

Junior Soldiers

Unit 8 : Lesson 10



All are equal!

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that the Holy Spirit is as equally important in the Trinity as God the Father and Jesus the Son.

'We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.'

Doctrine 3

'God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God.'

Doctrine 3 (simplified version)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Matthew 28:19

2 Corinthians 13:14

John 10:30

John 14:10–11

1 John 5:7

The Trinity is a difficult thing to understand and children (and many adults!) may find it difficult to grasp. This is why a number of different 'concrete' illustrations have been created across the wider church, to help us gain a better understanding of what some see as an 'abstract, conceptual' entity, the Godhead. In this lesson we have enlisted multiple illustrations because we believe this will help children explore this topic more effectively. Please don't feel you need to use all of them; you can use as little or as many ideas as you like. Be reassured that as difficult as this concept might be, children will be better at accepting and appreciating it than most adults.

If you want to broaden your own understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity before this lesson, please refer to chapter three in The Salvation Army's *Handbook of Doctrine*.

Be mindful of any allergies your children might have especially when it comes to the egg illustration. If you do have children with allergies to egg (or anything else) you might like to use an apple as a substitute (the three parts being the skin, flesh and core).

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- One small wood block and three nails per child
- Some hammers to share
- A drill to pre-drill holes in wood blocks

For 'The Main Thing'

- Some props or pictures to help explain the Trinity (e.g. triangle, tricycle, tri-cep, triplets etc.)
- Some props to support your illustration of the how the Godhead works (e.g. an egg, an apple, a three-legged stool etc.)

For 'Tying In'

- Bibles
- Paper
- Pens or textas

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off a Home & Beyond card for each child.



Connecting In

Construction...

For this activity you will need one small wooden block, three nails per child and some hammers to share around. You will also need to have a completed key holder to show the children what they will be doing and the process that they will need to follow to make it. Pre-drill a small hole (less than 1cm wide) in the back of each piece of wood so the children can hang their key holder up when they get home.

- Divide your children into small groups as you explain that they are going to make key holders to hold keys, jewellery or other important things.
- Hold up an example of what you want the children to make.
- Place the materials and tools down at each group without giving all three elements (wood, hammer, nails) to any one group. For example, you might leave three pieces of wood with one group and two hammers and some nails at the next. You might put some wood and nails in the middle of another group, leaving them with no hammer.

'Okay you can begin making your key holder with the things in front of you.'

The children will hopefully realise fairly quickly that they don't have what they need to make the key holder. This will give a great opportunity to discuss the importance of all three parts being needed to do this particular activity.

Link:

- Is there any way you could make this key holder with just two of the items (*again, hold up the sample*)?
- Do you think any of the materials are more important than the others?

'Each item was equally important in the construction of this key holder. Even if I gave you more nails or more wood or extra hammers: you still need all three things to complete the key holder to look like this one. As we make our key holders I want you to start to think about the three parts of God. Often we think and talk about God the Father or we might talk mostly about his Son, Jesus, but just like we need to ensure we have wood, nails and hammer to make our key holder, we need to make sure that we include God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in our lives. Put your three nails in to represent each of these three parts of the Godhead and we will explore more about this soon.'

Give the children opportunity to make a holder each. You might like to encourage conversation around what they already know about the Trinity to gauge where your kids are at.

Cricket Game...

Tell the children that there are three roles they can choose from: batter, bowler, fielder. Split them up according to the role they choose (batters in one group, bowlers in another etc.). Tell each group that they are now going to go and play a game of cricket, only using their preferred role (batter, bowler or fielder). They will find they can't play cricket! Children will discover that you need all roles to play a game of cricket.

Link:

- So, which team was successful in playing a game of cricket?
- Why couldn't you play a game of cricket with only batters, with only bowlers or only fielders?
- What would have made this a better game?



'Sometimes when we try to connect to God, we can focus on only one aspect of him and leave out the other two parts: Jesus and the Holy Spirit. But just like each role in cricket needs to be included in order to play cricket, we need to make sure we remember that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are all equally important and need to be included in our lives.'

The Main Thing

Three things...

For this activity you might like to use some props, photos or pictures to help you explain what the word 'trinity' means (for example, a triangle, tricycle, triplets etc.).

- In The Salvation Army, we believe that there are three parts that go to making up God, some people refer to it as the Godhead.
 - I wonder if you can tell me what those parts of God are.
- Today we will explore those three parts, what they are and how they work together as ONE. We don't worship three gods. There is only ONE God.
 - I wonder if you know what the word 'trinity' means. (Three: from Latin for three, tria, and Latin for 'state of', itas; so 'trinity' is 'the state of being three')
- For example:
 - TRIangle = 3 angles
 - TRIcycle = 3 wheels
 - TRIad = 3 notes in music making up a chord
 - TRIathlon = swimming, running and cycling
 - TRIceps = three parts to muscle on the back of your arm
 - TRIplets = 3 babies
 - Can you think of anymore?
- (Make the link to the 'Connecting In' games as you reinforce the equal importance of the parts.)
- What would happen if you didn't have one of the three elements?

Illustrations...

For this activity you will need some props to hold up while you are talking through each illustration. Choose at least two illustrations to help connect the children with the Trinity.

- Egg – shell, white, yolk
- Apple – skin, flesh, core
- Water – fluid, ice, steam
- Three legged stool – if one leg is missing, chair is not functional
- Three leafed clover (you could make one out of cardboard) – one leaf, three leaves
- Father/Son/Brother or Sister/Mother/Daughter (use three different hats/props to represent each role or share three different photos of you in each role, e.g. mother: a photo of you with kids)

'Some things exist as three things in one. For example, when we talk about an egg, we are not just talking about an egg shell, and we are not just talking about the yolk, we are talking about an egg as meaning three things—shell, white and yolk. So some things are one thing, but at the same time, they're three things. Well, guess what? God is one thing and three things at the same time. Let's see how the Bible explains it.'



Tying In

Explore the scripture...

Look at the scripture below to explore each role and use the questions below to guide a discussion. You might like to divide your group into three, with each group focusing on one part of the Godhead. Have each group explore scripture, maybe write some notes then come back and share what they learnt. Be sure to give children the opportunity to ask any questions that they might have.

- God the Father: Romans 8:15, 2 Corinthians 6:18, Psalm 89:26, 1 John 3:1
- Jesus the Son: Matthew 17:5, Luke 3:22
- Holy Spirit: John 14:26, Romans 8:16, Matthew 4:1

Discussion questions:

- What does this verse/passage teach you about?
- What stands out for you?
- Do you have any questions?

Prayer activity:

'We've been able to see how important being in community and in relationship is to God—even God is in a community: Father, Son and Holy Spirit! That is what the Trinity is all about. We need to make sure that we spend time focusing on OUR relationship with God. You might like to split into groups of three and take turns praying for each other.'

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

It's your turn...

- Use one of the illustrations you have learnt to teach your family or Big Bud about the Trinity.

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