

TRINITY DOCTRINE – CATHOLIC CREATION IN 381 AD

Biblical truth does not require additions.



SO WHERE DID THIS TRINITY DOCTRINE BEGIN?

There is no mention of a triune Godhead or Trinity doctrine anywhere in the 66 books of the Bible. None of the apostles believed that Jesus was God. Jesus himself criticized the Pharisees for falsely claiming he proclaimed he is God. Jesus also asked Peter who he thought Jesus was. Peter said Jesus is the “son of the living God.” Jesus then told Peter he was correct because his answer came from God and not from man. Early church leaders did not mention or explain the Catholic Trinity Doctrine for almost 300 years, so where did the idea come from?

PAGAN ROOTS

A trinity of 3 gods did not originate with Christianity. The Trinity Doctrine is not unique and is the refining of a pagan concept that goes back to at least 600 BC. The idea was 3 Gods are more powerful than 1. Each God has its own area of specialization. The Hindu religion has the Trimurti as its Godhead made up of Brahma, Vishna, and Shiva. Egyptians believed in the Trinity of Kneph, Phthas, and Osiris. Phoenicians had Ulomus, Ulosuros, and Eliun. In Greece the trinity was

Zeus, Poseidon, and Aidoneus. Early Rome had the trinity of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto. In Babylonia and Assyria, the trinity was Anos, Illinos, and Aos. Celtic nations believed in Kriosan, Biosena, and Siva, while in Germanic nations they were called Thor, Wodan, and Fricco. Trinities of gods existed in other cultures as well, including, but not limited to, those of Siberia, Persia, Japan, Scandinavia, and Mexico. We can see, therefore, that although the Trinity is characteristic of the Christian religion, it has pagan roots.

EARLY CHURCH BELIEFS.

Some may claim that the early church from the death of Christ to 325 AD. believed in the Trinity Doctrine, and it was only explained by the Catholic Church. Many times, I ask how can 3 =1. The answer is usually, well, no man can understand this. My answer is, "That is not correct, the Catholic Church has creeds and a Catechism that explains it perfectly." Jesus, nor the disciples, explained it, but the Athanasian Creed alone has 42 points explaining the Trinity Doctrine. Since Jesus denied he is God, and the Trinity Doctrine is explained nowhere in the Bible, we need to examine how this doctrine came into being. The claim that early church leaders believed the Catholic Trinity Doctrine is just incorrect. A triune Godhead consisting of 3 equal beings was simply not a part of the early Christian church. Let's take a look:

1. APOSTLES CREED - The first belief statement of the Apostles (according to the Catholic Church) is the Apostles Creed. No mention of a triune God exists here. (See copy of creeds below.)

2. POPE CLEMENT (DIED 99 AD)

- a. Supposedly ordained by the Apostle Peter according to Tertullian.
- b. There is little intentional dogmatic teaching in the Epistle, for it is almost wholly hortatory. A passage on the Holy Trinity, however, is important. Everyone agrees there is a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but the Trinity doctrine goes far beyond that, and is never mentioned by Clement. Instead,

he states a subservient relationship between God and Jesus, which is consistent with biblical teaching.

- c. Clement uses the Old Testament affirmation "The Lord liveth", substituting the Trinity thus: "As God liveth, and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth and the Holy Spirit — the faith and hope of the elect, so surely he that performeth", etc. (sect. 58)." Christ is frequently represented as the High-Priest, and redemption is often referred to. Clement speaks strongly of justification by works. His words on the Christian ministry have given rise to much discussion (sect. 42 and 44): "The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent from God. SO THEN CHRIST IS FROM GOD, AND THE APOSTLES FROM CHRIST."
- d. No Trinity Doctrine mentioned or explained from the first Pope. Clement states not that Jesus is God, but that Jesus came from God. This statement is in perfect agreement with scripture: Joh 6:38 KJV..... For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

3. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH (DIED APPROX 117)

- a. Quote from Martyrdom of Ignatius 2 states "For there is but one God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that are in them; and one Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, whose kingdom may I enjoy."
- b. Jesus is not God, but the Son of God. Also, nothing about the Holy Spirit or a triune Godhead. Pretty much a straightforward statement mirroring the message of the whole New Testament.
- c. It is easy to say Ignatius believed the Trinity Doctrine, but harder to prove.

