WATERMARK WAVES

Trinity Misunderstandings

Answering Common Questions With Scripture

A six-session companion workbook

Scripture - Reflection - Prayer - Practice

Living an Authentic Life
Through the Holy Spirit.

A4 | Print at actual size (100%)

Welcome

Questions about the Trinity can leave us unsure of what to say. This workbook helps you return to Scripture, test common claims, and speak about God with care. The aim is to know Him, trust Jesus Christ, and grow through the Holy Spirit.

Christians confess one God who eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each Person is fully God. The Persons are distinct, yet God is not divided into parts or separate divine beings.

This six-session workbook accompanies twelve free Watermark Waves Articles. The full Article text is not included. Internet access is needed for the companion readings. Use your Bible for the passages and write in your own words.

How to Use This Workbook

- Complete each session in two sittings if that helps you read with care.

- Read each passage in its setting. Include verse references in your answers.

- For difficult passages, compare Bible translations and read surrounding verses.

- Test claims against the whole biblical witness. A mystery is not the same as a contradiction.

- Group discussion is optional. Listen with patience and share only what you choose.

- The PDFs are designed for printing and handwriting; they are not fillable.

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This workbook is free for personal use. You may download both paper sizes and print copies for your own use, including when attending a group. Please share the Watermark Waves Study link so others can download their own copy. Do not resell the files, distribute copies, or upload them online. The companion Articles are free to read and share by link.

Your Reading Plan

No.	Focus	Companion Articles
1	Hold the Bible's Teaching Together	Common Trinity Errors / Trinity and Monotheism
2	The Father and Son Are Distinct	Is Jesus the Father? / Modalism Explained
3	Jesus Is Fully and Eternally God	Jesus Is God and Son of God / Arianism Explained
4	Distinct Persons, Equal Deity	Is the Holy Spirit a Person or a Force? / Subordinationism Explained
5	God Is Not Divided	Tritheism Explained / Partialism Explained
6	Explain Your Faith With Care	Trinity Contradiction / Trinity Analogies

Each session includes two readings, six Scripture questions, life reflection, a connection table, a practical step, prayer, optional group discussion, and notes.

Optional whole-chapter Bible reading appears at the end of each session.

The full workbook closes with Look Back: Knowing God Without Dividing Him; Put the Bible's Teaching Into Your Own Words; and Keep Walking in Faith.

Open the Trinity Misunderstandings Study.

Session 1: Hold the Bible's Teaching Together

Before You Begin

What question about the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit do you bring to this study? You do not need to settle every question today.

Opening prayer: Father, teach me through Your Word. Help me trust Your Son and depend on Your Spirit. Give me humility to learn and patience when I speak with others. Amen.

Reading One: Recognize What a Claim Leaves Out

Read Common Trinity Errors (Misunderstandings About the Trinity Explained).

Read in your Bible: **Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:1-3, 14; Acts 5:1-4.**

Matthew tells of Jesus' baptism: the Son is baptized, the Spirit descends, and the Father speaks. John introduces the eternal Word and later identifies Him as the One who became flesh. Acts describes deception within the church; Peter connects lying to the Holy Spirit with lying to God. Each passage contributes to the wider picture. None must explain the whole doctrine on its own.

Look at the Passage

1. In Matthew 3:13-17, what does the Son do, what happens with the Spirit, and what does the Father say? Which personal distinctions do you see?

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2. What does John 1:1-3 say about the Word's relationship with God, His deity, and creation? How does verse 14 help identify the Word?

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3. In Acts 5:1-4, how does Peter describe the lie? What does verse 4 show about the owners' freedom to keep the land or its proceeds?

Bring it into your life

Which truth about God have you tended to overlook? Write a passage that helps you hold it together with the others.

Session 1: Hold the Bible's Teaching Together

Reading Two: Three Persons, One God

Read Trinity and Monotheism: One God and Three Persons Explained.

Read in your Bible: **Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Mark 12:28-34; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6.**

Moses calls Israel to love the one Lord and remember His commands. Jesus affirms this confession and joins love for God with love for our neighbor. Paul addresses food offered to idols, rejects the idea of other gods, and names the Father and Jesus Christ in relation to all things. Read these passages alongside Reading One. The Son's deity does not give Christians another god to worship.

