

Trinity Lecture - Part 1 of 3

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 6. We are going to spend about 105 minutes together over the next three weeks studying a topic that really is a study for the rest of our lifetime and then all of eternity.

And that is about our triune God. And one of the things that I have come to a conclusion about while going through this study and putting this together is that an understanding of our triune God requires a deep understanding of the incarnate Christ.

And in understanding those two, we'll start to see some things that God has revealed to us. The Trinity is understood by what the triune God has revealed to us. And so he has made known the things he once made known, and it's really inaccessible to the purely intellectual mind.

And it is given to us as kind of a relational thing. We've tried to liken it to different things, as Trent was talking about earlier. And all of those things fall short because, as God says, there's really nothing like him in this world.

So we're going to have trouble making comparisons. There's not many verses in the Bible that just simply explain the triune nature of God. I thought about that. Why is that? And I don't really know that I have an answer, but perhaps it's not something that God wanted us to just understand intellectually.

[1 : 27] It falls into the category of those things reserved for the people of faith, those things reserved for people who approach the Bible and say, it's not just an intellectual academic study for me.

This is my God. This is the God that I trusted in. This is the God that I believe in. And so this is the family secret, so to speak, about God.

We'll talk about a couple of things, and I want to tell you how we'll approach each one of the nights as we study this. Tonight we're going to look at the Trinity or the triune God revealing himself in the Old Testament.

Then next week we'll look at how Christ revealed the Trinity. And then on the third night we'll look at how the apostles taught the Trinity. And hopefully in those we'll develop a pattern because this is really something that's made for us to understand relationally as we study the Bible and as we follow the Lord in faith.

These things start to be revealed to us in the Scripture. So hopefully we'll be able to create some tools that we'll use to study the Scripture and see when God is revealing his triune self.

[2 : 37] There are some things that we want to lay out that are just kind of, maybe we call them ground rules for studying. Things that we know about God. We'll start with a definition.

There is one God. He is just one God. And he is, but in three co-equal and eternal persons he's revealed himself. No parts or separate beings.

All three persons are fully God. But with a distinction that each is not the other. And so the Son is different than the Father. And the Father is different than the Spirit. And the Spirit is different than the Son.

In that distinction. And so we talk about him in his essence and his nature in terms of oneness. But we talk about him manifest in three persons, yet in an undivided way.

And so this is how we'll look at the Trinity and we'll just kind of start with a definition there. I want to give you some methodology over the next three weeks as you're reading Scripture to sort of see some things.

[3 : 39] Some things that God has revealed about himself. An awareness of how the Trinity is presented. Help us understand the significance of each instance where God reveals himself in this way to us.

And so we know, as Trent also with a great introduction about the Trinity gave us, God is unseen unless he makes himself seen in some way.

Right? And so there is no way to know God. He is also unknowable unless he makes himself knowable in some way. In some way he's chosen to reveal himself.

And so the things we're looking for are things that God has revealed about himself. This is his testimony of himself. This is God telling us who he is and how we are to know him and how we are to have a relationship with him.

The things that he has done to make himself knowable really fall into two big categories. Things that he has said and things that he has done. And in his word we find the explanation of his deeds.

[4 : 42] Now the big deeds that have revealed God to us, you know these. The creation, obviously, is a revelation of God. And then the incarnation of Christ, another revelation of him, not just of him but part of his triune nature.

The scriptures, of course, that we have. It's a revelation of God. We're going to find the scriptures testifying of themselves that they are gods and they are divine. And so these are ways in which we know God and what he's like.

Isaiah chapter 40 verse 18 says, To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare unto him? And I say, that's trouble we have.

I mean, that's a problem. Is to try to say, here's what the Trinity is like. Sometimes we'll say it's like ice, water, and steam. But even that falls short because those things are only one thing at a time.

And God is one God who is manifest in three persons. And so all of our examples, as the scripture tells us, are going to fall short. The invisible God created the things which are visible.

