



The Trinity – January 8, 2020  
Led by: Michelle Olsta

**Verses Covered This Week**

*Ephesians 1:3 – 14*

*John 1:9 – 10*

*2 Corinthians 13:14*

*Psalms 139:1-10, 13 – 16*

*John 14:7 – 8*

*John 8:58 – 59*

*Matthew 3:16 – 17, 4:1*

*Ephesians 4:30*

*Acts 13:2*

*Matthew 24:36*

*John 4:3 – 6*

*John 17:1 – 5*

*Philippians 2:4 – 9*

*Matthew 28:18 - 20*

OK, ladies, welcome. This is different, right. We don't have Chris. We're facing the wrong direction. And y'all are all still here anyway. Happy new year. You know our church is in a time of transition so as Chris is leaving, the Women's Ministry wanted to continue this class for you. So Autumn Hokenson and I are taking over the next four to however many weeks they need us to. We've been through this curriculum together multiple times with Chris and then we taught last year at 06:30 in the morning. I don't remember seeing any of your faces in the morning class. We probably didn't have very good faces on then either. But we're just here serving the Lord and serving at request from the church. We are not experts, but we are teaching Chris', pretty much word for word, Bible verse for Bible verse, oh no, not word for word. Because I don't have any gun examples. I do not hunt and many other things. In some ways, we found that having women teach this class kind of brings in a little bit more relationship and I hope that you experience that. I mean, we love Chris because He's so wise, but sometimes He can be a little intimidating to ask a question to. And so I want you to know at the end of this class we're going to do the same thing that we always did with him. It's going to be open for questions and also open for you to pipe up with some knowledge that you have on the subject that we don't. So I hope that you enjoy this. We're starting off this year with the Trinity; one of our foundational things that we have. I'm going to try to keep the verses up on the screen. You know, I haven't played with this technology

in about a year, so if I get rusty and it says, “Michelle’s phone’s disconnected.” Would you just let me now? You can just kind of pull it up. I feel like I rushed through and didn’t even introduce myself. Did I say, “I’m Michelle Olsta?” Welcome. I feel like I’m doing the Central Focus up here and you already know who I am but there’s a good chance you don’t. So forgive me for that.

So, ladies, let’s just go ahead and get to it. This is one of these foundational things of our faith that’s really important; the Trinity. But it’s also a little complicated to explain. You know, it’s kind of like when you went through the lesson with Chris on angels. You can’t say exactly what does the angel look like. Because there’s really nothing on earth that looks like an angel. Well that’s the same thing with the Trinity. People will try to tell you, “Well it’s sort of like an egg. You know, there’s a shell and a yolk and white.” There’s just not a perfect explanation, but what we’re going to walk through today is the Biblical explanation of what the Trinity is. So the Bible fully explains it. It’s just our human minds have trouble picturing exactly what it is. So the Trinity comes from the Latin word, *trinitas*, which simply means three. So that’s easy. Our God is three in one. He is God, He’s the Holy Spirit, and He’s the Jesus. Today’s lesson is important because Chris says the Trinity is really the number one way that cults try to get Christians away from their faith. He says two of the things they do, specifically Mormons, Jehovah’s Witness, they like to deny the deity of Jesus, or deny the personality of the Holy Spirit. So we’re just going to dig in. We’re going to talk this through and get you ready in case one of those people come knocking on your door some morning.

The word Trinity doesn’t actually appear in the Bible but it is acknowledged in the Bible. We’re not going to flip there, but just to start off here in Ephesians 1:3 -14 it really acknowledges this three-person God, the Trinity, that accomplished the redemption. So we have God the Father who chose to redeem us. We have God the Son accomplishing the redemption. And the Holy Spirit applies the redemption. So that’s where praise for the Trinity begins in Ephesians. So to get this, we’re going to go all the way back to the beginning. So now if you want to join me, you can flip over or scroll over to Genesis 1:26, and I’ll put it up here for you too. Does that work for you? Good. Genesis 1:26. This is the first example that God really uses to allude to the fact that He is indeed a three-person God. We’re going down to 26.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let Us make man in our image after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, over the livestock, and over all of the earth, over every creeping thing that creeps on earth.”

