

# Life in the Trinity

*In him was **life** and the **life** was the light of men.*

*John 1.4*

Life in the Trinity

At the center of the  
universe is a *relationship*

Life in the Trinity

*Definition of God's Life:*

intimate knowledge of the divine love  
eternally shared between Father, Son and Spirit

## Life in the Trinity

Goal: Answer two questions...

1. What does it mean that God is Trinity?
2. What are some practical applications of this glorious reality?

Life in the Trinity

We are not thinking human thoughts  
about God;  
we are thinking God's thoughts  
about God.

## Life in the Trinity

In other words, the Trinity is not some man-made theological concept — it is the central identity of who God is.

## Life in the Trinity

Jeremiah 10:6-7... There is none like you, O LORD;  
you are great, and your name is great in might.  
Who would not fear you, O King of the nations?  
For this is your due; for among all the wise ones of the  
nations and in all their kingdoms there is none like you.

Exodus 9.14...so that you may know that there is  
none like me in all the earth.

Life in the Trinity

None like our God:

1 as 3

and

3 in 1



Life in the Trinity

# Recommended Books:

Life in the Trinity

*Donald Fairbairn*

Delighting in the Trinity

*Michael Reeves*

Experiencing the Trinity

*Darrell Johnson*

Life in the Trinity

Genesis 1.1-2, 26:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image,  
after our likeness.”

Life in the Trinity

*God's image in us:*

intimate knowledge of the divine love  
eternally shared between Father, Son and Spirit

Life in the Trinity

Mark 12.28-31

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?”

## Life in the Trinity

### Mark 12.28-31

Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ [Dt 6.4-5] The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ [Lev 19.18] There is no other commandment greater than these.”

## Life in the Trinity

# The Lord is One (in three Persons)

	<b>Father</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>Holy Spirit</b>
Called God	Phil. 1:2	John 1:1,14	Acts 5:3-4
Creator	Isaiah 64:8	Col. 1:15-17	Job 33:4
Resurrects	1 Thess. 1:10	John 2:19	Rom. 8:11
Indwells	2 Cor. 6:16	Col. 1:27	John 14:17
Everywhere	1 Kings 8:27	Matt. 28:20	Psalms 139:7-10
All knowing	1 John 3:20	John 16:30	1 Cor. 2:10-11
Sanctifies	1 Thess. 5:23	Heb. 2:11	1 Pet. 1:2
Life Giver	Gen. 2:7	John 1:3	2 Cor. 3:6,8
Fellowship	1 John 1:3	1 Cor. 1:9	2 Cor. 13:14
Eternal	Psalms 90:2	Micah 5:1-2	Rom. 8:11
A Will	Luke 22:42	Luke 22:42	1 Cor. 12:11
Loves	John 3:16	Eph. 5:25	Rom. 15:30
Speaks	Matt. 3:17	Luke 5:20	Acts 13:2

## Life in the Trinity

### Matthew 3.16-17

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; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

## Life in the Trinity

### Matthew 28.17-20

And when they [the eleven disciples] saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”



## Life in the Trinity

### Hebrews 1.1-3

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

## Life in the Trinity

### John 10.27-33

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

## Life in the Trinity

### John 10.27-33

The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?”

The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.”

Life in the Trinity

# I and the Father are one

Luke 18.18-19

And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said to him,

“Why do you call me good?

No one is good except God alone.

## Life in the Trinity

### John 14.25-27

“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.

## Life in the Trinity

### John 16.13-15

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

## Life in the Trinity

# The doctrine of the Trinity:

1. There is only one God
2. The Father is God
3. The Son is God
4. The Holy Spirit is God
5. The Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit
6. The Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit
7. The Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son