[5 : 46] Right? And that's what the Bible tells us about him. The Bible says, things which are seen were not made of things which do appear in Hebrews. And then in Romans it says, For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.

So how do we know about him? Well, he says things and he does things. And in doing things, his saying explains what he's done. And so we can look at those and we can understand.

Now let's talk about some key considerations before we get to the structure of how we're going to spend our next three weeks and tonight especially. When you see God acting in the scripture, just always presume that's the triune God.

Just presume that all three persons are there. When you see any member of the Godhead at work, just presume they're all three there. Okay?

And that'll help you when you're looking at scripture to understand some things. Here's an example of how that works. This is a New Testament example, but I want to use it for this point. Let's take the resurrection.

[6 : 57] In Acts chapter 3 verse 26, the Bible says, So we see in that verse, God raised Jesus from the dead.

In John chapter 10 verse 17 and 18, the Bible says, Jesus speaking, Therefore, doth my father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. This is Jesus going to raise himself.

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down to myself. I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it again. So here's Jesus raising himself from the dead. We get to Romans chapter 8 verse 11.

The Bible says, But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you.

So we see God raising Jesus. We see Jesus raising himself. We see the Holy Spirit raising Jesus. And so when I see one member of the Trinity at work, I just presume they're all there.

[8 : 04] And so I don't have to worry about, okay, well, where's Jesus at while God's doing all this? Jesus is right there. Where was Jesus at during the creation? He was there creating. Where was the spirit at?

He was there at the creation, helping in the creation. And so we see that rule number one is when you see one member of the Trinity, just presume they're all there.

Second thing is never forget that God is one God. He is one God. Okay? And so with one will, one purpose, he is one God.

It's not like Jesus has a separate will. God has a different will. The Holy Spirit has a different will. There's one God, one will, one purpose. And the last thing, and this is really just an encouragement as you look at different things in the scripture.

It's just a lens to look at things and a lens to interpret things. Nothing in our description of the Trinity regarding Jesus or the Holy Spirit can give them a beginning.

[9 : 02] Nothing in the scripture can give Jesus or nothing in our interpretation can give Jesus or the Holy Spirit a beginning. They are eternal. The Son is eternal.

He's the eternal Son of God. The Spirit is the eternal Spirit of God. No, no beginning. And we'll talk about the incarnation next week. But Jesus is the eternal Son of God and the Holy Spirit is the eternal Spirit.

So what are we going to look at tonight? We're going to look at the Old Testament. We'll look at the Old Testament tonight and then we'll look at how Jesus introduced the Trinity next week. And then the week after that we'll look at how the apostles taught it and methodology for us to teach the Trinity as well.

I think we've already discovered that learning the Trinity is a relation-based educational process. And it's just going to happen by experiencing the triune God in your life as you follow him by faith.

And seeing how he reeled himself in the scripture and how he'll work in your life. So tonight we're going to talk about, oddly enough, first of all, his oneness. His oneness.

[10 : 06] He's introduced in the Old Testament as one God. One Lord. The Holy One. And he's introduced that way not because he's concealing the fact that he's a triune God.

But because all the nations around Israel were pagans that worshipped multiple gods. And the distinction that God is laying out for them is, your God is different because he's not a bunch of gods.

He's one God. And so we're going to look at the oneness of God from Deuteronomy. Then we're going to look at Old Testament revelations of the Trinity. God's going to use some neat things.

A pluralistic language. And he's going to show the Word of God doing things. And the Spirit of God doing things. And so he's going to start to reveal those things to us. But then the last and the best part that's going to carry us into next week is the Messiah.

You want to talk about a revelation of the Trinity. The Messiah is going to be this wonderful revelation of God's triune nature. And so we'll start tonight. Lessons, goals for tonight.

[11 : 10] Understanding God's emphasis on himself as one God in the Old Testament. One Lord. The Holy One. How he introduces his triune nature to his people relationally.

