



Common Bible Questions and Answers on the Godhead



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*Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep
the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.
Revelation 14:12*

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This collection of Bible questions and answers examines some of the most popular objections raised by Trinitarians. The answers are given from the Scriptures with supplementary material from the Spirit of Prophecy where relevant. This is not an exhaustive list of objections, but seeks to address the most common and popular ones that are raised. We pray that you will be blessed by this collection of questions and answers.

Common Bible Questions

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Question 1 (Genesis 1:2):

The Holy Spirit was present at creation; therefore He must be an individual person like the Father and the Son. “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:2. What do you say about that?

Answer:

Creation has been attributed to the Holy Spirit as much as to the Father and the Son due to the above text. But what the readers sometimes fail to acknowledge is the possessive terminology used in the above verse. In this verse the possessive is used: “The Spirit *of* God”. It does not say “God the Spirit”.

Psalms 33:6 “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the *breath* of his mouth.”

The Hebrew word for “breath” is רוּחַ (rûach) which is the same word translated ‘spirit’ in Genesis 1:2. The meaning should be clear: the spirit of God *is* the breath of God. This is confirmed further by Jesus in John 20:22 “And when he had said this, he *breathed* on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Jesus breathed His own Spirit, not someone else. It is this same spirit that is mentioned in Genesis 1:2, “the Spirit *of* God”, which can also be translated “breath of God”.

“The *Spirit of God* hath made me, and the *breath of the Almighty* hath given me life.” Job 33:4
The Spirit of God is equated with His breath. That is what the word means.

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Question 2 (Genesis 1:26; 11:7):

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” Genesis 1:26. This text (as well as Genesis 11:7) proves that God is a plurality of three persons because ‘us’ is referring to all three.

Answer:

It is true the ‘us’ means that there was more than one person involved in creation, but not necessarily three. It could simply be two rather than three. The Scripture says, “God...created all things by Jesus Christ” Ephesians 3:9. It should be obvious that ‘God’ in this verse is someone other than Jesus Christ. And according to Hebrews 1:2, God the Father created all things *by* his Son.

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?” Proverbs 30:4

This verse attributes the work of creation to two beings (A father and a son). Proverbs 8:22-30 also attributes the work of creation to two beings. God the Father is the great Source of all and He created all things *by* His Son Jesus Christ.

Now we can know for a certainty who is speaking in Genesis 1:26. God the Father said to his Son, “let us make man in our image.” Remember, Christ is “the express image” of the Father (Hebrews 1:3), so anyone created in the Father’s image is naturally created in his Son’s image. As such, when God created man in His image He created two beings (Genesis 1:27; 5:2), not three. That is a conclusive proof that the ‘us’ in Genesis 1:26 refers to only two individuals (the Father and Son), not three.

This understanding helps us with other similar verses (such as Genesis 11:7). The ‘us’ would have the same meaning as Genesis 1:26.

Spirit of Prophecy:

There is an interesting comment from the Christian author E. G. White on this verse:

“After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God says to his Son, "Let us make man in our image."” {1SP 24, 25}

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Question 3 (Isaiah 9:6):

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. This passage proves the trinity because Christ is called the ‘mighty God’ and the ‘everlasting Father’!

Answer:

Much stress is laid on Isaiah 9:6, as proving a trinity because Christ is called the everlasting Father. But it can have no reference to a trinity. Is Christ the Father in the trinity? If so, how is he the Son? Or if he is both Father and Son, how can there be a trinity? For a trinity is three persons. To recognize a trinity, the distinction between the Father and Son must be preserved. Christ is called “the second person in the trinity” but if this text proves a trinity, or refers to it at all, it proves that he is not the second, but the first. And if he is the first, who is the second? It is very plain that this text has no reference to such a doctrine. And, as we compare Scripture with Scripture, we can be sure that it does not support the “Jesus only” doctrine.

The Son is referred to as the everlasting Father, not of Himself, nor of His Father, but of the children which *his Father* has given him. His language is “I and the children which God hath given me.” Hebrews 2:13. Paul is quoting Isaiah 8:18 and applies it to Christ.

Furthermore, Jerusalem is “the mother of us all” Galatians 4:26, and she is the bride of her Husband Jesus Christ (Revelation 21:2). Thus if Jesus is the husband of our mother, this makes Him *our* everlasting Father.

Notice also that Isaiah 9:6 says that “his name shall be called... The mighty God.” This term emphasizes the divine nature of Christ. He is indeed mighty, for all power is given unto Him (Matthew 28:18) and He is divine by virtue of His divine birth (Hebrews 1:4, 8). It is therefore appropriate to refer to the Son as mighty, for he is powerful. It is also appropriate to refer to him as God, for the Most High God himself refers to his Son as God in Hebrews 1:8. Therefore the terms “everlasting Father” and “The mighty God” can rightly apply to the Son.

