

## **Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides**

### **September 11th**

#### **Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)**

1. What is your favorite fall activity?
2. What is the first thing that you think of when you hear the word “theology” or “doctrine”?

#### **Bible Study Questions**

1. Why does it matter what you believe? What is an example of how beliefs impact some of the choices that you make?
2. Do you have any examples about how wrong beliefs about God and the Bible have hurt Christians? Have there been times in your life when a wrong belief about God has hurt you?
3. How would you explain the trinity to someone who had never heard about it before?
4. Take some time to get into some of the Bible passages. Read Genesis 1:26, Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19, John 1:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Hebrews 1:3. What do these verses tell you about the Trinity?
5. Augustine once said that when it came to the trinity, “*nowhere is erring more dangerous, seeking more toilsome, and finding more fruitful.*” Do you agree or disagree? What are the dangers of having a wrong view about the trinity?
6. What do you see as the key benefits of serving a triune God?
7. Pastor Michael talked about the doctrine of the Trinity being essential for God to be a God of love. God is able to love us because God has always been a loving relationship of divine beings. How does this image of God impact the way that you think of him?

8. How does God being a relationship impact the way that we relate with other people?

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## Doctrine: The Trinity

Intro: We often shy away from topics such as “theology” or “doctrine” because we view them as academic and only for committed Bible scholars. Yet they are very important for any believer. **What you believe powerfully shapes your desires and the decisions that you make.** That is why we are going to be spending the next two months going through our doctrinal statement and exploring the beliefs of our church.

### Understanding the Trinity

- **One divine being, three divine persons:** One of the problems with the Trinity is that we approach it as a puzzle to solve with material explanations, when God is not of this world and is Spirit. The Bible teaches us many things. There is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4) but there are three distinct persons making up that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19, John 1:1, Hebrews 1:3, 2 Corinthians 14:13).
- **Each members has existed from all eternity:** No one member of the Trinity was created but they have always existed. (John 1:1-2) The early church taught the Son was begotten, meaning that he has always had his existence from the Father. The Holy Spirit was said to be “spirited” from both the Father and the Son.
- **What is true of one is true of them all:** The trinity is completely unified in essence, will, and power. One of the earliest church creeds talks about how each attribute of the Father is true of both the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- **No hierarchy within the trinity:** Some have suggested that the subordination of Jesus to the Father is a sign of Jesus being a lesser God. Yet we are told in Philippians 2:6-7 that Jesus chose to make himself a servant, meaning that there was a time that he wasn’t. In John 17:3-4, Jesus talks about the glory that he previously had with the Father in the beginning, saying in verse 14 that all that belongs to the Father is His.

### Application

- **The trinity teaches us that God is a relationship. We can approach God as a God of love because he has always existed within a relationship.** If there was no trinity, then it means that before the creation of the world, God had no one to love. He therefore was unable to be a God of love. Since God cannot change, then he is unable to be a God of love now. But the trinity teaches us that God is a relationship of which love has been central from the beginning. Therefore, we can commune with a God who truly is

love. What more, we can understand the importance of our own community in that it reflects the character of God.