



THE HOLY TRINITY

I. INTRODUCTION

The doctrine and belief in the Holy Trinity is a cornerstone of Christianity. This belief is that there is one God, one *ousia* or essence, and three *hypostases* or Persons Who are distinct but not separate.

This formula is part of what distinguishes Christians from non-Christians. For example, Mormons speak about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but they are not one God in their doctrine. They believe that they are three separate gods and there are many other gods besides them. Also, Jehovah Witnesses also speak of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but deny the Holy Trinity saying that the Son was created and less than the Father and that the Holy Spirit is not a Person at all, but rather a force or power.

II. DEFINITIONS

Whenever speaking about theology, one must not only be very accurate and particular as to which words to use, one must also make sure that the right definitions to those words are understood in order to make sure that everyone is speaking with the same understanding.

There is a long history as to how these terms evolved and the different meanings for which they have been used, but the terminology used today is as follows. *Ousia* is a Greek word that means “essence”. So God is one in essence. We also say that He is one nature. However, to distinguish between the Holy Trinity, we say that He is three *hypostases*. In English, we say that He is three Persons with a capital “P”.

III. ANALOGIES

When trying to understand Who God is, we can only go so far as to what God reveals to us since this is what our limited mind will comprehend when trying to understand the unlimited God. You may have heard of the story of one who was walking along the beach and he saw a child taking water from the sea and trying to put it in a hole in the sand. This man thought that what the child was doing was silly, but then was rebuked himself of trying to understand the unlimited God by our limited mind. However, the fathers of the Church have given us analogies to help us both understand the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and explain it to others. Although no analogy is absolutely perfect, they are the best we have to come close to understanding principles of theology. Some of these analogies are:

- a) **The Sun** – The sun in the sky emits both light and heat. However, one cannot really separate these three things: the sun, the light, and the heat. One never exists without the other two. Thus, although they are three distinct things when speaking about them, they are also one.
- b) **Human Being** – The human being is body, soul, and spirit. However, they are all one person and when we speak about any person we distinguish but not separate between one and another component.
- c) **Finger** – Fingers on a hand are three parts, but each of those parts have the same components – in a sense the same essence. The only difference between the three parts is the end part that has the nail. This signifies that One from the Trinity – the Son, the Word of God – took flesh.

IV. THE HOLY TRINITY IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Although there is no explicit reference to the term “Holy Trinity”, yet there are several passages in the Holy Bible that mention the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. From the very beginning of the Holy Scriptures, the first verses in the book of Genesis expose us to this when it is written: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said,...” (*Gen. 1:1-3*). So here we are immediately exposed to God the Father, the Holy Spirit Who was hovering over the face of the waters and the Son, the Word of God, Who says. Moreover, in the Hebrew, God is written as *Elohim*, or the plural of God, referring in the same context, to the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. And it is clear that this God that Moses wrote about at the time of creation is the same God spoken of when he wrote in *Deuteronomy 6:4*: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!” So there is One God Who is the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. There are multiple other verses in the Holy Bible that speak about the One God.

There are a few verses in the Holy Scriptures where God, or the Lord, is used in the plural but still referring to the One God. For example, when God created man and woman, He is referred to in both the singular and the plural at the same time: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (*Gen. 1:26-27*). After the fall, it is further written: “Then the Lord God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’— therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life” (*Gen. 3:22-24*). The same occurs in the story of the tower of Babel: “And the Lord said, ‘Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech’” (*Gen. 11:6-7*).

There are also several other references to the Holy Trinity in the Holy Bible. Isaiah refers to this mystery in his book when he writes concerning the sending of the Messiah, the Son of God, by God the Father and the Holy Spirit: “Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me” (*Is. 48:16*; see also *Is. 61:1*). There is also an explicit reference in the *Gospel* according to St. Matthew speaking of the faith and formula by which one is baptized: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,...” (*Matt. 28:19*). We also have the Divine Manifestation (Theophany) at the time of the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ where the Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven (*Matt. 3:16-17*; *Mark 1:10-11*; *Luke 3:21-22*).

