

The Trinity

- I. The Trinity is a hotly debated topic, both in professing Christianity and among other religions of the world.
 1. Trinity - 1. The state of being threefold, threefoldness, threeness. a. in non-theological sense. b. *spec.* in theological use: applied to the existence of one God in three persons. (In early use esp. in phr. 'God in trinity', i.e. in threeness.) 2. a. The three 'persons' or modes of being of the Godhead as conceived in orthodox Christian belief; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as constituting one God; the triune God. (Now always with capital T; often the *Holy Trinity*, the *Blessed Trinity*.)
 2. Jews and Muslims deny the existence of the triune God.
 3. The pseudo Christian cults like the Unitarians, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, Christian Science, World Wide Church of God (Armstrongism), Oneness Pentecostals, and Scientology all reject the Trinity.
 4. There are also what are called Binitarians who believe that God the Father and Jesus are God, but the Holy Spirit is not.
 5. Some will argue that the Roman Catholic church invented the Trinity.
 - A. This is simply not true as the remainder of this study will show.
 - B. Just because the Catholics (or any other group for that matter) believe something doesn't automatically make it wrong.
 - C. Despite their numerous errors, the Catholics believe some truth such as the virgin birth of Christ.
 - D. Don't ever throw the baby out with the bath water, so to speak.
- II. The logicalness and comprehensibility of the Trinity
 1. Some people claim that the concept of a Trinity is illogical and incomprehensible.
 - A. While the triune nature of God may be difficult to grasp, it is not illogical or impossible to understand.
 - B. Consider the following examples from nature which are types of a trinity.
 2. The universe is a trinity made of matter, space, and time.
 - A. The universe can't exist without all three elements.
 - B. Matter can't move without space and as it moves, time occurs.
 3. Space is a trinity made of three dimensions: length, width, and height.
 - A. Space can't exist without all three.
 - B. Yet, length is not width and width is not height.
 - C. One couldn't really say that length is a part of space though, since length cannot be separated from space and analyzed alone.
 - D. Since there is no space without length, one could say that all of space is length; yet length is not width or height.
 - E. The same is the case with the other two dimensions.
 4. Matter is a trinity made of energy, motion, and phenomena.
 - A. Matter is energy in motion that causes a phenomena (light, sound, etc).
 - B. Energy, motion, and phenomena are not what matter does, they are what matter is.
 5. Time is a trinity made of past, present, and future.
 - A. They are not the same, yet if any of them are missing, there is no time.
 - B. All time was future, is, was, or will be present, and is or will be past.

6. Human beings are likewise trinities made of body, soul, and spirit (**1Th 5:23**).
7. The Trinity is not three Gods.
 - A. Some say if the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost are each God, then that means that there are three Gods: $1+1+1=3$.
 - B. That is the wrong formula. In order to calculate the volume of a three dimensional space (which is a trinity - see above), the three dimensions are multiplied, not added.
 - C. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost are three persons, yet one God: $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$.
8. Bad analogies of the Trinity
 - A. The Trinity is like an egg composed of three parts: yoke, white, and shell.
 - i. This is a terrible analogy because the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost are not three different parts of God, they are all equally God.
 - ii. This analogy denies the unity of the Godhead.
 - iii. Any analogy that uses a body that has three parts is not a valid comparison to the Trinity.
 - B. The Trinity is like a man who is a Father, Son, and Husband all at the same time.
 - i. This is another poor analogy because it would suggest that God is a Trinity simply because He relates differently to us at different times.
 - ii. The Father, Word, and Holy Ghost are not three offices of God, they are three persons who are all equally God.
 - C. The Trinity is like a three leafed clover.
 - i. This analogy is so bad that it doesn't even need refuted.
 - ii. God is not some three-headed plant.
 - D. The Trinity is like water which can be water, ice, or gas, all of which are all H₂O.
 - i. The problem with this analogy is that H₂O can only be in one state at a time.
 - ii. This analogy actually teaches modalism.
 - iii. Modalism - The Sabellian doctrine that the distinction in the Trinity is 'modal' only, i.e. that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are merely three different modes of manifestation of the Divine nature.