Look at the Passage

4. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, how does the confession of one God shape love, daily habits, and teaching within the home?

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5. In Mark 12:28-34, what does Jesus affirm about God? How does the scribe describe the place of love in relation to sacrifices?

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6. In 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, what does Paul say about idols and God? How does he describe the Father and Jesus Christ in relation to all things?

Bring it into your life

How could worship of the one God shape a choice you face this week? Name one act of love for God or a neighbor.

Session 1: Hold the Bible's Teaching Together

Connect the Two Readings

Hold the passages together. Record what supports each truth and include a verse reference.

What I learned	My response and verse reference
There is one true God.	
The Son and Holy Spirit are revealed as divine.	
The Father, Son, and Spirit are personally distinct.	

Take One Step

Choose a claim such as "The Trinity means three gods" or "Jesus is the Father." Write a short response using one passage from each reading. Name what the claim leaves out. Then choose one way to show love for God or your neighbor this week.

Prayer

Praise the one God. Thank the Father for sending His Son, Jesus for His saving death and resurrection, and the Holy Spirit for giving new life. Ask for faith, understanding, and a gentle voice when you answer questions.

Session 1: Hold the Bible's Teaching Together

Optional Group Discussion

- What does each passage add to the picture of God? Which truth might be lost if we read only one?

- How can we explain one God in three Persons without describing three gods or one Person changing roles?

- How can a question about the Trinity lead to prayer, trust in Christ, or love for a neighbor?

Keep the passages open. Ask what a person means before answering. Do not treat an honest question as a settled rejection of the faith.

Optional Further Reading

Read the whole chapter: **Mark 12.** Notice Jesus' teaching about God, love, resurrection, and the Messiah. His question about David's Lord invites further thought about who the Christ is.

What does this chapter add to what you learned in this session? Include a verse reference.

After This Session

Return to one passage during the week. Follow through on your practical step and note what you learned.

Notes and Prayer Requests

Session 2: The Father and Son Are Distinct

Before You Begin

When you hear Jesus speak to the Father, what does that teach you about their relationship?

Opening prayer: Father, help me read Your Word with care, trust Your Son, and respond through the work of Your Spirit. Amen.

Reading One: Is Jesus the Father?

Read Is Jesus the Father?.

Read in your Bible: **John 10:22-30; John 17:1-5.**

In John 10, Jesus answers questions about His identity and speaks of His Father's care for His sheep. In John 17, He prays to the Father before His arrest. Their unity does not erase their relationship. Read the prayer as the Son addressing the Father, not as one Person speaking under two names.

Look at the Passage

1. What do Jesus and the Father each do for the sheep in John 10:27-30? How does that setting help you read 'I and the Father are one'?

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2. In John 17:1-3, whom does Jesus address, and what does He ask? How does verse 3 connect eternal life with knowing God and Jesus Christ?

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3. What does John 17:4-5 reveal about Jesus' work and the glory He shared with the Father before the world existed?

Bring it into your life

How does hearing the Son pray to the Father shape your own trust and prayer?

Session 2: The Father and Son Are Distinct

Reading Two: Modalism Explained

Read Modalism Explained.

Read in your Bible: **Matthew 3:13-17; John 14:16-17, 25-26.**

Modalism treats Father, Son, and Spirit as modes of one Person. At Jesus' baptism, all three are present. Before His death, Jesus tells His disciples that He will ask the Father for another Counselor. The Son asks, the Father gives, and the Spirit comes to dwell with them. These are distinct Persons, not one Person changing roles.

Look at the Passage

4. In Matthew 3:13-17, how does the scene challenge the idea of one Person switching from Father to Son to Spirit?

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5. In John 14:16-17, who asks, who gives, and who is given? What does Jesus say about the Counselor's presence?

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6. In John 14:25-26, what will the Spirit teach and bring to the disciples' remembrance? How is this promise connected to Jesus' teaching?

Bring it into your life

What could you say to someone who uses 'three roles' to describe God? Begin with a passage and a gentle question.

