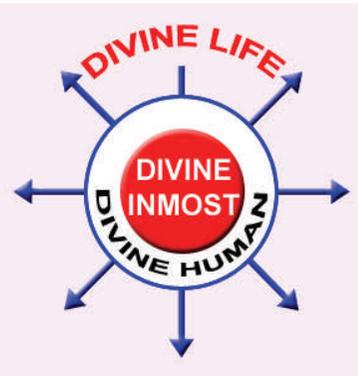


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tempted as he confronted every evil experienced by mankind right up to his final temptation and victory on the cross. By this means he overcame the power of evil and made his Humanity, Divine.

During his life then, the humanity of Jesus was in transition from a weak and error prone humanity derived from his mother Mary to a Divine Humanity. And all the time his inner being was the very being of God – the Father within. As Jesus struggled with this transition he felt at times totally separate from the Father within, as when he prayed to the Father, and yet at other times he was so aware of the forthcoming union with his Father following his death and resurrection that he was able to say with total conviction - *“I and the Father are one.”*

This leads us to a new diagram of the trinity in God picturing the relationship between the Divine Humanity of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Inmost, and the Divine Life that flows throughout Creation.



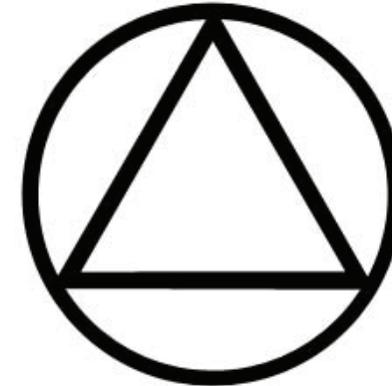
In his second letter to the Colossians, Paul writes:

*“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form”*

Writing in a similar way Emanuel Swedenborg simply states:

*“God is one, in whom is the Divine Trinity, and He is the Lord God the Saviour Jesus Christ”* True Christian Religion 3

# The Trinity in God



For centuries the idea of a trinity in God has dominated debate both within Christianity and between Christianity and other faiths, but if God is One, what does it mean to talk about the trinity in God or the threefold nature of God? To begin to answer this question we must start by exploring what makes up the essential nature of God.

Two key elements surely exist as the essence of God – love and wisdom. We might say that God is Love Itself and Wisdom Itself since all love and all wisdom throughout God's creation come from the One divine source.

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But there is a third key element that arises from divine love and divine wisdom acting as one and that is divine power, activity or influence. We can therefore understand God as being All Loving, All Wise and All Powerful. This picture of God is common to many world religions and provides a fundamental description of the trinity in God or God's threefold nature – divine love and wisdom acting powerfully together throughout all creation.



In the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah there is the following passage:

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6*

For Christians this prophecy is taken as relating to the birth of Jesus Christ, who is therefore, according to Isaiah, the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father.

Yet the New Testament presents several very important concepts that appear to produce a different view of the One God. Right at the beginning of Jesus' ministry he is baptised by John the Baptist and the Gospel of Matthew 3:17 records these words:

*... and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Frequently Jesus is reported as talking about the Father as someone completely separate to him and describes himself as the Son, but at other times Jesus makes a different claim, as in these words from John 14:9:

*Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

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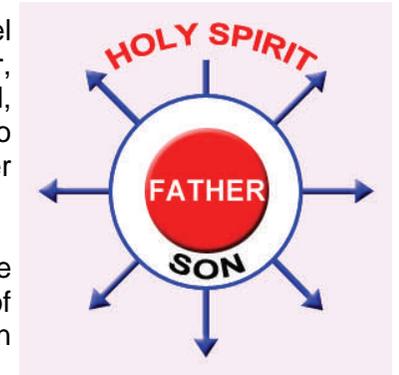
But Jesus also prayed to the Father, as in Mark 14:36:

*And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."*

Finally after the resurrection Mathew 28:19 tells us that Jesus said to his disciples:

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*

What clearly emerges from these Gospel accounts is that God can be seen as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, a trinity in God, although there is apparent conflict as to who Jesus is – is he the Son or is he the Father as well?



Nevertheless can we perhaps begin to see the parallel between the trinity in God of Love, Wisdom and Power and the trinity in God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

But how can it be that at times Jesus felt himself as completely separate from the Father and yet at other times he could remark –

*"I and the Father are one."* John 10:30

So who is the Jesus of the Gospels?

In Matthew 1:23 Jesus is referred to as – '*Immanuel*' (*God with us*). This is because the only way God could directly challenge the evil and selfishness of the world, and so restore spiritual freedom, was to take on human form with all its weakness and be born as a baby in Bethlehem but without a human father.

Thus, as he grew up, Jesus was human like us all but with a soul that was the Divine Itself – the Father. His humanity was continuously

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