St. Paul also gives us the apostolic blessing: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen” (*2Cor. 13:14*) amongst other verses where he mentions the Holy Trinity (*Rom. 8:1-4*; *1Cor. 12:3-7*; *Gal. 4:4-6*; *Eph. 1:3-14*; *2:18*; *4:4-6*; *2Thess. 2:13-14*; *Tit. 3:4-6*; *Heb. 9:14*). St. Peter in his first epistle also

mentions the Holy Trinity: “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (*1Pet.* 1:2).

In order to establish the Biblical teaching of the Holy Trinity, one must see the verses that state that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, in addition to the verses that state that there is only one God. There are many verses referring to all of these. By the grace of God, we will address these separately in subsequent lessons. However, we will limit this topic here as a summary of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and how this can be understood and explained.

V. DIVINE TITLES AND ATTRIBUTES REFERRING TO ALL THREE *HYPOSTASES*

There are certain attributes and titles that the Holy Bible uses in respect to God Himself. Furthermore, these words are used in reference to each of the three *hypostases* of the Holy Trinity to show that they are not only God, but are one and the same essence since they have been described by each of these words. We will only mention some of these attributes.

- **Love** – Father (*Rom.* 5:5, 8; 8:39; *2Cor.* 13:11, 14; *Eph.* 2:4; 6:23; *2Thess.* 3:5; *1Jn.* 4:7-8), Son (*Rom.* 5:8; 8:35, 39; *2Cor.* 5:14; *Eph.* 2:5; 3:19; 5:2, 25; 6:23; *1Tim.* 1:14; *2Tim.* 1:13; *Tit.* 3:4), Holy Spirit (*Rom.* 5:5; 15:30; *Gal.* 5:22; *Col.* 1:8).
- **Truth** – Father (*Jer.* 10:10; *Rom.* 1:25; 3:7; 15:8), Son (*Jn.* 14:6; *2Cor.* 11:10; *Eph.* 4:21; *Rev.* 3:7), Holy Spirit (*1Jn.* 5:6; *Jn.* 14:17; 15:26; 16; 13).
- **Eternal** – Father (*Rom.* 1:20; *Tit.* 1:2), Son (*1Tim.* 1:17), Holy Spirit (*Heb.* 9:14).
- **Life-giving** – Father (*Rom.* 4:17; 6:4, 22-23; *1Tim.* 6:13; *Tit.* 1:2), Son (*Jn.* 5:21; *Rom.* 5:17, 21; 6:4, 22-23; *1Cor.* 15:45; *2Cor.* 4:10-11; *2Tim.* 1:1, 10), Holy Spirit (*Jn.* 6:63; *Rom.* 8:2, 10-11; *2Cor.* 3:6; *Gal.* 6:8). In *Ps.* 33:6, it is clear that this title is for the Holy Trinity: “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth”.
- **Holy** – In the book of *Isaiah* alone, the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” appears 25 times referring to God. The same phrase is mentioned in *Ps.* 71:22; 78:41; 89:18; *Jer.* 50:29; 51:5; *Ez.* 39:7. Furthermore, the Trisagion, i.e. “Holy, Holy, Holy” is mentioned in *Isaiah* 6:3 as well as the book of *Revelation* 4:8 to Him Who is sitting on the throne. St. John tells us in his Gospel that this praise in the book of *Isaiah* was directed towards the Son when he writes: “These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him” (*Jn.* 12:41). The other times this title is mentioned in the book of *Revelation* (3:7; 6:10; 15:4), they are all in reference to the Son. There are also many verses in the Holy Bible that mention the Holy Spirit (e.g. *Ps.* 51:11; *Matt.* 1:18; *Mk.* 1:8; *Lk.* 1:41; *Jn.* 14:26; *Rom.* 5:5; 9:1; 14:17; 15:13, 16; *1Cor.* 2:13; 6:19; 7:34; 12:3; *2Cor.* 6:6; 13:14; *Eph.* 1:13; 3:5; 4:30; *1Thess.* 1:5-6; 4:8; *2Tim.* 1:14; *Tit.* 3:5; *Heb.* 2:4; 3:7; 6:4; 9:8; 10:15; besides many others). Since the Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of God (*Rom.* 8:9, 14; 15:19; *1Cor.* 2:11, 14; 3:16; 7:40; 12:3; *Eph.* 4:30) and the Spirit of Christ (*Rom.* 8:9), then one can infer from these verses that St. Paul is also saying that the Father and Son are Holy.

