichoresis", from Greek *going around, envelopment* (written with a long O,

omega—some mistakenly associate it with the Greek word for dance, which however is spelled with a short O, omicron). This concept refers for its basis to, where Jesus is instructing the disciples concerning the meaning of his departure. His going to the Father, he says, is for their sake; so that he might come to them when the "other comforter" is given to them. At that time, he says, his disciples will dwell in him, as he dwells in the Father, and the Father dwells in him, and the Father will dwell in them. This is so, according to the theory of perichoresis, because the persons of the Trinity "reciprocally contain one another, so that one permanently envelopes and is permanently enveloped by, the other whom he yet envelopes". (Hilary of Poitiers, *Concerning the Trinity* 3:1).

This co-indwelling may also be helpful in illustrating the Trinitarian conception of salvation. The first doctrinal benefit is that it effectively excludes the idea that God has parts. Trinitarians affirm that God is a simple, not an aggregate, being. The second doctrinal benefit is that it harmonizes well with the doctrine that the Christian's union with the Son in his humanity brings him into union with one who contains in himself, in St. Paul's words, "all the fullness of deity" and not a part. (See also: *Theosis*). Perichoresis provides an intuitive figure of what this might mean. The Son, the eternal Word, is from all eternity the dwelling place of God; he is, himself, the "Father's house", just as the Son dwells in the Father and the Spirit; so that, when the Spirit is "given", then it happens as Jesus said, "I won't leave you as orphans; for I'll come to you"

Some forms of human union are considered to be not identical but analogous to the Trinitarian concept, as found for example in Jesus' words about marriage: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they're no more twain, but one flesh" . According to the words of Jesus, married persons are in some sense no longer two, but joined into one. Therefore, Orthodox theologians also see the marriage relationship as an image, or "icon" of the Trinity, relationships of communion in which, in the words of St. Paul, participants are "members one of another". As with marriage, the unity of the church with Christ is similarly considered in some sense analogous to the unity of the Trinity, following the prayer of Jesus to the Father, for the church, that "they may be one, even as we're one".

Eternal generation and procession

Trinitarianism affirms that the Son is "begotten" (or "generated") of the Father and that the Spirit "proceeds" from the Father, but the Father is "neither begotten nor proceeds". The argument over whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, or from the Father and the Son, was one of the catalysts of the Great Schism, in this case concerning the Western addition of the Filioque clause to the Nicene Creed.

This language is often considered difficult because, if used regarding humans or other created things, it would necessarily imply time and change; when used here, no beginning, change in being, or process within time is intended and is in fact excluded. The Son is generated ("born" or "begotten"), and the Spirit

proceeds, eternally. Augustine of Hippo explains, "Thy years are one day, and Thy day isn't daily, but today; because Thy today yields not to tomorrow, for neither does it follow yesterday. Thy today is eternity; therefore Thou begat the Co-eternal, to whom Thou saidst, 'This day have I begotten Thee.'"

Son begotten, not created

Because the Son is begotten, not made, the substance of his persona is that of Yahweh, of deity. The creation is brought into being through the Son, but the Son himself isn't part of it except through his incarnation.

The church fathers used a number of analogies to express this thought. St. Irenaeus of Lyons was the final major theologian of the second century. He writes "the Father is God, and the Son is God, for whatever is begotten of God is God."

Extending the analogy, it might be said, similarly, that whatever is generated (procreated) of humans is human. Thus, given that humanity is, in the words of the Bible, "created in the image and likeness of God", an analogy can be drawn between the Divine Essence and human nature, between the Divine Persons and human persons. However, given the fall, this analogy is far from perfect, even though, like the Divine Persons, human persons are characterized by being "loci of relationship". For Trinitarian Christians, this analogy is particularly important with regard to the Church, which St. Paul calls "the body of Christ" and whose members are, because they're "members of Christ", also "members one of another".

However, any attempt to explain the mystery to some extent must break down, and has limited usefulness, being designed, not so much to fully explain the Trinity, but to point to the experience of communion with the Triune God within the Church as the Body of Christ. The difference between those who believe in the Trinity and those who do not, isn't an issue of understanding the mystery. Rather, the difference is primarily one of belief concerning the personal identity of Christ. It is a difference in conception of the salvation connected with Christ that drives all reactions, either favourable or unfavourable, to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. As it is, the doctrine of the Trinity is directly tied up with Christology.

