

# Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

## Ephesians 4:1-6

### 2 Questions from Sunday’s Sermon

- Does the Bible demand and support the doctrine of the Trinity?
- Does the doctrine of the Trinity make logical sense?

### I. Does the Bible demand and support the doctrine of the Trinity?

- Using Eph. 1:3-14 what role does the Trinity have in our salvation?
- **Read and discuss** the following passages in Ephesians
  - Eph. 1:16
  - Eph. 2:18
  - Eph. 2:22
  - Eph. 3:14-17
  - Eph. 5:18-20
  - Eph. 4:4-6
- Why do you think Paul refers to the Trinity so much in the book of Ephesians?
  - **Leaders Cheat:** Remember that the overarching theme of Ephesians is unity.
- What does the Trinity have to do with the Body of Christ? Read Ephesians 4:4-6 again to help answer this question.
- **Read and discuss** the following passages that show the distinction between the 3 persons of God.
  - Matthew 3:16-17
  - John 16:7
  - John 14:26

- Why is it wrong to argue that the Holy Spirit is a force or just the power of God? Can you think of Scripture that backs up your reasoning?
- Read the following passages and discuss how they show the divinity of Jesus.
  - John 1:1-3
  - John 8:58-59
  - John 20:28-29
  - Matthew 28:16-17
  - Hebrews 1:1-6
  - Colossians 1:15-17
  - Revelations 1:12-20
  - Revelations 5:6-14
  - Philippians 2:5-11
    - Compare this passage in Philippians with Isaiah 45:22-23
- Read the following passages and discuss how they show the divinity of the Holy Spirit.
  - Acts 5:3-4
  - 2 Corinthians 3:17
  - Matthew 12:31-32
- Discuss how the divinity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit fit with the following verses?
  - Deuteronomy 6:4
  - Isaiah 45:5
- Even though the word “Trinity” is not used in Scripture, what do the following verses show about the Apostles’ understanding of God?
  - 1 Peter 1:2
  - 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
  - Matthew 28:19

## II. Does the Doctrine of the Trinity make logical sense?

- Do you believe that Christians sometimes see the doctrine of the Trinity as a liability instead of an asset to the Christian cause? Explain.
- When asked about the Trinity (by both believers and unbelievers), do you think we too quickly respond, “We just can’t understand”? Explain.
- Is the Trinity a contradiction? Why or why not?
  - **Leaders Cheat:**
    - 1 essence & 3 essences = contradiction
    - 1 God & 3 Gods = contradiction
    - 1 person & 3 persons = contradiction

- 1 essence (God) & 3 persons = mystery
- What is the difference between a contradiction and a mystery?
- Can you think of any mystery in the known physical universe? Why don't we call them illogical?
- Why is the Trinity necessary for 1 John 4:8 to be true?
- **Read and discuss** the following quote

The doctrine of the Trinity protects the gracious character of God's love. God is not only loving, He is love for He is an eternal community of loving relationships. When He loves us, He does not do so because some quality in us draws forth His love. Indeed the opposite is the case: God loves us despite who we are. "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)

God is not love in the same way that He is wrath. His wrath is a response to our sin. But His love is not a response to us. His love does not depend on the loveliness of the one He loves. It is an act of pure grace. He loves because He is love, not because we are lovely. And He is love because He is an eternal Trinity of persons in loving relationship. – Tim Chester

- How does the doctrine of the Trinity help us understand what it means to be made in the image of God? Read Genesis 1:27 to help answer this question.
- What does Genesis 1:26-27 tell us about our need for relationships?
  - **Leaders Cheat:** Pay attention to the personal pronouns (us, our, him, them)
- **Read and discuss** the following quote and how it relates to us imaging God.
  - The key to integrating the one and the many is found in trinitarian understanding of personhood. Because humanity is made in the image of the Trinity, we become truly human the more we image the Trinity. Personhood in the Trinity is not defined in opposition to others, but through relationship with others. The Father is the Father because He has a Son and so on. The Father, Son and Spirit are not persons because they operate independently with one another. Indeed, their personhood is realized in the total interdependency of a perichoretic relationship. God is persons-in-relationship. – Tim Chester