

WHO	TITLES	Attribute / Affinity / Accolade	IS	IS NOT
GOD	YHWH (I AM WHO AM, I AM THAT I AM, I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE) My Lord / Adonai Elohim * To Moses The God of your father The God of Abraham The God of Isaac The God of Jacob	Mystery, not fully revealed. Tell them "I AM" sent you In ordered but not subordinate relationship Truth Love Merciful Gracious A Mystery Creating, Redeeming, Sanctifying One-ness In Community	My nature will become evident by my action [. . .and you shall know that I am the Lord] Three <i>Distinct</i> Equal Persons One Godhead One Indivisible Divine Nature (possessed in its totality by all Three) One essence , one nature, One substance, one will, One Lord, one intellect	Individual Person with three names Separate (able to be separated) but equal persons <u>Sharing</u> of the Divine Nature as in portions. Not One Person playing three roles, that of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit at separate times. Or one person "changing hats"
Father	1 st Person of the Trinity Abba Our Father	The ultimate source & Origin of all Creator of Heaven and Earth	Eternal Father to the Son the Principle without a Principle	Not Made, Not Begotten Not Proceeding
Son	The Incarnate Word Son of God Jesus, Immanuel Yeshua 2 nd Person of the Trinity Lamb of God Redeemer / Messiah Light of the World Alpha & Omega I Am (John 8:15-58) (John 17)	Word was with God, And the Word was God (John 1:1) – abiding, not passing Through Whom all things were made (John 1:3) You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt 16:16) ". . . you are the Son of God! (John 1:49) My Lord and My God (John 20:28) Sacrificial Lamb The image of the invisible God (Col 1:15)	Begotten Eternal Son of the Father	Not Made Not Proceeding Not Principle without Principle
Holy Spirit	Lord and Giver of Life 3 rd Person of the Trinity Sanctifier Paraclete /Advocate Love between Father & Son: their Spirit	[Jesus] was conceived by the Holy Spirit Born of the Virgin Mary Joining the divine and human nature into one person Spirit / Breath / Breathe	Proceeding	Not Made Not Begotten Not Principle without Principle

* The form of the word *Elohim*, with the ending *-im*, is plural and masculine, but the construction is usually singular, i.e. it governs a singular verb or adjective when referring to the Hebrew god, but reverts to its normal plural when used of heathen divinities (Psalms 96:5; 97:7). There are many theories as to why the word is plural:

Among [orthodox Trinitarian](#) Christian writers it is sometimes used as evidence for the doctrine of the [Holy Trinity](#).

- The Divine Nature is the What, the Persons are the Who
 - Explanation: In a dark room, I might see a figure of a man (the what). When I ask, who are you, that is directed at the 'who.'
 - When I ask what is God?, and I answer all-knowing, all-loving, etc. that is the what. When I ask who is God, I reply the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- Because God is infinite, there is no distinction between his attributes and Himself.
 - Explanation: My knowing is something that I do, but it is not myself. Because my knowledge is less than myself (I forget things and I will gain new knowledge tomorrow that I don't have today) my knowledge is subject to change.
 - God's knowing is not subject to this limitation. It is not distinct from Himself. Just as God is knowledge, so also He is love, He is justice, He is mercy, etc.
- In the Gospels, we find Jesus saying something new about God
 - Alongside his insistence that God is one (quoted from the OT) "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God"
 - There is a new element of more-than-oneness, which still leaves the oneness utterly perfect Matt 11:27 and Luke 10:22 – "No one knows the Son but the Father; and no one knows the Father but the Son." Here are two persons put on the same level. "I and the Father are one." (Jn 10:30)
 - At the end of Matthew's Gospel, a third is brought in, still within the oneness – "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" - - three persons but with one name
 - John's chapters 13 – 17 are rich in the one and more-than-one concepts. Thus when Philip the Apostle says (Jn 14:8) "Let us see the Father," Our Lord answers, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." He ties Himself, the Father and the Spirit together in Jn 16:7-15.
- How can there be three persons and not three Gods? Or Three Separate Natures?
 - Explanation: Take 3 men. Jones, Smith and Brown, each with his own, finite measure of human nature: Jones does not have Smith's intellect; Brown does not love with Jones' will. Each has his own. Each a distinct person, each with his separate human nature, his own separate equipment as man. The phrase, "three Gods" could only mean three distinct persons, each with his own separate divine nature, his own separate equipment as God.
 - But this is not so. They possess a single nature – they have what the three men do not have – they know with the same intellect, love with the same will. There are three persons and each is God; but they are one God, not three.
- Illustration by F. J. Sheed of the Triune interrelationship.
 1. God utters a WORD, a WORD who is with God, a Word that is God, not framed by a mouth, but akin to a thought or idea. An idea of himself. This thought / self-idea is the WORD, the Son of God. The link between having a son and having an idea of oneself is that both are ways of producing likeness. God's idea of himself must be perfect, for He is all-knowing, even of Himself. Thus because God is infinite, eternal, all-powerful, etc., his idea of himself is infinite, eternal, all-powerful. Because God is God, his idea is God
 2. The thinker and the idea are distinct, the one is not the other; Father and Son are two persons. But they are not separate. An idea can exist only in the mind of the thinker. It cannot go off and start a separate life of its own.
 3. Merely by being God, he knows himself with infinite knowing power, and utters his total self-knowledge in the totally adequate idea of Himself which is his co-eternal Son.
 4. The Holy Spirit: As we have already seen, there is one huge and instant difference between God's idea and any idea we may form. His idea is Someone, our ideas are something. A thinker can know a thing, can admire it, can love it. It, however, cannot