Economic and Ontological Trinity

- Economic Trinity: This refers to the acts of the triune God with respect to the creation, history, salvation, the formation of the Church, the daily lives of believers, etc. and describes how the Trinity operates within history in terms of the roles or functions performed by each of the Persons of the Trinity—God's relationship with creation.

- Ontological (or essential or immanent) Trinity: This speaks of the interior life of the Trinity (note)—the reciprocal relationships of Father, Son and Spirit to each other without reference to God's relationship with creation.

Or more simply—the ontological Trinity (who God is) and the economic Trinity (what God does). Most Christians believe the economic reflects and reveals the ontological. Catholic theologian Karl Rahner went so far as to say "The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity, and vice versa."

The ancient Nicene theologians argued that everything the Trinity does is done by Father, Son, and Spirit working together with one will. The three persons of the Trinity always work inseparable, for their work is always the work of the one God. Because of this unity of will, the Trinity can't involve the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father. Eternal subordination can only exist if the Son's will is at least conceivably different from the Father's. But Nicene orthodoxy says it's not. The Son's will can't be different from the Father's because it's the Father's. They have but one will as they've but one being. Otherwise they wouldn't be one God. If there were relations of command and obedience between the Father and the Son, there would be no Trinity at all but rather three gods. In explaining why the Bible speaks of the Son as being subordinate to the Father, the great theologian Athanasius argued that scripture gives a "double account" of the son of God – one of his temporal and voluntary subordination in the incarnation, and the other of his eternal divine status. For Athanasius, the Son is eternally one in being with the Father, temporally and voluntarily subordinate in his incarnate ministry. Such human traits, he argued, were not to be read back into the eternal Trinity. Like Athanasius, the Cappadocian Fathers also insisted there was no economic inequality present within the Trinity. As Basil wrote: "We perceive the operation of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to be one and the same, in no respect showing differences or variation; from this identity of operation we necessarily infer the unity of nature."

Augustine also rejected the idea of an economic hierarchy within the Trinity. He claimed that the three persons of the Trinity "share the inseparable equality one substance present in divine unity". Because the three persons are one in their inner life, this means that for Augustine their works in the world are one. For this reason, it's an impossibility for Augustine to speak of the Father commanding and the Son obeying as if there could be a conflict of wills within the eternal Trinity.

John Calvin also spoke at length about the doctrine of the Trinity. Like Athanasius and Augustine before him, he concluded that Philippians 2:4-11 prescribed how scripture was to be read correctly. For him the Son's obedience is limited to the incarnation. It is indicative of his true humanity assumed for our salvation.

Much of this work is summed up in the Athanasian Creed. This creed stresses the unity of the Trinity and the equality of the persons. It ascribes equal divinity, majesty, and authority to all three persons. All three are said to be "almighty" and "Lord" (no subordination in authority; "none is before or after another" (no hierarchical ordering); and "none is greater, or less than another" (no subordination in being or nature). Thus, since the divine persons of the Trinity act with one will, there's no possibility of hierarchy-inequality in the Trinity.

Since the 1980's, some evangelical theologians have come to the conclusion

that the members of the Trinity may be economically unequal while remaining ontologically equal. This theory was put forward by George W. Knight III in his 1977 book *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women*, states that the Son of God is eternally subordinated in authority to God the Father. This conclusion was used as a means of supporting the main thesis of his book: that women are permanently subordinated in authority to their husbands in the home and to male leaders in the church, despite being ontologically equal. Subscribers to this theory insist that the Father has the role of giving commands and the Son has the role of obeying them.

Old Testament evidence

Old Testament theophanies

In the Old Testament, several theophanies are recorded in which "God appeared" to one or more human beings in a physical manifestation that could be seen and heard. Jews will reply that "God appearing" doesn't signify his being in human form since the Jewish bible states in Numbers 23:19 that "God isn't a man that He should lie" and that "none is like Him".

- God appeared to Abraham
- God appeared to Isaac
- God appeared to Jacob
- God appeared to Moses
- God appeared to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- God appeared to Aaron
- God appeared to Moses and Joshua
- God appeared to Samuel
- God appeared to Solomon
- God appeared to David
- God appeared to Solomon


The Angel (Messenger) of the Lord

God identified as "the Father" in the Old Testament

- (Moses' time)
- (pre-exile)
- (post-exile)

God identified as "the Son" in the Old Testament

God isn't directly identified as "the Son" in the Old Testament. Israel (and, poetically Ephraim) are called God's first born son, representing an aspect of the Jewish nation's relationship with God. There are, however, what many Christians believe are foreshadowings of Jesus as God the Son.