Life in the Trinity

*Tim Keller*

*John Piper*

4 minute discussion on the Trinity



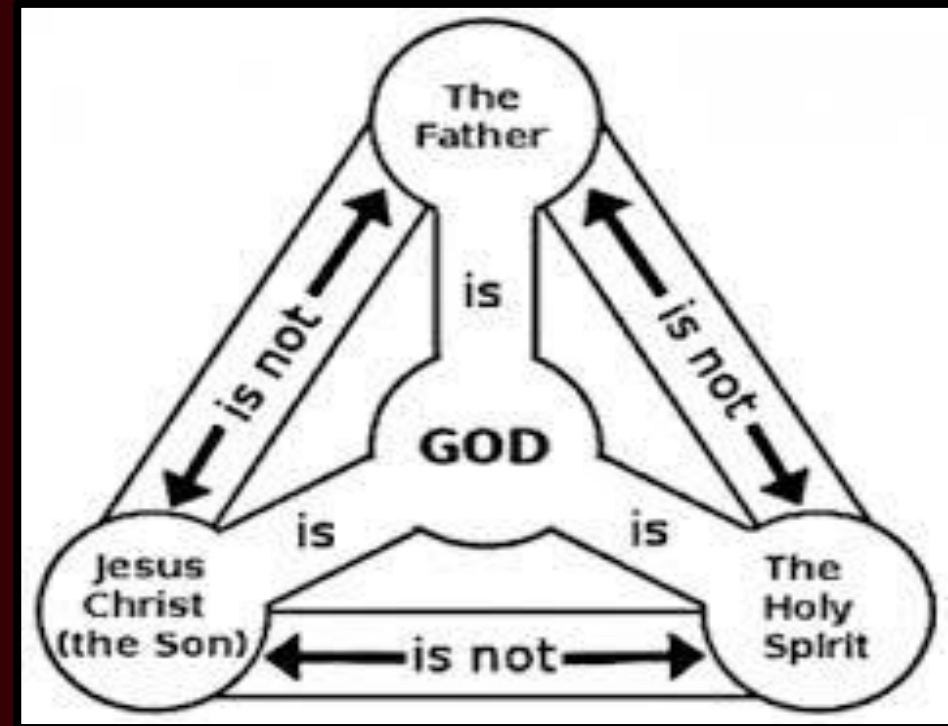
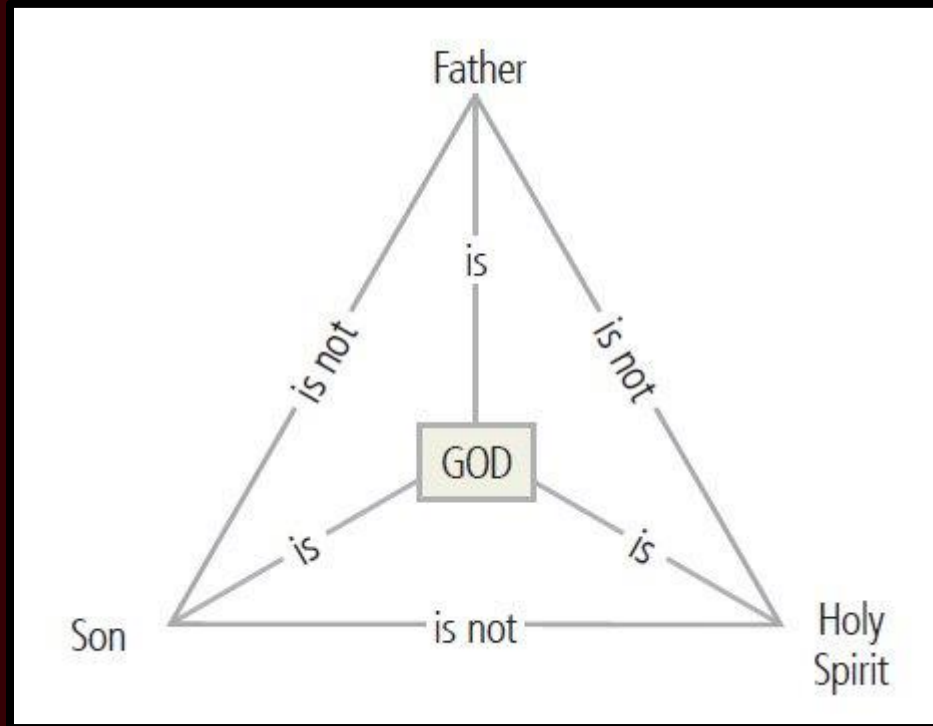


Life in the Trinity

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# Life in the Trinity



Life in the Trinity

## The Athanasian Creed (5<sup>th</sup> century):

...we worship one God in trinity and the trinity  
in unity, neither blending their **persons**,  
nor dividing their **essence**.