VI. *THEOLOGY VS. ECONOMY*

One must distinguish between the theology (qeol og.a) of the Holy Trinity – i.e. the doctrine, divinity, and nature of the Holy Trinity – and the economy (o,konom.a), i.e. the creation and salvation of mankind through the action of the Holy Trinity for humanity. This refers more to the Divine plan that was in the mind of God before the ages (cf. *Eph.* 3:9; *2Tim.* 1:9-10; *Rom.*

16:25-26; *1 Cor.* 2:7-8) and is being carried out over time and will be fulfilled in the last day at the general resurrection and the Day of Judgment. St. Paul writes about this in *Ephesians* 1:3-11:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, **just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having **predestined us to adoption as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, **having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ**, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,...**”.

It was this role of the Holy Trinity in the economy, i.e. the Divine plan, that led the fathers of the Church to use the formula “from the Father, by the Son, through the Holy Spirit” and also “from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit”. The Holy Bible speaks about the work of the Holy Trinity in each of these steps in the economy.

a) The Creation was the work of the Holy Trinity:

As mentioned above, this is clear from the first verses of the book of *Genesis*. However, there are several verses speaking of **both the Father and the Son creating**: “**God who created all things through Jesus Christ**” (*Eph.* 3:9); “has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, **through whom also He made the worlds**” (*Heb.* 1:2); “**upholding all things by the word of His power**” (*Heb.* 1:3); “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (*Col.* 1:16-17); “God who created all things through Jesus Christ” (*Eph.* 3:9); that is, through the **Word**: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men” (*Jn.* 1:1-4; see also *Wisdom.* 9:1); that is, through the **Wisdom**: “The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens” (*Prov.* 3:19; see also 8:22-30, 33; *Wisdom* 7:21). There are also other clear verses in the Holy Bible that mention the role of the **Holy Spirit in the creation** (cf. *Gen.* 1:2; *Ps.* 104:30; *Job* 33:4; *Ps.* 33:6).

b) The Role of the Trinity in the Incarnation:

The Holy Bible states clearly that it is the **Son Who took flesh being sent by the Father**: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (*Jn.* 1:1, 14); “who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man” (*Phil.* 2:6-8); “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same” (*Heb.* 2:14); “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent

forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (*Gal.* 4:4-5). The **Holy Spirit also had a role in the Incarnation** as is written in the fourfold Gospel (cf. *Matt.* 1:18, 20; *Luke* 1:35). But Isaiah writes that the Son was sent by the Father and the Holy Spirit: “Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me” (*Is.* 48:16).

c) The Role of the Trinity in the Sacrifice of the Cross:

The Father out of His love offered His Only-Begotten Son: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (*Jn.* 3:16); “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (*Rom.* 5:8); “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (*1Jn.* 4:9-10); “For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” (*Rom.* 5:10; compare *2Cor.* 5:18-19, 21). This was done in order to be justified and purified (*Rom.* 3:24-25; compare *Tit.* 3:4-7), and to become sons by adoption (*Eph.* 1:3-5; *Gal.* 4:4-7; *1Jn.* 3:1), and to gain all things: “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (*Rom.* 8:32).

The Son also offered Himself for us of His own free will: “who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” (*Heb.* 9:14); “As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep... Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father” (*Jn.* 10:15, 17-18); “And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma” (*Eph.* 5:2); “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (*Phil.* 2:8); “who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed” (*Tit.* 2:14); “who gave Himself a ransom for all” (*1Tim.* 2:6); “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us” (*1Jn.* 3:16); “For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost” (*Matt.* 18:11; *Lk.* 9:56; 19:10); “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (*Matt.* 20:28; *Mk.* 10:45). See also *Col.* 1:14; *Eph.* 1:14; *Heb.* 9:26; *Gal.* 3:13; *Eph.* 2:14-19 where St. Paul speaks about the redemption and reconciliation that occurred through the shedding of His blood on our behalf.