Spirit of Prophecy:

“However much a shepherd may love his sheep, he loves his sons and daughters more. *Jesus is not only our shepherd; He is our "everlasting Father."* And He says, "I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father." John 10:14, 15, R. V. What a statement is this!--the only-begotten Son, He who is in the bosom of the Father, He whom God has declared to be "the Man that is My fellow" (Zech. 13:7),--*the communion between Him and the eternal God is taken to represent the communion between Christ and His children on the earth!*" {EGW, DA 483}

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Question 4 (Isaiah 44:6):

“Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.” Isaiah 44:6. Please explain this text.

Answer:

There are many titles and names in the Bible that are shared by both the Father and the Son, and the title, “the first and the last” is one of them. People immediately apply this text to Jesus because the speaker calls himself “redeemer” and then declares “beside *me* there is no God.”

Let us examine the text to find out who is speaking. The speaker says, “beside me there is no God,” and in verse 8, he says, “Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.” This is very precise language to indicate that the speaker is alone. All of the pronouns are singular, indicating that only one person is speaking. Who is this one person? The New Testament clarifies this.

In 1 Corinthians 8:4, Paul wrote, “we know... that there is none other God but one.” And he makes it very clear who he was referring to by adding “to us there is but one God, the Father (v. 6).” Paul understood the one God of the Bible to be God the Father and no one else.

The word ‘redeemer’, used in the text, is thought to refer only to Christ. Actually, the Father is also called by this title.

Isaiah 63:8, 9 “For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their *Saviour*. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he *redeemed* them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”

The Father is called the “Saviour” and it is the Father who “redeemed” Israel. We can be sure because in the same verse the Son is mentioned separately as “the angel of *his* presence” (.

Notice also verse 16 “Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, *O LORD, art our father, our redeemer*; thy name is from everlasting.”

Again, in Isaiah 49:7 God the Father is speaking and calls Himself “the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One” What is interesting about this passage is that Christ speaks through Isaiah in verses 4 and 5 and twice addresses the Father as “my God”. These are all the titles of the Father of Christ, who is Jehovah (YHWH), the self-existent Being, the great Source of all, and from whom all have their being; “the redeemer of Israel”, being concerned with his Son in the redemption, of his people; “and his Holy One”, or the Holy One of Israel.

So, one cannot apply Isaiah 44:6 To Christ solely because He calls Himself the redeemer, as we have seen this title is just as rightfully applied to the Father.

Jesus had the same understanding. In answering the question of the scribe (see Mark 12:28) Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4, the scribe told him, “Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he (Mark 12:32).” Who is the one God the scribe was referring to? Was he referring to Jesus as the one God? No. He was referring to God the Father.

At another time, while Jesus was talking to the scribes and Pharisees, He said, “If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God.” John 8:54. Jesus knew that when the scribes and Pharisees said “God,” they were referring to his Father. When the scribe said, “there is one God; and there is none other but he,” Jesus knew that he was talking about His

Father. Jesus did not correct the scribe by saying, "You are wrong, I am really the one God of the Bible." Not at all! To the contrary, the Bible says that Jesus saw that he answered discreetly or wisely and He told the scribe "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12:34). Jesus knew that this man was correct, that there is one God, the Father, and there is none other God but him.

With this clarification from the New Testament, we can be completely sure who is speaking in Isaiah 44:6. He is God the Father and no one else. He is the ultimate first and last, He is the great Source of all, and His Son inherited that title by virtue of His divine birth.

The point of the passage in question is that God is contrasting Himself with the false *gods* of the heathen.

Isaiah 44:8 "Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any." This is the case when you examine the rest of the verses (9-20).

Spirit of Prophecy:

"As the world's Redeemer, *Christ* was constantly confronted with apparent failure. He, the messenger of mercy to our world, seemed to do little of the work He longed to do in uplifting and saving. Satanic influences were constantly working to oppose His way. But He would not be discouraged. Through the prophecy of Isaiah *He declares*, "I have labored in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with *My God*. . . . Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and *My God* shall be My strength." *It is to Christ that the promise is given*, "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to Him whom man despiseth, to Him whom the nation abhorreth; . . . thus saith the Lord: . . . I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that Thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. . . . They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them." Isa. 49:4, 5, 7-10. {DA 678.3}

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Question 5 (Isaiah 48:16):

When Christ was sent to the world He was sent by both the Father and the Holy Spirit according to Isaiah 48:16 “Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now *the Lord GOD, and his Spirit*, hath sent me.” Isn’t this a clear proof of the trinity?

