The Trinity

Announcing the Biblical Truths of our Lord

Articles

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These articles were compiled by House of Truth Ministries.
These articles present a defense of the Trinity.

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Definitions on the Trinity

What is the Trinity?
By CARM
http://www.carm.org/doctrine/whatisthetrinity.htm

The word "trinity" is a term used to denote the Christian doctrine that God exists as a unity of three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each of the persons is distinct from the other, yet identical in essence. In other words, each is fully divine in nature, but each is not the totality of the Trinity.

The Father is not the same person as the Son who is not the same person as the Holy Spirit who is not the same person as the Father.

But in God there are not three entities, nor three beings. God, is a trinity of **persons consisting of one substance and one essence.** God is numerically one. **Yet, within the single divine essence are three individual subsistences that we call persons**.

Each of the three persons is completely divine in nature though each is not the totality of the Godhead.
Each of the three persons is not the other two persons.
Each of the three persons is related to the other two, but are distinct from them.

Another Look at the Trinity
By CARM
http://www.carm.org/doctrine/trinitylook.htm

The Trinity is defined as one God who exists in three eternal, simultaneous, and distinct persons known as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Athanasian Creed
(fifth century)
http://www.carm.org/creeds/athanasian.htm

We worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance.
And yet there are not three eternal Beings, but one eternal Being. So also there are not three uncreated Beings, nor three infinite Beings, but one uncreated and one infinite Being.
Thus the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. **And yet there are not three Gods, but one God only.**

The Nature of God - The Tri-Unity of God
By James White
http://www.aomin.org/aoblog/index.php/2013/01/07/the-nature-of-god-the-tri-unity-of-god-vintage/

A. Scriptural Evidence: (Quotations from The Works of B. B. Warfield, vol. 2, pages 133-135). The term _"Trinity"_ is not a Biblical term, and we are not using Biblical language when we define what is expressed by it as the doctrine that there is one only and true God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three coeternal and coequal Persons, **the same in substance but distinct in subsistence.**

Is The Creedal Doctrine of The Trinity Biblical?
By Bob Passantino
Copyright 1992 by Bob Gretchen Passantino

By "trinity" I mean that within the nature of the one true God, **there are three eternal, distinct Persons**: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three persons are the one God. By using the logical technique called the transitive property of equality (things equal to the same thing are equal to each other),

Why We Should Believe in the Trinity?
Pat Zukeran
https://www.probe.org/why-we-should-believe-in-the-trinity/

This essential teaching of Christianity states that we believe in one God who exists in three separate and **distinct persons**--God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each member is **equal in nature and substance**.

The Dogma of the Trinity
By Catholic Online
http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=11699

The Trinity is the term employed to signify the central doctrine of the Christian religion -- the truth that in the unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these Three Persons being truly distinct one from another.

Thus, in the words of the Athanasian Creed : "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods but one God." In this Trinity of Persons the Son is begotten of the Father by an eternal generation, and the Holy Spirit proceeds by an eternal procession from the Father and the Son. Yet, notwithstanding this difference as to origin, the Persons are co-eternal and co-equal: all alike are uncreated and omnipotent. This, the Church teaches, is the revelation regarding God's nature which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came upon earth to deliver to the world: and which she proposes to man as the foundation of her whole dogmatic system.

BIBLE STUDY: WHY CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE TRINITY

The doctrine of the Trinity, as taught in the Bible, is a vital tenet of the Christian faith. Christians universally agree upon the biblical substantiation of the Trinity so as to make it a testing ground for genuine fellowship. Those in the early Church who rejected the doctrine of One God in three persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) were identified as false teachers. In today's Christianity we need to make certain that we hold true to this biblical doctrine of God.

Outside of Christianity there are those who argue that the doctrine of the Trinity came into being through a series of Church councils, beginning at the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325). Others denounce the Trinity saying that early Christians borrowed the concept from pagan religions.

In response to the first argument, the doctrine of the Trinity was not formed at a church council. It is founded upon clear passages in the Bible. Church councils only helped define, theologically, the teachings already found within the Scriptures.

In response to the second argument, the Trinity was not borrowed from paganism, since all pagan concepts are polytheistic, which is not comparable to the monotheism within the Trinity. Polytheistic religions taught many gods, whereas the Trinity is monotheistic, teaching one God.

Two fallacies of reasoning are committed by such an argument. It is a categorical fallacy to compare polytheism to monotheism, since the two are mutually exclusive and belong to separate categories of discussion. It is also a genetic fallacy to claim that mere similarities prove a common origin. Just as similarities of automobiles cannot prove a common maker, so also similarities between Christian theology and world religions does not prove a common origin.

It is the duty of every Christian to understand the biblical teaching of one God who exists as three Persons. The Trinity is defined as: Within the nature of the One True God there simultaneously exist three eternal Persons; namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All three persons are co-equal in all the nature and attributes of God.

The absence of the word "Trinity" in the Bible does not diminish the truth that the Bible teaches the eternal existence of one God as three Persons. Christians refer to God as tri-personal, which means there are three centers of identity. All three Persons speak and act in first person singular, "I," (Father--Jn. 12:28; Son--Jn. 8:58; Holy Spirit--Acts 13:2). The Scriptures used in this study are not exhaustive. They are intended to demonstrate the doctrine clearly without violation of the context.

MONOTHEISM, THE BELIEF IN ONE GOD: Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10, 44:8, 45:21-22; Mk. 12:32.

GOD'S NATURE OR ESSENCE IS SPIRIT: Jn. 4:24; 2 Cor. 3:17.

WE MUST SHOW THE DISTINCTION OF PERSON:
Father is a Person - Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2.
Son is a Person - Matt. 3:17; Acts 13:33; Prov. 30:4; Isa. 9:6.
Holy Spirit is a Person - John, chapters 14, 15, 16 (personal pronoun HE), Matt. 12:31; Rom. 8:26-27; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 10:29 (only a person can be blasphemed, grieved, insulted, intercede, etc.).

Their personal distinction is shown:
In the incarnation (Luke 1:35).
In Christ's baptism (Matt. 3:16).
In the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19).
In Paul's Epistles (2 Cor. 13:14).

WE MUST SHOW THAT ALL THREE PERSONS ARE GOD:
Father is God - Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3.
Son is God - Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Zech. 12:10; Matt. 1:23, 22:41-45, Mk. 2:7-10, 12:35-37; Luke 5:20-21, 20:41-44; Jn. 1:1 and 14, 1:18 (only begotten God, in Greek, See New American Standard Bible), Jn. 5:18, 8:58, 10:30-33, 20:28, Acts 20:28; Phil. 2:6-8; Col. 2:9; Titus 2:10-13; Heb. 1:6-8, 1 Jn. 5:20; 2 Pet. 1:1; Rev. 1:8.
Holy Spirit is God - 2 Sam. 23:2-3; Ps. 95:7-11 with Heb. 3:7-19; Isa. 6:8-10 with Acts 28:25-27; Jer. 31:33-34 with Heb. 10:15-16; Acts 5:1-4; 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

WE MUST SHOW THAT ALL THREE PERSONS ARE ONE LORD: (One Lord) Eph. 4:5; 1 Cor. 8:6; (Father) Isa. 64:8; Matt. 11:25; (Son) Jn. 11:32; Acts 2:36; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14 (Holy Spirit) 2 Cor. 3:17.