The Holy Spirit also had a role in the economy of the Cross. In one verse, St. Paul writes about the role of the Holy Trinity in the sacrifice of the Cross: “**how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God...**” (*Heb.* 9:14). The Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit proclaiming that He is the One chosen from before time to be the Savior and Redeemer: “He established me before time [was] in the beginning, before he made the earth” (*Prov.* 8:23, LXX); “and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (*Rom.* 1:4); “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” (*Acts* 10:38; compare *Lk.* 4:18; *Matt.* 3:16; *Jn.* 1:32; *Acts* 4:26, 27). This was done in agreement with the prophets (*Is.* 11:1, 2; 42:1; 61:1, 2).

d) The Role of the Trinity in the Power of the Resurrection:

Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead by His own power and authority: See *Matt.* 28:64; *Mk.* 16:6; *Lk.* 24:6; *1Cor.* 15:12. “He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (*1Cor.* 15:4); “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (*1Cor.* 15:20); “and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again” (*2Cor.* 5:15).

The Father raised Christ from the dead (see *Acts* 2:24; 5:30; 13:30; 17:31; *Gal.* 1:1; *Rom.* 4:24; 10:9; *1Cor.* 6:14; *2Cor.* 4:14; *Col.* 2:12; *Heb.* 13:20). “...which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (*Eph.* 1:20-23).

The Holy Spirit also has His role in the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ: “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit” (*1Pet.* 3:18); “and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (*Rom.* 1:4); “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (*Rom.* 8:11; compare *Ez.* 37:14).

e) The Role of the Trinity in the Glorious Ascension:

Christ was “received up in glory” (*1Tim.* 3:16) and was “carried up to heaven” (*Lk.* 24:51) by the work of the Holy Trinity.

Christ ascended to the heavens by Himself through the power of His Divinity:

“Therefore He says: When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men. (Now this, He ascended--what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things)” (*Eph.* 4:8-10); “who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him” (*1Pet.* 3:22). “He was taken up” (*Acts* 1:2, 9, 11, 22). “He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God” (*Mk.* 16:19); “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (*Heb.* 12:2); “He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (*Heb.* 1:3); “who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (*Heb.* 8:1); “and has become higher than the heavens” (*Heb.* 7:26); “But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God” (*Heb.* 10:12).

The Father lifted up the Son to the heavens: “Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins” (*Acts* 5:31). “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (*Phil.* 2:9-11); “which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and

might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church” (*Eph. 1:20-22*); “The Lord said to My Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool’” (*Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:44; Mk. 12:36; Lk. 20:42; Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13*); “even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (*Eph. 2:5-6*).

The Holy Spirit also had a role in the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to the heavens. The Gospels in particular speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ being “led up by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness” (*Matt. 4:1*). There was also a close connection between the ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles on the Pentecost (see *Jn. 16:7, 14; Jn. 7:39; Acts 2:32-33*). Furthermore, one should keep in mind the one essence in the three *hypostases* and the unity of the *hypostases* Who are distinct but not separate. So the one nature and the one will gives the Holy Trinity a role in all steps of the economy. As we also said previously, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ.

f) The Role of the Trinity in the Resurrection of the Flesh on the Last Day:

The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the assurance of the resurrection of the flesh in the last day. This is such a firm and established belief that Christianity is founded on that St. Paul makes it clear that if there is no resurrection of the dead then Christ is not risen. “Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? **But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.** Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise. **For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!** Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming” (*1Cor. 15:12-23*).

The Father Who raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead will also raise us up in the last day: “And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power” (*1Cor. 6:14*); “knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you” (*2Cor. 4:14*).

The Holy Spirit will raise us up in the last day: “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (*Rom. 8:11*).

VII. RELATIONSHIP OF THE HOLY TRINITY WITH THE BELIEVERS

We have already touched on the relationship of the Holy Trinity with the believers. But in continuation of the last section, each of the steps of the economy are for the salvation of the human race for eternal life. But then the question becomes: “How does one become worthy of the redemption that was offered?” Our Lord Jesus Christ answered this when He said about the Holy Spirit: “**He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All**

things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you” (*Jn.* 16:14-15). So the Holy Spirit transfers all of the saving effect of the sacrifice on the Cross to the believers through the Church.