Session 2: The Father and Son Are Distinct

Connect the Two Readings

Hold the passages together. Record what supports each truth and include a verse reference.

What I learned	My response and verse reference
The Father and Son act in unity.	
The Son speaks to the Father.	
The Father gives another Counselor.	

Take One Step

Write two sentences explaining why the Father is not the Son. Use John 17 and one passage from Reading Two. Turn what you learned into a prayer of thanks.

Prayer

Thank the Father for welcoming you through His Son. Thank Jesus for revealing the Father. Ask the Spirit to help you trust God's Word and speak with patience.

Session 2: The Father and Son Are Distinct

Optional Group Discussion

- How does the setting of John 10 keep us from confusing unity with personal identity?

- What does Jesus' prayer reveal that the idea of three roles cannot explain?

- How can we answer confusion without making a person feel foolish?

Listen with patience. Keep the passages open and let questions lead to further study.

Optional Further Reading

Read the whole chapter: **John 17.** Notice whom Jesus addresses, what He asks, and how His prayer reaches beyond the first disciples.

What does this chapter add to what you learned? Include a verse reference.

After This Session

Return to one passage during the week. Follow through on your practical step and note what you learned.

Notes and Prayer Requests

Session 3: Jesus Is Fully and Eternally God

Before You Begin

What does the word 'Son' make you assume about Jesus? Let Scripture test that assumption.

Opening prayer: Father, help me read Your Word with care, trust Your Son, and respond through the work of Your Spirit. Amen.

Reading One: Jesus Is God and Son of God

Read Jesus Is God and Son of God.

Read in your Bible: **John 1:1-3, 14-18; John 20:24-31.**

John begins before creation and describes the Word as with God and as God. The Word becomes flesh and reveals the Father. At the end of the Gospel, Thomas confesses the risen Jesus as his Lord and God. John writes so readers will believe in Jesus, the Christ and Son of God, and have life in His name.

Look at the Passage

1. What does John 1:1-3 say about the Word before creation? What came into being through Him?

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2. How do John 1:14-18 connect the Word who became flesh with the Father? What do these verses say He reveals?

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3. In John 20:24-31, how does Thomas respond to Jesus, and what purpose does John give for recording these signs?

Bring it into your life

What difference does Jesus' identity make when you trust Him with guilt, fear, or doubt?

Session 3: Jesus Is Fully and Eternally God

Reading Two: Arianism Explained

Read Arianism Explained.

Read in your Bible: **Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-12.**

Arianism treats the Son as a created being. Paul calls Christ the firstborn of all creation, then explains that all things were created through Him and for Him. In this setting, firstborn expresses His supremacy over creation, not membership among created things. Hebrews distinguishes the Son from angels and describes His throne and enduring work as Creator.

Look at the Passage

4. In Colossians 1:15-17, what reasons does Paul give for Christ's supremacy? How do 'all things' and 'before all things' help explain 'firstborn'?

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5. According to Colossians 1:18-20, what connects Christ's supremacy with reconciliation through His blood?

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6. In Hebrews 1:5-12, how is the Son distinguished from angels? What do verses 8 and 10-12 say about His identity and enduring nature?

Bring it into your life

Write a statement of trust in Jesus grounded in one of these passages. Include the verse reference.

Session 3: Jesus Is Fully and Eternally God

Connect the Two Readings

Hold the passages together. Record what supports each truth and include a verse reference.

What I learned	My response and verse reference
The Word is with God and is God.	
All things were created through Christ.	
The divine Son brings reconciliation.	

Take One Step

Read Colossians 1:15-20 aloud. Explain 'firstborn' using the surrounding verses. Then thank Christ for His saving work rather than treating this as a word puzzle.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are worthy of trust and worship. Thank You for entering our world, dying for sinners, and rising again. Help me rest in You and follow You.

Session 3: Jesus Is Fully and Eternally God

Optional Group Discussion

- How does John's purpose connect teaching about Jesus with faith and life?

- Why must 'firstborn' be read with the verses that follow?

- How does Christ's identity shape our understanding of the Gospel?

Listen with patience. Keep the passages open and let questions lead to further study.

