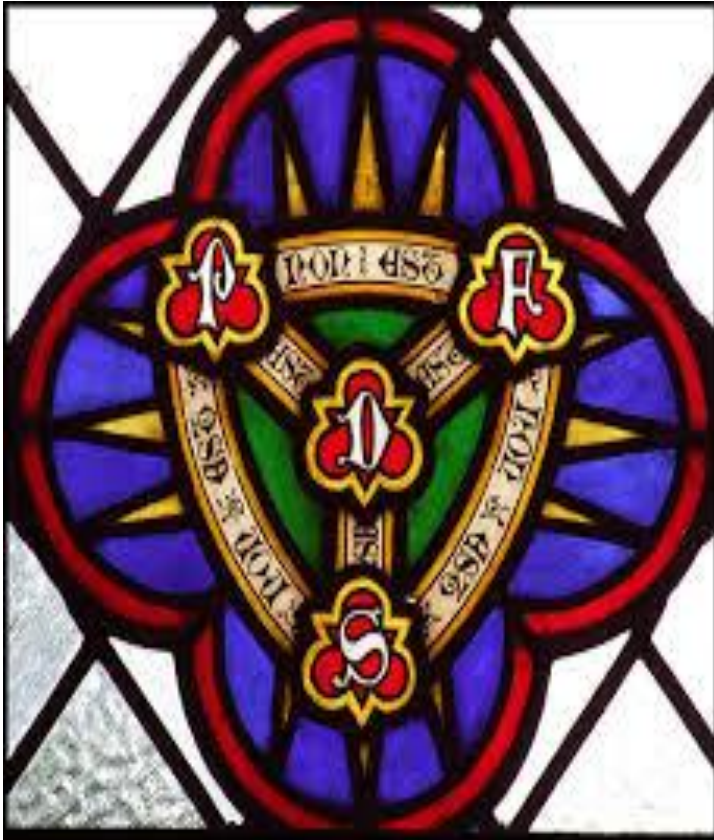


ABM Speakers' Corner



Issue Two, June 2014



ABM acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land; and the Elders both past and present, who have contributed to the life journey of all.

Speakers' Prayer

Almighty God, as we engage with our ABM family and friends around Australia, may the gifts that you have taught us give us the confidence to spread your word and bring our work into the hearts of all Australians. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Amen

A TRINITY WELCOME

A very warm welcome to your second edition of Speakers' Corner for 2014. Your feedback is always most welcome.

Thank you for your hard work, tireless efforts and support of ABM - we really can't do it without you.

Yours in Christ.

Michael Robinson

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INTRODUCTION INTO TRINITY

The doctrine of the Trinity is the Christian belief that:

There is One God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Other ways of referring to the Trinity are the *Triune God* and the *Three-in-One*.

The Trinity is a controversial doctrine; many Christians admit they don't understand it, while many more Christians don't understand it but think they do.

In fact, although they'd be horrified to hear it, many Christians sometimes behave as if they believe in three Gods and at other times as if they believe in one.

Trinity Sunday, which falls on the first Sunday after **Pentecost**, is one of the few feasts in the Christian calendar that celebrate a doctrine rather than an event.

A fundamental doctrine

The doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most difficult ideas in Christianity, but it's fundamental to Christians because it:

- states what Christians believe God is like and who he is
- plays a central part in Christians' worship of an "unobjectifiable and incomprehensible God"
- emphasises that God is very different from human beings
- reflects the ways Christians believe God encounters them
- is a central element of Christian identity
- teaches Christians vital truths about relationship and community
- reveals that God can be seen only as a spiritual experience whose mystery inspires awe and cannot be understood logically

Unpacking the doctrine

The idea that there is One God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit means:

- There is exactly one God
- The Father is God
- The Son is God
- The Holy Spirit is God
- The Father is not the Son
- The Son is not the Holy Spirit
- The Father is not the Holy Spirit

An alternate way of explaining it is:

- There is exactly one God
- There are three really distinct Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- Each of the Persons is God



Common mistakes

The Trinity is not

- Three individuals who together make one God
- Three Gods joined together
- Three properties of God

Bible and why Christians believe in the Trinity

The Bible and why Christians believe in the Trinity

Christianity adopted this complicated idea of God because it was the only way they could make sense of One God in the context of the events and teaching of the Bible.

