

# God the Trinity

## Romans 8 v 15-17

### Context:

I remember when I first became a follower of Jesus finding the doctrine of the Trinity both confusing and embarrassing – confusing, because I just couldn't seem to make rational and logical sense of it; and embarrassing, because no matter how many clever analogies or images I used, I couldn't explain it to others in a way that convinced them of its truth. However, having now been a Christian for over 40 years, I can honestly say that the doctrine of the Trinity – that there is **ONE** God who *has* always and *will* always exist in **THREE** persons – is *the* most beautiful and essential truth revealed to us by God in the Scriptures. It is the ground of every other biblical truth and we must learn to humbly marvel at it and rejoice in it, while accepting that, as fallen and finite creatures, we will be unable to fully understand it until Jesus returns. As Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 13, we see now in a glass darkly, we know in part, but when Jesus comes again we will know fully, just as we are fully known. The Bible doesn't use the word 'Trinity', nor does it ever explicitly explain the doctrine. However, the truth of this glorious teaching can be found throughout the Scriptures as the biblical writers simply assume it to be true and make reference to it time and again. So, in today's study we will explore the way Paul presents us with the truth of the Trinity in just 3 verses in his letter to the Romans.

### Observation:

1. What kind of Spirit did we NOT receive when we became Christians, according to v 15a?
2. What kind of Spirit DID we receive and what is the effect of the Spirit's presence in us according to v 15b?
3. *With* what and *to* what does the Spirit testify (v 16)?
4. What is the consequence of being a child of God according to v 17a?
5. What is the ultimate goal of all this according to the end of v 17 and on what is this goal conditional?

### Meaning:

1. What is the slavery to fear that Paul speaks of in v 15a? – see Romans 1 v 18, 1 v 32, 2 v 5-6, 2 v 12, 3 v 19-20.
2. How does receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit deliver us from this fear?
3. The word 'Abba' (v 15b) literally means 'Daddy'. How can someone who is by nature a sinner (see Romans 3 v 23), call God 'Abba'? What role does the Spirit play in this?
4. What do you think Paul means in v 16? How do our spirit and the Holy Spirit work together to assure us of God's fatherly love for us and our belonging to him as his children?
5. Of what are we heirs (v 17) – what *do* we or *will* we inherit from God? – see Romans 8 v 31–39, 5 v 1-2, 2 v 7.
6. In what sense are we co-heirs with Christ (v 17)?

7. What do you think it means to share in the sufferings of Christ (v 17)?
8. What do you think it means to share in the glory of Christ (v 17)?
9. Why do you think sharing in the sufferings of Christ is a condition for sharing in the glory of Christ (v 17)?
10. How do you see the three persons of the Trinity at work in this short passage?

**Application:**

1. How have you experienced the inner presence of the Spirit overcoming your fear?
2. What does it mean to you to be called a child of God?
3. How does the promise of your future inheritance, sharing the glory of Jesus, encourage and inspire you in your daily life?
4. In what ways are you sharing the sufferings of Christ?

**Pray:**

- Thank God for the Trinity and all his benefits – being called a child of God the Father, a co-heir of God the Son, and indwelt by God the Holy Spirit.