Psalm 2 is widely considered a Messianic psalm (Jewish Messianic Interpretations of Psalm 2)  prophetically describing the Lord's "Anointed One" (verse 2). It

contains in verse 7 the divine decree: "You are my Son, today I've become your Father." Verse 12 contains the words "Kiss the Son". While in verse 7 the Hebrew word for son is used, in verse 12 a Chaldean word is used. Support for the translation of the Chaldean word as "Son" is found in its other appearances, such as Ezra 5:2 ([External Link](#)). This psalm denotes a Father Son relationship between God and the Messiah, who as the Son would be the heir (verse 8). Isaiah 9, also considered a Messianic prophecy, describes the coming Messiah as "Mighty God" (verse 6). Psalm 110 describes the LORD (understood as God the Father) sharing his eternal glory with the psalmist's Lord (understood to be the Son, the Messiah).

In Daniel chapter 7 the prophet records his vision of "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven" (Daniel 7:13), who "was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him." (v14) Christians believe worship is only properly given to God, and that in the light of other Bible passages this "son of man" can be identified as the second person of the Trinity. Parallels may be drawn between Daniel's vision and Jesus' words to the Jewish high priest that in the future those assembled would see "the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven". (Matthew 26:64-65). Jesus was immediately accused of blasphemy, as at other times when he'd identified his oneness with God. Christians also believe that John saw the resurrected, gloried Jesus and described him as "One like the Son of Man" (Revelation 1:13)

God the Spirit in the Old Testament

Deity of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:

Words of the Holy Spirit called the words of God:

Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant distinctions

The Western (Roman Catholic) tradition is more prone to make positive statements concerning the relationship of persons in the Trinity. Explanations of the Trinity are not the same thing as the doctrine itself; nevertheless the Augustinian West is inclined to think in philosophical terms concerning the rationality of God's being, and is prone on this basis to be more open than the East to seek philosophical formulations which make the doctrine more intelligible. Eastern Christianity, for its part, correlates ecclesiology and Trinitarian doctrine, and seeks to understand the doctrine of the Trinity via the experience of the Church, which it understands to be "an icon of the Trinity". Therefore, when St. Paul writes concerning Christians that all are "members one of another", Eastern Christians in turn understand this as also applying to the Divine Persons.

The principal disagreement between Western and Eastern Christianity on the Trinity has been the relationship of the Holy Spirit with the other two hypostases. The original credal formulation of the Council of Constantinople was that the Holy Spirit proceeds "from the Father". While this phrase is still used unaltered both in the Eastern Churches, including the Eastern Catholic Churches, and, when the Nicene Creed is recited in Greek, in the Latin Church, it became customary in the

Latin-speaking Church, beginning with the provincial Third Council of Toledo in 589, to add "and the Son" (Latin *Filioque*). Although this insertion into the Creed was explicitly rejected by Pope Leo III, who equally explicitly approved the doctrine it expressed, it was finally used in a Papal Mass by Pope Benedict VIII in 1014, thus completing its spread throughout Western Christianity. The Eastern Orthodox Churches object to it on both ecclesiological and theological grounds. Anglicans have made a commitment in their Lambeth Conference, to provide for the use of the creed without the Filioque clause in future revisions of their liturgies, in deference to the issues of Conciliar authority raised by the Orthodox.

Most Protestant groups that use the creed also include the Filioque clause. However, the issue is usually not controversial among them because their conception is often less exact than is discussed above (exceptions being the Presbyterian Westminster Confession 2:3, the London Baptist Confession 2:3, and the Lutheran Augsburg Confession 1:1–6, which specifically address those issues). The clause is often understood by Protestants to mean that the Spirit is sent from the Father, by the Son, a conception which isn't controversial in either Catholicism or Eastern Orthodoxy. A representative view of Protestant Trinitarian theology is more difficult to provide, given the diverse and decentralized nature of the various Protestant churches.

Naming the Persons

Some feminist theologians refer to the persons of the Holy Trinity with gender-neutral language, such as "Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer (or Sanctifier)". This is a recent formulation, which seeks to redefine the Trinity in terms of three roles in salvation or relationships with us, not eternal identities or relationships with each other. Since, however, each of the three divine persons participates in the acts of creation, redemption, and sustaining, traditionalist Christians reject this formulation as suggesting a new variety of Modalism. Some theologians prefer the alternate terminology of "Source, and Word, and Holy Spirit".