For the person of the Father is a distinct person,  
the person of the Son is another, and that of  
the Holy Spirit, still another.

But the divinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal.

Life in the Trinity

Kevin DeYoung:

Essence: think “Godness”. All three Persons of the Trinity share the same “Godness”.  
None is more essentially divine than the rest.

Person: think “a particular individual distinct from the others.”

Life in the Trinity

Kevin DeYoung:

“Theologians use these terms because they are trying to find a way to express the relationship of three beings that are equally and uniquely God,  
but not three Gods.

That’s why we get the tricky (but learnable)  
language of essence and persons...  
we want to be true to the biblical witness.”

Life in the Trinity

Kevin DeYoung:

“The Persons are not three gods; rather they dwell in communion with each other as they subsist in the divine nature without being compounded or confused.”

Does God exist?

Life in the Trinity

Exist vs. Subsist (*enacademic.com*)

To exist is 'to live', 'to be,' 'to have life':

"Raccoons exist in that forest."

"Hatred of war exists in all nations."

To subsist also means 'to have life' but with the

*additional idea of doing so by dependence upon something else*, such as food, water, and shelter:

"Only an experienced explorer can subsist in the Arctic."

## Life in the Trinity

### John 5:19; John 8:28; John 14:10

So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.

So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.



Life in the Trinity

Every analogy of the trinity  
breaks down at some level

“God is not an egg!”

## Life in the Trinity

Using the finite creation to describe  
an infinite God will always create  
some degree of error.

So we need to tread carefully...

Life in the Trinity

But, do we simply throw up our  
hands in defeat and say:

“*it’s a mystery*”?

Or were we meant to wrestle?

Life in the Trinity

Michael Reeves:

“...one has successfully avoided all sorts of nasty-sounding heresies, but at the cost of wondering who or what one is actually to worship.

Enter the word mystery, a word so soothing it let's us feel that our absolute cluelessness about how God can be both one and three is actually how things are supposed to be.”

## Life in the Trinity

### Michael Reeves:

“God is a mystery in that who he is and what he is like are secrets, things we would never have worked out by ourselves. But this triune God has revealed himself to us.

To know the Trinity is to know God, an eternal and personal God of infinite beauty, interest and fascination.”

Life in the Trinity

Michael Reeves:

“The Trinity is a God we can know, and forever grow to know better. Pressing into the Trinity we are doing what, in Psalm 27, David said he could do all the days of his life:

we are gazing upon the beauty of the Lord.

And as we do so, I hope you will begin to feel as David did, and that you could do the same.”

## Life in the Trinity

Looking at the physical creation is a means to point us to spiritual realities

Psalm 19.1-2...The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech,  
and night to night reveals knowledge.

Life in the Trinity

In creation, we see the finger prints  
of God as Trinity.

Rom 1.20... For his invisible attributes,  
namely, his eternal power and divine nature,  
have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation  
of the world, in the things that have been made.



