



RS.CB2 The Trinity

AQA 8062 · Calculators not allowed · about 55 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

1 This question checks key vocabulary used in Christian teaching about the Trinity.

- (a) State what is meant by the Trinity. (1)
- (b) State what is meant by a creed. (1)
- (c) Name the creed, first agreed in the fourth century, which sets out Christian belief in the Trinity. (1)
- (d) State what is meant by the Filioque clause. (1)
- (e) Give one word for the belief that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are equally, fully God. (1)

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

2 Give three Christian beliefs about the Trinity.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

- 3** Explain two reasons Christians believe the Trinity is present in scripture. Refer to scripture or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

- 4** Explain two contrasting Christian views on the origin of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity (the Filioque clause). Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

5 This question is about the Trinity in Christian belief. It is the AQA-style 24-mark, five-part question.

- (a)** State one word for the Christian doctrine that God is three persons in one Being. **(1)**
- (b)** Give two things all three persons of the Trinity are believed to share. **(2)**
- (c)** Explain two ways the Trinity is presented as active at creation. Refer to scripture in your answer. **(4)**
- (d)** Explain two contrasting Christian views on whether analogies, such as water existing as ice, liquid and steam, are a helpful way to understand the Trinity. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer. **(5)**
- (e)** Evaluate this statement: 'The Bible provides clear evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity.' In your answer you should: refer to Christian teaching, refer to different points of view, reach a justified conclusion. **(12)**

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(Total for Question 5 is 24 marks)

6 Explain two ways a belief in the Trinity might affect Christian worship today.

(Total for Question 6 is 4 marks)

7 Give three sources of authority Christians use to learn about the Trinity.

(Total for Question 7 is 3 marks)

Mark scheme · RS.CB2 The Trinity

Question 1

- (a) **B1** the Christian belief that God is three persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in one being, oe
- (a) **Answer: The belief that God is three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in one being.**
- (b) **B1** a formal, official statement of Christian belief, oe
- (b) **Answer: A formal, official statement of Christian belief.**
- (c) **B1** the Nicene Creed, oe
- (c) **Answer: The Nicene Creed.**
- (d) **B1** the Western addition to the Nicene Creed stating the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father 'and the Son', oe
- (d) **Answer: The Western addition to the Nicene Creed stating the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.**
- (e) **B1** the Godhead / consubstantiality, oe
- (e) **Answer: The Godhead (or 'consubstantiality': being of one being/substance).**

Question 2

- **B1** the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three distinct persons, oe
- **B1** each person of the Trinity is fully and equally God, oe
- **B1** the three persons are united in one Being/Godhead, not three separate gods, oe
- **Answer: Any three: three distinct persons; each fully/equally God; united in one Being (not three gods).**

Question 3

- **B1** point 1: the Great Commission names Father, Son and Holy Spirit together in a single baptismal formula, oe
- **B1** development: Matthew 28:19 records Jesus instructing his disciples to baptise 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', oe
- **B1** point 2: Paul's closing blessing names all three persons together, oe
- **B1** development: 2 Corinthians 13:14 reads, 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all', oe
- **Answer: E.g. (1) the baptismal formula naming all three (Matthew 28:19); (2) Paul's three-part blessing (2 Corinthians 13:14).**

Question 4

- **B1** view 1: Western Christianity, including the Catholic Church and most Protestant denominations, follows the Filioque addition and believes the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son, oe
- **B1** development: this wording was added to the Western text of the Nicene Creed some centuries after the original councils, and had been adopted by the Western Church, including Rome, by the eleventh century, oe
- **B1** view 2: Eastern Orthodox Christians reject the Filioque addition and hold that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, oe
- **B1** development: this is based on the original wording agreed at the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople and on John 15:26, where Jesus speaks of 'the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father', and Orthodox Christians regard the Western addition as an unauthorised, one-sided change to a creed the whole Church had agreed together, oe
- **B1** reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe
- **Answer: Contrast: the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (Western/Filioque view) vs the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone (Eastern Orthodox view, John 15:26).**