Responding to feminist concerns, orthodox theology has noted the following: a) the names "Father" and "Son" are clearly analogical, since all Trinitarians would agree that God is *beyond* all gender; b) that, in translating the Creed, for example, "born" and "begotten" are equally valid translations of the Greek word "gennao", which refers to the eternal generation of the Son by the Father: hence, one may refer to God "the Father who gives birth"; this is further supported by patristic writings which compare the "birth" of the Divine Word "before all ages" (for example, eternally) from the Father with his birth in time from the Virgin Mary; c) Using "Son" to refer to the Second Divine Person is most proper only when referring to the Incarnate Word, Jesus, who is clearly male; d) in Semitic languages, such as Hebrew and Aramaic, the noun translated "spirit" is grammatically feminine. Images of God's Spirit in scripture are also often feminine, as with the Spirit "brooding" over the primordial chaos in Genesis 1, or grammatically feminine, such as a dove.

Logical Coherency

On the face of it, the doctrine of the Trinity seems to be logically incoherent as it appears to imply that identity isn't transitive—"for the Father is identical with God, the Son is identical with God, and the Father isn't identical with the Son." Recently, there have been two philosophical attempts to defend the logical coherency of Trinity, one by Richard Swinburne and the other by Peter Geach et al. The formulation suggested by Swinburne is free from logical incoherency, but it's debatable whether this formulation is consistent with historical orthodoxy. Regarding the formulation suggested by Geach, not all philosophers would agree with its logical coherency. Swinburne has suggested that "the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be thought of as numerically distinct Gods". Geach suggested that "a coherent statement of the doctrine is possible on the assumption that identity is "always relative to a sortal term".

Some Messianic groups, the Branch Davidian Seventh Day Adventists, and even some scholars within (but not necessarily representing) denominations such as Southern Baptist Convention view the Trinity as being comparable to the concept of a family, hence the familial terms of Father, Son, and the implied role of Mother for the Holy Spirit. The Hebrew word for "God", Elohim, which has an inherent plurality, has the function as a surname as in "Yahweh Elohim". The seeming contradiction of Elohim being "one" is solved by the fact that the Hebrew word for "one", "echad", can describe a compound unity, harmonious in direction and purpose; unlike "yachid" which means singularity.

If God has compositional parts, they're either finite or infinite parts. If finite, then God is finite. If infinite, then there are multiple infinities. Each case becomes a denial of monotheism. By definition, therefore, the belief in compositional parts has been regarded as a heresy since the establishment of the Nicene Creed, and reaffirmed in Protestant Creeds such as the Westminster Confession of Faith and 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith which state "God has no parts". Louis Berkhof describes the doctrine of the Trinity requiring belief in a "simplex unity" and not a complex (or composite) being. "There is in the Divine Being but one indivisible essence" and "The whole undivided essence of God belongs equally to each of the three persons."

The Trinity in art

The Trinity is most commonly seen in Christian art with the Spirit represented by a dove, as specified in the Gospel accounts of the Baptism of Christ; it's nearly always shown with wings outspread. However depictions using three human figures appear occasionally in most periods of art.

The Father and the Son are usually differentiated by age, and later by dress, but this too isn't always the case. The usual depiction of the Father as an older man with a white beard may derive from the biblical Ancient of Days, which is often cited in defence of this sometimes controversial representation. However, in Eastern Orthodoxy the Ancient of Days is understood to be God the Son, not God the Father. When the Father is depicted in art, he's sometimes shown with a halo shaped like an equilateral triangle, instead of a circle. The Son is often shown at

the Father's right hand . He may be represented by a symbol—typically the Lamb or a cross—or on a crucifix, so that the Father is the only human figure shown at full size. In early medieval art, the Father may be represented by a hand appearing from a cloud in a blessing gesture, for example in scenes of the Baptism of Christ. Later, in the West, the "Throne of Mercy" (or "Throne of Grace") became a common depiction. In this style, the Father (sometimes seated on a throne) is shown supporting either a crucifix or, later, a slumped crucified Son, similar to the Pieta (this type is distinguished in German as the *Not Gottes*) in his outstretched arms, whilst the Dove hovers above or in between them. This subject continued to be popular until the eighteenth century at least.