4. POLYCARP (DIED APPROX 160)

- a. Martyrdom of Polycarp – "I bless you...I glorify you, through the eternal and heavenly high priest, Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, through whom be glory to you, with him and the Holy Spirit, both now and for the ages to come. Amen."

- b. Polycarp, like Pope Clement referred to Jesus as a high priest of God. Jerome, Irenaeus, and Tertullian all said Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John, but Polycarp said nothing about a triune God.

5. JUSTIN MARTYR (DIED APROX 165)

- a. Martyr, once a pagan, believed Jesus “came from,” God, but was a lesser God than the “most true God.” He writes, “His Divinity, however, seems subordinate, as does the worship which is rendered to Him” (I Apol., vi; cf. Ixi, 13)
- b. In addition, Martyr believed Jesus is the Holy Spirit. Martyr wrote, “Therefore, it is wrong to understand the Spirit and the power of God as anything else than the Word, who is also the first-born of God.” Hardy, the Trinity Doctrine! It is with extreme deception or profound ignorance that anyone claims Justin Martyr believed trinity.
- c. In other words, even about 150 years after Christ, no Holy Spirit as a separate person, Jesus is not God, and no equality. Nevertheless, many falsely claim Martyr believed in the Catholic Trinity Doctrine.

6. THEOPHILIS OF ANTIOCH– (DIED APROX 185)

- a. The first recorded use of the term “Trinity” was about 150 years AD by the third Catholic bishop of Antioch, Theophilus of Antioch. However, Theophilus’ Trinity does not refer to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- b. Trinity quote - “In like manner also the three days which were before the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God, and His Word, and His wisdom. And the fourth is the type of man, who needs light, that so there may be GOD, THE WORD, WISDOM, MAN.” (from the beliefs of the Apostles. (75; ND 16).
- c. It very clear the Trinity of Theophilus is not the Trinity of the Catholic Church. Theophilus also believed God and Jesus are of the same substance but are not equal. Jesus is subservient to the Father.

- d. Nevertheless, some people say the Trinity doctrine existed 150 AD by incorrectly using Theophilis as an example.

7. IRENAEUS (DIED 190)

- a. Quote #1 “one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation ” (Against Heresies X.I)[12]
- b. Quote #2 - But our Physician is the only true God, the unbegotten and unapproachable, the Lord of all, the Father and Begetter of the only begotten Son. We have also as a Physician the Lord our God, Jesus the Christ, the only begotten Son and Word, before time began, but who afterwards became also man, of Mary the virgin. Ignatius to the Ephesians (7.22 Long Recension)
- c. Quote #3 - “And thus one God the Father is declared, who is above all, and through all, and in all. The Father is indeed above all, and He is the Head of Christ; (Against Heresies 5.18.2)
- d. Irenaeus may have called Jesus a “God,” but he clearly believed Jesus was subordinate to the Father who is the “only true God.” Irenaeus said God is not begotten, but Jesus was begotten by God. Irenaeus also did not appear to show the Holy Spirit as a person. He condemned the Gnostic idea that God has different emanations. For the most part, he agreed with Martyr and Polycarp. Definitely no Trinity Doctrine there.

8. TERTULLIAN (DIED 215)

- a. “We define that there are two, the Father and the Son, and three with the Holy Spirit, and this number is made by the pattern of salvation . . . [which] brings about unity in trinity, interrelating the three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are three, not in dignity, but in degree, not in substance but in form, not in power but in kind. They are of one substance and power, because there is one God from whom these degrees, forms and kinds devolve in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” (Adv. Prax. 23; PL 2.156-7).