The idea of the Trinity does not supersede monotheism; it interprets it, in the light of a specific set of revelatory events and experiences.

Keith Ward, *Religion and Creation*, 1996

Encounters with God

Humanity met God in three different forms:

- God the Father: revealed by the Old Testament to be Creator, Lord, Father and Judge.
- God the Son: who had lived on earth amongst human beings
- God the Holy Spirit: who filled them with new life and power

What the Bible taught

The Bible taught that Christians were to worship Father and Son and Holy Spirit. It also taught that Christians should only worship God. Finally, it taught that there was only one God:

- We must worship only God
- We must worship God the Father
- We must worship God the Son
- We must worship God the Holy Spirit
- There is only one God

This seemed to put Christians in an impossible position from which they were rescued by the doctrine of the Trinity, which solved the puzzle by stating that God must be simultaneously both Three and One.

Scripture and the Trinity

For obvious reasons the Trinity is not referred to in the Old Testament, although many writers think that the Old Testament does drop heavy hints about it - for example when it uses a plural Hebrew noun to refer to God.

The **New Testament** of the Bible never explicitly refers to the Trinity as such, but it does contain a number of references to the Economic Trinity:

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.



TRINITY SUNDAY

Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost to honor the Holy Trinity—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although the word “trinity” does not appear in Scripture, it is taught in [Matthew 28:18-20](#) and [2 Corinthians 13:14](#) (and many other biblical passages). The concept of the trinity can never be completely understood or rationalized, but it is clearly taught in Scripture. Understanding of all scriptural doctrine is by faith which comes through the work of the Holy Spirit; therefore, it is appropriate that this mystery is celebrated the first Sunday after Pentecost, when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit first occurred.

On Trinity Sunday, the Christian Church ponders with joy and thanksgiving what the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have done to accomplish the salvation of sinful humanity. It is brought to remembrance how Christians should respond to the love God has shown us, praising Him and giving Him glory. We remember the Father as our Creator, the Son as our Savior and the Holy Spirit as our Comforter. Scriptural readings for the Trinity Sunday ceremony may include [Psalm 8](#), beginning and ending with, “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.” [Second Corinthians 13:11-13](#) appeals to believers to aim for perfection and live in peace, ending with the prayer that the grace of Christ Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all, including again the commission Jesus left for believers in [Matthew 28:16-20](#).



Contact List

This list only contains people who have given ABM written permission to have their contact details published. To be included, please email your details to Michael Robinson (see address below).

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<i>Bunbury</i>	<i>The Rev'd Bill Byleveld</i>
<i>Canberra</i>	<i>The Rev'd Rebecca Newland</i>
<i>Grafton</i>	<i>Helen Newton</i>
<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Mr Brett Collins</i>
<i>Newcastle</i>	<i>The Rev'd Canon Katherine Bowyer</i>
<i>Perth</i>	<i>The Ven. Lionel Snell</i>
<i>Rockhampton</i>	<i>Mrs Sybil Pawley</i>
<i>SA Province</i>	<i>The Right Rev'd David McCall</i>
<i>Sydney</i>	<i>Mrs Edwina Waddy</i>
<i>Tasmania</i>	<i>The Rev'd Warwick Cuthbertson</i>

List of Resources

For Education and Publicity

- Prayer Diary
- Project Book
- Partners' Magazine
- Annual Report
- ABM DVDs
- Partner Brochures
- Magnets
- Posters (Marks of Mission, Country overview)

For Fundraising

- Duplex (Giving) envelopes
- Purses
- Lanyards
- Bequest Forms
- Crosses

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