Not academically. You know, if it were academically, we could just go to big, long passages where he explains in detail how he's three in one. And he didn't do that. I mean, he's laid it out across the Bible so that we make these happy discoveries as we read our Bible on a day in and day out basis of who God is and how he relates to us.

We look at the creation, man language and the Lord, the pluralistic language and the work of the Holy Spirit. And we're going to understand how the anointed one, the Messiah, fits into all of this.

And so let's look at Deuteronomy chapter 6. I told you to go there. That wasn't a bait and switch. But go to Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 4 through 5. And we're going to look at a text that every person in Israel, every Jewish person in Israel, would have known and would have been told to study and to be able to repeat.

They did this on a regular basis. And so he says in Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 4, verse 4 to 5. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.

[12 : 31] One Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might. You've heard those words before, right? Those are New Testament words summarizing the commandments and how we're to keep them.

In verse 13, the Bible says that thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him and swear by his name. So fear him and serve him, swear by his name.

Okay? It's a singular name. He has one name. Okay? The Lord God is his name. And so he says in verse 14, you shall not go after other gods, plural, of the gods of the people which are round about you.

God is saying, here's how I'm different. I am one God. I am one God. There are not, there's not many of me. There's not a bunch of me. I have no rivals. I have no comparisons.

I am one God. We are the people of one God. And the Lord is his name. And that's what God wanted them to understand. Even today, when we baptize, we baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

[13 : 43] It's one name. It's one name for one God. Isaiah 44, verse 8. He says, Fear ye not, neither be afraid.

Have not I told thee from that time and have declared it? Yet even my witnesses, ye are even my witnesses.

Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God. I know not any. And so he is the one God. Isaiah 46, 9 through 10. They should have these verses on the board for you if you can, because we're going to go through quite a few of them.

Atypical of my normal messages and where I park in a passage and just go through. This one requires that we do some traveling. And so stay with me if you can, and they'll be on the board for the most part.

Isaiah 46, 9 through 10. Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else. I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand.

[14 : 50] I will do all my pleasure. No, no. He doesn't have to make an inquiry of anybody. He doesn't have to ask anybody if he can do his will. He is God and he is God alone.

This carries into the New Testament. Romans chapter 3, verse 30. Paul will write, Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith. He is recognizing that God is one God.

By the way, the devils even know there is one God. James chapter 2, verse 19. Thou believest there is one God. Thou doest well. The devils also believe and tremble.

There is one God. And he is the Lord. And so the nations around them were pagans. And they had multiple gods. And their gods had to do silly things. Like they fought amongst themselves.

And they, in their legends, they fought amongst themselves for power and for control. And they depended on humans to bring them food and to serve them and to feed them. Our God's not like that. Our God doesn't need anything.

[15 : 50] The psalm says if he was hungry, he wouldn't tell us. He has, he is the owner and creator of all that there is. And not like any other gods. You know, Laban had gods, right?

When Jacob and Rachel moved down, headed on, Rebecca headed on out of town. She took his gods and she, or Rachel, I'm sorry, took his gods and hid them.

Then when we get back into the hometown, Jacob had to advise his house to put away their strange gods. Before they left in the Exodus, God executed judgment against all the false gods.

In the land of Egypt. And then after crossing the Red Sea, Moses proclaimed that all other gods had been, God is greater than all other gods.

And God had put those down. Jethro, the priest of Midian, he declared that God was the greatest of all the gods. And when the children of Israel wondered what happened to Moses after he didn't come back in such a long time, they asked Aaron to make them some gods to lead them.

[16 : 55] And so the influences of the pagan gods all around Israel were very strong. And so God said, I want you to understand a major distinction between me and all the gods that are around you.

There's just one of me. And I am just one God. And so this is a big theme in the Old Testament because of this. The false gods of the Gentile nations had all kinds of influence on the people.

As we see, oftentimes Israel's told, you've got to get the gods out. You've got to get the idols out. You've got to get these things out. Okay. And so the point was to show Israel that the Lord is one God.