Optional Further Reading

Read the whole chapter: **Colossians 1.** Notice how Paul's prayer, teaching about Christ, and account of his ministry belong together.

What does this chapter add to what you learned? Include a verse reference.

After This Session

Return to one passage during the week. Follow through on your practical step and note what you learned.

Notes and Prayer Requests

Session 4: Distinct Persons, Equal Deity

Before You Begin

Do you tend to think of the Spirit as Someone to know or something to use?

Opening prayer: Father, help me read Your Word with care, trust Your Son, and respond through the work of Your Spirit. Amen.

Reading One: Is the Holy Spirit a Person or a Force?

Read Is the Holy Spirit a Person or a Force?.

Read in your Bible: **John 16:7-15; Acts 13:1-4; Ephesians 4:25-32.**

Jesus speaks to His disciples about the Spirit's coming work. In Acts, the Spirit speaks as the church worships and directs the sending of Barnabas and Saul. Paul tells believers not to grieve the Spirit as he calls them to truthful, loving speech. These passages show the Holy Spirit speaking, guiding, and being grieved. He is a Person, not an impersonal force. Calling Him a Person does not mean He has a human body.

Look at the Passage

1. In John 16:7-15, what actions does Jesus attribute to the Spirit? How do verses 13-15 connect His work with Jesus and the Father?

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2. In Acts 13:1-4, what does the Spirit say, and how does the church respond? Who is described as sending the workers?

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3. In Ephesians 4:25-32, what behaviors surround the command not to grieve the Spirit? What change in your speech does Paul call for?

Bring it into your life

Choose one habit of speech to change as you respond to the Spirit's work.

Session 4: Distinct Persons, Equal Deity

Reading Two: Subordinationism Explained

Read Subordinationism Explained.

Read in your Bible: **John 5:16-23; Philippians 2:5-11.**

Subordinationism makes the Son or Spirit less divine than the Father. Jesus describes His united work with the Father and calls for equal honor to the Son. Paul describes Christ's humility in becoming human and obeying to death. The Son's willing obedience in His saving mission does not mean He has an inferior divine nature. These passages address both His identity and His mission.

Look at the Passage

4. In John 5:19-23, how does Jesus describe His work in relation to the Father? What does verse 23 say about honoring the Son?

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5. In Philippians 2:5-8, what does Christ's humility involve? How does Paul connect this teaching with the attitude believers should have?

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6. In Philippians 2:9-11, what response is given to Jesus, and how does that response bring glory to God the Father?

Bring it into your life

How could Christ's humility shape the way you serve someone this week?

Session 4: Distinct Persons, Equal Deity

Connect the Two Readings

Hold the passages together. Record what supports each truth and include a verse reference.

What I learned	My response and verse reference
The Spirit speaks and acts.	
The Son receives honor with the Father.	
Christ's humility shapes our service.	

Take One Step

Practice one change in speech from Ephesians 4. Choose one act of humble service from Philippians 2. Record how both respond to God rather than use Him for your own goals.

Prayer

Father, teach me to honor Your Son and listen to Your Word. Spirit of God, help me turn from harmful speech. Shape the humility of Christ in my service.

Session 4: Distinct Persons, Equal Deity

Optional Group Discussion

- Which actions show that the Spirit is more than an impersonal force?

- How does Jesus' obedience differ from being less divine?

- What would humble service look like in our group this week?

Listen with patience. Keep the passages open and let questions lead to further study.

Optional Further Reading

Read the whole chapter: **Philippians 2.** Notice how the example of Christ shapes unity, obedience, and the care shown by His servants.

What does this chapter add to what you learned? Include a verse reference.

After This Session

Return to one passage during the week. Follow through on your practical step and note what you learned.

Notes and Prayer Requests

Session 5: God Is Not Divided

Before You Begin

Which sounds easier to picture: three gods or three parts? What might each picture leave out?

Opening prayer: Father, help me read Your Word with care, trust Your Son, and respond through the work of Your Spirit. Amen.

Reading One: Tritheism Explained

Read Tritheism Explained.