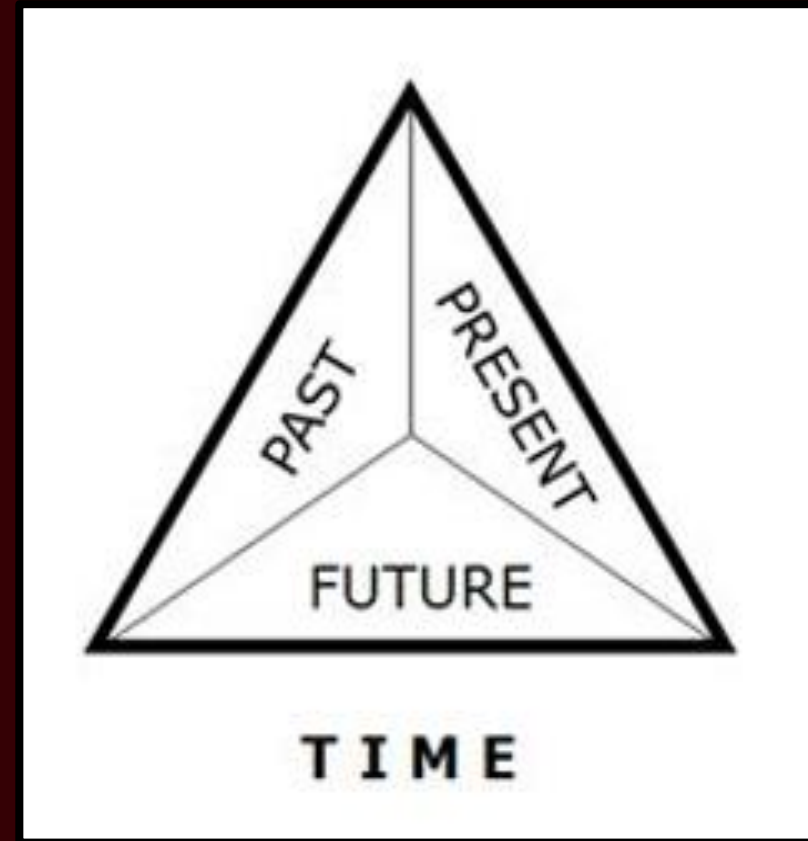
## Life in the Trinity

### Finger Print 1:

Past: a few short years

Present: infinitely short

Future: infinitely long

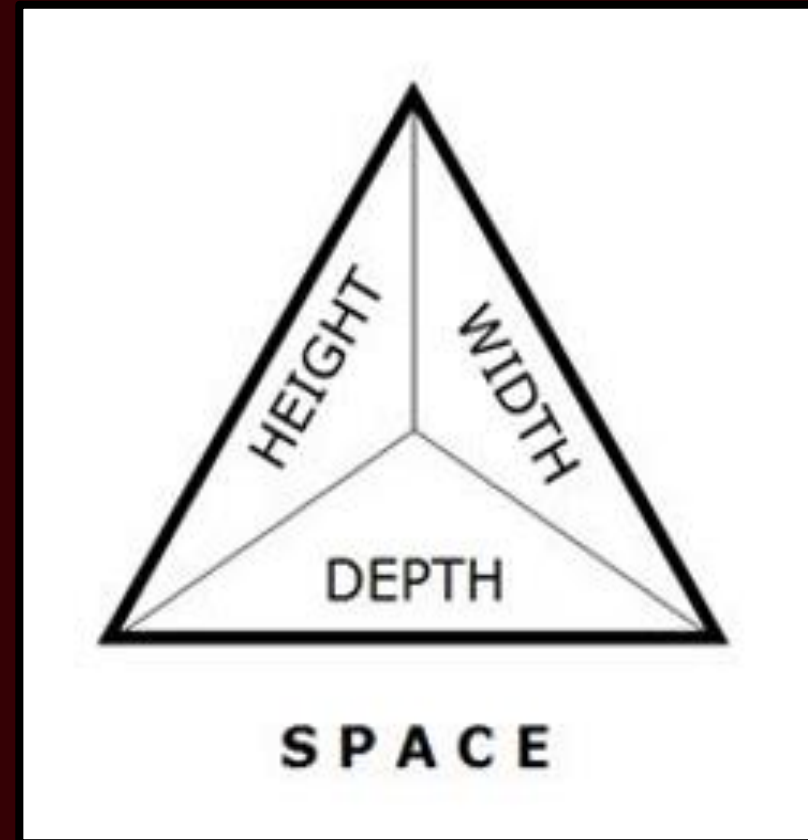


## Life in the Trinity

### Finger Print 2:

Physical Life exists  
in three dimensions  
(why not only one or two?)