So we've got Deuteronomy 6, 4 through 5 where he says, Hear, Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. He is called the Holy One of Israel a bunch of times, about 50 times in the Old Testament.

In Psalms chapter 16, verse 10, the Bible says, For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. There's an allusion to the Trinity there we'll talk about next week more.

[18 : 01] Psalm chapter 78, verse 41. Yea, they turned back and tempted God and limited the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 12, 6.

Cry out and shout, Thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. Then Isaiah 40, verse 25. To whom then will you liken me, or shall I be equal?

Saith the Holy One. He's the Holy One. And so the Lord is one God. Now, he speaks, second thing, he speaks and reveals himself in a triune way.

Okay? And so he's going to use some pluralistic language. He's going to say, in Genesis chapter 1, verse 26, he's going to say, Let us make man in our image.

Okay? An introduction to some things, some distinctions about him. And after our likeness. Creation and man, the triune nature. God introduces himself to man as God, as deity, but also as the personal Lord.

[19 : 02] He puts man where he wants him. He speaks to man. And so this is God introducing himself in his relationship that he wants to have. Now, man understood this.

Man understood, hey, I've got a body. And it's got breath in it that gives me life. And there's a thing inside of me that feels and understands and rationalizes and has faith. And those sorts of things were not unusual to him.

Because God had made him in their image. 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verse 23. The Bible says, Genesis chapter 3.

God said, After man had taken of the tree, he was not supposed to. The Lord said, Behold, the man has become as one of us now. And this pluralistic language that God is using about himself is an indication that there's a distinction to God that we need to understand.

And Genesis 11, verse 7. He built this tower to Babel, expecting that no floods could get them now, and they'd make a name for themselves. And God said, Let us go down and confound their language.

[20 : 12] And in Isaiah chapter 6, verse 8, passage we use a lot. He says, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? And so God is using this.

These are all indications that God has some things to reveal to us about his nature. The language wherein his word and his spirit would go out from him and perform things. Psalm 33, 6.

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He starts to make this distinction between God and his word going out to do things, and his spirit going out to do things.

Okay? We're being trained slowly. We're being trained slowly in the Old Testament to start to understand what Jesus is going to reveal as the Messiah. And so Isaiah 55, 11.

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void. God's word goes out, and it does it work, and it comes back.

[21 : 12] And so Genesis 15, 1. The word of the Lord was verbal, came to Abraham in a vision. But by chapter 15, verse 4 and 5, it's a he that's leading Abram around.

And so the word is connected with, is given a personal pronoun there. These distinctions just didn't seem odd to them that heard it. It just didn't seem odd.

They didn't ask things about it. They didn't ask questions about it. They were led by the Lord. To them, the word of the Lord, the spirit of the Lord, and the Lord were one and the same thing. We're inseparable. Then the revelation of the spirit of the Lord and the spirit of God.

Well, Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, the spirit, right, of God moved upon the face of the waters during the creation. So many things we could talk about there. But he moved upon the face of the waters, and he's still moving upon the face of the earth today.

Moving in every nation, waiting on the word of God to get there, to preach to people so that they can be saved. When we get to Exodus 31, by the way, we've never left the first five books of the Old Testament when we're talking about all these things, right?

[22 : 16] The one God, and then the God who manifests himself in this pluralistic language, and we and us and these plural pronouns. And also the God who is talking about the Holy One and his spirit, the spirit of God.

And so we see in Exodus 31, 3, Bezalel is filled with the spirit of God. He's given the spirit of God of wisdom and understanding. We do get to 1 Samuel 10, and the spirit of God comes upon Saul.

Job 33, 4, Job recognizes the work of the Almighty and of the spirit of God from creation. And in Ezekiel, we routinely see God here and his spirit doing something over here.

But when I see the spirit of God at work, I know all of God is at work. And when I see God sitting over here, I know that all of God is sitting over there. And when I see Jesus doing something, I know that it's all of the Godhead that is working there because this is how he's revealed himself.

