

The Presence of God and the Trinity:
How God's Relational Character Changes Everything (John 17)

The thesis for the morning: **The eternal love and glory enjoyed within the Trinity is the basis for all of creation and the site of our eternal joy.**

This thesis has three basic parts:

- 1) There is eternal love and glory enjoyed within the Trinity.
- 2) That eternal love and glory is the basis for all of creation.
- 3) That eternal love and glory is the site of our eternal joy.

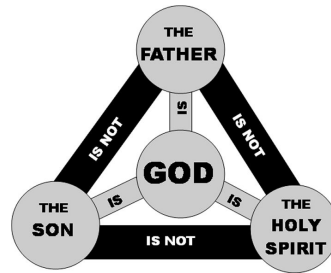
There is eternal love and glory enjoyed within the Trinity.

Trinity basics: We believe that there is ONE GOD, eternally existing in THREE DISTINCT PERSONS—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Trinity possesses the same DIVINE ESSENCE.

Person – Answers “Who?” (Father, Son, Holy Spirit=THREE) Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19

Essence – Answers “What?” (God, Divine=ONE) Deuteronomy 6:4; James 2:19

Three In One:



Therefore, since we believe in a Trinitarian God, existing in three distinct persons, *we believe in a God who has enjoyed eternal fellowship within himself. Our God has a fundamentally relational nature.*

John 17:4-5 – I (Jesus) glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

1 John 4:8-9 – Anyone who does not love does not know God, because *God is love.*

“God is love” is most fundamentally about God’s love for himself among the Trinity.

John 17:24 – Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me *because you loved me before the foundation of the world.*

That eternal love and glory is the basis for all of creation.

All of creation exists to display the glory of God. (Psalm 19:1; Isaiah 43:7; Romans 11:36)

John 17:24 – Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see *my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.* (ESV)

The eternal love of God for himself is manifest in creation in the ultimate display of the glory of God and apex of creation—the cross of Christ:

1 John 4:8-9 – Anyone who does not love does not know God, *because God is love*. In this the love of God was *made manifest among us*, that God *sent his only Son into the world*, so that we might live through him.

Summary: God has eternally loved himself and glorified himself within the Trinity—the Father loving the Son, the Son loving the Father, the Father glorifying the Son, the Son Glorifying the Father, the Spirit loving and glorifying the Father and the Son. And God purposed to “take this show on the road” to display his love and glory outside of himself in creation, creating humans for his glory (Isaiah 43:7) and displaying his perfect love in the cross (1 John 4:8-9).

That eternal love and glory is the site of our eternal joy.

We are invited into the eternal love and glory of the Trinity.

John 17:20-26 – I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, *that they also may be in us*, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. *The glory that you have given me I have given to them*, that they may be one even as we are one, *I in them and you in me*, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me *and loved them even as you loved me*. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, *may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world*. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, *that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.*”

God has been eternally loving and glorifying himself. Out of the overflow of that love and glory he created the universe, and invites us into that love and glory for all of eternity. **Therefore, the eternal love and glory of our Trinitarian God is the site for our eternal joy in him. The Trinity matters because if there is not eternal love and glory in God, we are invited into nothing.**