

**“The Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds
– The Truth about the Trinity”**

-The Ecumenical Creeds as Summaries
About Who God Is,
Versus False Religions and Cults-

Part 3 - A Bible Study of the Athanasian Creed

Trinity Lutheran Church LCMS Norman, OK.

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**10) Almighty is the Father; almighty is the Son; almighty is the Spirit:
And yet there are not three almighty beings, but one who is almighty.**

While restating the three persons in one God yet again, we now see an emphasis on the almightiness of God. God is omnipotent; that is, God is all-powerful.

**(Ephesians 3:20-21;
Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 2:9-10;
Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22;
Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7,14; 19:6)**

**11) Thus the Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Spirit is God:
And yet there are not three gods, but one God.**

**(Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 9:6;
Matthew 1:18, 23; 28:19; John 1:1,14; 6:27; 10:30; 20:28;
Acts 5:3-4; 20:28;
Romans 9:5; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 3:16; 6:19; 8:4;
2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 3:17; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:9;
Titus 2:10)**

The Holy Trinity and Life Together

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The Athanasian Creed confesses the Church's belief in **the Trinity**. What is the relationship between the **three Persons of the Trinity**, and what does that mean for our Life Together?

The relationship of the Trinity

In all three creeds we recite—the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian—we confess that **the Son of God is begotten of the Father**. This does not mean that the **Father** reproduced Himself to form **the Son** in a biological way, like a father begets a son in our lives, but **the First Person of the Trinity's relationship with the Second is like that of Father and Son**. And it always has been that way, because **the Son is eternally present...**

God is love

Scripture testifies to this “inner relationship” of **the Trinity**. We can see this relationship that is at **the heart of the Godhead** when St. John writes, “**God is love**” (1 John 4:8). This is more than a warm and wooly feeling, more than a vague and emotional statement. It is at **the heart of who God is**. In order to love, there must be someone to love. St. Paul refers to this in the famous passage from 1

Corinthians, “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful” (1 Cor. 13:4–5).

In other words, love is always directed at another person. It is always a denial of oneself in favor of the other, their interests and their life and being. In this sense, self-love is an oxymoron, like saying “married bachelor.” We cannot love ourselves if we truly understand what love is. Love is always about the other.

If God is love itself, then God must have another to love. It is not enough to say that He loves His creation. He does, but if that is the only “other” that He loved, then before creation, **God** would not have been love. No, if **God** is love in its perfect and biblical definition, then love also describes His relationship with Himself. **The Father loves the Son and the Spirit. The Son loves the Father and the Spirit. The Spirit loves the Father and the Son. In other words, God is One, but since God is love, He loves within Himself, in the way of the Holy Trinity.**

When we confess the Athanasian Creed, we also see that **God is never alone. God Himself** is a community, a relationship. He is One but also Three and always **One in Three and Three in One**. This **love of God** passes to us who have been created in His own image, who were also created in a community with Him and given a community with one another. We, too, are created to express our love not by ourselves, not by looking in a mirror, but in community with spouse and children, friends and neighbors.

Uncreated, infinite, eternal

Even when **the Son of God became a man**, He reflects and teaches **this inner life of God**—this community of **God**, the relationship He has **with the Father**—and relates it to us. He says that **He is One with the Father**, that we may be **One with Him** (John 17:22). He says **the Word** He speaks is not His own but was given by **His Father** (John 14:10). **Jesus’ ministry** was centered on glorifying **His Father** in allowing Himself to do what **the Father sent Him** for. But it is double-sided: All that **Jesus** said and did was for us and our salvation.

Jesus does the Father’s will and speaks the Father’s Word completely and faithfully and obediently and lovingly. And what He speaks is life-giving and eternal. What **the Father has, the Son** gives, and it is eternal life. You could even say He gives Himself. He is life and love, and He gives Himself to those who hear, to those He calls, to those who listen to His Word.

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