return the thinker's love. But God's idea is someone and an infinite someone; between thinker and idea there is an infinite dialogue, an infinite interflow.

- 5. Father and Son love each other with infinite intensity. The term of this [infinite](#) fruitful mutual [love](#) is Their Spirit Who is co-eternal and con-substantial with Them. In the Son, the Father utters his self-knowledge; in the Holy Spirit, Father and Son utter their mutual love.

METAPHORS, ANALOGIES, AND COMMENTARIES OF AND ON THE TRIUNE GOD

1. From Augustine (De Trinitate) Our own beings are etched with the signs of our Trinitarian origin. Our human psyche itself has an inherent threefold structure: memory, knowledge and love. Because these powers to remember, to know, and to love not only ourselves but also God are truly distinct powers yet exist within the oneness of our own being,
2. From Augustine (De Trinitate) Our own experience of lover, beloved, and the very love uniting them gives us a small hint of the life of God: the Spirit is in person the bond of love uniting the Father and Son as lover and beloved.
3. An egg: Shell, yoke, egg-white
4. Sun (Father), Light (Son), Heat (Spirit)
5. Shamrock from St. Patrick
6. St Irenaeus of Lyon calls the Son and Holy Spirit the "hands" of the Father (Against Heresies – Book V, Chapter 6)

Questions from the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

38. With what name does God reveal Himself?

203-209

230-231

God revealed himself to Moses as the living God, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob" (*Exodus* 3:6). God also revealed to Moses his mysterious name "I Am Who I Am (YHWH)". Already in Old Testament times this ineffable name of God was replaced by the divine title *Lord*. Thus in the New Testament, Jesus who was called *Lord* is seen as true God.

39. Is God the only One who "is"?

2112-2113

Since creatures have received everything they are and have from God, only God in himself *is* the fullness of being and of every perfection. God is "He who is" without origin and without end. Jesus also reveals that he bears the divine name "I Am" (*John* 8:28).

46. What did Jesus Christ reveal to us about the mystery of the Father?

240-242

Jesus Christ revealed to us that God is “Father”, not only insofar as he created the universe and the mankind, but above all because he eternally generated in his bosom the Son who is his Word, “the radiance of the glory of God and the very stamp of his nature” (*Hebrews* 1:3).

47. Who is the Holy Spirit revealed to us by Jesus Christ?

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The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Most Blessed Trinity. He is God, one and equal with the Father and the Son. He “proceeds from the Father” (*John* 15:26) who is the *principle without a principle* and the origin of all Trinitarian life. He proceeds also from the Son (*Filioque*) by the eternal Gift which the Father makes of him to the Son. Sent by the Father and the Incarnate Son, the Holy Spirit guides the Church “to know all truth” (*John* 16:13).

48. How does the Church express her Trinitarian faith?

249-256

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The Church expresses her Trinitarian faith by professing a belief in the oneness of God in whom there are three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three divine Persons are only one God because each of them equally possesses the fullness of the one and indivisible divine nature. They are really distinct from each other by reason of the relations which place them in correspondence to each other. The Father generates the Son; the Son is generated by the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

49. How do the three divine Persons work?

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Inseparable in their one substance, the three divine Persons are also inseparable in their activity. The Trinity has one operation, sole and the same. In this one divine action, however, each Person is present according to the mode which is proper to him in the Trinity.

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