- b. The above quote sounds like the Trinity for sure, but Tertullian has more to say: Against Praxeas 9

“The Father is not the same as the Son, since they differ one from the other in the mode of their being. For the Father is the entire substance, but the Son is a derivation and portion of the whole, as He Himself acknowledges: “My Father is greater than I.” In the Psalm His inferiority is described as being “a little lower than the angels.” Thus, the Father is distinct from the Son, being greater than the Son, inasmuch as He who begets is one, and He who is begotten is another; He, too, who sends is one, and He who is sent is another; and He, again, who makes is one, and He through whom the thing is made is another.”

- a. Certainly, no Trinity Doctrine equality there. Tertullian believed in a theology called modalism. In fact, Tertullian's Trinity was rejected by the Church during its 56 years of formulation and debate of the official Trinity Doctrine (theory) approved in 381 AD.
- b. Even today, the Catholic Church makes it clear it does not teach Tertullian's Trinity. CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA REGARDING TERTULLIAN: "In not a few areas of theology, Tertullian's views are, of course, completely unacceptable. thus, for example, his teaching on the Trinity reveals a subordination of son to father that in the later crass form of Arianism the church rejected as heretical."

9. ORIGEN (184 – 253 AD)

- a. Quote: “Moreover, nothing in the Trinity can be called greater or less, since the fountain of divinity alone contains all things by His word and reason, and by the Spirit of His mouth sanctifies all things which are worthy of sanctification . . .” (Roberts and Donaldson, Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 4, p. 255, de Principii.I.)
- b. Origen is credited as being the first to say the Holy Spirit is a separate being and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all equal. However, Origen seemed often to contradict himself by stating Jesus only became fused with God after his resurrection, and the Holy Spirit came from Jesus.

- c. Wikipedia states the following” - Nonetheless, Origen was a subordinationist, [202][201][203][204] meaning he believed that the Father was superior to the Son and the Son was superior to the Holy Spirit,[202][201][204] a model based on Platonic proportions.[201] Jerome records that Origen had written that God the Father is invisible to all beings, including even the Son and the Holy Spirit,[211] and that the Son is invisible to the Holy Spirit as well.[211] At one point Origen suggests that the Son was created by the Father and that the Holy Spirit was created by the Son,[212] but, at another point, he writes that "Up to the present I have been able to find no passage in the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit is a created being." [201][213] At the time when Origen was alive, orthodox views on the Trinity had not yet been formulated[211][214] and subordinationism was not yet considered heretical.[211][214] In fact, virtually all orthodox theologians prior to the Arian controversy in the latter half of the fourth century were subordinationists to some extent.[214] Origen's subordinationism may have developed out of his efforts to defend the unity of God against the Gnostics.[203]
- d. Keep in mind, this is at least 200 years after the death of Christ, virtually all early church leaders still disagreed with the Trinity doctrine as we know it. At this point, Origen seems to be the Heretic, not Arius who was born a few years after Origen died. Actually, it would be more accurate to say the Trinity Doctrine does not agree with early church leaders.

BEGINNING OF THE CATHOLIC TRINITY DOCTRINE

1. About 300 AD the Catholic Church began incorporating ideas such as dualism and hypostasis from Gnostic beliefs. Wikipedia states the following: “Jesus is identified by some Gnostics as an embodiment of the supreme being who became incarnate to bring gnōsis to the earth.” Remember the Apostle Paul talking about the twin gods of Alexandria Greece (Acts 28;11)? The Catholic Church espoused the same twin idea in a dualistic God consisting of the Father and Jesus. Jesus then became man through hypostasis (and brought gnosis to earth). Is it a coincidence that both dualism and Gnostic hypostasis also began in Alexandria? Some theologians, however, later wanted to include the Holy Spirit and form a trinity.

Since the Bible is clear there is only one God, it was important that a theory stated $3 = 1$.