Answer:

A very brief look at the verse in the original language tells us that it has been mistranslated and misunderstood. Here is the same verse in a few other translations:

“and now the Lord God has sent me, and given me his spirit.” (Bible in Basic English)

“And now the Lord GOD has sent me and his Spirit.” (Revised Standard Version)

“And now the Lord Jehovah hath sent me, and His Spirit.” (Young’s Literal Translation)

According to the context the speaker appears to be Christ. It was God the Father who sent Jesus on His mission (John 3:16). When Jesus entered the world as the Messiah, God sent His Holy Spirit to rest upon Him (Isaiah 11:2; 42:1; 61:1–3; Matthew 3:16; Luke 4:18–21; John 1:32, 33; Acts 10:38). In this text Christ is simply saying that God the Father sent me and has anointed me with His Spirit. There was only one sender (the Father) not two. This is confirmed in numerous places (John 5:30,36,37; 6:39,44,57; 8:16,18,29,42; 12:49; 14:24; 17:21,25; 20:21; Galatians 4:4-6; 1 John 4:10, 14;).

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Question 6 (Micah 5:2):

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” (margin: the days of eternity) Micah 5:2. Doesn’t this text prove that Christ is eternally pre-existent?

Answer:

The meaning of this text is clarified when we understand the terms “goings forth” and “from everlasting.” Here is the text in three other Bible translations:

“And his *comings forth* are of *old*, From the *days of antiquity*.” YLT

“whose *origin* is from of old, from ancient days.” RSV

“whose going out has been purposed from time past, from the *eternal days*.” BBE

The term “goings forth” comes from the Hebrew word מוצאה *mowtsa’ah* (Strong’s number 04163) which means ‘a family *descent*’ or “origin, place of going out from” as the RSV puts it. The word “origin” means “birth, come into being” according to *The Award English Dictionary*. As for the word “everlasting” as you can see in RSV, YLT, BBE and KJV marginal reading, it means “days of eternity”, “eternal days”, “ancient days”, or “days of antiquity”.

When we insert the meanings in the text it will read like this: “whose origin [family descent / birth] is from of old, from ancient days [days of eternity]” RSV

Thus this text is speaking of Christ’s eternal and divine sonship, as is very commonly interpreted; being the only begotten of the Father (John 3:16; 1:14), of the same nature with him (John 10:30), and a distinct person from him (Proverbs 30:4; John 8:17, 18); the eternal Word that went forth from him, and was with him from the days of eternity (John 1:1,2), and is truly God by nature (Hebrews 1:8). So as the first part of the verse sets forth his human birth, the second sets forth His divine birth; which, due to the excellency and ineffableness of it, is expressed in the plural number, “goings forth”.

Spirit of Prophecy:

Now notice how Mrs. White uses that same text, and applies correctly the meaning of the phrase “goings forth”.

“His "goings forth have been from *of old*, from everlasting." Micah 5:2. And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, *before His works of old*. I was set up from everlasting. . . . When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." *Proverbs 8:22-30*." {PP 34}

It clearly says there that Christ’s “goings forth” were “*before His works of old*”, meaning *before* creation. Thus Christ was brought forth in eternity, or before time was created.

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Question 7 (Matthew 12:31, 32):

When we deny that the Holy Spirit is a third divine being we are committing the unpardonable sin. “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” Mathew 12:31, 32. Why don’t you stop promoting this horrible sin?

Answer:

This verse is often misunderstood and misapplied to mean that the unpardonable sin is rejecting the *person* of the Holy Spirit. But is this the correct interpretation? What does ‘blasphemy against the Holy Ghost’ actually mean?

The context of Jesus’ speech must not be overlooked. Let us read the passage in its setting:

“And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” Matthew 12:25-31

The parallel story is found in the Gospel of Mark. This sheds further light on this question:

“Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.” Mark 3:28-30

In Mark 3:30 we read that the reason Jesus pointed the people to the unpardonable sin was “Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.” After healing the blind and deaf the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub (Matthew 12:24), in reply to their accusation Jesus said: “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” What does accusing Jesus of performing miracles by the power of Beelzebub have to do with rejecting the Holy Spirit? What moved Jesus to say what He said?