ALL THREE PERSONS SHARE THE ATTRIBUTES WHICH ARE UNIQUE TO THE TRUE GOD:
Omnipotent - (Father) Jer. 32:17; Job 42:2 (Son) Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 1:24; Col. 1:16-18; Rev. 1:8 (Holy Spirit) Lk. 1:35-37.
Omnipresent - (Father) Jer. 23:24; 1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chron. 2:6 (Son) Matt. 18:20, 28:20 (Holy Spirit) Ps. 139:7-10.
Omniscient - (Father) Ps. 139:1-6; Isa. 44-7-8, 46:10 (Son) Jn. 2:24, 16:30; 1 Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:3 (Holy Spirit) Isa. 40:13; 1 Cor. 2:10.
Eternal - (Father) Deut. 33:27; Isa. 40:28 (Son) Micah 5:2; Jn. 1:1; Col. 1:17-19; Heb. 13:8; 1 Jn. 1:1 (Holy Spirit) Heb. 9:14.
Creator - (Father) Gen. 1:1; Isa. 42:5; Zech. 12:1 (Son) Jn. 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2, 10 (Holy Spirit) Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps. 104:30.
Glory - (Father) Isa. 42:8 (Son) Jn. 17:5; Heb. 1:2 (Holy Spirit) 1 Pet. 4:14.

ALL THREE PERSONS SHARE IN THE WORK THAT IS UNIQUE TO GOD:
Indwells - (Father) Jn. 14:23; 1 Jn. 2:23 (Son) Eph. 3:17; Rev. 3:20 (Holy Spirit) Jn. 14:17; 2 Cor. 6:16-17.
Resurrected Jesus' body - (Father) Gal. 1:1; 1 Thes. 1:9-10 (Son) Jn. 2:18-22, 10:17-18 (Holy Spirit) 1 Pet. 3:18.
Sanctifier - (Father) Jude 1 (Son) Heb. 2:11 (Holy Spirit) Rom. 15:16.
Restorer from death - (Father) Jn. 5:21; Rom. 4:17 (Son) Jn. 5:21, 6:39 (Holy Spirit) 1 Pet. 3:18.
Searches the heart - (Father) 1 Chron. 28:9 (Son) Rev. 2:18, 23 (Holy Spirit) 1 Cor. 2:9-10.

ALL THREE PERSONS ARE MENTIONED IN UNISON AS GOD:
Isa. 48:16; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14.

GOD SPOKE WITH PLURAL PRONOUNS:
All three Persons are shown in passages where God spoke using plural pronouns of Himself. God uses "us" and "our" in these verses when speaking of himself - Gen. 1:26, 3:22, 11:7-8; Isa. 6:8. Furthermore, the Hebrew word *Elohim*, used of God 2,600 times in the Old Testament, is a plural noun. It is always translated in the singular when speaking of the true God because of the singular verb that governs the pronoun. An example is Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God [*Elohim*, a plural noun] created [*bara*, a singular verb] the heavens and the earth." Even though the noun God is plural it is translated singular because it is governed by the verb. More than one Old Testament commentator sees the Trinity concealed in the precise language of the Bible. God has a plurality of Persons within the nature of His Being.

JEHOVAH IS USED OF EACH PERSON:
Most Bible translations (KJV, NIV, NASB, RSV) will typeset the Hebrew name for God in all capital letters, LORD. The Hebrew word used here is referred to as the tetragrammaton JHVH (Jehovah) or sometimes YHWH (Yahweh). Yahweh is preferred by scholars as closest pronunciation for the Hebrew name of God. Since it is recognized in our English translation as the LORD we can identify where God's name is used in the Hebrew. This is valuable in discussing the Trinity because there are places in the Old Testament where more than one person is identified as Jehovah or Yahweh. The fact that God is One (Deut. 6:4) only underscores the importance of His Persons being identified with His name.
Two Persons are seen in Gen. 19:24, where the Lord rained fire and brimstone from the Lord. A distinction of two persons is made in Ps. 110:1, one is David's Lord and the other is the LORD. Isaiah 44:6, in the Hebrew (see KJV, NKJV, NASB, NRSV), shows two persons, the speaker is the LORD and his redeemer is the LORD. Isaiah 48:16 shows three Persons; the speaker is the LORD, yet the LORD and His Spirit sent Him. In Jer. 50:40 and Amos 4:10-11 we find Gen. 19:24 reiterated, two persons are shown. Zechariah 2:8-11 and 10:12 has the LORD as the speaker, but it also speaks of the LORD as another person.

JESUS IS JEHOVAH!
New Testament writers referred to Jesus as Jehovah. They quickly drew the connection between Jesus and Jehovah because of their familiarity with the Old Testament. In some passages the name Jesus replaced the name Jehovah from the Old Testament quotation. In other passages Jesus is the one fulfilling only what Jehovah himself would do.

THE OLD TESTAMENT NAME JEHOVAH IS DELIBERATELY APPLIED TO JESUS.

Matt. 3:3 with Isa. 40:3.
Matt. 11:5 with Isa. 35:4-6.
Matt. 16:27 with Ps. 62:12.
Jn. 19:37 with Zech. 12:10.
Acts 2:20-21 with Joel 2:32.
Rom. 10:9-13 with Joel 2:32.
Phil. 2:10 with Isa. 45:23.
Heb. 1:10 with Ps. 102:25-27.
1 Pet. 2:8 with Isa. 8:13-14
Rev. 2:23 with Jer. 17:10.
Rev. 22:12 with Isa. 40:10 and 62:11.

APPEARANCES OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AS JEHOVAH.
The appearances of Christ in the Old Testament are called Theophanies (appearances of God) or Christophanies (appearances of Christ). There were several times in the Old Testament

where God appeared to men in a visible manifestation. Sometimes this would be in the appearance of angel and at other times the appearance of a man. This, of course, does not make God a created being, like an angel, it only means He manifested Himself to His people.

The Gospel of John records that no man has seen the Father (Jn. 1:18, 6:46). If the Father was not seen in the Old Testament, who, then, did the Patriarchs see? We believe it was the Second Person of the Trinity before he was born unto Mary. He was seen by Abraham (Jn. 8:56-58), and by Isaiah (Jn. 12:37-41). Paul wrote about Theophanies (1 Cor. 10:4) as did Luke (Acts 7:4).

Some of the appearances of God in the Old Testament are: Gen. 12:7, 17:1, 18:1, 26:2, 26:24, 35:9; Ex. 3:2-6, 6:3, 24:9-11, 33:18; Isa. 6:1-5. For further study consult a good study Bible (*Open Bible, Scofield Reference Bible*) or a Bible encyclopedia.

OLD TESTAMENT ATTRIBUTES AND TITLES OF JEHOVAH APPLIED TO JESUS.