By the end of the fifteenth century, larger representations, other than the Throne of Mercy, became effectively standardised, showing an older figure in plain robes for the Father, Christ with his torso partly bare to display the wounds of his Passion, and the dove above or around them. In earlier representations both Father, especially, and Son often wear elaborate robes and crowns. Sometimes the Father alone wears a crown, or even a papal tiara.

Eastern Orthodox tradition

Direct representations of the Trinity are much rarer in Eastern Orthodox art of any period -reservations about depicting the Father remain fairly strong, as they were in the West until the high Middle Ages. The Second Council of Nicea in 787 confirmed that the depiction of Christ was allowed because he became man; the situation regarding the Father was less clear. The usual Orthodox representation of the Trinity was through the "Old Testament Trinity" of the three angels visiting Abraham - said in the text to be "the Lord" (Genesis:18.1-15). However post-Byzantine representations similar to those in the West are not uncommon in the Greek world. The subject long remained sensitive, and the Russian Orthodox Church at the Great Synod of Moscow in 1667 finally forbade depictions of the Father in human form. The canon is quoted in full here because it explains the Russian Orthodox theology on the subject:

Chapter 2, §44: It is most absurd and improper to depict in icons the Lord Sabaoth (that is to say, God the Father) with a grey beard and the Only-Begotten Son in His bosom with a dove between them, because no-one has seen the Father according to His Divinity, and the Father has no flesh, nor was the Son born in the flesh from the Father before the ages. And though David the prophet says, "From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee" (Ps.109:3), that birth wasn't fleshly, but unspeakable and incomprehensible. For Christ Himself says in the holy Gospel, "No man hath seen the Father, save the Son" (cf.). And Isaiah the prophet says in his fortieth chapter: "To whom have ye likened the Lord? and with what likeness have ye made a similitude of Him? Has not the artificier of wood made an image, or the goldsmiths, having melted gold, gilt it over, and made it a similitude?". In like manner the Apostle Paul says in the Acts, "Forasmuch then as we're the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art of man's imagination". And John Damascene says: "But furthermore, who can make a similitude of the invisible,

incorporeal, uncircumscribed and undepictable God? It is, then, uttermost insanity and impiety to give a form to the Godhead" (*Orthodox Faith*, 4:16). In like manner St. Gregory the Dialogist prohibits this. For this reason we should only form an understanding in the mind of Sabaoth, which is the Godhead, and of that birth before the ages of the Only-Begotten-Son from the Father, but we should never, in any wise depict these in icons, for this, indeed, is impossible. And the Holy Spirit isn't in essence a dove, but in essence He is God, and "No man hath seen God," as John the Theologian and Evangelist bears witness and this is so even though, at the Jordan at Christ's holy Baptism the Holy Spirit appeared in the likeness of a dove. For this reason, it's fitting on this occasion only to depict the Holy Spirit in the likeness of a dove. But in any other place those who have intelligence won't depict the Holy Spirit in the likeness of a dove. For on Mount Tabor, He appeared as a cloud and, at another time, in other ways. Furthermore, Sabaoth is the name not only of the Father, but of the Holy Trinity. According to Dionysios the Areopagite, Lord Sabaoth, translated from the Jewish tongue, means "Lord of Hosts". This Lord of Hosts is the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And although Daniel the prophet says that he beheld the Ancient of Days sitting on a throne, this shouldn't be understood to refer to the Father, but to the Son, Who at His second coming will judge every nation at the dreadful Judgment.

Scenes that depict the Trinity

Only a few of the standard scenes in Christian art normally included a representation of the Trinity. The accounts in the Gospels of the Baptism of Christ were considered to show all three persons as present with a separate role. Sometimes the other two persons are shown at the top of a crucifixion. The Coronation of the Virgin, a popular subject in the West, often included the whole Trinity. But many subjects, such as Christ in Majesty or the Last Judgement, which might be thought to require depiction of the deity in the most amplified form, only show Christ. There is a rare subject where the persons of the Trinity make the decision to incarnate Christ, or *God sending out the Son*. Even more rarely, the Angel of the Annunciation is shown being given the mission.

Less common types of depiction

The depiction of the Trinity as three *identical* persons is rare, because each Person of the Trinity is considered to have distinct attributes. Even rarer is the depiction of the Trinity as a single anthropoid figure with three faces, because the Trinity is defined as three persons in one Godhead, not one Person with three attributes (this would imply Modalism, which is defined as heresy in traditional Christian orthodoxy).