*Flatland - 1884*



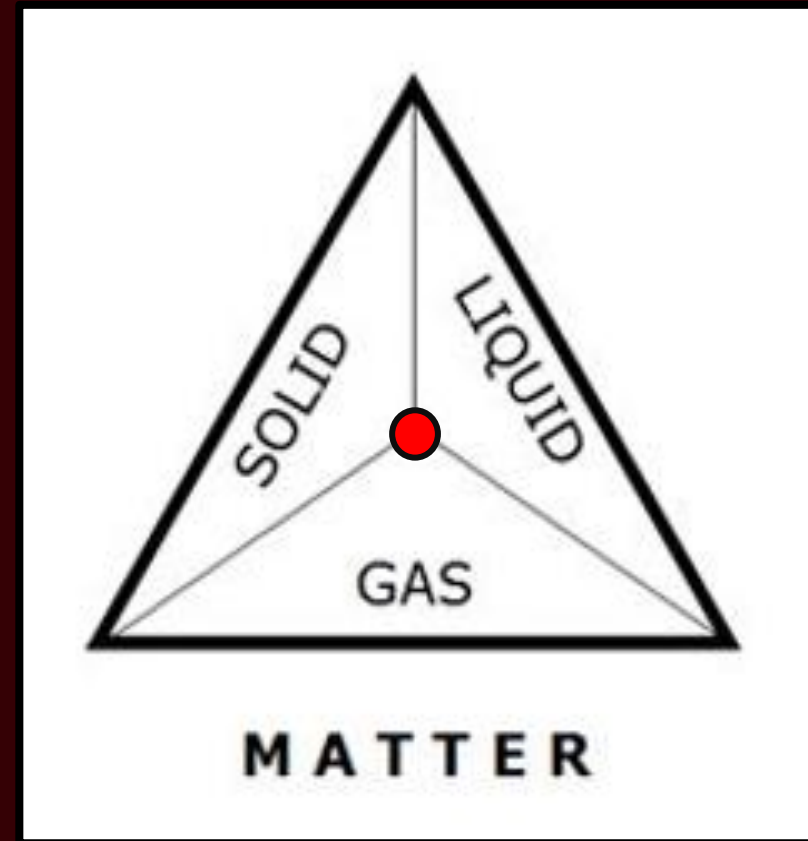
## Life in the Trinity

### Finger Print 3:

Triple Point of H<sub>2</sub>O

Temperature:  $.01^{\circ}\text{C}$

Pressure:  $.006 \text{ atm}$



## Life in the Trinity

These illustrations are NOT an attempt to describe the Trinity... merely that we should not be surprised to see God's divine nature in His creation. (*Rom 1.20*)

## Life in the Trinity

Goal: Answer two questions...