So you don’t have to be an English major to figure this out, right. Us means more than one. We’ve got more than one Creator in this. So there is only one God. So we have the Trinity creating. We have Jesus creating. We have God creating. We’ve got all three of them, as us, making man in their image. Let’s flip over to John 1:9 – 10. OK. Here we go again. We’ve got John, he’s talking about Jesus down here in verse 9.

<sup>9</sup>The true Light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him.

So John’s saying there isn’t a single thing that Jesus did not create. So that ties back to what we were just reading in Genesis. So you don’t have God the Father creating the water and the trees, and maybe Jesus is making the fish, and then you’ve got the Holy Spirit over here working on

weather or something like that. The Trinity works together in agreement. So they did this all working together on each step. So you see I've written up here, you've got God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. We just covered that they can work together, but they can also work separately. So in creation, we have them working together. And then we're going to go over to 2 Corinthians 13:14. This is going to talk a little bit about the redemption. So we're at 2 Corinthians 13:14.

<sup>14</sup>The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and all the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

So you have God's love that's motivating our redemption. You have the grace of Jesus Christ. Now the grace here is not an emotion, grace. This is the act of grace. Jesus' grace was what He performed by going to the cross. And then lastly, we have the fellowship of the Spirit. So here in redemption we have all three parts of God performing different roles but in agreement for one cause. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have separate roles here. So if God didn't choose to redeem us, then the Son doesn't go to the cross, then there's no need for the Holy Spirit. If God chose to redeem us, but Jesus did not go to the cross, then, again, the Holy Spirit would not arrive. But if God the Father chose to convict us, Jesus chooses the cross, but the Holy Spirit doesn't convict, it's still no benefit to you because you can't be saved. So you can see that in redemption all three of these roles have to be played out. They're different roles, but they have to be played out for redemption to happen. They're dependent on each other. Does that make sense? Let me show you as best I can. We're going to go over to Psalm 139. We're looking at verses 1 through 10. So over to Psalm 139. I love listening to some of this. We're picking up right here at verse 1.

<sup>1</sup>O Lord, You have searched me and know me! <sup>2</sup>You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You discern my thoughts from afar. <sup>3</sup>You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup>Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. <sup>5</sup>You hem me in, behind and before, and lay Your hand upon me. <sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

That all-knowing love from God is really a comfort to me. And what we just saw in 139 is that God is all knowing. He's not just on some topics, but all of them including you and including me. He knows your thoughts before you think them. He's omniscient. As we go down into verse 7.

<sup>7</sup>Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? <sup>8</sup>If I ascend to heaven, You are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there! <sup>9</sup>If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, <sup>10</sup>even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

So what we're establishing here, God is ever present. There's nowhere that you can go where He is not. And then we have this third aspect. So we've covered Him being omniscient. He's ever present. And we need to know these things as we build forward. So stay with me. Our third aspect is down in verses 13 – 16.

<sup>13</sup>For You formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup>I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul

knows it very well. <sup>15</sup>My frame was not hidden from You, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. <sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in Your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

We have this all powerful God who can do anything. We have these three really defining statements about God. He knows everything. He's everywhere. He can do anything. If you don't exhibit these three characteristics, you are not God. So if we're looking at a Trinity, this means that Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God all have to be exhibiting these characteristics. Does that make sense? So we're going to walk through this a little bit more. We know that, for instance, the angels don't have these three qualities. Demons don't have this quality. We don't even have those qualities. Even before the fall we didn't have those qualities.

So let's look at Jesus. Because Jesus says, "I am God." There are several places that He states this. So we're going to start in John 14:7 – 9. Now this is one of those places that Jesus is absolutely making the claim, "I am God." Which backs up the fact that our Trinity is three parts. So John 14:7 – 9. This is Jesus talking.