	Jehovah	**Jesus**
Glory	Isa. 42:8	Jn. 17:5
Light	Isa. 60:20 Ps. 27:1	Jn. 1:9 Jn. 8:12
Holy	Isa. 57:15	Lk. 1:49
Judge	Joel 3:12 Ps. 89:9 Ps. 50:6	Jn. 5:22 Jn. 9:39 2 Cor. 5:10
King	Jer. 10:10 Ps. 47:7	Rev. 17:14 Jn. 12:15
Lord	Deut. 10:17	Rev. 17:14
Rock	Deut. 34:4 2 Sam. 22:32	1 Cor. 10:4 1 Pet. 2:8
Savior	Ps. 106:21	Acts 4:12
First & Last	Isa. 41:4 Isa. 44:6	Rev. 1:8 Rev. 1:17
Shepherd	Ps. 23:1 Ps. 80:1	Jn. 10:14 Heb. 13:20
I AM	Ex. 3:14	Jn. 8:58

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS JEHOVAH!

The Holy Spirit is shown to be Jehovah in the Old Testament. The following are quotations from the Old Testament where Jehovah was speaking, but in the New Testament He is identified as the Holy Spirit.

Ex. 16:7 with Heb. 3:7-9.
Ps. 78:17 with Acts 7:51.
Isa. 6:8-10 with Acts 28:25.
Jer. 31:33-34 with Heb. 10:15-16.
Ps. 95:7 with Heb. 3:7-11 (Elohim).

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND JESUS SHARE THE ATTRIBUTES THAT BELONG ONLY TO JEHOVAH.

	Jehovah	**Jesus**	**Holy Spirit**
Glory	Isa. 42:8	Jn. 17:5	1 Pet. 4:14
Rock	Deut. 32:4	1 Pt. 2:8	2 Sm.23:2,3
Judge	Ps. 50:6	Jn. 5:22	Jn. 16:8
Holy	Isa. 57:15	Lk. 1:35	Eph. 4:30
Lord	Deut. 10:17	Rv. 17:14	2 Cor. 3:17

CONCLUSION

This Bible study contains approximately 250 biblical references on the Trinity. Only space prevents the study from going deeper. A good student of the Bible will make use of a cross-reference edition of the Bible and look up additional verses to enhance this study.

Christianity rests upon the Bible as it source of doctrine. The ample amount of support contained in this tract makes the doctrine of the Trinity undeniable. Enjoy your study of God's nature. Rejoice in Him for revealing such wonderful things in His Word.

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WHY CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN
THE PERSON AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Bible begins with these two verses:

Genesis 1:1-2 - In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and the darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

There are four things that can be observed from this passage. (1) God created all things, so He cannot be a created thing Himself. (2) All created things must have a beginning and are finite. Since God is not a created thing, then He is infinite and eternal. (3) There are two persons active as the Creator in these verses, God and the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit's personal distinction is seen in the prepositional phrase "the Spirit of God." (4) Hence, the Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) is coequal with God as the Creator in eternity.

The Bible opens with the doctrine of God's existence independent of creation. The activity of the Father (Genesis 1:1), the Son (John 1:3), and the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:2) in creation forms a basis for the coequality of three Persons in one God (the Trinity). When Christians refer to the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity, it has nothing to do with degree or rank. He is called the third person of the Trinity only to distinguish His person from the Father and Son.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

When we speak of the "person" of the Holy Spirit, we must clearly state that "person" does not mean a "material body," since we've seen in Genesis that the Holy Spirit is uncreated and is eternal. By "person," we mean the qualities that determine a personal nature (intelligence, emotion, will and mind) reside in the Holy Spirit. These personal characteristics cannot be found in non-personal entities. The Holy Spirit, then, is not a mere influence, force, or power. He has the distinctive characteristics of personal beingness.

Intelligence: John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10
Emotion: Romans 15:30 (love); Ephesians 4:30
Will: 1 Corinthians 12:11
Mind: Romans 8:27

The Holy Spirit is addressed as a person in the Old Testament. He speaks and He is identified with a personal pronoun.
2 Samuel 23:2 -- His Word was on my tongue.
Isaiah 40:13-14 -- Who has taught Him?
Ezekiel 11:1-2, 5 -- He, The Spirit of the Lord, spoke.

The Holy Spirit's person can be further demonstrated by examining the pronouns applied to Him. Even though the word "Spirit" in the Greek New Testament is a neuter noun, it is often used with a masculine demonstrative pronoun. This emphasizes the personality of the Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit by using the masculine pronouns He and Him. The Greek word "ekeinos" is used

as a demonstrative pronoun throughout John 14, 15 and 16. The masculine noun "paraklete", for Helper (Comforter, KJV), is also used throughout these chapters for the Holy Spirit. Let us examine His personal nature in these verses:

John 14:16-17 -- And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Helper (parakleton), that **He** may abide with you forever-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees **Him** nor knowes **Him**; but you know **Him**, for **He** dwells with you and will be in you.

John 14:26 -- But the Helper (parakletos), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He** (ekeinos) will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 15:26 -- But when the Helper (parakletos) comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, **He** (ekeinos) will testify of me.

John 16:7-8 – Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (parakletos) will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send **Him** to you. And when **He** (ekeinos) has come, **He** will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

John 16:13-14 -- However, when **He** (ekeinos), the Spirit of truth, has come, **He** will guide you into all truth; for **He** will not speak on **His** own authority, but whatever **He** hears **He** will speak; and **He** will tell you things to come. **He** (ekeinos) will glorify me, for **He** will take of what is mine and declare it to you.

The Holy Spirit speaks of Himself in first person singular, as "me" and "I".

Acts 10:19-20 -- While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for **I** have sent them."

Acts 13:2 -- ...the Holy Spirit said, Separate **me** Barnabas and Saul for the work unto which **I** have called them.

The Holy Spirit spoke with His own voice from Heaven.

Revelation 14:13 -- Then **I heard a voice** from heaven saying to me, "Write: `Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," **says the Spirit**, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

Revelation 22:17 -- And **the Spirit** and the bride **say**, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires let him take the water of life freely.

The Holy Spirit's work is uniquely what only God does:

He works miracles: Acts 8:39
He teaches: Nehemiah 9:20; John 14:26
He speaks: John 16:14; Acts 13:2; Revelation 2:7
He hears: John 16:13
He intercedes: Romans 8:26
He inspires: 2 Peter 1:21
He convicts of sin: John 16:8

The Holy Spirit responds only as a Person does:

He can be blasphemed: Matthew 12:31
He can be lied to: Acts 5:3
He can be grieved: Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30
He can be resisted: Acts 7:51; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

The Holy Spirit is not merely a power, since He is distinguished from power.

Acts 10:38 -- "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power."

Romans 15:13 -- Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:4 -- And my speech and by preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

The Holy Spirit shows personal interactions with other persons:

Matt. 28:19 -- His relationship to the Father and Son in this verse is one of equality.

