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"I believe in God, One and Triune"

The Blessed Trinity is the mystery of God Himself, the central mystery of Christian faith and life. What does it mean in practice to say "I believe in the Triune God"? How can we have a relationship with each of the Three Divine Persons?

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Summary

1. What does "I believe in God" mean?
2. What is God like?
3. What is the meaning of the mystery of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit?
4. What are the consequences of believing in one God?
5. Is belief the same as faith? What is faith?

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1. What does "I believe in God" mean?

The affirmation "I believe in God" is the most important article of faith: it is the source of all the other truths about mankind, the world, and the believer's whole life. Believing in

God means believing what God has revealed.

God, in his goodness and wisdom, reveals himself to man. He reveals himself through events and words. Most especially He has made himself known through the Incarnate Word, his Son Jesus Christ made Man, in order to open the way that leads to the definitive enjoyment of God in Heaven.

In practice, believing in God means adhering to God Himself, trusting fully in Him and giving full assent to all the truths revealed by Him, because God is the Truth.

It means believing in one God in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Meditate with St. Josemaría

- We need to allow these truths of our faith to penetrate our soul,

to the point of changing our whole life. God loves us: the Almighty, the One who made heaven and earth.

- God is interested even in the smallest events in the lives of his creatures — in your affairs and mine — and he calls each of us by our name. This certainty which the faith gives enables us to look at everything in a new light. And everything, while remaining exactly the same becomes different, because it is an expression of God's love. Our life is turned into a continuous prayer, we find ourselves with good humour and a peace which never ends, and everything we do is an act of thanksgiving running through all our day. (*Christ is Passing By*, 144)

2. What is God like?

God is One and Triune, One God and Three Divine Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity is the mystery of God in himself, the central mystery of the faith and of Christian life. It is the source of all the other mysteries of faith; it is the light that illuminates them.

Only God, from all eternity, transcends the world and history. He is the creator of all things; he made heaven and earth. He is the faithful God, always close to his people in order to save them. He is the Holy One *par excellence*, "rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4), always ready to forgive. God is the spiritual Being, transcendent, omnipotent, eternal, personal and perfect. He is truth and love.

Meditate with St. Josemaría

- If you leaf through the holy Scripture, you will discover constant references to the mercy of God. Mercy fills the earth. It extends to all his children, and is "all around us." It "watches over me." It "extends to the heavens" to help us, and has been continually "confirmed". God in taking care of us as a loving father looks on us in his mercy — a mercy that is "tender", welcome as "rain-clouds".
- What security should be ours in considering the mercy of the Lord! "He has but to cry for redress, and I, the ever merciful, will listen to him." It is an invitation, a promise that he will not fail to fulfil. (*Christ is Passing By*, 7)
- It looks as if the whole world is coming down on top of you.

Whichever way you turn you find no way out. This time, it is impossible to overcome the difficulties. But, have you again forgotten that God is your Father? —all-powerful, infinitely wise, full of mercy. He would never send you anything that is evil. That thing that is worrying you, it's good for you, even though those earthbound eyes of yours may not be able to see it now. Lord, once again and always, may your most wise Will be done! (*Way of the Cross*, 9)

3. What is the meaning of the mystery of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit?

"The Catholic faith is this: that we venerate one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity, not confusing the Persons, nor separating the substances; one is the person of the Father, another that of the Son, another that of the Holy Spirit; but of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit one is the divinity, equal in glory, coeternal in majesty" (Athanasian Creed).

There is but one God, the almighty Father and his only Son and the Holy Spirit.

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- Our heart now needs to distinguish and adore each one of the divine Persons. The soul is, as it were, making a discovery in the supernatural life, like a little child opening his eyes to the world about him. The soul spends time lovingly with the Father and the Son and

the Holy Spirit, and readily submits to the work of the life-giving Paraclete, who gives himself to us with no merit on our part, bestowing his gifts and the supernatural virtues!

(Friends of God, 306)

- Learn to praise the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Learn to have a special devotion to the Blessed Trinity: I believe in God the Father, I believe in God the Son, I believe in God the Holy Spirit; I hope in God the Father, I hope in God the Son, I hope in God the Holy Spirit; I love God the Father, I love God the Son, I love God the Holy Spirit. I believe, I hope and I love the most Holy Trinity. —This devotion is much needed as a supernatural exercise for the soul, expressed by the movement of the heart, although not always in words.
(The Forge, 296)

4. What are the consequences of believing in one God?

Believing in God, the One God, entails acknowledging his greatness and majesty; living in thanksgiving, always trusting in him, even in adversity; recognizing the unity and true dignity of all men and women, created in the image of God; and making right use of the things he has created.

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- This is the great boldness of the Christian faith: to proclaim the value and dignity of human nature and to affirm that we have been created to achieve the dignity of children of God, through the grace that raises us up to a supernatural level. An incredible boldness it would be, were it not founded on the

promise of salvation given us by God the Father, confirmed by the blood of Christ, and reaffirmed and made possible by the constant action of the Holy Spirit. (*Christ is Passing By*, 133)

5. Is belief the same as faith? What is faith?

Faith is a free gift of God, accessible to those who humbly ask for it. It is the supernatural virtue necessary for salvation. The act of faith is a human act, that is, an act of man's intelligence, which, under the impulse of the will moved by God, freely assents to divine truth.

Moreover, faith is certain because it is based on the Word of God; it "acts through charity" (Galatians 5:6); and it is in continual growth, thanks in

particular to listening to the Word of God and to prayer. Faith makes us taste the joy of heaven now and forever.

Meditate with St. Josemaría

- History is not the plaything of blind forces and is not the result of mere chance. It is the manifestation in time of the mercies of God our Father. God's thoughts are above our thoughts, says Scripture, so trusting God means believing in spite of everything, going beyond appearances. The love of God, who loves us eternally, is behind every happening, although in a way that is sometimes hidden from us.
- When Christians live by faith – a faith that is not just a word but real personal prayer – the conviction of God's love shows in their joy and inner freedom.

The knots that sometimes tie the heart down, the burdens that weigh down and crush the soul, break up and melt away. "If God is for us, who is against us?" And we find a smile coming to our lips. Those who are children of God, Christians, who live by faith, can suffer and cry; they can have reasons for sorrow; but they cannot have any reason to be sad. (*The Riches of the Faith*)

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