III. The word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, but the concept is.

1. There are plenty of words that are not found in the Bible that we use to describe true concepts that are found in the Bible.
2. The word "bible" itself is not found in the Bible.
3. The phrase "total depravity" is not found in the Bible, but the concept is.
4. The phrase "sovereign grace" is not found in the Bible, but the concept is.

IV. Biblical proof of the Trinity

1. Proof texts/passages for the Trinity.
 - A. **1Jo 5:7** is a proof text for the Trinity.
 - i. Some explain the Trinity as three offices of God.
 - ii. These are not three offices or personalities of God, but rather three persons which bear record (**Joh 8:14-18 c/w 1Jo 5:7**).
 - iii. Record - I. 1. Law. a. The fact or attribute of being, or of having been, committed to writing as authentic evidence of a matter having legal importance, spec. as evidence of the proceedings or verdict of a court of

justice; evidence which is thus preserved, and may be appealed to in case of dispute.

- iv. Witness - 1. Knowledge, understanding, wisdom. *Obs.* (not used after 1482).
 - 2. a. Attestation of a fact, event, or statement; testimony, evidence;
†evidence given in a court of justice.
- v. A person can only bear record once as a person, not multiple times as the holder of different offices.
- vi. One could not testify in court as three different witnesses because of three different offices that he holds.

B. The Trinity is clearly shown in **Isa 48:12-16**.

- i. Jehovah God is speaking in this passage (**Isa 48:12-15**).
- ii. Then Jehovah says that Jehovah (the Lord GOD) and His Spirit (the Holy Ghost) hath sent Him (Jehovah) (**Isa 48:16**).
- iii. Jehovah (God the Father) and His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) sent Jehovah (the Word).

2. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost are all declared to be God in the Bible.

A. There is only one God (**1Co 8:4-6; 1Ti 2:5; Deu 6:4; Isa 45:5**).

B. God the Father is God (**2Th 2:16**).

C. Jesus Christ (the Word) is God.

- i. The Word, who is God (**Joh 1:1-3**), is the second person of the Trinity (**1Jo 5:7**).
- ii. The Word became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ (**Joh 1:14**).
- iii. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh (**1Ti 3:16**).
- iv. Jesus Christ is the express image of God (**Heb 1:3**).
 - a. Express *adj.* - 1. a. Of an image or likeness: Truly depicted, exactly resembling, exact. Now chiefly with reminiscence of Heb. i. 3.
 - b. Image *n.* - 1. An artificial imitation or representation of the external form of any object, esp. of a person, or of the bust of a person. a. Such an imitation in the solid form; a statue, effigy, sculptured figure.
- v. Jesus claimed to be God who is I AM (**Joh 8:58 c/w Exo 3:14**).

D. The Holy Ghost/Spirit is God.

- i. The Holy Ghost is a person who is referred to with personal pronouns, not an impersonal force.
 - a. He would teach the apostles all things (**Joh 14:26**).
 - b. He would testify of Christ (**Joh 15:26**).
 - c. Jesus would send him to the apostles (**Joh 16:7**).
 - d. He would guide the apostles into all truth, not speak of Himself, but speak of what He heard, and show them things to come (**Joh 16:13**).
 - e. He would glorify Christ (**Joh 16:14**).
 - f. Teaching, testifying, guiding, speaking, hearing, showing, and glorifying are all acts of a person, not a force.
- ii. The apostle Paul also declared that the Holy Spirit is a person.
 - a. The Spirit also helps with our infirmities, making intercession for us (**Rom 8:26**).
 - b. He gives us spiritual gifts (**1Co 12:8,11**).