John 14:26 -- When Jesus used "another Comforter" to describe the Holy Spirit, He was saying that the Holy Spirit was the same as He was. The word "another" in the Greek is "allon" which denotes "another of the same kind." Whereas, if "heteros" was used, it would mean "another of a different kind."

Acts 15:28 -- His relationship to the Apostles shows a personal relationship.

2 Corinthians 13:14 -- The only way that we can have fellowship with the Holy Spirit is if He is a person.

Can anyone truly deny that the Holy Spirit is a person? There are some who attempt to do so, but without biblical justification. The above references are not mere figures of speech. They are not personifications of a force or energy. The Holy Spirit is a personal being and He is God. No impersonal entity can possess intellect, emotion, will and mind.

<u>The Holy Spirit is GOD</u>

It is clearly taught in the Bible that there is only One True God. Specific attributes belong uniquely to God and nobody else. If the Scriptures show us that there are three Persons who are called God, and that all three Persons have the **unique** attributes of the True God, then we must conclude that these three Persons are the true God. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit co-equally share the attributes and nature of God.

The Holy Spirit is called God in these passages:

2 Samuel 23:2-3 -- Here the Holy Spirit is called the God of Israel.

Acts 5:3-4 -- In these verses it is seen that the Holy Spirit was lied to, and it was not man who was lied to, but it was God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 -- It is the Holy Spirit who is in you, yet it is God who is in you.

2 Timothy 3:16 with 2 Peter 1:20 -- The Holy Spirit inspires Scripture, because He is God.

The Holy Spirit has the unique attributes of the True God:

Creator: Genesis 1:2; Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30

Omnipotent: Luke 1:35-37 (He is called the Power of the Highest)

Omnipresent: Psalm 139:7-10

Omniscient: Ezekiel 11:5; Isaiah 40:13; 1 Corinthians 2:10

Eternal: Hebrews 9:14

The Holy Spirit is Jehovah:
Bible students do not question that Jehovah (or Yahweh) is the only true God. Yet some are surprised that the Holy Spirit is shown to be Jehovah from the Old Testament. In the following references we find Old Testament quotations applied to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Jehovah was speaking in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament His identity is the Holy Spirit.
Exodus 32:9 with Acts 7:51
Isaiah 6:8-10 with Acts 28:25
Jeremiah 31:33-34 with Hebrews 10:15-16

The Holy Spirit is Elohim:
The most frequently occurring Hebrew noun for God in the Old Testament is Elohim. This is applied to the Holy Spirit in the following passages.
Psalm 95:7 with Hebrews 3:7-11

The Holy Spirit is Lord:
The Holy Spirit's Deity is seen in His union with the Father and the Son. The Bible teaches that there is One Lord, (Ephesians 4:5), and all three Person of the Trinity are called Lord.
The Father is called Lord (Matthew 11:25).
The Son is called Lord (1 Corinthians 8:6).
The Holy Spirit is called Lord (2 Corinthians 3:17).

The Holy Spirit is coequal with the Father and Son:
The equality of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is seen in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
The Father resurrected Christ (Galatians 1:1).
The Son resurrected Himself (John 2:18-22; 10:17-18).
The Holy Spirit resurrected Christ (2 Pet. 3:18).
The equality of all three Persons is seen in the baptismal formula of Matt. 28:19 and in the sending of the Messiah in Isaiah 48:16.

The Holy Spirit shares God's unique attributes:
The Holy Spirit's nature as God is seen in a comparison of the attributes and titles of Jehovah God with the Holy Spirit.

	God	**Holy Spirit**
Glory	Isa. 42:8	1 Peter 4:14
Searches mind and heart	1 Chronicles 82:9	1 Corinthians 2:9-10
Gives life	Rom. 4:17	Rom. 8:11
Indwells	2 Cor. 6:16-17 1 Cor. 6:19	1 Cor. 6:19 John 14:17
Spoke to prophets	Lk. 1:68-70 Heb. 1:1	Acts 28:25 2 Pet. 1:21
Rock	Deut. 32:4	2 Sam. 23:2-3
Judge	Ps. 50:6	Jn. 16:8
Comforter	Isa. 51:12	Jn. 14:16

The Holy Spirit is truly a person and is truly God. To deny either is to deny the uniformity of the Scriptures. Those who deny His person and His deity have traded the truth for "another spirit" (2 Corinthians 11:4), which other spirit Paul warned us about. Denial of the Holy Spirit's person and deity is disobedience to biblical truth.

The testimony of the Scripture is overwhelming that the Holy Spirit is a person and that He is God. Let not deceivers persuade you with a counterfeit Holy Spirit. The New Testament gives us the complete picture of the Holy Spirit. He is not an influence, force, or power. He is the Third Person of the Trinity who was sent by the Father and the Son to abide with us forever--John 14:16.

Compiled by Kurt Van Gorden
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Another Look at the Trinity

The Trinity can be a difficult concept to understand. Some think it is a logical contradiction. Others call it a mystery. Does the Bible teach it? Yes it does, see trinity, but that doesn't automatically make it easier to comprehend.

The Trinity is defined as one God who exists in three eternal, simultaneous, and distinct persons known as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Such a definition may suffice for some, but for others this explanation is insufficient.

Therefore, to help understand the Trinity better, I offer the following analogy that, I think, is hinted at in Rom. 1:20: *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made."*

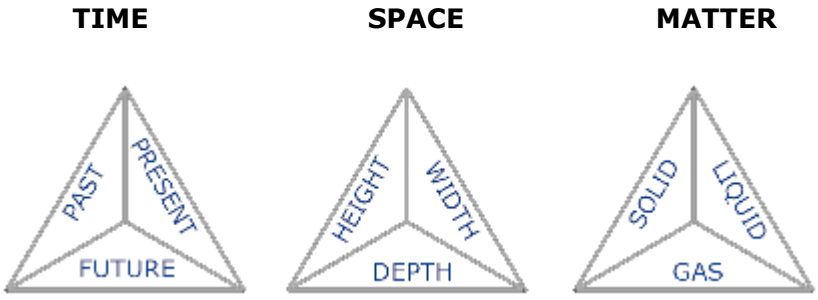
Notice that this verse says God's attributes, power, and nature, can be clearly seen in creation. What does that mean? Should we be able to learn about God's attributes, power, and nature by looking at what He has made? Apparently, according to the Bible, this is possible.

When a painter paints a picture, what is in him is reflected in the painting he produces. When a sculptor creates a work of art, it is from his heart and mind that the source of the sculpture is born. The work is shaped by his creative ability. The creators of art leave their marks, something that is their own, something that reflects what they are. Is this the same with God? Has God left His fingerprints on creation? Of course He has.

Creation

Basically, the universe consists of three elements: Time, Space, and Matter. Each of these is comprised of three 'components.'

Time	Past	Present	Future
Space	Height	Width	Depth
Matter	Solid	Liquid	Gas



As the Trinitarian doctrine maintains, each of the persons of the Godhead is distinct, yet they are all each, by nature, God.

