

STUDY NOTES

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN A SERIES *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “[The Trinity: God as Lover, Loved & Love](#)” on 6/17/18 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: COLOSSIANS 1:15-23

FIRSTBORN OVER ALL CREATION

Paul describes Jesus as “firstborn over all creation” and that “all things were created through Jesus”. This means that Jesus existed before he was born on earth, and that means Jesus has always been, because He, God, and the Holy Spirit are one. This is called the trinity and it is hard to explain logically.

- *Why is it actually a good thing that we can't explain the trinity logically?*

“God's nature is indeed relational and personal as it is expressed in a divine community of love. It cannot be said that God is love (1 John 4:8) if God is alone.”

- St. Augustine

A way we could use the love analogy to help describe the Trinity is as follows:

God (LOVER) - The One who loves

Jesus (LOVED) - That which is loved

Holy Spirit (LOVE) - The means of loving

- *What can we learn about God seeing how relational he is and how much love permeates his whole being?*

FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD

The Object of God's Love is Jesus and Jesus, as the head of the Church, is who God sees when He sees us. This means that we are as loved as Jesus is loved. **Read Ephesians 1:4-6.** When we place our faith in Jesus, we are adopted into God's family and we receive the same rights that Jesus has as the firstborn.

- *What does being adopted by God mean to you personally?*
- *What does it mean to you to know that, if you've placed your faith in Jesus, when God looks at you, it is as if he is looking at Jesus?*

WHY WE NEED EACH OTHER

“The Trinity is to be the way in which we image God in this world through the community of believers—and not as isolated individuals.”

- Margaret Manning

Paul says that we find these rights through faith in Jesus, but he also says that we need to continue in faith. Thankfully, we find our strength in Jesus, who was ultimately stable and steadfast. However, we need the Christian community to embody the love of Jesus to help us stay stable and steadfast. We need accountability **from** the community, and accountability **to** the community, in order to guard against the shifting from the hope of the gospel.

- *The Christian community reveals God to the world. How does the way we interact with each other show reveal God's nature to the world?*
- *The Christian community is needed to find strength in Jesus living in the world. When have you avoided accountability? How did you feel less stable or steadfast?*
- *What are some ways you can establish more accountability in your life?*
- *Pray with each other to find strength in Jesus through the community of people around you.*