Read in your Bible: **Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Isaiah 45:18-22; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6.**

Tritheism describes three separate gods. Moses calls Israel to love the one Lord. Isaiah identifies the Creator as the only God and calls the ends of the earth to turn to Him for salvation. Paul affirms one God while naming the Father and Jesus Christ in relation to all things. Personal distinction must not be turned into separate divine beings.

Look at the Passage

1. How do Deuteronomy 6:4-9 connect the Lord's oneness with a life of love and remembrance?

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2. What does Isaiah 45:18-22 say about other gods, the Creator, and the invitation to receive salvation?

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3. In 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, how does Paul's confession preserve one God while including the Father and Jesus Christ?

Bring it into your life

What competing loyalty needs to be brought under your worship of the one true God?

Session 5: God Is Not Divided

Reading Two: Partialism Explained

Read Partialism Explained.

Read in your Bible: **Colossians 2:6-10; Matthew 28:16-20.**

Partialism treats the Persons as pieces that combine to make God. Paul tells believers to remain rooted in Christ and warns against teaching that takes them captive. All the fullness of deity dwells bodily in Christ. The risen Jesus sends disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Read these with the wider biblical witness: no Person is one-third of God.

Look at the Passage

4. In Colossians 2:6-8, how should believers walk in Christ, and what warning does Paul give?

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5. What do Colossians 2:9-10 say about the fullness in Christ and the believer's relationship with Him? Why does this challenge the idea that the Son is only a piece of God?

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6. In Matthew 28:16-20, what authority, command, and promise does Jesus give? How are Father, Son, and Spirit named within the mission?

Bring it into your life

How could being rooted in Christ help you respond when a simple illustration seems to explain everything?

Session 5: God Is Not Divided

Connect the Two Readings

Hold the passages together. Record what supports each truth and include a verse reference.

What I learned	My response and verse reference
The Lord alone is God.	
The fullness of deity dwells in Christ.	
Disciples belong to Father, Son, and Spirit.	

Take One Step

Write why 'three gods' and 'three parts' each lose a biblical truth. Use a verse for each answer. Then choose a habit that helps you stay rooted in Christ.

Prayer

Praise the one true God. Thank Jesus for the fullness revealed in Him and for His promise to remain with His disciples. Ask for undivided love and faithful obedience.

Session 5: God Is Not Divided

Optional Group Discussion

- How does Isaiah connect God's oneness with His call to salvation?

- What is lost when the Persons are called parts of God?

- How can a helpful teaching aid become a misleading picture?

Listen with patience. Keep the passages open and let questions lead to further study.

Optional Further Reading

Read the whole chapter: **Colossians 2.** Notice the warnings against captivity and the reasons Paul gives for confidence in Christ.

What does this chapter add to what you learned? Include a verse reference.

After This Session

Return to one passage during the week. Follow through on your practical step and note what you learned.

Notes and Prayer Requests

Session 6: Explain Your Faith With Care

Before You Begin

Think of someone with a question about God. What would help you listen before giving an answer?

Opening prayer: Father, help me read Your Word with care, trust Your Son, and respond through the work of Your Spirit. Amen.

Reading One: Trinity Contradiction

Read Trinity Contradiction.

Read in your Bible: **Deuteronomy 6:4; John 1:1-3, 14; Matthew 3:13-17.**

A contradiction claims and denies the same thing in the same sense. The Trinity does not say God is one Person and three Persons. It confesses one divine being and three distinct Persons. These terms summarize the biblical witness. The passages reveal oneness, the Son's deity, and personal distinction; read them together without pretending they answer every question.

Look at the Passage

1. What does Deuteronomy 6:4 affirm? What does it not attempt to explain about the personal distinctions revealed later?

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2. What two truths about the Word appear in John 1:1? How do verses 3 and 14 add to the picture?

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3. What distinctions appear in Matthew 3:13-17? Explain why one divine being and three Persons are different claims, not opposing answers to the same question.

Bring it into your life

Which part can you explain with Scripture, and which question do you still need to study?

Session 6: Explain Your Faith With Care

Reading Two: Trinity Analogies

Read Trinity Analogies.