With time, for example, the past is distinct from the present, which is distinct from the future. Each is simultaneous. Yet, they are not three 'times,' but one. That is, they all share the same nature: time

With space, height is distinct from width, which is distinct from depth, which is distinct from height. Yet, they are not three 'spaces,' but one. That is, they all share the same nature: space.

With matter, solid is not the same as liquid, which is not the same as gas, which is not the same as solid. Yet, they are not three 'matters,' but one. That is, they all share the same nature: matter.

Note that there are three sets of threes. In other words, there is a trinity of trinities. If we were to look at the universe and notice these qualities within it, is it fair to say that these are the fingerprints of God upon His creation? I think so. Not only is this simply an observation, but it is also a good source for an analogy of the Trinity.

A Criticism of Trinitarianism

Some critiques of the Trinitarian doctrine say that the Trinity is really teaching three gods, not one. They will say that God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit would make three gods, since the Father plus the Son plus the Holy Spirit would make three. But this is not a logical necessity. Instead of adding, why not multiply? One times one times one equals one. Why must addition be the criteria by which the doctrine is judged? It need not be. Rather, the doctrine should stand or fall based upon biblical revelation, not human logic. Nevertheless, let me draw an analogy from creation itself to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity.

An Analogy of the Trinity

To continue with the observation about the Trinitarian nature of creation, I would like to use 'time' to illustrate the Trinity. Is the "past" plus the "present" plus the "future" a total of three times? Not at all. It simply is a representation of three distinct aspects of the nature of time: past, present, and future. Likewise, the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit are not three separate beings or entities, but three distinct persons in the one nature of the Godhead.

One more comment about Jesus. All cults deny that Jesus is God, the creator of the universe, in flesh. Various objections are raised saying that Jesus could not be God, otherwise, He would be praying to Himself, etc. Let's work with the analogy above, and continue with 'time' as our illustration.

Let's take 'present' and add to it human nature. Present, then, would have two natures: time and man. If 'present' were truly human then he would be able to communicate with us, tell us much, and we could see and touch him. But, because he is also 'time' by nature, he would be able to tell us both the past and the future as he manifested the 'time' nature within him. If 'present' then, communicated with the past and the future, it would not mean he was communicating with himself, but with the distinctions known as the past and the future.

I know that this is only an analogy. But I think it is a good, though basic, illustration of God's nature as expressed in Trinitarian expression.

This article is by CARM.

The Council of Nicaea

Written by Don Closson

Introduction

The doctrine of the Trinity is central to the uniqueness of Christianity. It holds that the Bible teaches that "God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God."{1} So central is this belief that it is woven into the words Jesus gave the church in His Great Commission, telling believers to " . . . go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . ." (Matthew 28:19).

It is not surprising, then, that the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most denigrated and attacked beliefs by those outside the Christian faith. Both Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses reject this central tenet and expend considerable energy teaching against it. Much of the instruction of the Jehovah's Witness movement tries to convince others that Jesus Christ is a created being, not having existed in eternity past with the Father, and not fully God. Mormons have no problem with Jesus being God; in fact, they make godhood available to all who follow the teachings of the Church of Latter-day Saints. One Mormon scholar argues that there are *three* separate Gods--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--who are one in purpose and in some way still one God.{2} Another writes, "The concept that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God is totally incomprehensible."{3}

Among the world religions, Islam specifically teaches against the Trinity. Chapter four of the Koran argues, "Say not 'Trinity': desist: it will be better for you: for Allah is One God: glory be to Him: (far Exalted is He) above having a son" (4:171). Although Muhammad seems to have wrongly believed that Christians taught that the Trinity consisted of God the Father, Mary the Mother, and Jesus the Son, they reject as sinful anything being made equivalent with Allah, especially Jesus.

A common criticism by those who reject the doctrine of the Trinity is that the doctrine was not part of the early church, nor a conscious teaching of Jesus Himself, but was imposed on the church by the Emperor Constantine in the early fourth century at the Council of Nicea. Mormons argue that components of Constantine's pagan thought and Greek philosophy were forced on the bishops who assembled in Nicea (located in present day Turkey). Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Emperor weighed in against their view, which was the position argued by Arius at the council, and, again, forced the church to follow.

In the remaining portions of this article, we will discuss the impact the three key individuals--Arius, Constantine, and Athanasius--had on the Council of Nicea. We will also respond to the charge that the doctrine of the Trinity was the result of political pressure rather than of thoughtful deliberation on Scripture by a group of committed Christian leaders.

Arius

Let's look first at the instigator of the conflict that resulted in the council, a man named Arius.

Arius was a popular preacher and presbyter from Libya who was given pastoral duties at Baucalis, in Alexandria, Egypt. The controversy began as a disagreement between Arius and his bishop, Alexander, in 318 A.D. Their differences centered on how to express the Christian understanding of God using current philosophical language. This issue had become important

because of various heretical views of Jesus that had crept into the church in the late second and early third centuries. The use of philosophical language to describe theological realities has been common throughout the church age in an attempt to precisely describe what had been revealed in Scripture.

Alexander argued that Scripture presented God the Father and Jesus as having an equally eternal nature. Arius felt that Alexander's comments supported a heretical view of God called Sabellianism which taught that the Son was merely a different mode of the Father rather than a different person. Jehovah's Witnesses argue today that the position held by Arius was superior to that of Alexander's.

Although some historians believe that the true nature of the original argument has been clouded by time and bias, the dispute became so divisive that it caught the attention of Emperor Constantine. Constantine brought the leaders of the church together for the first ecumenical council in an attempt to end the controversy.

It should be said that both sides of this debate held to a high view of Jesus and both used the Bible as their authority on the issue. Some have even argued that the controversy would never have caused such dissension were it not inflamed by political infighting within the church and different understandings of terms used in the debate.

Arius was charged with holding the view that Jesus was not just subordinate to the Father in function, but that He was of an inferior substance in a metaphysical sense as well. This went too far for Athanasius and others who were fearful that any language that degraded the full deity of Christ might place in question His role as savior and Lord.

Some believe that the position of Arius was less radical than is often perceived today. Stuart Hall writes, "Arius felt that the only way to secure the deity of Christ was to set him on the step immediately below the Father, who remained beyond all comprehension."{4} He adds that whatever the differences were between the two sides, "Both parties understood the face of God as graciously revealed in Jesus Christ."{5}

Emperor Constantine

Many who oppose the doctrine of the Trinity insist that the emperor, Constantine, imposed it on the early church in 325 A.D. Because of his important role in assembling church leaders at Nicea, it might be helpful to take a closer look at Constantine and his relationship with the church.

Constantine rose to supreme power in the Roman Empire in 306 A.D. through alliance-making and assassination when necessary. It was under Constantine's Edict of Milan in 313 A.D. that persecution of the church ended and confiscated church properties were returned.

