

# Biblical Topics

## Trinity

It may surprise you to learn that the word *Trinity* is not in the Bible. It was reportedly coined by an Early Church scholar named Tertullian, who is the oldest known Latin writer to use the term *Trinity*, as well as the earliest writer to give us a formal explanation of a trinitarian theology. The word *triune* simple means “three in one.” (Portals of Prayer – 6/15.14)

The only true God is the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three distinct Persons in one divine Being or Essence. Still there are not three Gods, but ONE God; nor is each of them a third God. An illustration from life would be the apple. It has an outer skin, flesh and the core. Yet it is only one apple.

- Deuteronomy 6:4: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
- 1 Corinthians 8:4 We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.
- Matthew 28:19: 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.
- 2 Corinthians 13:14: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- Matthew 3:16-17: At Jesus’ baptism the Father spoke from heaven and the Spirit descended in the form of a dove.

The three divine Persons are distinguished from each other. To the Father especially is ascribed the work of Creation; to the Son, the work of Redemption; to the Holy Spirit, the work of Sanctification. The “especially,” is used because none of these works is exclusively the work of the Person to whom it is primarily ascribed.

- Psalm 2:7: I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.
- John 15:26: When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.
- Galatians 4:6: Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.”

Much of the above information is taken from: “Luther’s Small Catechism” annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler and A Summary of Christian Doctrine also by Edward W. A. Koehler.