The Trinity may also be represented abstractly by symbols, such as the triangle (or three triangles joined together), trefoil or the triquetra—or a combination of these. Sometimes a halo is incorporated into these symbols. The use of such symbols are often found not only in painting but also in needlework on tapestries, vestments and antependia, in metalwork and in architectural details.

Gallery

Different depictions

Four 15th century depictions of the Coronation of the Virgin show the main ways of depicting the persons of the Trinity. Image:Manuscript 7 104v picture.jpg | The conventional depiction, with older Father, dove, and Christ showing the wounds of his Passion Image:Enguerrand Charonton 001.jpg | Enguerrand Quarton with Christ and God the Father as identical figures, and a dove, as specified by the cleric who commissioned the work Image:BLRoyal2BXVFol055vAllSts.jpg | Page from Book of Hours, with three differentiated human figures for the Trinity Image:Le Couronnement de la Vierge.jpg | Jean Fouquet, also with three human figures, but identical.

Depictions using two different human figures and a dove

Image:St Olof trenighedsalter.jpg | "Throne of Mercy", Gothic, Sweden Image:Bernt Notke 001.jpg | *Not Gottes*, Bernt Notke c. 1483 (St.-Annen-Kloster, Lübeck) Image:Albrecht Dürer 003.jpg | "Throne of Mercy", Albrecht Dürer, 1511 Image:Jan Polack 001.jpg | "Gottes Not", Jan Polack (Polish artist working Germany), 1491 Image:José de Ribera 047.jpg | "Gottes Not", Jusepe de Ribera, ca. 1635 Image:H Agia Triada Moni Vatopediou Agion Oros.JPG | Icon of the Holy Trinity at Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos Image:LiturgieDamaskinos.jpg | Michael Damaskenos Icon of the *Holy Liturgy*, from the 16th century Cretan school, showing Western stylistic influence. Image:Hendrick van balen Holy trinity.jpg | Baroque Trinity, Hendrick van Balen, 1620, (Sint-Jacobskerk, Antwerp)

Other depictions

Image:Fridolin Leiber - Holy Trinity.jpg | *Holy Trinity* by Fridolin Leiber (1853–1912) Image:Perugia - Trinità - Foto G. Dall'Orto - 5 ago 2006.jpg | Allegory of the Holy Trinity, painted as three faces fused in one, medieval fresco in Perugia Image:Trinità Castelletto Cervo.jpg | Trinity, XV century fresco, Castelletto Cervo (Vercelli, Italy), St Peter and St. Paul Church Image:Treenigheten, fransk miniatyr från 1300-talet.jpg | Later drawing of a Trinity in a 14th century French miniature

Ambivalence to Trinitarian doctrine

Some Protestant Christians, particularly some members of the restoration movement, are ambivalent about the doctrine of the Trinity. While not specifically rejecting Trinitarianism or presenting an alternative doctrine of the Godhead and God's relationship with humanity, they're neither dogmatic about the Trinity nor hold it as a test of true Christian faith. Some, like the Society of Friends (Quakers) and Christian Unitarians, may reject all doctrinal or creedal tests of true faith. Others, like some members of the restorationist Churches of Christ, in keeping with a distinctive understanding of "Scripture alone", say that since the doctrine of the Trinity isn't clearly articulated in the Bible, it can't be required for salvation. Still

others may look to church tradition and say that there has always been a Christian tradition that faithfully followed Jesus without such a doctrine.

Non-orthodox Trinitarianism

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) identify the Trinity (or Godhead) as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but with a different intention than the Nicene faith. They regard these three as individual members of a heavenly triumvirate, completely united with one another in purpose - each member of the Godhead being a distinct being of physical form (God the Father, Jesus Christ) or spiritual form (The Holy Ghost.)

The Trinity in Christian Science is found in the unity of God, the Christ, and the Holy Ghost or—"God the Father-Mother; Christ the spiritual idea of sonship; divine Science or the Holy Comforter". The same in essence, the Trinity indicates "the intelligent relation of God to man and the universe".

Nontrinitarianism

Some Christian traditions either reject the doctrine of the Trinity, or consider it unimportant. Persons and groups espousing this position generally don't refer to themselves as "Nontrinitarians". They can vary in both their reasons for rejecting traditional teaching on the Trinity, and in the way they describe God.