- c. He can be grieved (**Eph 4:30**).
 - d. All these things show that the Holy Spirit is a Person.
 - e. Since God the Father is a Person (**Heb 1:3**) and Jesus Christ is a Person, the same must be true of the Holy Ghost since He is spoken of with them (**2Co 13:14; Mat 28:19**).
- iii. When Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost he lied to God because the Holy Ghost is God (**Act 5:3-4 c/w 1Jo 5:7**).
 - iv. Paul attributes the words of God to the Holy Ghost (**Heb 10:15-17 c/w Jer 31:33-34**).
 - v. The Holy Ghost is God who Israel tempted in the wilderness (**Heb 3:7-11 c/w Psa 95:7-11**).
 - vi. The Holy Ghost is Jehovah God who spoke to Isaiah (**Act 28:25-27 c/w Isa 6:5,8-10**).
 - vii. The *Spirit of the LORD* came upon Samson and *the LORD* departed from him (**Jdg 15:14 c/w Jdg 16:20**). Therefore, the Spirit of the LORD (the Holy Spirit) is Jehovah God.
 - viii. David said that *the Spirit of the LORD* spake by him Whom he then calls *the God of Israel* (**2Sa 23:2-3**). Therefore, the Spirit of the LORD is the God of Israel.
 - ix. Elihu said that the Spirit of God made him (**Job 33:4**), which is a declaration that the Spirit of God is God.
 - x. The Spirit of God is omnipresent (**Psa 139:7-8**), which demands that He is God (**Pro 15:3**).
 - xi. The Spirit of God is God who gives spiritual gifts to the church (**1Co 12:6 c/w 1Co 12:11**).
 - xii. Paul said that the Corinthians were the temple of God (**1Co 3:16**) and their body was the temple of the Holy Ghost (**1Co 6:19**), which shows that the Holy Spirit is God.
 - xiii. All scripture is given by the inspiration of God (**2Ti 3:16**).
 - a. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (**2Pe 1:21**).
 - b. Therefore, the Holy Ghost is God.
 - xiv. The Holy Spirit is called the *eternal Spirit* (**Heb 9:14**).
 - a. Only God is eternal (**Psa 90:2**).
 - b. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is God.
- E. Jesus and the Father are one (**Joh 10:30; Joh 14:9**).
- F. Jesus and the Holy Ghost are one.
- i. Jesus said that He would send a Comforter which was the Holy Spirit (**Joh 14:16-17**).
 - a. Then Jesus said that He would not leave his disciples comfortless: He would come to them (**Joh 14:18**).
 - b. The Holy Spirit coming to the disciples is the same as Jesus coming to the disciples because Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - ii. The *Spirit of God* (the Holy Spirit) is the Spirit of Christ (**Rom 8:9; Phi 1:19; 1Pe 1:11 c/w 2Pe 1:21**).
 - a. The Spirit of God dwells in the elect (**Rom 8:9**).

- b. Christ dwells in the elect (**Rom 8:10**).
 - c. The Spirit of the Son dwells in our hearts (**Gal 4:6**).
 - d. Therefore, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one.
 - iii. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us (**Rom 8:26-27**).
 - a. Jesus Christ makes intercession for us (**Rom 8:34**).
 - b. Jesus and the Holy Ghost both make intercession for us because they are one (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - iv. Jesus Christ gave the Revelation to John which included messages to the seven churches of Asia (**Rev 1:1; Rev 1:17-20**).
 - a. The messages from the Son of God (**Rev 2:18**) were said to be from the Spirit (**Rev 2:29; Rev 3:22**).
 - b. The messages were from Jesus and the Holy Spirit because they are one (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - G. If 1) there is only one God, and 2) the Father, Jesus Christ (the Word), and the Holy Ghost/Spirit are all God, and 3) they are one with each other, therefore, God is three persons, yet one God, or in other words a Trinity or triune God.
3. References to two or more members of the Trinity in the OT
- A. God is referred to in both the singular and plural in the Old Testament, showing both the oneness and the threeness of God.
 - i. When God created man, He said "Let *us* make man in *our* image" (**Gen 1:26**).
 - a. But the next verse tells us that "God created man in *his* own image" (**Gen 1:27**).
 - b. It is clear from these verses that God is both plural and singular, three persons, yet one God (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - ii. When God banished Adam from the garden of Eden, He said that "the man is become as one of *us*" (**Gen 3:22**).
 - a. Then "*he* drove out the man" (**Gen 3:24**).
 - b. It is clear from these verses that God is both plural and singular, three persons, yet one God (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - iii. When the people of Babel built the tower of Babel, God said "let *us* go down, and there confound their language" (**Gen 11:7**).
 - a. Then it is written that "*the LORD* scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth" (**Gen 11:8**).
 - b. It is clear from these verses that God is both plural and singular, three persons, yet one God (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - iv. When God needed a prophet to proclaim His word, He said "Whom shall *I* send, and who will go for *us*?" (**Isa 6:8**).
 - a. In this verse, God refers to Himself in both the singular and the plural.
 - b. He can do so without contradiction because He is a Trinity: three persons, yet one God (**1Jo 5:7**).
 - B. The *word of the LORD* came unto Abraham (**Gen 15:1**).
 - i. The *word of the LORD* that came unto Abraham was the LORD Jehovah (**Gen 15:7**).
 - ii. Jesus is called the Word of God (**Rev 19:13**).