Read in your Bible: **Isaiah 40:18-28; Acts 17:22-31; 1 Peter 3:13-16.**

Isaiah challenges attempts to compare God with idols and calls weary people to trust the Creator. Paul speaks to people in Athens, starting with their setting and pointing to the God who made all things. Peter urges believers under pressure to give a reason for their hope with gentleness and respect. These passages do not discuss every Trinity illustration; they guide reverence, limits, and the way we speak.

Look at the Passage

4. In Isaiah 40:18-28, why do the prophet's questions expose the limits of images and comparisons? What does he say about the Creator?

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5. In Acts 17:22-31, how does Paul connect with his listeners and challenge their view of God? Where does his message lead?

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6. In 1 Peter 3:13-16, what should believers honor, be ready to explain, and bring to their response? How does the setting of suffering shape this instruction?

Bring it into your life

Rewrite an answer you have given about God so it uses a passage, admits a limit, and shows respect.

Session 6: Explain Your Faith With Care

Connect the Two Readings

Hold the passages together. Record what supports each truth and include a verse reference.

What I learned	My response and verse reference
Oneness and personal distinction belong together.	
Created pictures cannot contain God.	
Answers should express hope with gentleness.	

Take One Step

Write a brief answer to one real question about the Trinity. Include two passages, explain what each contributes, and state one limit of your explanation. If you share it, listen to the person's response.

Prayer

Father, thank You for revealing Yourself through Your Son and giving Your Spirit. Help me speak truth with love, place my hope in Christ, and keep learning from Your Word.

Session 6: Explain Your Faith With Care

Optional Group Discussion

- What is the difference between a mystery and a contradiction?

- Which illustration can drift toward modes, parts, or separate gods?

- How can we keep the Gospel and the person's question in view?

Listen with patience. Keep the passages open and let questions lead to further study.

Optional Further Reading

Read the whole chapter: **Acts 17.** Notice different responses to the message and how Paul points his listeners toward repentance and the risen Christ.

What does this chapter add to what you learned? Include a verse reference.

After This Session

Return to one passage during the week. Follow through on your practical step and note what you learned.

Notes and Prayer Requests

Look Back: Knowing God Without Dividing Him

Review the six sessions. Use this table to recall a truth, then return to its passages before writing your response.

Session	Truth to remember	Bible references
1	Hold the whole witness together.	Matthew 3:13-17; John 1:1-3; Deuteronomy 6:4
2	The Father and Son are distinct.	John 17:1-5; John 14:16-17
3	Jesus is fully and eternally God.	John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20
4	Personal distinction does not mean lesser deity.	John 5:19-23; Acts 13:1-4
5	God is not three gods or three parts.	Isaiah 45:18-22; Colossians 2:9
6	Explain the truth with humility and care.	Isaiah 40:18-28; 1 Peter 3:13-16

Which misunderstanding can you now recognize? Write the claim, the truth it leaves out, and a passage that helps you respond.

How has this study shaped worship, trust in Christ, or dependence on the Holy Spirit?

Put the Bible's Teaching Into Your Own Words

Explain one God in three Persons without describing three gods, three parts, or one Person changing roles. Include at least two passages and tell what each contributes. You can be clear about what Scripture reveals while admitting what you do not understand.

Connect This Truth With the Gospel

Read John 3:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Titus 3:4-7. The Father gives His Son. Jesus dies for our sins and rises again. The Spirit brings renewal. Salvation rests on God's mercy, not our ability to master a doctrine.

In your own words, explain why we need salvation and what Christ has done. How do these passages call you to trust Him?

A Response of Faith

What would it mean for you to rest in Christ and follow Him today? Name a response of faith, repentance, or gratitude.

Keep Walking in Faith

Let this study become a pattern of listening to Scripture, prayer, love, and obedience. You do not need a perfect explanation before taking a faithful next step.

Choose a Reading Habit

Which passage or chapter will you return to? When will you read it, and how will you record what you learn?

Choose Someone to Serve or Pray For

Name one person. What act of love or prayer can you offer without turning every conversation into a debate?

Keep One Question Open

What question will you study next? Record the passages you want to compare and a first step.

Prayer

Father, thank You for making Yourself known through Jesus Christ. Help me trust His saving work, receive Your Word, and grow through Your Spirit. Teach me to love others, answer with gentleness, and walk in faith. Amen.