<sup>7</sup>If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him. <sup>8</sup>Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know Me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

So this is Jesus saying clearly, "I am God." And it's a big concept. It was even hard for the disciples. I mean, there's evidence here that it was difficult. Even for those in Jesus' presence to fully grasp that He is God. So you're not alone if you need a little assistance trying to wrap your head around all of this, right. These people were with Jesus and they're still kind of like, "Can you help me clear this up?" But Jesus says, He is God and God is Him. Now we're going to go just a little to the left over to John 8:58 – 59. Here Jesus just backs the whole point up again. We're going to start at John 8.

<sup>58</sup>Jesus says to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

So Jesus called Himself by the name we see God use. He says, "I Am." We've all heard this before, right. We sing the song, The Great I Am. This is who God says that He is. This is who Jesus says He is. So He's stepping out using a name that is well-known at this time for God saying, "I Am." And Jesus steps up and says, "I Am." So how many of you remembered that this all started back when Moses says to God, "If you want me to go to Israel, what's Your name?" And God said to Moses, "Tell them, I Am is calling them out." So but here in verse 59, this is where Jesus has just said to them, "I Am."

<sup>59</sup>So they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

So you're kind of going here, "He just told them He's God, then He hides, then He leaves the temple." Well Jesus basically just told them, "I Am God." And because He called Himself by the name of God, that's blasphemy in that culture, and they would stone you to death. So this text

proves to us that Jesus is God. And He is not meant to die through a stoning in the temple which is why He leaves. So we're going to go over to Matthew 3:16 – 17. We're going to talk a little bit more now about the Holy Spirit. So we'd see God saying, "There was Us creating the world." We see Jesus saying, "I'm one of the Us." Now we're going to go to the Holy Spirit over in Matthew 3. So this is our third part of the Trinity.

<sup>16</sup>And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; <sup>17</sup>and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." <sup>1</sup>Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

So how does this prove that the Holy Spirit was God? If the Holy Spirit is not God, in this scenario right here, Jesus just sinned because He followed someone who wasn't God. It says right here that He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. So if Jesus was sinning and following someone else besides God, then He is no longer sinless, right. If He obeyed someone who wasn't God, and we know that Jesus died sinless because the Scripture tells us that He did. So if Jesus didn't sin here, then the Holy Spirit is God leading Jesus into the wilderness. You can just look up to the screen for these next couple of verses. I'm going to quickly go through them. But we've got Ephesians 4:30.

<sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

So we have the Holy Spirit sealing us for the day of redemption. We've got Acts 13:2

<sup>2</sup>While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

So here we have the Holy Spirit being listed as that of God and in Acts we actually see the Spirit performing Godly tasks by calling humans to do work. And if you notice, these quotes are not a mistake. The Holy Spirit is actually talking. So again, it's showing another one of God's qualities. So before we kind of close all of this up, I want to cover some of the arguments that you're going to hear from the cults. Of course, they want to tell you Jesus is not God, that there is no Trinity. Because it's a little complicated to explain, we get all tripped up over it. You know what I mean? So then you're kind of like, "Maybe I don't have this right." And all of a sudden once question is brought in, that's when they can take you away from the faith that we know is true. So this is where we're hitting first. The number one way. They've got a couple of verses that they're going to use for you. I wrote on the back side of here because I get a little nervous when I'm writing and you're watching me. I'm sure I'm going to misspell something or I don't know. I already don't write very well up here. So let me just turn this around so we can get to our next argument.

Arguments against the Trinity. So if Jesus was God, He would, this is what they're going to tell you. If Jesus was God, He would have these different things. So we're going to flip over to Matthew 24:36. Now remember, these verses I'm pulling up, this is what someone who's trying to argue out of the Trinity is pulling up for you. OK. So they're going to tell you, "Well, look right here in Matthew. It says:

<sup>36</sup>“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

So what they’re going to say to you, “Wait a minute. If Jesus is God”, and we covered God is all-knowing, right, we covered that in the beginning. “How come He does not know the hour of His death? He’s supposed to be all-knowing, right?” OK. We’ll get to the answer. But just follow me through a couple more things they’re going to say to you. Argument 2. Going over to John 4:3 – 6. OK. So we’ve got argument 1: how could He be God if He doesn’t know the hour of His death. Then they’re going to pull this. John 4:3 – 6.

