

TEXT Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:15-34

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Luke 3:22; John 14:26; 16:13-15; 1 John 5:7

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to cite scriptural evidence supporting the existence of the Divine Trinity.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. — Matthew 28:19

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. — 2 Corinthians 13:14

RESOURCE MATERIAL Tract No. 25 — The Trinity

ANSWER TITLE: **The Bully**

SEARCH TITLE: **The Holy Trinity**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Jordan River, where Jesus was baptized, is the main and largest river in Palestine. Its source is at the base of Mt. Hermon and it empties into the Dead Sea.

John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins and only six months apart in age, John being the older. We aren't told about John's childhood relationship with Jesus, but we do know that when Jesus' time came to minister to the world, John was ready to fulfill his ministry to Jesus. His was no obscure baptism, but was well attended by followers of John who witnessed the Holy Trinity working as one.

Jesus' own claims, as well as the Holy Spirit's revelation, established in the minds of New Testament Christians these convictions: God is One, Jesus is God, the Holy

Spirit is God, and the Three Persons are united. With these convictions well attested to by the Early Church fathers, the council of Nicea, 325 A.D., brought the biblical data into focus in a doctrinal expression to which Bible-believing Christians down through the centuries have adhered—the Holy Trinity.

Some of the attributes applied to the Triune God (the Holy Trinity) are: All-powerful, Deuteronomy 32:39; Eternal, Deuteronomy 32:40; 33:27; Omnipresent, 1 Kings 8:27; Infinite, Isaiah 43:13; A spirit, John 4:24; Self-existent, Acts 17:24,25; Immutable, James 1:17. There are many attributes of personality and office which belong to and constitute the divine nature of God, which may be referred to as the "full assemblage of those perfections which God ascribes to Himself in His Word."

YOUR OPENER

The Holy Trinity

TEXT: Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:15-34

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Luke 3:22; John 14:26; 16:13-15; 1 John 5:7

KEY VERSE: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. — 2 Corinthians 13:14

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 25 — The Trinity

The New Testament states that one of God’s purposes in sending Christ to this world was to reveal Himself more fully to man (John 1:17,18). The study of the Holy Trinity is a glimpse into God’s divine nature as revealed to us more clearly in the New Testament, for without this fundamental precept there can be no deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Spirit. Through the Trinity we see real unity in God the Father’s love, Jesus’ grace and intercession, and the Holy Spirit’s comfort and presence in us.

RESPONSES

1. In the three verses in Genesis, the word “us” is used denoting the plurality of the Godhead. The verse in 1 John, explicitly states, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word [Christ], and the Holy Ghost: these three are one.”

2. “These three [the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost] are one.” Discuss the fact that the word “Trinity”—the trinity of the Godhead—is not used in the Scriptures, but is definitely implied. Neither is the word “Persons” used. The word “Persons” was evidently the nearest image the human mind could conceive of in the mysterious relationship of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It has been suggested that perhaps the word “Persons” is too concrete and fixed as the human mind conceives it today; and for that reason, the term “Personalities” is preferable. However, the Scriptures use the term “Godhead.”

3. In verse 17, the Father spoke from Heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” In verse 16, we find, “. . . the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.” Jesus was there incarnate to receive the heavenly sanction. Thus we have the three personalities of the Godhead in evidence.

1. Genesis 1:1 states, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” The Hebrew word for God here is the plural form, “Elohim.” Used together with the singular form of the word, “created,” we see the unity of the divine Godhead in the work of creation. Verse 2 of this chapter refers to “the Spirit of God,” completing the reference to the Trinity. What words in each of the following verses demonstrate the Trinity? See Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7 and 1 John 5:7.

2. What does the last part of 1 John 5:7 tell us about the Trinity?

3. In the Matthew account of John’s baptism of Jesus, describe how each person of the Trinity was revealed.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. Why do you think the account of John's water baptism of Jesus occurs in all of the four Gospels?

5. John the Baptist spoke of Christ's ministry as fulfilling and exceeding his own. What promise was given to those who believed in Christ regarding the third Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit? See Matthew 3:11 and Mark 1:8. What promise is given to people today in this respect? See Acts 2:38,39.

6. What is the contribution of each person of the Godhead toward the salvation of mankind? See Romans 5:5,6. For a clearer understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, see John 16:8,13,14.

7. In what attitude of prayer and worship should we come into the presence of the Triune God who extends to us His infinite authority and power? See Isaiah 55:6,7; 57:15 and Hebrews 13:15.