Question 5

- (a) **B1** the Trinity, oe
- **(a) Answer: The Trinity.**
- (b) **B1** full/equal divinity, each is fully God, oe
- (b) **B1** eternal existence, each is eternal, without beginning, oe
- **(b) Answer: E.g. full/equal divinity, and eternal existence.**
- (c) **B1** point 1: God (the Father) creates, and the Spirit of God is present and active at creation, oe
- (c) **B1** development: Genesis 1:1-2 describes God creating the heavens and the earth while 'the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters', oe
- (c) **B1** point 2: the Word, understood by Christians to be the Son, is present and active at creation, oe
- (c) **B1** development: John 1:1-3 states the Word 'was with God' and 'was God' at the beginning, and that 'through him all things were made', oe
- **(c) Answer: E.g. the Spirit hovering over the waters (Genesis 1:2); the Word active in creation (John 1:1-3).**
- (d) **B1** view 1: some Christians find such analogies helpful for making an abstract doctrine easier to grasp, oe
- (d) **B1** development: e.g. water as ice, liquid and steam, or, according to a popular but historically unverified legend, St Patrick's use of a three-leaf shamrock, are used to help explain how something can be one thing yet exist/appear in three ways, oe
- (d) **B1** view 2: other Christians argue these analogies are theologically misleading, oe
- (d) **B1** development: such analogies can suggest the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are only three different forms or stages of one being appearing at different times, a view historically rejected as the heresy of modalism, rather than three distinct persons who exist together, at the same time, oe
- (d) **B1** reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe
- **(d) Answer: Contrast: analogies as a helpful teaching tool vs analogies as theologically misleading (risking modalism), assessed against the Nicene Creed's insistence on three co-existing persons.**
- (e) **L4** (10-12): A well-argued, balanced answer that considers more than one point of view in a developed way, using accurate and detailed references to Christian teaching and/or scripture to support each point, and reaches a clear, justified conclusion.
- (e) **L3** (7-9): A clear and reasoned answer that considers more than one point of view, supported by relevant references to Christian teaching and/or scripture, though the justification of the conclusion may be less developed.
- (e) **L2** (4-6): A reasoned answer that considers at least one point of view, with some relevant supporting evidence, but with limited or no consideration of an alternative view.
- (e) **L1** (1-3): One or more relevant points are made, but with little or no supporting evidence and no reasoned conclusion.
- (e) **L0** (0): No relevant content.

- **(e) Indicative content:**

- Agree: the baptismal formula in Matthew 28:19 names Father, Son and Holy Spirit together in a single instruction from Jesus.
- Agree: 2 Corinthians 13:14 names all three persons together in one blessing, suggesting they were already thought of together in the earliest Church.
- Agree: John 1:1 states the Word 'was with God, and the Word was God', which Christians take as clear evidence for the divinity of the Son alongside the Father.
- Agree: some older English translations, following the King James Version, include 1 John 5:7-8, which states directly that 'there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one' - if original, this would be the single most explicit statement of the doctrine in the whole Bible.
- Disagree: the word 'Trinity' itself does not appear anywhere in the Bible; it was first used in Christian theology by the writer Tertullian, around 200 AD, showing the precise doctrine was formulated by the later Church rather than stated as such in scripture.
- Disagree: the passage quoted above, 1 John 5:7-8 (sometimes called the Comma Johanneum), is regarded by the great majority of modern biblical scholars and textual critics as a later addition, not present in the earliest surviving Greek manuscripts of 1 John; most modern translations (e.g. the NIV, ESV and NRSV) omit it from the main text or clearly mark it as a later addition, so it cannot be relied on as clear, original biblical evidence.
- Disagree: the fullest doctrinal statement of the Trinity was only formally agreed at the Councils of Nicaea (325 AD) and Constantinople (381 AD), which some see as evidence that the Church had to interpret and develop scattered scriptural evidence into a single settled doctrine, rather than the doctrine being stated outright and completely within the Bible itself.
- A balanced answer might conclude that scripture contains strong Trinitarian patterns, such as the triple formula in Matthew 28:19 and the divine claims made about the Word in John 1, which most Christians see as more than sufficient grounds for the doctrine, even though the single most explicit verse sometimes used to 'prove' it (1 John 5:7-8) is textually disputed and the precise term 'Trinity' was coined only later by the Church.

Question 6

- **B1** point 1: many church services and personal prayers use a Trinitarian formula, oe
- **B1** development: e.g. the sign of the cross made 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit', or the doxology 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit', oe
- **B1** point 2: belief that the Holy Spirit is a living, active person of God leads some Christians to expect the Spirit's presence and guidance in worship, oe
- **B1** development: e.g. a Christian might pray for the Spirit's help before making an important decision, or feel the Spirit's presence during a time of prayer or worship, oe
- **Answer: E.g. use of a Trinitarian formula in prayer/blessing; seeking the Holy Spirit's presence and guidance in worship.**

Question 7

- **B1** the Bible, oe
- **B1** the Nicene Creed, oe
- **B1** Church teaching and tradition, e.g. the decisions of Church councils, oe
- **Answer: Any three: the Bible; the Nicene Creed; Church teaching/tradition (e.g. Church councils).**