St. Paul says the exact same teaching when he writes: **“For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father”** (*Eph.* 2:18). In fact, the path to salvation cannot begin without the Holy Spirit Who leads us to believe that Christ is Lord: “Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit” (*1Cor.* 12:3). He also makes known to us the things that God has granted to us (*1Cor.* 2:10-12).

Through the Holy Spirit we become sons of God by adoption as opposed to our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the Only-Begotten Son of God by nature: “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, **that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, Abba, Father!** Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (*Gal.* 4:4-7); “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father” (*Rom.* 8:14-15; see also *Eph.* 1:3-5).

Without the gift of the Holy Spirit, we cannot be one with Christ: “Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His” (*Rom.* 8:9). And once we have been baptized, i.e. born of water and Spirit (*Jn.* 3:5), and receive the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation we become one in the body of Christ, the Church: “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit” (*1Cor.* 12:12-13; *Rom.* 12:5). “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (*Eph.* 4:4-6); “in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (*Eph.* 2:21-22; compare *Eph.* 5:23; *Col.* 1:18; 3:15). And when we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, we become one in His Body (*1Cor.* 10:16-17; cf. *Jn.* 6:56).

This all occurs at the hands of the priest who has been given this authority by the Holy Spirit given by our Lord Jesus Christ, the True and Eternal High Priest, when He breathed on the face of His holy apostles saying: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (*Jn.* 20:22-23). St. Paul affirms that He has received this same authority of the Holy Spirit when he writes: “and I think I also have the Spirit of God” (*1Cor.* 7:40).

The Holy Spirit works in us to be conformed to the image of the Son (*Rom.* 8:29) to the glory of God the Father: “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (*2Cor.* 3:18; compare *Phil.* 3:3-11).

So this is why **the Holy Spirit must dwell in us and make us a temple for God:** “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you” (*Rom.* 8:9); “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (*1Cor.* 3:16-17; compare *1Cor.* 6:19-20). And once the Holy Spirit dwells in us, the

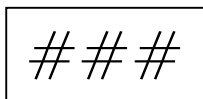
Father and the Son also dwell in us and we become a dwelling for the Holy Trinity: “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him” (*Jn. 14:23*). St. Paul continues this teaching from the above verses about the Holy Spirit and the Father dwelling in us and also says that Christ dwells in us when the Holy Spirit dwells in us (*Rom. 8:9-10*; compare *Gal. 2:20*). He furthermore teaches us how to pray in order to have a relationship with God (*Rom. 8:26-27*; *Eph. 6:18*; *Gal. 4:6*; *Rom. 8:15*) and through Whom the love of God is poured into our hearts (*Rom. 5:5-7*).

Therefore, in order to have the proper relationship with the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit must work in us to “cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (*Heb. 9:14*) and “put to death the deeds of the body” (*Rom. 8:13*). He works in us to sanctify us in order to become holiness and righteousness before God (*Eph. 4:24*) and in order to bear fruit that is acceptable to God (*Gal. 5:22-23*; *Eph. 5:8-10*). This is because we are all called to holiness: “For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit” (*1Thess. 4:7-8*). Not only does He sanctify us, He sanctifies our gifts that they may be acceptable to God (*Rom. 15:16*).

In addition to these and other verses mentioned previously, there are the numerous verses where the Holy Spirit gives us power, peace, love, and all of the means that are necessary to overcome Satan and the sin and to live according to God’s will.

The Holy Spirit as the *Paraclete* [meaning not only Comforter or Helper, but also a Defender or Intercessor] intercedes for us and is through Whom we are able to call upon God and pray to Him as sons since the Holy Spirit is “the Spirit of grace and supplication” (*Zach. 12:10*): “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (*Rom. 8:14-16*); “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (*Rom. 8:26-27*); “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (*Eph. 6:18*); “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit” (*Jude 20*).

He is also the one Spirit that gives all of the gifts in the Church, the body of Christ, to each one as He sees fit (*1Cor. 12*; *Rom. 12*) for edification, the salvation of souls, and the spreading of the kingdom that will in the end be delivered to God the Father (*1Cor. 15:24*).



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QUESTIONS:

- 1) How would you explain the Holy Trinity to someone? The key here is keeping it as simple as possible, but clear, to the point, and still comprehensive.
- 2) Give three verses, or groups of verses, from the Holy Bible that mention the Holy Trinity.