Now, we have about 11 minutes left. Let's look at the promise of the coming Messiah. The word Messiah is a great word, and we use it a lot.

[23 : 27] It's interesting. It's only found twice in the Bible in the book of Daniel, in one chapter in the book of Daniel. But we know what it means. It means the anointed one. Now, anointing means like smearing on. And so they poured or they smeared on oil and anointing.

But anointing is really representative of a choice that's been made for somebody to do some specific thing, whether it's in the priesthood or whether it was a king.

In this particular case, the anointed one of Scripture, of course, the model, the ideal anointed one of Scripture is the Lord Jesus Christ. He's the anointed one.

And so the word Christ means anointed one. And so whether it's Messiah or anointed or Christ, it's all talking about the same thing. It's the anointed one, the one chosen by God.

And so we have God has made a choice here for a specific task. The messianic language or the language of the anointing and the Messiah in the Old Testament really had two specific functions.

[24 : 30] Because they had kings and they had prophets and they had priests in the Old Testament, which were never quite got the whole job done. Right. The kings were often an utter failure.

And even the priesthood was plagued with problems with sin and idolatry and other things like that. And so the model, the view of the anointed in the Old Testament has this side that's very human and fails and doesn't measure up.

But it also has this side that is the ideal or the model anointed one, which is the figure of Christ. Okay. And it's the one, it's the Messiah that is expected or the Messiah that is hoped for.

So when we read these types of passages, we should take a look and see if the anointing fell on someone completely human. And so there we can expect probably a failure of some point.

Or if the anointing is speaking about the anointed one, the Lord's anointed, the Lord's Christ. So we're going to go to Psalm chapter 2. Psalm chapter 2.

[25 : 39] And these will be our three main texts for the night. It will be Deuteronomy chapter 6, Psalms chapter 2. And the barrage of Bible verses is about at an end.

We're going to plant in Psalms chapter 2 and Psalm 110 for just a minute. Psalms chapter 2, we're going to see something and try to make a quick analysis on this.

Psalm chapter 2, the Bible says, why do the heathen rage? And the people imagine a vain thing.

The vain thing they imagine is that they can overthrow God and get out from under his authority, get out from under his judgment or wrath. The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed.

Okay. And so we have this introduction of the Lord's anointed here. Now, God identifies his anointed, right, as his own son. Even before the passage is out.

[26 : 41] Verse 7. Language you probably have seen in the book of Hebrews before.

He's also to be revered and feared, but he will bless them that trust him. And verse 12. Kiss the son, lest he be angry. And you perish from the way. And when his wrath is kindled but a little blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

And so Acts chapter 4 tells us that this is a psalm of David. It announces and lets us know that it's a psalm of David. And with the announcement of David's kingdom and a throne that would continue forever, hopes of the ideal king that would rescue them from their oppression materialized in their mind.

And so they really started to see, rather than the Lord's anointed, they started to see this earthly king that would be their rescue from all these things.

2 Samuel chapter 7 verse 16. He says, And thine house and thy kingdom, speaking about David, shall be established forever. Thy throne shall be established forever. And this fell to them like their hope.

[27 : 52] Now, we're building up to the incarnation of Christ. Because we've seen Messiah in the Old Testament, the anointed one, is a figure in humanity that represents kings or priests or prophets that don't quite measure up.

But the Messiah or the anointed one, God's anointed one, is the Lord Jesus Christ who will come. He will be the perfect priest. He will be the king that will set up his kingdom on this earth and rule and reign in righteousness.

So that brings us to Psalm chapter 110. Remember those three passages, Deuteronomy 6, Psalms 2, and Psalm 110. So many things in these Psalms that we'll have to pass over for the sake of just looking at the Trinity.

And I'm going to try to bring this all together in a few minutes here. Psalms 110, God speaking to God. Go try to unravel that in your mind. God speaking to God.

It's just amazing. And he says in verse 1, he says, The Lord said unto my Lord, and this is David writing. Later the scriptures will say David was speaking by the Holy Spirit.

