

**ECC Growth Groups – Term 4, 2014**  
**Behold our God – Study 2: God is Three, God is One (John 13-16)**

When you hear the phrase, ‘God is three and God is one’, or the word ‘Trinity’, what thoughts and feelings do you experience?

Last week we commenced our series of studies by reading Deuteronomy 29:29 ...

*“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law”.*

As we come to this study, it is especially important that we remind ourselves of the truths that we drew out from this verse. In line with this, Jensen and Payne make the following helpful comments about the Trinity:

*“Christians have too often been defensive and negative about the doctrine of the Trinity. We feel the need to apologise for believing something for which we can find no parallels or analogies in life ... We should not be embarrassed. It shouldn’t surprise me that God turns out to be greater and more complex than anything I know of in this world. There are many things in this world that I find difficult to comprehend, so I should not be surprised that I cannot completely fathom the Creator of the universe. This is not to say that the Trinity is an impenetrable mystery that I cannot understand in any fashion at all. We must not confuse knowing everything with knowing something. I can know that God is three persons and one God” (The Blueprint, p 28).*

In light of the above, as well as your interactions during the ‘Discussion Starter’, spend some time praying for each other as you look at God’s Word together.

**Bible Reading**

The truth that God is one God and yet three persons can be seen throughout the Scriptures. However, it is in Jesus – God with us – that this truth is made known to us most clearly. Therefore, we will restrict ourselves in this study to some of the richest teaching that Jesus himself provides – his words of farewell to his disciples in the upper room on the night before his death.

Read John 13:31-14:11.

### Activity

Split your group into pairs/triplets and hand out a print-out of Appendix 1 to each small group. Instruct each pair/triplet to work together and fill out on the first table what we discover in this passage regarding the relationship between God the Son (Jesus) and God the Father.

God the Son (Jesus)	↔	God the Father
	13:31-32	
	14:1-4	
	14:7-9	
	14:10-11	

Bring the pairs/triplets back together again to share with each other what they have discovered.

What do we find out from those verses in terms of the relationship between God the Son and God the Father?

Was there anything that you found new, interesting or thought-provoking?

Jesus' words in John 14:6 ("*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*") have rightly become well-known. Spend some time together unpacking each aspect of Jesus' claim.

## Bible Reading

Read John 15:26-16:15.

## Activity

Once again, split your group into pairs/triplets. Using the second table on the same handout as before (Appendix 1), instruct each pair/triplet to work together and fill out what we discover in this passage regarding the relationships between God the Son (Jesus), God the Holy Spirit (the Counsellor) and God the Father.

God the Son (Jesus) → ← God the Holy Spirit (the Counsellor) → ← God the Father
15:26
16:7
16:12-13
16:14-15

Bring the pairs/triplets back together again to share with each other what they have discovered.

What do we find out from those verses in terms of the relationships between God the Son, God the Holy Spirit and God the Father?

Was there anything that you found new, interesting or thought-provoking?

In John 16:8, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness and judgement. How would you explain how he does this, in your own words?

### **Application Questions**

Imagine if Jesus was not God. How would that change your day-to-day life?

Imagine if the Holy Spirit was not God. How would that change your day-to-day life?

Gregory of Nazianzus – a famous Christian from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD – stated, “*When I say God, I mean Father, Son and Holy Spirit*”. Why is it that we rarely think this way? What are some of the problems that result from our wrong thinking in this regard?

### **Close + Prayer**

See Appendix 2 – ‘Theology to Doxology’ and then close the study with a time of prayer.

## Appendix 1 – God is Three, God is One

**Table 1**

God the Son (Jesus)	↔	God the Father
	13:31-32	
	14:1-4	
	14:7-9	
	14:10-11	

**Table 2**

God the Son (Jesus) ↔ God the Holy Spirit (the Counsellor) ↔	↔	God the Father
	15:26	
	16:7	
	16:12-13	
	16:14-15	

## Appendix 2 – Theology to Doxology

For this study, there are two options for our ‘Theology to Doxology’ section. You could use either song, or even both of them, for your group.

Firstly, if you would like to listen to a highly-recommended and fun song that does an excellent job at capturing the truths of this study, try:

Colin Buchanan, *Rev Master-T's Trinity Mashmix* (‘God Rock’ album).

The lyrics are printed below:

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit  
 Three names  
 The Trinity

Every time I think of the Three  
 My mind is drawn to  
 Drawn to the One

And every time I think of the One  
 My mind is drawn to  
 Drawn to the Three

And I think Gregory expresses that brilliantly  
 Gregory Nazianzus  
 Gregory expresses that brilliantly

In terms of the Trinity  
 There is a point at which one  
 Has to stop speculation

And simply  
 Bow down and worship  
 Bow down and  
 Bow down and  
 Bow down and worship

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit  
 God is Three and God is One  
 The Trinity

CCLI Song # 5977855  
 Colin Buchanan  
 © 2011 Wanaaring Road Music

Instead, or as well as, Colin Buchanan's song you could use *'Praise the Father, Praise the Son'* by Chris Tomlin to sing together or listen to.

If you would like to listen to a version online, you can use the URL below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpyIc7aR8BQ>

If you would like to sing together or simply read out the lyrics, they are included below:

### **Verse 1**

O sov'reign God O matchless King  
The saints adore the angels sing  
And fall before the throne of grace  
To You belongs the highest praise

### **Verse 2**

These sufferings this passing tide  
Under Your wings I will abide  
And ev'ry enemy shall flee  
You are my hope and victory

### **Chorus**

(Oh) praise the Father praise the Son  
(And) praise the Spirit Three in One  
Clothed in power and in grace  
The name above all other names

### **Verse 3**

To the valley for my soul  
Thy great descent has made me whole  
Your word my heart has welcomed home  
Now peace like water ever flows

### **Chorus (x 2)**

### **Bridge**

Yours is the kingdom Yours is the power  
Yours is the glory forever  
Yours is the kingdom Yours is the power  
Yours is the glory forever

### **Final Chorus**

Praise the Father praise the Son  
And praise the Spirit Three in One  
Clothed in power and in grace  
The name above all other names  
The name above all other names

CCLI Song # 5203251

Chris Tomlin | Ed Cash

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