2. To add to the confusion, a conservative ascetic religious leader named Arius objected to this new trinity theory and felt the Catholic Church was beginning to promote the ideas of Greek paganism. His movement became known as Arianism. (Note: Arianism should not be confused with Aryanism which is a radical racial belief beginning in the 19th century.)

3. Therefore, there needed to be unity in the church, so Emperor Constantine (who opposed Arius) called for a Church council. In 325 AD the Catholic Council of Nicaea proposed the Trinity doctrine to put an end to Arianism. Per Wikipedia - "According to some accounts in the hagiography of Nicholas of Myra, debate at the council became so heated that at one point, Nicholas struck Arius across the face." Arius and his followers were exiled. Emperor Constantine even ruled that anyone refusing to turn over Arius' writings should be killed. Arius and his followers were considered anathema and Arius was exiled. Some people rejected the Trinity doctrine completely, others denied the separate divinity of the Holy Ghost. Because of much disagreement, the Trinity doctrine could not be approved at Nicaea in 325 AD.

4. Edict of Thessalonica - 55 years later, 380, the 3 emperors of Rome (sort of a Trinity) wanted to restore unity in the empire and issued the Edict of Thessalonica. It reads as follows:

"According to the apostolic teaching and the doctrine of the Gospel, let us believe in the one deity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in equal majesty and in a holy Trinity. We authorize the followers of this law to assume the title of Catholic Christians; but as for the others, since, in our judgment they are foolish madmen, we decree that they shall be branded with the ignominious name of heretics and shall not presume to give to their conventicles the name of churches. They will suffer in the first place the chastisement of the divine condemnation and in the second the punishment of our authority which in accordance with the will of Heaven we shall decide to inflict."

5. Acceptance of the Doctrine - The next year, 381, the Catholic Church obeyed the Edict of Thessalonica. Finally, 56 years after the Council of Nicaea, the Trinity

Doctrine was fully formulated and approved at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD. For the next 1200 years, until the reformation, Christians who did not believe the Trinity Doctrine could be called heretics and persecuted.

6. Even "The New Catholic Encyclopedia" states that the Trinity doctrine was not part of Christian beliefs until the end of the 4th century. Christians today are to believe the disciples clearly taught this doctrine, but why did it take 350 years after the death of Christ for the Catholic Church figured it out for us. Moreover, we see that the Trinity doctrine was a slowly evolving teaching of the Catholic Church and completed by mandate of the Roman Empire. We see proof of this evolution in the Catholic Creeds and Catechism:

COPIES OF 3 MAIN CATHOLIC CREEDS

The Apostles Creed (believed to come from the Apostles);

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Nicene Creed (325 AD):

WE BELIEVE in one God, the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and
was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen

1. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith
2. Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
3. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
4. Neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.
5. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.
8. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated.
9. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible.
10. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal.
11. And yet they are not three eternal but one eternal.
12. As also there are not three uncreated nor three incomprehensible, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible.
13. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty.
14. And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
15. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God;
16. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
17. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord;
18. And yet they are not three Lords but one Lord.

19. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;
20. So are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say; There are three Gods or three Lords.
21. The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
22. The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.
23. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.
24. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.
25. And in this Trinity none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another.
26. But the whole three persons are coeternal, and coequal.
27. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.
28. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.
29. Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
30. For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.
31. God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of substance of His mother, born in the world.
32. Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
33. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood.
34. Who, although He is God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ.

35. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of that manhood into God.
36. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.
37. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ;
38. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead;
39. He ascended into heaven, He sits on the right hand of the Father, God, Almighty;
40. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
41. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies;
42. and shall give account of their own works.
43. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
44. This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved.