However, the nature of Constantine's relationship to the Christian faith is a complex one. He believed that God should be appeased with correct worship, and he encouraged the idea among Christians that he "served their God."{6} It seems that Constantine's involvement with the church centered on his hope that it could become a source of unity for the troubled empire. He was not so much interested in the finer details of doctrine as in ending the strife that was caused by religious disagreements. He wrote in a letter, "My design then was, first, to bring the diverse judgments found by all nations respecting the Deity to a condition, as it were, of settled uniformity; and, second to restore a healthy tone to the system of the world . . ."{7} This resulted in him supporting various sides of theological issues depending on which side might help peace to prevail. Constantine was eventually baptized shortly before his death, but his commitment to the Christian faith is a matter of debate.

Constantine participated in and enhanced a recently established tradition of Roman emperors meddling in church affairs. In the early church, persecution was the general policy. In 272, Aurelian removed Paul of Samosata from his church in Antioch because of a theological controversy. Before the conflict over Arius, Constantine had called a small church synod to resolve the conflict caused by the Donatists who argued for the removal of priests who gave up sacred writings during times of persecution. The Donatists were rebuked by the church synod. Constantine spent five years trying to suppress their movement by force, but eventually gave up in frustration.

Then, the Arian controversy over the nature of Jesus was brought to his attention. It would be a complex debate because both sides held Jesus in high regard and both sides appealed to Scripture to defend their position. To settle the issue, Constantine called the council at Nicea in 325 A.D. with church leaders mainly from the East participating. Consistent with his desire for unity, in years to come Constantine would vacillate from supporting one theological side to the other if he thought it might end the debate.

What is clear is that Constantine's active role in attempting to resolve church disputes would be the beginning of a new relationship between the empire and the church.

Athanasius

The Council of Nicea convened on May 20, 325 A.D. The 230 church leaders were there to consider a question vital to the church: Was Jesus Christ equal to God the Father or was he something else? Athanasius, only in his twenties, came to the council to fight for the idea that, "If Christ were not truly God, then he could not bestow life upon the repentant and free them from sin and death."{8} He led those who opposed the teachings of Arius who argued that Jesus was not of the same substance as the Father.

The Nicene Creed, in its entirety, affirmed belief ". . . in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost." {9}

The council acknowledged that Christ was God of very God. Although the Father and Son differed in role, they, and the Holy Spirit are truly God. More specifically, Christ is of one substance with the Father. The Greek word *homoousios* was used to describe this sameness. The term was controversial because it is not used in the Bible. Some preferred a different word that conveyed *similarity* rather than *sameness*. But Athanasius and the near unanimous majority of bishops felt that this might eventually result in a lowering of Christ's oneness with the Father. They also argued that Christ was begotten, not made. He is not a created thing in the same class as the rest of the cosmos. They concluded by positing that Christ became human for mankind and its salvation. The council was unanimous in its condemnation of Arius and his teachings. It also removed two Libyan bishops who refused to accept the creed formulated by the Council.

The growing entanglement of the Roman emperors with the church during the fourth century was often less than beneficial. But rather than Athanasius and his supporters seeking the backing of imperial power, it was the Arians who actually were in favor of the Emperor having the last word.

Summary

Did Constantine impose the doctrine of the Trinity on the church? Let's respond to a few of the arguments used in support of that belief.

First, the doctrine of the Trinity was a widely held belief prior to the Council of Nicea. Since baptism is a universal act of obedience for new believers, it is significant that Jesus uses Trinitarian language in Matthew 28:19 when He gives the Great Commission to make disciples and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The *Didache*, an early manual of church life, also included the Trinitarian language for baptism. It was written in either the late first or early second century after Christ. We find Trinitarian language again being used by Hippolytus around 200 A.D. in a formula used to question those about to be baptized. New believers were to asked to affirm belief in God the Father, Christ Jesus the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit.

Second, the Roman government didn't consistently support Trinitarian theology or its ardent apologist, Athanasius. Constantine flip-flopped in his support for Athanasius because he was more concerned about keeping the peace than in theology itself. He exiled Athanasius in 335 and was about to reinstate Arius just prior to his death. During the forty-five years that Athanasius was Bishop of Alexandria in Egypt, he was banished into exile five times by various Roman Emperors.

In fact, later emperors forced an Arian view on the church in a much more direct way than Constantine supported the Trinitarian view. Emperors Constantius II and Julian banished Athanasius and imposed Arianism on the empire. The emperor Constantius is reported to have said, "Let whatsoever I will, be that esteemed a canon," equating his words with the authority of the church councils.{10} Arians in general "tended to favor direct imperial control of the church."{11}

Finally, the bishops who attended the Council of Nicea were far too independent and toughened by persecution and martyrdom to give in so easily to a doctrine they didn't agree with. As we have already mentioned, many of these bishops were banished by emperors supporting the Arian view and yet held on to their convictions. Also, the Council at Constantinople in 381 reaffirmed the Trinitarian position after Constantine died. If the church had temporarily succumbed to Constantine's influence, it could have rejected the doctrine at this later council.

Possessing the freedom to call an ecumenical council after the Edict of Milan in 313, significant numbers of bishops and church leaders met to consider the different views about the person of Christ and the nature of God. The result was the doctrine of the Trinity that Christians have held and taught for over sixteen centuries.

Notes

1. Grudem, Wayne, *Bible Doctrine* (Zondervan, 1999), p. 104. **2.** Blomberg, Craig L., & Robinson, Stephen E., *How Wide the Divide,* (InterVarsity Press, 1997), p. 128. **3.** Bruce McConkie in *Mormonism 101* by Bill McKeever & Eric Johnson (Baker Books, 2000), p. 52. **4.** Hall, Stuart G., *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church*, (Eerdmans, 1991), p. 135. **5.** Ibid. **6**. Hall, Stuart G., *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church,* p. 118. **7**. Noll, Mark, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity,* (InterVarsity Press, 1997), p. 51. **8**. Ibid., 55. **9.** Ibid., 57. **10**. Ibid. **11.** Ibid., 60.

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WHY CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

The belief that Jesus Christ is God incarnate is not new to the Christian faith. This doctrine is deeply rooted in Scripture and spans both the Old and New Testament.

Our acceptance of the deity of Jesus Christ is based upon direct biblical statements that He possesses the unique attributes of God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-equal in all the nature and attributes of God.

When Christians speak of Jesus as God incarnate, we mean that God, the Creator of the universe, stepped into the human race and clothed Himself with a human body. The Scriptures clearly teach us that the Son of God was sent into the world to become the Savior of mankind (John 3:16). He came from above (Jn. 8:23), as our Creator (Jn. 1:3, 10), and entered the human race in a tabernacle of flesh (Jn. 1:14). Faithful followers of Jesus Christ accept the teaching that He has two natures - the nature of God and the nature of man.

To deny either aspect of Christ's nature, that He is both God and man, is to commit the greatest sin in understanding God's Word. Denial of Jesus' deity is a denial of His personal nature and preexistence, which would reduce Him to merely a man in need of salvation himself. Denial of His human nature is just as detrimental, for it denies his mission, atonement, and resurrection. The only correct understanding of Scripture is to accept **all** that it says about Jesus, that He is both God and man.