Nontrinitarian groups

Since Trinitarianism is central to so much of church doctrine, nontrinitarians were mostly groups that existed before the Nicene Creed was codified in 325 or are groups that developed after the Reformation, when many church doctrines came into question

In the early centuries of Christian history Adoptionists, Arians, Ebionites, Gnostics, Marcionites, and others held nontrinitarian beliefs. The Nicene Creed raised the issue of the relationship between Jesus' divine and human natures. Monophysitism ("one nature") and monothelitism ("one will") were early attempts, considered heretical by trinitarians, to explain this relationship.

During more than a thousand years of Trinitarian orthodoxy, formal nontrinitarianism, for example, a doctrine held by a church, group, or movement, was rare, but it did appear. For example, among the Cathars of the 13th century. The Protestant Reformation of the 1500s also brought tradition into question. At first, nontrinitarians were executed (such as Servetus), or forced to keep their beliefs secret (such as Isaac Newton). The eventual establishment of religious freedom, however, allowed nontrinitarians to more easily preach their beliefs, and the 19th century saw the establishment of several nontrinitarian groups in North America and elsewhere. These include Christadelphians, Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Unitarians. Some groups espousing

Binitarianism such as the Living Church of God claim that Binitarianism was the majority view of those that professed Christ in the second century.

Twentieth-century nontrinitarian movements include Iglesia ni Cristo and the Unification Church. Nontrinitarian groups differ from one another in their views of Jesus Christ, depicting him variously as a divine being second only to God the Father (for example, Jehovah's Witnesses), Yahweh of the Old Testament in human form, God (but not eternally God), Son of God but inferior to the Father (versus co-equal), prophet, or simply a holy man.

Included in this are Oneness Pentecostals, who deny the Trinitarian doctrine, though affirming their belief that God came to Earth as man (for example, manifested himself) in the man Jesus Christ. Like Trinitarians, Oneness Pentecostals believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. One can understand Oneness Pentecostals by replacing the Trinitarian term "person" with the term "mode" or "manifestation" when discussing the Christian Godhead. Many Oneness Pentecostals can recite the first Nicene Creed, as it rejects Arianism, yet preserves the oneness of God and divinity of Jesus Christ. Yet Oneness Pentecostals are regarded by all orthodox Christians groups as subscribing to the heresy of Modalism, teaching that God displayed himself in the Old Testament as Father, in the Gospels as the Son, and after the Ascension as the Holy Spirit, which isn't the accepted orthodox view of three distinct persons in one divine essence. Oneness Pentecostalism teaches there's only one person displaying himself in different ways.

Acknowledgements, Thanks & Terms of Use

<http://www.wikipedia.org>

<http://clover.totallyexplained.com/>

<http://shamrock.totallyexplained.com/>

http://holy_trinity.totallyexplained.com/

If you have a moment please email your comments and suggestions to
feedback@staidenshomeschool.com

Other Volumes In Our Series Of Workbooks

AFRICA

ALPHABET, VOWELS & CONSONANTS

ANIMALS

COLOURS, SHAPES, PUZZLES

DOLCH WORDS , WORD FAMILIES & PHONICS

NUMBERS AND COUNTING

© All rights reserved. Digital duplication, electronic transmission or posting of the contents contained, printing, photocopying, and/or distribution of copies of content is prohibited with the exception of the purchaser reproducing as many copies as necessary for use by their own family or single classroom. Altering, amending, or reproducing portions of this document or the contents contained herein, in any other than the original format is prohibited. Every caution has been taken to ensure that the information contained herein is accurate. However by the use of this product the user absolves Donnette E Davis and/or St Aiden's Homeschool and/or her/its duly authorized representative/s from any liability or obligation arising out of the use hereof whatsoever. Any changes to these terms and conditions must be made in writing and agreed to by all parties involved.

While the contents of this package are in the public domain we have spent many man hours compiling this unit and therefore hold the Compilation Copyright to this Collection. Additionally while you can copy the content of Public Domain material which is freely available, the format, layout, design and images and graphic content, including web pages, i.e. the unit, remains the sole property of Donnette E Davis and/or St Aiden's Homeschool and/or her/its duly appointed agents. Some images are my personal photographs and others are utilised from the Microsoft Clipart Gallery.

Donnette E Davis © 2009

St Aiden's Homeschool, South Africa & The Child Development Spot

P O Box 13720

Cascades

3202

KwaZulu-Natal

Republic of South Africa

www.staidenshomeschool.com

www.childdevelopmentspot.com