[28 : 59] You'd have to speak by the Holy Spirit if you were recording God speaking to God. There is just no other way to do that. And so if you want to know who's writing the Bible, that's the Holy Spirit. The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at thy right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Right? And so he's saying something here fully divine that only a king of kings and lord of lords could say. Sit at my right hand while I make your enemies into your footstool.

In Mark chapter 12, this passage is quoted so often in the New Testament. Mark chapter 12, Jesus said unto them while he taught in the temple, How do the scribes say that Christ is the son of David?

Verse 36, For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, David said by the Holy Ghost, said to my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Verse 37, David therefore calleth him Lord, whence is he then his son? Here's the question. How can Christ be both David's Lord and his son?

[30 : 04] There's a thousand years between David and this moment in time. How can he say that David can say that Christ is both his Lord and, as the scribes say, his son?

The answer is the eternal son of God is the Christ. And the incarnation is how he is both Lord and son. And so God is revealing through the incarnation an aspect of how the Trinity works.

Jesus then will confirm the incarnation. Isaiah chapter 61 verse 1, And if you wonder who the Lord's anointed is in Isaiah chapter 61, Jesus walks into the synagogue one day and opens a scroll of the book of Isaiah.

And he says, This day, and he reads that verse, and he says, This day is that scripture fulfilled in your ears. Jesus is saying, I am the anointed one of Isaiah 61.

And he's making that point. And so Jesus confirms that. Jesus declares the anointed one, the Messiah, from the book of Isaiah, is him. The promise of the coming Messiah was going to reveal the Trinity in a new and magnificent way.

[31 : 29] One of the greatest things about reading the New Testament in the eyes of the apostles and the guys who were doing the writing of the scripture that day under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is that they're looking at the Old Testament in a brand new way.

They're looking at the Old Testament through the lens of the resurrected Christ. And so many things now became clearer than they had ever been before. And so as we look at this, I just want to give you a quick summary.

I can get this done in two minutes. God introduces himself as one God, God as one God. That's not because he's only one God and he changes later. He introduces himself as one God so that they knew that they believed in one God and not the, like the pagans all around them who believed in many gods.

We don't believe in many gods. I mean, there's countries that have a God for about everything you could imagine. They're powerless. They're false gods. They have no real power. They have no real ability to do anything.

But they're worshiped nonetheless by people who don't know the one God. Of the Bible. And so he tells us that in Deuteronomy chapter six, here, Israel, the Lord, our God is one Lord.

[32 : 43] He tells him after that, he said, you know what? Put that on your doorpost. Matter of fact, put it on your arm, put it on your head. So when somebody is looking at you in the eyes, they see that. Talk about it.

When you're walking down the street, talk about it. When you're in the house, he says, just talk about that all day long so that you always remember you are people of the one true God, the Holy one of Israel.

He said, I'm the Lord. I don't need to look for another because there isn't one. Then God reveals himself and gives us information about his triunity or his triune nature with the pluralistic language.

He talks about we, us, and our uses these personal pronouns that are plural descriptions of his Holy Spirit going out and working. We didn't have time to look at as many of those as we, as we could have.

You can do that for the rest of your life. Just notice those every time you read the Bible. Then descriptions of the word of God going out and the word of God goes out first as the word of God.

[33 : 41] And then it's personified. Then all of a sudden it's he that's leading them around. And so God revealed himself to us through the word. You're so familiar with Genesis one, one through three.

And you're also familiar with the parallels in John one, one through three, where God literally tells us that the word of God is God and also took on flesh. And so in verse 14, and then the last thing, the revelation of the Lord's anointed, anointed means chosen Messiah smearing on the one that God has selected for this.

The work that Jesus did could be done by no other. But when you see Jesus at work, just know they're all there. And when you see God at work, just know they're all there.

We can never do anything that gives Jesus or the Holy Spirit a beginning. They didn't have that. They are eternal as is the, the, the Godhead.

The Lord's anointed God God. So, the city God gives that.