Catholic Catechism excerpts:

- 232 Christians are baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"⁵³ Before receiving the sacrament, they respond to a three-part question when asked to confess the Father, the Son and the Spirit: "I do." "The faith of all Christians rests on the Trinity."⁵⁴
- 234 The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the "hierarchy of the truths of faith".⁵⁶ The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

reveals himself to men "and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin".⁵⁷

- 249 From the beginning, the revealed truth of the Holy Trinity has been at the very root of the Church's living faith, principally by means of Baptism. It finds its expression in the rule of baptismal faith, formulated in the preaching, catechesis and prayer of the Church. Such formulations are already found in the apostolic writings, such as this salutation taken up in the Eucharistic liturgy: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."⁸¹

- 258 The whole divine economy is the common work of the three divine persons. For as the Trinity has only one and the same natures so too does it have only one and the same operation: "The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are not three principles of creation but one principle."⁹⁷ However, each divine person performs the common work according to his unique personal property. Thus the Church confesses, following the New Testament, "one God and Father from whom all things are, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and one Holy Spirit in whom all things are".⁹⁸ It is above all the divine missions of the Son's Incarnation and the gift of the Holy Spirit that show forth the properties of the divine persons.

- 239 By calling God "Father", the language of faith indicates two main things: that God [the Godhead] is the first origin of everything and transcendent authority; and that he is at the same time goodness and loving care for all his children.

- 241 For this reason the apostles confess Jesus to be the Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; as "the image of the invisible God"; as the "radiance of the glory of God and the very stamp of his nature".⁶⁵

- 242 Following this apostolic tradition, the Church confessed at the first ecumenical council at Nicaea (325) that the Son is "consubstantial" with the Father, that is, one only God with him.⁶⁶ The second ecumenical council, held at Constantinople in 381, kept this expression in its formulation of the Nicene Creed and confessed "the only-begotten Son of God, eternally

begotten of the Father, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father".⁶⁷

- 253 The Trinity is One. We do not confess three Gods, but one God in three persons, the "consubstantial Trinity".⁸³ The divine persons do not share the one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire: "The Father is that which the Son is, the Son that which the Father is, the Father and the Son that which the Holy Spirit is, i.e. by nature one God."⁸⁴ In the words of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), "Each of the persons is that supreme reality, viz., the divine substance, essence or nature."⁸⁵

266 "Now this is the Catholic faith: We worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity, without either confusing the persons or dividing the substance; for the person of the Father is one, the Son's is another, the Holy Spirit's another; but the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal" (Athanasian Creed: DS

SUMMARY OF CREEDS AND CATECHISM

1. The Apostles Creed made no mention of the Trinity doctrine.
2. The Nicene Creed elevated Jesus from Lord to eternal God.
3. The Athanasian Creed added to previous creeds:
4. The one God is not the Father, and the term Godhead is used for the first time.
5. All elements of the Trinity are equal.
6. A person cannot be saved unless he believes in the Trinity.
7. The Catechism, in line 239, Contradicts the Athanasian Creed by stating that the term "Father" can refer to both a part of the Trinity as well as the Godhead. This also tries to justify the Anathanasian Creed with the Nicæan Creed which states "WE BELIEVE in one God, the Father, the Almighty." In other words, the Catechism tries to justify both creeds. The Bible tells us the simple truth - 1Co 8:6 KJV..... "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

SUMMARY OF THE CREATION OF THE CATHOLIC TRINITY DOCTRINE.

Logic and common sense prove the Trinity doctrine as being false. The Trinity doctrine is full of hypocrisy. No amount of human explanation can show how $3=1$. Some might say that's because it is incomprehensible. However, the Catholic Church has Creeds and a Catechism that fully explains it. They even have the Shield of the Trinity to illustrate how $3=1$, so don't tell me, no human can understand it. The Catholic Church created it and understands it fully. Of course, the Catholic Church has no problem stating its divine understanding and declaring only Catholics are true Christians. Of course, this is the same church that gave us Immaculate Conception (of Mary), Eucharist, penance, indulgences, annulment, Purgatory, Rosary Beads, and confession to a priest. Moreover, we see that the Trinity doctrine was a slowly evolving theology that is totally different from the Bible and was formulated and approved only after 56 years of debate.