



LESSON TWO: ONE GOD, THREE PARTS: FATHER

FACILITATOR NOTE

This is a foundational lesson. Here, we ask the question “Does God exist? If so, why do we believe that?” The even more difficult side of this discussion is the Trinity and thinking of God in three parts. So, this lesson is heavy. It will first focus on One God, Three Parts and then will turn to the first part, THE FATHER. These notes are a suggested guide to keep the discussion on-course. Feel free to adapt either in advance or in class if you think that it would be fruitful to the discussion. Your feedback is welcomed.

PRAYER

Spend time in prayer with the class. Allow for requests and center your prayer on this lesson.

FOCUS

Most people will say they believe in God. As a matter of fact, statistics show that some 90% of the world’s population says they believe in God or a high power. But what “god” do they believe in? What “god” do we believe in? In a time when most believe in God, it is important that we are able to clearly articulate what God we believe in and serve.

Memory Verse: ¹⁴ May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor. 13:14)

- We believe in *one* eternal God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:16,45; 6:1,4,8,9; James 1:17; John 1:1; 14:9; Genesis 1:2; John 4:24; 14:16-20; 2 Peter 1:21)
 - We believe in *God the Father*, who is the Creator of all things seen and unseen (Genesis 1:1; Acts 17:24-28; Hebrews 11:3)

LESSON

I. WE BELIEVE IN ONE ETERNAL GOD WHO IS FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

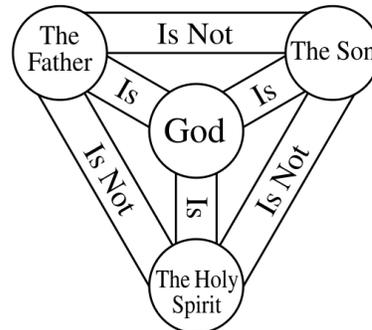
- A. **Does God exist? Why?**
- B. **Where do we find evidence of God’s existence?**
 1. General Revelation
 - a) Nature (Ps. 19:1-2; Rom. 1:20)
 - b) Humans (Gen. 1:26-28)
 - c) History (through the church, etc.)



2. Special Revelation
 - a) Bible (God's Word)
 - b) Jesus (John 1:1-14)
- C. Who is God?**
1. God is a Transcendent Being
 - a) God was and is before time.
 - b) God created time, space, and everything in them and therefore stands outside of them (Exodus 3:14).
 - c) God is Eternal
 - d) God is not confined by anything He created but can affect them.
 - e) Even though God is transcendent, He is personal and feels emotions.
 - f) The OMNI's
 - (1) **Omnipotent** – God is all powerful
 - (a) Are there limits to God's power?
 - (b) Is there anything that God cannot do?
 - (c) What about human free will?
 - (2) **Omnipresent** – God can be wherever He wants
 - (a) How can God be everywhere yet be with you at all times?
 - (3) **Omniscient** – God knows everything
 - (a) Are there limits to what God knows? (Genesis 3:9; 18:20-21)
 - (b) Does or can God limit Himself?
 - (c) What about when God "discovers" something and then takes action? Does this mean He didn't know human would make certain choices? (Gen. 6:5-7; 11:5-7; Exodus 3:9-10; 1 Sam. 15:11, 35; 2 Sam. 24:16; Jer. 18:9-10)
 - (d) What about when God changes His mind? (Exodus 32:12-14; 2 Kings 20:1-6; Ps. 106:44-45; Jer. 18:7-8; 26:19; Joel 2:13; Amos 7:3, 6; Jonah 3:9-10)
 2. God is a Dynamic Being
 - a) Dynamic within Himself and in Activity
 - (1) **TRINITY**: The word Trinity does not occur in the Bible. Yet it is something that essential to Christian belief. The first use of the word is credited to Tertullian (a Latin theologian who wrote in the early 3rd century) to explain the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one in essence, but three in person. Draw (or give copies) the "Shield of the Trinity" and discuss its meaning together:

FOUNDATIONS

Learning the Basic Truths of the Christian Faith



- (2) The Christian concept of the Trinity affirms that one God eternally exists and is fully expresses in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each member of the Godhead is equally God, eternally God, and fully God. Each person of the Trinity is equal in essence to the other divine persons. Therefore, each possesses fully the eternal divine nature. Yet, each is a distinct personal expression of the one and undivided divine nature.
- (a) **Simply stated:** God is ONE in *essence* and THREE in *persons*. Instead of thinking of it in a mathematical term like $1+1+1=3$, you must think $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$.
- (3) The question is, what distinguishes the persons of the Trinity if they are ONE as God yet THREE as persons? There are two things that distinguishes the persons of the Trinity: 1) **Role**, and 2) **Relationship**. Each member of the Trinity has a distinct Role they play in the work of God and each has a distinct Relationship with the other persons in the Trinity. The following is a simple way in which to view the distinguishing Roles and Relationships within the Trinity:
- (a) Gen. 1:1-3; John 1:1-18; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; John 10:30; 14:26; 15:26; Rom. 1:4; 5:5-6; 8:2-3, 9, 16-17; 14:17-18; 15:16-17, 30; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2, and so on...
- (b) **The Father** – Is supreme in authority among the Godhead. He is responsible for devising the purposes and plans (according to His will) that take place throughout all of creation and through the story of redemption. (Eph. 1:3-4, 9-11) See notes below for further discussion.
- (c) **The Son** – Is under the Father's authority and always seeks to do His Father's will. He is fully God, yet He takes His lead from the Father and seeks to glorify Him in everything He does (John 8:28-29, 42).
- (d) **The Spirit** – Is under both God the Father and God the Son. The Spirit seeks to lead people to the Son and glorify the



Son to the ultimate praise of the Father (John 16:14; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:11).

- (4) Activity (John 5:16-17)
 - (a) In creation (in the act and in its processes [especially His children]) (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3)
 - (b) In Jesus & The Spirit
3. God is Absolute Goodness & Love (as we will see in the coming weeks)

II. OUR FAMILY BELIEVES IN ***GOD THE FATHER WHO IS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS SEEN AND UNSEEN***

Facilitator Note: As mentioned above, in the Trinity, the Godhead is one in essence and three in persons. A good question to ask everyone in class is "What are some analogies that might help us comprehend the Trinity better?" (i.e. – An egg, forms of water, the sun, etc.) This is important to understand as we discuss specifically what roles and relationship each person of the Godhead plays in the coming weeks.

A. God the Father

1. Supreme in authority (both Jesus and The Spirit take their lead from God the Father)
2. God the Father devises the grand purposes and plans that take place in creation and redemption of the world. Often He does this through His Son and Spirit. (Phil. 2:13)
3. God the Father is Creator of all things.
 - a) See Genesis 1:1; Acts 17:24-28; Hebrews 11:3
4. An example of God the Father's role in redemption:
 - a) The Father purposed and planned the redemption of humankind.
 - b) The Father planned that it would take place through Jesus and HE therefore exalted Him (Eph. 1:9-10).
 - c) The Father chose us through Jesus before the world existed (Eph. 1:3-4).
 - d) The Father chose Jesus (the Son) as Savior through death for our sins (Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:20).
 - e) The Father sent the Son (John 8:42).
 - f) Jesus (the Son) was here to do the Father's will (John 6:38, and several others) and this was clearly evident in His prayer at Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39).
 - g) The Father put the Son on the cross to save us (Isa. 53:10; 2 Cor. 5:21).



REFLECTION

- Does God exist? Why?
- If you believe in God, does doubt disappear? Explain.
- Where do we find evidence for God?
- Describe the Trinity (Godhead).
- Discuss different activities attributed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (creation, redemption, ongoing sanctification).
- We have seen how the three Persons are distinct, how are they related?
- What's our relationship with God the Trinity?
 - God the creator (Gen 1:1-3, Deut 6:4)
 - Christ the redeemer (Gal 4:4-6)
 - Spirit the counselor (John 16:5-15)

PRAYER

NEXT WEEK: ONE GOD, THREE PARTS: God the Son (Part 1)