4. Allow time for the students to give their answers, which may include the thought that Jesus is our example and that His baptism gives clear evidence of the Trinity. Discuss with the class that God's words do not have to be written more than once to be valid and obeyed, but when the Spirit inspires four authors to write the same truth we are more apt to recognize the importance of that truth. In further contemplation of this question, emphasize the fact that the account of Jesus' baptism is one of the clearest evidences of the Divine Trinity.

5. The students should recognize that Christ promised to pray to the Father that the gift of the Holy Ghost might be given to His believers, and to men today under the Latter Rain Gospel. Bring out in discussion that under the Old Testament dispensation a comparatively few people attained to a close walk of communion with God. Even the High Priest could enter only once a year into the Holy of Holies where the Spirit of God dwelt. The Scriptures explain that Jesus opened the way for all believers who have been forgiven and sanctified through His Blood to experience the Third Person of the Trinity in receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

6. The Father loves the world; Jesus gave Himself for the world; the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit, and teaches us as we enjoy the blessings of salvation. This question gives an opportunity to discuss the truth that it requires the agency of each of the Godhead to provide salvation and eternal life to man. As someone has said, the Trinity is needed to make a Christian, the Trinity is needed to cheer a Christian, the Trinity is needed to complete a Christian, and the Trinity is needed to create in a Christian the hope of glory. As we have already learned, the Trinity was united in the creation of mankind, and here we see the Godhead united in the salvation of man.

7. The sinner should come to God in repentance, realizing that God is high in Heaven and holy. He dwells also with those who are humble and continually give Him praise and thanksgiving. In concluding this lesson, encourage a verbal interchange of thought concerning the glory of God. Too often contemporary Christianity assumes an almost flippant relationship of man to God. The Almighty God is brought down almost to the level of human beings, and the result is the departure of the glory of God. Let us ask ourselves: Is our service to God given exclusively to glorify Him? Be it daily living, on the job or in the home, be it a ministry of music, song, testimony or preaching, is it all done to glorify God? Or could there be an element of self-exaltation involved? Are we concerned about the commendation of others? Let us resolve that our heartfelt attitude will always be, to God be the glory.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What does the word *Trinity* mean?

We have different relationships, and receive different benefits from the various members of our family: father, mother, brother, and sister. Yet we are all one family. What special relationships and benefits do we have from each member of the Holy Trinity?

How does the baptism of Jesus confirm the Holy Trinity?

How does the account of the Creation indicate the Holy Trinity was involved?

Can you name some instances in the Bible where the Holy Spirit led or directed someone?

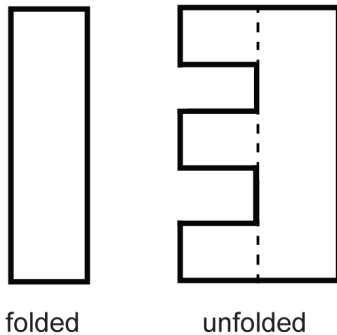
Are there times own life that God's Spirit directed in a specific way?

In the ANSWER story, what was being studied in Jerry's Sunday school lesson that was particularly difficult for him to understand?

What did Jerry think might help him? How did he follow up on this?

THINGS TO DO

Cut a piece of construction paper or typing paper like the following diagram and fold on dotted lines. Fold the tabs toward the back so children see a number 1. Explain that there is one God and yet there are three Persons in one. As you explain, you can unfold the tabs so the paper looks like a 3.



Cut a large circle or heart from construction paper. Cut the shape into three interlocking pieces (like a jigsaw puzzle). On each piece write the name of One of the Trinity. On the reverse side of each of those pieces, write

what that One has done and will do for us. (Have your students help with this part.) Use the pieces to illustrate the oneness of the Trinity, as well as various attributes of each Personality. You may find using the puzzle a good way to review the lesson at the end of class time.

Bring some objects that have three separate parts, yet make up one whole. (Examples: Egg — shell, white, yolk; Apple — skin, fruit, seed.) Talk about how each part has individual characteristics and purpose, but together they form one whole. Compare this to the Trinity.

For each child prepare three strips of paper (long and narrow), each a different color. On one write, "God the Father." On the next, "God the Son." On the third, "God the Holy Spirit." Help your students make a three-link chain with their strips of paper so that each link is connected to the other two. Point out that you have three parts but only one chain. Each part is different (different color). Liken this to the three personalities of the God-head.

Answers for ANSWER

Three in One

Each leaf of the clover contains the name of a Person of the Trinity in puzzle form. The letters appear in different positions and sizes. On the lines below, write the names you find. Can you see the word GOD in the example?

God is . . .

 FATHER

 SON

 HOLY SPIRIT