It is clear that the sin against the Holy Spirit is committed when one *knowingly and deliberately attributes the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan*. When there is a determined and persistent resistance to truth and evidence, then one is sinning against the Holy Spirit. The unpardonable sin is not rejecting the person of the Holy Spirit, rather it is rejecting light and refusing to repent and heed the promptings of God’s Spirit. By continually rejecting to repent and to accept the light that God has shown our way, we are blocking God’s avenue to reach us. By placing ourselves where we can not be reached by God we commit the unpardonable sin in that we leave no way for God to reach us.

Spirit of Prophecy:

“The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit does not lie in any sudden word or deed; it is the firm, determined resistance of truth and evidence (MS 30, 1890).” {5BC 1093.1}

“No one need look upon the sin against the Holy Ghost as something mysterious and indefinable. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the sin of persistent refusal to respond to the invitation to repent.” {FLB 58.8}

According to the inspired pen, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is the sin of persistent refusal to repent and determined resistance of truth and evidence.

We read in the Spirit of Prophecy:

“Those who made this charge against Christ were on perilous ground. They were quenching the *last ray of light* emanating from the throne of God to their prejudiced, benighted souls. Jesus warned them of their danger, saying: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." {ST, October 1, 1896 par. 5}

Again we read:

“*By rejecting the light that was shining upon them, by refusing to examine the evidence to see whether the messages were from heaven, the Pharisees sinned against the Holy Ghost.* Christ, the world's Redeemer, was in the world. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. . . . He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not." The voice of *his Spirit* came to them, saying, "This is the Son of God; believe on him." But turning their faces from the light, they refused to listen, choosing, instead, to cultivate their unbelief. Thus the light which, if received, would have been to them a savor of life unto life, rejected, became a savor of death unto death,—death to spirituality.” {RH, July 27, 1897 par. 2}

“Brother P, you ask if you have committed the sin which has no forgiveness in this life or in the life to come. I answer: I do not see the slightest evidence that this is the case. *What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit.* For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan. It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men willfully reject the Spirit and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which had been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness. Thus the words of Christ are verified: “If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” For a time, persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy’s ground, standing under his black banner.” {*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 634}

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Question 8 (Matthew 3:16, 17):

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16, 17. In the baptism of Christ we see the Father speaking from heaven, Christ is on earth and the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Does this not prove plainly the presence of three different persons, or the trinity?

Answer:

The answer to this is very simple. If we do not add to the scripture we will not be confused. Here is the account in the Bible:

Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him

Mark 1:10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him

Luke 3:21, 22 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

John 1:32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

A few facts we learn from these accounts are:

- a. It is the Spirit of God. It was the Spirit of someone, namely God.
- b. Its *descent* was like a dove.
- c. Its *shape* was like a dove.
- d. Its called an “it” by John

Do these facts support the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is a different person separate to God? John certainly would not have used “it” to refer to a divine being. The Holy Spirit is actually possessed by God (it is the Spirit of God).

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18

Jesus said these words after the wilderness experience. They were a direct fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the descent of the Spirit:

Isaiah 11:2 “And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;”

Isaiah 42:1 “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”

To any honest reader it is a very simple and plain fact. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Lord, it's His own Spirit and not someone else called "the Spirit of the Lord". Many people falsely believe that "Spirit of the Lord", "Spirit of God", "Holy Spirit", "Holy Ghost" etc. are proper names. They are not. They actually describe whose Spirit it is, and what kind of Spirit it is. It belongs to the LORD and it is Holy because it belongs to someone Holy.

That is why Jesus was able to say

John 10:37, 38

*"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, **that the Father is in me, and I in him.**"*

How was the Father in Christ?

The answer is found in all the verses mentioned above. The Father was in Jesus by His Spirit. And it is thus that Jesus will be in us (John 14:20), by His Spirit.

Spirit of Prophecy:

If we can understand the above clearly we will be able to understand the scriptures better. This conclusion is confirmed when we examine the comments on this incident from the Spirit of Prophecy:

*"Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at his baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bearers of the message from the Father to his Son. But, no; **direct from the Father issues the light of his glory.** The heavens were opened, and **beams of glory** rested upon the Son of God, and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dove-like form was emblematical of the meekness and gentleness of Christ." {2SP 60, 61}1877*

*"Never before have the angels listened to such a prayer. They are eager to bear to their loved Commander a message of assurance and comfort. But no; **the Father Himself** will answer the petition of His Son. **Direct from the throne issue the beams of His glory.** The heavens are opened, and upon the Saviour's head descends a dovelike form of **purest light**,--fit emblem of Him, the meek and lowly One. Of the vast throng at the Jordan, few except John discerned the heavenly vision. Yet the solemnity of **the divine Presence** rested upon the assembly. The people stood silently gazing upon Christ. His form was **bathed in the light that ever surrounds the throne of God.** His upturned face was **glorified** as they had never before seen the face of man. From the open heavens a voice was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." {DA 112}1898*

According to the above, we are told that it was a dovelike light that descended upon the Savior's head and it was the "glory" of "the Father Himself", not a third being called the 'God Holy Spirit.'