Several biblical passages discuss the incarnation of Jesus at length (John 1:1-18; Phil. 2:6-8; Col. 1:16-18; Heb. 1:1-10; Rev. 1:1-17). One passage that sets forth the two natures of Jesus Christ in unmistakable terms is Philippians 2:6-7.

"*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.*"

These verses present us with the clear understanding that Jesus has two natures - the nature of God and man. Let us closely look at these verses line by line.

Verse 6: *Who, being in the form of God* -- The word *form* here is the Greek word *morphe*, meaning form, nature, or attributes. Jesus, in His pre-human nature was none other than God. *Thought it not robbery to be equal with God* -- This says that He did not have to grasp for what was already His by nature, namely, equality with God.

Verse 7: *But made himself of no reputation* -- This speaks of Christ's humility. When He came to earth, He *emptied Himself* by choosing to live and respond as a man while still possessing all the fullness of deity (Col. 2:9). *And took upon him the form of a servant* -- This second occurrence of *morphe*, form, tells us that Jesus acquired manhood. He is the *form* of God and took upon himself another *form*, that of man. *And was made in the likeness of men* -- His nature as a man was not altered by the fact that his person was God, neither was his nature as God altered in any way when He became incarnate as man.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF DIRECT STATEMENT ATTESTING TO THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

Isa. 7:14 - Immanuel means "God with us," a name that describes His person.

Isa. 9:6 - He is the mighty God. See 10:22, the mighty God is Israel's God.

Zech. 12:10 - In this verse Jehovah is the speaker, yet He is pierced for our sins.

Matt. 1:23 - He is God with us.

Matt. 22:41-45 - Jesus is David's Lord--but David lived 1,200 years before Christ said this! David was monotheistic, believing in one Lord. See Mk. 12:35-37 and Lk. 20:44.

Mk. 2:7-10 - Jesus forgave sins, which only God can do. See Lk. 5:20 also.

Jn. 1:1, 14 - The eternal Word was God who became a man.

Jn. 1:18 - The Greek text says "Only begotten God," instead of "Son." See the NASB or NIV.

Jn. 5:18 - Jesus made Himself equal with God by saying that God was His Father.

Jn. 8:58 - Jesus used the divine expression I AM of Himself, as also found in Ex. 3:14.

Jn. 10:30 - I and my Father are one. The word *one* (hen) is neuter in Greek. It means one in essence or nature. In this He claims to be God. See verse 33, where the Jews understood this claim.

Jn. 20:28 - Thomas said Jesus is his Lord and God. Thomas was monotheistic, believing in one God. Jesus accepted it and blessed him.

Acts 20:28 - The two oldest Greek manuscripts say that God purchased the Church with his own blood. This could only happen when God was incarnate as Jesus.

Rom. 9:5 - The antecedent to the clause "God, blessed forever," is Jesus.

Phil. 2:6-7 - Jesus has two natures, that of God and man.

Col. 2:9 - The fullness of deity dwelt bodily in Him.

Titus 2:13 - The Granville Sharp rule of Greek grammar says this should be translated as "our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." When two nouns are joined by the word *and* (kai), whereas the first has the definite article but the second does not, then the second noun is only further description of the first. See the NASB or NIV.

Heb. 1:8 - The Father called the Son God.

2 Pet. 1:1 - Jesus is "our God and Savior." The Granville Sharp rule of Greek grammar applies here. See the NASB.

1 Jn. 5:20 - This verse says Jesus is the True God and eternal life. For those who doubt, see 1 Jn. 1:2, where the Son is called the "eternal life" at the opening of this epistle.

Rev. 1:8 - Here, Jesus speaks of himself as God the almighty.

JESUS HOLDS ALL THE ATTRIBUTES THAT ARE UNIQUE TO GOD.

Eternal: Micah 5:2; Jn. 1:1; Col. 1:17-19 (before all things); Heb. 1:8; 1 Jn. 1:1.

Omnipotent: Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 1:24; Col. 1:16-18; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 1:8.

Omnipresent: Matt. 18:20, 28:20.

Omniscient: Jn. 2:24, 16:30; 1 Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:3.

Immutable: Heb. 1:8, 13:8.

Creator: Jn. 1:3, 10; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2, 10.

JESUS IS JEHOVAH!

New Testament writers referred to Jesus as Jehovah. Those familiar with the Old Testament, as what the early Christians were, would quickly see this connection. In some passages,

New Testament writers simply replaced the name Jehovah with Jesus, showing His identity. In other passages Jesus fulfills only what Jehovah was said to fulfill.

THE OLD TESTAMENT NAME JEHOVAH IS DELIBERATELY APPLIED TO JESUS.

Matt. 3:3 with Isa. 40:3
Matt. 11:5 with Isa. 35:4-6
Matt. 16:27 with Ps. 62:12
Jn. 19:37 with Zech. 12:10
Acts 2:20-21 with Joel 2:32
Rom. 10:9-13 with Joel 2:32
Phil. 2:10 with Isa. 45:23
Heb. 1:10 with Ps. 102:25-27
1 Pet. 2:8 with Isa. 8:13-14
Rev. 2:23 with Jer. 17:10
Rev. 22:12 with Isa. 40:10 and 62:11

APPEARANCES OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The appearances of Christ in the Old Testament are called Theophanies (appearances of God) or Christophanies (appearances of Christ). There are several times in the Old Testament where God appeared to men in a visible manifestation. Sometimes the manifestation is as an angel, a man, or a burning bush. The Gospel of John records that no man has seen the Father (Jn. 1:18, 6:46). Since no one has seen the Father, who, then, did they see in the Old Testament? We believe that the testimony of Scripture is that it was Jesus, before he was born unto Mary, who appeared. The New Testament gives direct and indirect reference to this. He was seen by Abraham (Jn. 8:56-58), and by Isaiah (Jn. 12:37-41), and Paul wrote about Theophanies (1 Cor. 10:4) as did Luke (Acts 7:4).

For your personal Bible study on this, consult Gen. 12:7, 17:1, 18:1, 26:2, 26:24, 35:9; Ex. 3:2-6, 6;3, 24:9-11, 33:18; and Isa. 6:1-5. Additional study can be found in good study Bibles or Bible encyclopedias.

OLD TESTAMENT ATTRIBUTES AND TITLES OF JEHOVAH APPLIED TO JESUS.

	Jehovah	**Jesus**
Glory	Isa. 42.8	Jn. 17:5
Light	Isa. 60:20 Ps. 27:1	Jn. 1:9 Jn. 8:12
Holy	Isa. 57:15	Lk. 1:35
Judge	Joel 3:12 Ps. 50:6	Jn. 5:22 2 Cor. 5:10
King	Jer. 10:10 Ps. 47:7	Rev. 17:14 Jn. 12:15
Lord	Deut. 10:17	Rev. 17:14
Rock	Deut. 32:4 2 Sam. 22:32	1 Cor. 10:4 1 Pet. 2:8
Savior	Ps. 106:21	Acts 4:12
Shepherd	Ps. 23:1 Ps. 80:1	Jn. 10:14 Heb. 13:20
I AM	Ex. 3:14	Jn. 8:58
First and Last	Isa. 41:4 Isa. 44:6	Rev. 1:8 Rev. 1:17

JESUS RESPONDED TO SITUATIONS AS ONLY GOD CAN.