<sup>3</sup>He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. <sup>4</sup>And He had to pass through Samaria. <sup>5</sup>So He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Jacob’s well was there; so Jesus, wearied as He was from His journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

And I don’t exactly know what that means, but I’m sure about six o’clock. I’m usually pretty weary and I’m grateful to sit down for a minute so I know how He feels. And here He is sitting beside the well. Well the argument is, if Jesus is God, He would not be tired. Right. Because He can do anything. So why couldn’t He make this little trip?

Argument 3. We’re going to go over to John 17:1 – 5.

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus spoke the words, He lifted His eyes to heaven, and He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You, <sup>2</sup>since You have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. <sup>3</sup>And this is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. <sup>4</sup>I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave Me to do. <sup>5</sup>And now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.

So if Jesus was God, He would not need to beg for God’s glory because He can do anything. He would already have this. So this is where they’re going to take you. Three strong arguments. And you can see already you’re kind of like, “OK, what’s going on here?” Why would Jesus be begging for God’s glory? So they’re going to hit you with these things that we’ve talked about. He isn’t omniscient, He isn’t all-powerful, He does not have God’s glory. So how can He be God, right? But our answer comes from Philippians 2:4 – 9. So this is where Jesus is getting baptized. If you remember that, He’s being held under water which we know is the symbol of dying and coming up new. So let’s look in Philippians 2:4.

<sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup>Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name.

So we're kind of focusing there on 6 where it says, who, though He was in the form of God, He did not count it as something to be grasped. He's God but He emptied Himself taking on the form of man. So when He emptied Himself, He did not quit being God, He drowned to living life on earth as God. He drowned during His baptism to living life on earth as God. He chooses to live a human life and He lives it under the direction of the Holy Spirit. So that's why these things are happening. Because He is, at this point, humbled Himself to human form. That's why He doesn't know the hour of His death. That's why He's tired, right. He is living life as a human. He chose not to be God when He was living here on earth so He could bring about our redemption.

Lastly Jesus lets us use Matthew 28 to kind of put a bow on this. Matthew 28:18 – 20.

<sup>18</sup>And Jesus said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

So Jesus is saying, "I have all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me." And then He commands us to be baptized in the names of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Because it's the work of all three of these parts of God separately and together that have achieved salvation for us. So as we go through this, maybe there are some questions you'd like to ask. What do you think about the Trinity?

### Questions

**Q.** Can you just repeat what you said about when He was baptized, He was drowned. What does that mean?

**A.** Drowned to living life on earth as God.

**Q.** How do you imagine the Trinity? What physical form does the Trinity take? Because we can see Jesus, human.

**A.** I don't see any Biblical references that describe to us what the Trinity would look like as the three parts working together. And so often God tells us you really can't behold, you can't put your eyes on Me. You couldn't take in His likeness. So I don't really think that there's anyplace that tells us what we can imagine this to look like. Which is why we kind of trying to put earthly things on it. Why you hear some of the earthly examples, like the egg. Have you heard any other ones where people are like, this is how you describe the Trinity. Maybe a glass of ice water. Yes. And I think that's why we struggle. Because in our flesh, we just want to see this. But that's not something that God's allowing us to know right now.

I think it's moderately clear, though, that it's not a physical body in the sense when he's talking about things that are eternal and obviously the Holy Spirit would be a Spirit and not a body. Jesus had to come and get a body. So those parts of it, you look at when Moses

goes to see God. There are things that you would read in those passages that would a little more than imply it's not a physical walking being that you would recognize with a body.

So we have, the truth is like the Spirit doesn't seem to have a physical, in the Bible we don't seem to have a physical explanation for it. And yet we were created in God's image. So we wonder what part of His image are we.