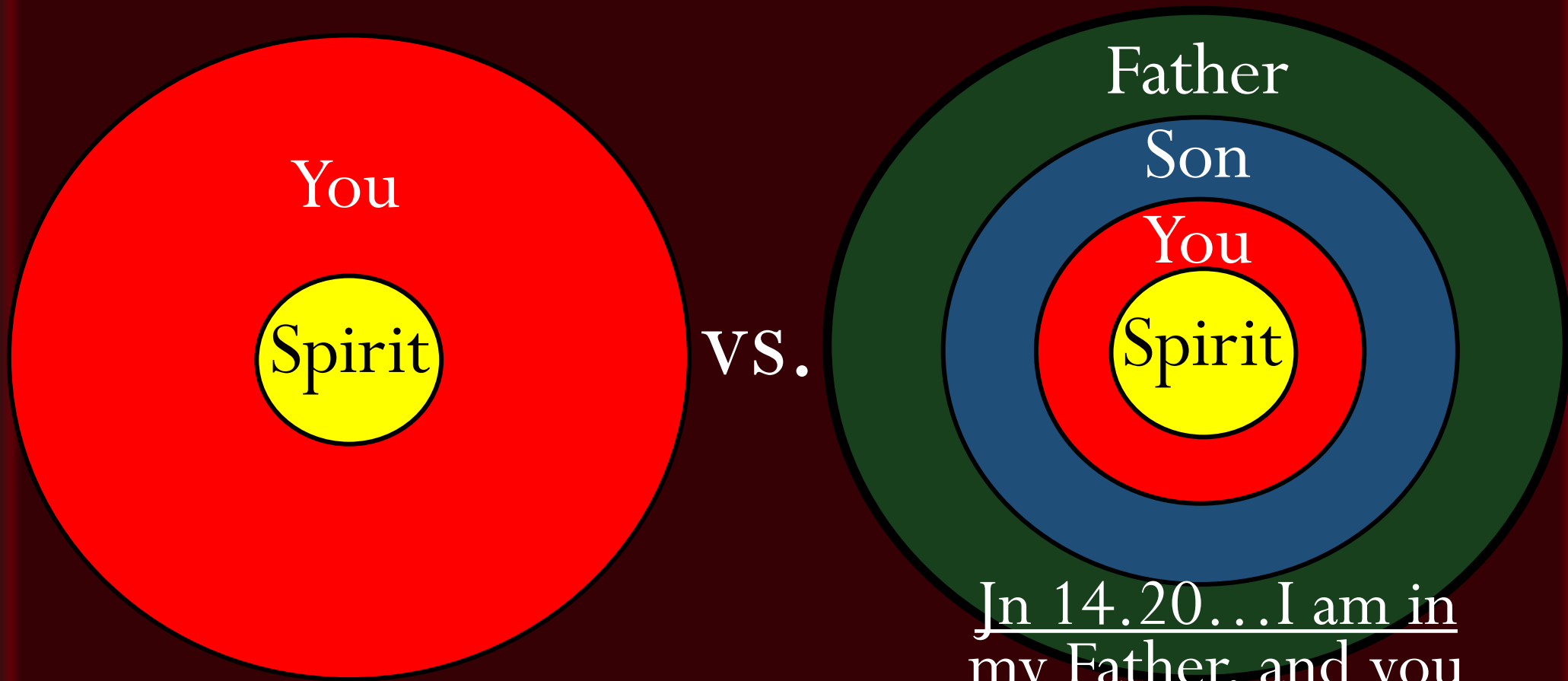
1. What does it mean that God is Trinity?
2. What are some practical applications?

Life in the Trinity

# Practical Application 1

*It's not about you.*

## Life in the Trinity



vs.

Jn 14.20...I am in  
my Father, and you  
in me, and I in you

Life in the Trinity

# Practical Application 2

*It's all about God.*



Life in the Trinity

All to the glory of God

*Is God that egotistical or insecure?*

*Is my worship required to satisfy his hunger?*

*How does a lonely, solitary god glorify himself?*

## Life in the Trinity

Father: “This is my beloved Son,  
with whom I am well pleased.” (*Mt 3.17*)

For when he received honor and glory from God  
the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the  
Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with  
whom I am well pleased.” (*2 Pet 1.17*)

## Life in the Trinity

Son: Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ (*John 8:54*)

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.” (*John 17.1*)

## Life in the Trinity

Holy Spirit: knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet 1.20-21)

*The Holy Spirit's primary desire is that all might see the love the Father has for the Son and see the love the Son has for the Father. He is the still, quiet Voice...always pointing.*

Life in the Trinity

## Practical Application 3

*Relationships matter*

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Why Marriage?

Why Children?

Why Friendship?

Life in the Trinity

Peter Leithart:

“The Father, Son and Spirit live in a harmony and love that is a model for human life...Others indwell our lives; therefore we ought to open our lives hospitably to them. We indwell the lives of others; therefore, we ought to see others not as obstacles to our plots and projects but as potential homes in which we can dwell together.”

Life in the Trinity

Kevin DeYoung:

“...it is only with a Trinitarian God that love can be an eternal attribute of God. Without a plurality of persons in the Godhead, we would be forced to think that God created humans so that he might show love and know love, thereby making love a created thing (and God a needy deity).”



## Life in the Trinity

### Kevin DeYoung:

“But with a biblical understanding of the Trinity we can say that God did not create in order to be loved, but rather, created out of the overflow of the perfect love that had always existed among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who ever live in perfect and mutual relationship and delight.”

Life in the Trinity

All relationships point us to  
the very identity and life  
of a Trinitarian God

Life in the Trinity

Question for discussion:

How does a better knowledge of  
God as Trinity change the way  
you view your relationships?