- iii. Jesus Christ is the Word who is Jehovah God (**Joh 1:1**).
 - C. The LORD appeared again unto Abraham as *three men* (**Gen 18:1-2**).
 - i. God appearing to Abraham as three men typified the triune nature of God.
 - ii. *They* asked where Sarah was (**Gen 18:9**).
 - iii. Then *he* (the LORD) said that Sarah would have a son (**Gen 18:10-14 c/w Rom 9:9**).
 - D. The LORD appeared to Lot as two angels (**Gen 19:1**).
 - i. After being nearly molested by some sodomites, they said that *they* would destroy the place (**Gen 19:13**).
 - ii. Then the LORD rained down fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah from the LORD out of heaven (**Gen 19:24**).
 - iii. It appears that two persons of the Godhead were on earth calling fire down from the third person of the Godhead in heaven.
 - E. All three persons of the Godhead took part in the creation of the universe.
 - i. In the beginning *God* (the Father - **Jam 1:17**) created the heaven and the earth (**Gen 1:1**).
 - ii. The *Spirit of God* (the Holy Spirit) moved upon the face of the waters (**Gen 1:2**).
 - a. The heavens were made by the breath of God's mouth (**Psa 33:6**).
 - b. The Holy Spirit is likened unto God's breath (**Joh 20:22**).
 - iii. God *said* (the Word of God) let there be light (**Gen 1:3**).
 - a. The Word, who is God, created all things (**Joh 1:1-3**).
 - b. All things were created by the Word made flesh (**Joh 1:14**), Jesus Christ (**Eph 3:9; Col 1:16**).
 - F. God is said to have anointed God in **Psa 45:6-7**.
 - i. This verse would make no sense if God were not a Trinity.
 - ii. It makes perfect sense when it is explained in the NT that God the Father anointed God the Son (the Word) (**Heb 1:8-9**) with the Holy Ghost (**Act 10:38 c/w Mat 3:16**).
 - G. All three persons of the Trinity are mentioned in **Isa 59:19-20**.
 - i. Those three were the Spirit of the LORD, the Redeemer, and the LORD.
 - ii. The Redeemer is Jesus Christ, who is the LORD (**Isa 44:6; Isa 60:16; 1Pe 1:18-19**).
 - H. Aaron was to bless Israel in the name of the LORD three times (**Num 6:23-26**).
 - I. The seraphims worshiped the Triune God calling Him holy thrice (**Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8**).
- 4. References to the Trinity in the New Testament
 - A. All three members of the Trinity were involved in the conception of Jesus Christ (**Luk 1:35**).
 - B. All three members of the Trinity were active at the baptism of Jesus.
 - i. At Jesus' baptism the Father spoke from heaven and the Spirit of God descended on Him like a dove (**Mat 3:16-17**).
 - ii. God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost at that time (**Act 10:38**).
 - C. All three members of the Trinity were active in the offering of Christ (**Heb 9:14**).
 - D. All three members of the Trinity took part in our salvation (**1Pe 1:2**).
 - i. God the Father elected whom He would save (**Eph 1:4**).

- ii. The Holy Spirit makes them holy by regenerating them (**Tit 3:5**).
 - iii. Jesus died for them and justified them by His blood (**Rom 5:9**).
- E. All three persons of the Godhead are mentioned together numerous times in the New Testament.
- i. Converts are to be baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost (**Mat 28:19**).
 - ii. The Father would send the Holy Ghost in Jesus' name (**Joh 14:26**).
 - iii. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, having received the promise of the Holy Ghost (**Act 2:33-34**).
 - iv. Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost and saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God (**Act 7:55**).
 - v. Paul was the minister of Jesus Christ, ministering the gospel of God, to the Gentiles who were sanctified by the Holy Ghost (**Rom 15:16**).
 - vi. Paul ended his second letter to the Corinthians with a benediction in the name of Jesus Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost (**2Co 13:14**).