Jesus forgave sins: Mk. 2:7-10; Lk. 5:20

Jesus was worshipped: Matt. 2:11 (by wise men), 8:3 (by the healed), 9:18 (by a ruler), 15:25 (by a Canaanite); Jn 9:38 (by the man born blind); Heb. 1:6 (by angels); Rev. 5:14 (by four heavenly creatures).

Jesus accepted prayer: Jn. 14:14 (the Greek says, "If you as ME anything in My name," see NASB); Acts 7:59-60 (Stephen prayed to Him); 1 Cor. 1:2 (the Church called upon Him); 2 Cor. 12:8-9 (Christ answered Paul's prayer).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In light of all the evidence concerning the deity of Jesus Christ there are some who still maintain that Jesus Christ is not God. This is usually due to two misunderstandings in their thinking -- (1) they confuse the Persons of the Trinity, or, (2) they confuse the humanity and deity of Christ.

In the first situation the denial is usually stated as "the Father is not the Son, so Jesus cannot be God." The problem is in the statement. No Christian says the Father is the Son. What we state is that the Father is distinct from the Son in person, but they share the nature of the one true God. We should always watch our terminology so that the Persons of the Trinity are not confused.

In the second situation the denial centers on the apparent humiliation of Christ's humanity, which is falsely interpreted as a denial of his deity. These questions are best answered by always keeping in mind the biblical fact that Jesus is both God and man. Let us look at some examples of these questions.

(1) Questions of omniscience: Verses like Mark 13:32 are referred to in an effort to say that Christ did not know everything. This confuses Christ's **will** with His **ability**. All knowledge was hidden in Him (Col. 2:3). If Jesus willed not to reveal something, it does not mean He lacked the ability. The will to do something is not the same as the ability, neither is the lack of will to be confused with the ability.

(2) Questions of omnipotence: Verses that show an apparent lack of power in Jesus are used to say He has no power. This is a misunderstanding of His mission. One purpose of His mission was to let the Father work through Him instead of acting on His own accord (Jn. 5:19). The Son was active in creation while the Father worked through Him (Heb. 1:2), yet nobody degrades the Father by claiming that the Father lacked the power on the basis that the Son did the work. Likewise, when we encounter verses where there is an appearance of weakness in the Son, we are most likely confusing His *willingness* to do something with His power to accomplish it. (3) Questions of omnipresence: This challenge is usually phrased, "How can the Son be everywhere when He is on the right hand of the Father?" The answer is that his nature as God is everywhere present (Matt. 18:20, 28:20), while his resurrected body is on the right hand of the Father.

(4) Another question comes from Matthew 19:16-21, where Jesus said, "There is none good, but one, that is, God." Some people suppose that Jesus denied his deity here. Just the opposite is true. Jesus affirmed what the young ruler had already recognized in him, that He is the "good master." Jesus never said He was not good. He called Himself the good Shepherd in Jn. 10:14. He never rebuked the man for calling Him good. Rather, He told the man to follow Him (vs. 21), which He would not have done were He not good enough to follow. If Jesus is good, according to this verse, and He is also God, or Jesus is not good, and He is not God. Nobody can settle for a Jesus who is not good, so this verse drives us to the conclusion that He is both Good and God.

CONCLUSION

The overwhelming testimony of the Bible is the Jesus is both God and man. We must base our beliefs upon the truth of His Word. There are over 100 verses in this study that attest to the deity of Jesus Christ. In agreement with Thomas, we too must recognize Jesus as, "My Lord and My God."

Compiled by Kurt Van Gorden
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Jesus' Two Natures

Jesus is God in human flesh. He is not half God and half man. He is fully divine and fully man. That is, Jesus has two distinct natures: divine and human. Jesus is the Word who was God and was with God and was made flesh, (John 1:1,14). This means that in the single person of Jesus is both a human and divine nature. The divine nature was not changed. It was not altered. He is not merely a man who "had God within Him" nor is he a man who "manifested the God principle." He is God, second person of the Trinity. *"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word,"* (Heb. 1:3, NIV). Jesus' two natures are not "mixed together," nor are they combined into a new God-man nature. They are separate yet act as a unit in the one person of Jesus. This is called the Hypostatic Union.

The following chart should help you see the two natures of Jesus "in action":

GOD	**MAN**
He is worshiped (Matt. 2:2,11; 14:33).	He worshiped the Father (John 17).
He was called God (John 20:28; Heb. 1:8)	He was called man (Mark 15:39; John 19:5).
He was called Son of God (Mark 1:1)	He was called Son of Man (John 9:35-37)
He is prayed to (Acts 7:59).	He prayed to the Father (John 17).
He is sinless (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:15).	He was tempted (Matt. 4:1).
He knows all things (John 21:17).	He grew in wisdom (Luke 2:52).
He gives eternal life (John 10:28).	He died (Rom. 5:8).
All the fullness of deity dwells in Him (Col. 2:9).	He has a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39).

The Communicatio Idiomatum

A doctrine that is related to the Hypostatic Union is the communicatio idiomatum (Latin for "communication of properties"). It is the teaching that the attributes of both the divine and human natures are ascribed to the one person of Jesus. This means that the man Jesus could lay claim to the glory He had with the Father before the world was made (John 17:5), claim that He descended from heaven, (John 3:13), and also claim omnipresence, (Matt. 28:20). All of these are divine qualities that are laid claim to by Jesus; therefore, the attributes of the divine properties were claimed by the person of Jesus.

Mistakes Cultists make

One of the most common errors that non-Christian cults make is not understanding the two natures of Christ. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses focus on Jesus' humanity and ignore His divinity. The repeatedly quote verses dealing with Jesus as a man and try and set them against scripture showing that Jesus is also divine. On the other hand, the Christian Scientists do the reverse. They focus on the scriptures showing Jesus' divinity to the extent of denying His true humanity.

For a proper understanding of Jesus and, therefore, all other doctrines that relate to Him, His two natures must be properly understood and defined. Jesus is one person with two natures. This is why He would grow in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52) yet know all things (John 21:17). He is the Divine Word that became flesh (John 1:1,14).

The Bible is about Jesus (John 5:39). The prophets prophesied about Him (Acts 10:43). The Father bore witness of Him (John 5:37; 8:18). The Holy Spirit bore witness of Him (John 15:26). The works Jesus did bore witness of Him (John 5:36; 10:25). The multitudes bore witness of Him (John 12:17). And, Jesus bore witness of Himself (John 14:6; 18:6).

Other verses to consider when examining His deity are John 10:30-33; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 1:6-8; and 2 Pet. 1:1.

1 Tim. 2:5 says, *"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* Right now, there is a man in heaven on the throne of God. He is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). He is our Savior (Titus 2:13). He is our Lord (Rom. 10:9-10). He is Jesus.

Written by CARM