If the baptismal account of Jesus proves anything it is that there is a Father in heaven, His Son Jesus Christ, and their Spirit. Exactly what the Spirit of the Lord revealed through the Spirit of Prophecy:

"They have one God and one Saviour; and one Spirit--the Spirit of Christ--is to bring unity into their ranks." {9T 189}

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Question 9 (Matthew 28:19):

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” Matthew 28:19. Why did Jesus instruct us to baptize in “the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” if the trinity is wrong? Doesn’t this verse prove that there are three persons in the Godhead?

Answer:

Before we answer the above verse, we would like to pose some questions for the reader’s contemplation:

- Was Jesus addressing the identity of God in that verse or discourse?
- Does the verse mention the word God?
- Does the verse tell us that God is made of three beings or persons?
- Does the verse tell us anything about the nature of these three?
- Does the verse tell us who the Holy Spirit is?
- Does the verse tell us that there are three names?

The honest answer to the above questions is no. The verse is not dealing with who God is and does not tell us the nature of the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit. Yet it does confirm for us that there *is* a Father, there is a Son and there is a Spirit. There is no doubt about the existence of any of them.

The relationship between Father and Son and Spirit is not defined in this text. To insist that it means there are three persons in the Godhead goes beyond the information provided in the passage. To define the relationship as three co-equal, co-eternal beings cannot be proved from this passage.

What *does* the passage mean? How was it understood by those who heard Christ giving that instruction? The answer is easily found when we study the book of Acts. We find that all the baptisms recorded there were performed in the name of Jesus and not in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5).

This begs the question: did the disciples misunderstand the command of Jesus? Were they wrong in baptizing people in the name of the Lord only? We do not believe so. We believe that the disciples had a better understanding of Jesus’ command than many do today. The reason they saw no difference between baptizing in the name of the Lord or in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is as follows:

The word ‘name’ means ‘authority’ (John 5:43). When we are baptized, we are come under the authority & power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The use of the singular ‘name’ confirms this fact. We are now professing to be stamped with the authority and character of the Father, Son & Spirit.

Jesus was given all power in heaven and in earth (Matt 28:18; John 5:27; John 5:43). He has the authority of the Father, has the authority of the Son (Himself) and with the correct understanding of the Holy Spirit (that it is His own Spirit, Christ Himself and not someone else), He has the authority of the Holy Spirit. Christ has this authority by virtue of His relation to the Father (being His only begotten Son). This is His divine inheritance (Hebrews 1:4).

Therefore, since Jesus has the authority of the Father (His Father), the Son (Himself) and the Holy Spirit (His own Spirit), the baptisms recorded in the book of Acts (in the name of the Lord or in the

authority of the Lord) are a recognition of the authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the highest authority in heaven and earth. Christ is the only medium whereby we can come under that authority (John 14:6).

Spirit of Prophecy:

The Spirit of Prophecy has this to say about it:

*Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged **as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God's spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, "**The Lord** our Righteousness." Jer. 23:6.... **Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing." And to them is fulfilled the promise: "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters."** 2 Cor. 6:17, 18. {FLB 145.4}*

To be baptized in the threefold name means to be under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which means receiving the impress of the divine name "the *Lord* our righteousness". We become children of the heavenly King (singular).

This is why Matthew 28:19 uses the singular "name" rather than "names". Further Biblical passages show that Matthew 28:19 is not teaching the trinity. For example, those who overcome will receive this promise:

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the **name of my God**, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him **my new name**." Revelation 3:12

The special group called the 144,000 is sealed with one name, not three:

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Revelation 14:1

These passages shed light on the meaning of the words of Christ in Matthew 28:19. Christ was not teaching a trinity of gods. We are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. By this we express our belief in the existence of the one true God, the mediation of his Son, and the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Having answered this verse, we would like to point out that Matthew 28:19, which is widely used by trinitarians to prove the trinity, was in fact instituted by our Lord and Savior to protect the church from reaching false doctrines such as the trinity.

Before we go any further, we must understand what the trinity teaches. Most trinitarians are not aware of this fact: once you believe in the trinity, you automatically deny the truth that God the Father is a *real* Father and Jesus is a *real* Son. The Trinitarian mind views these terms as merely figures, allegories and metaphors. The "Father" and "Son" are actually co-eternal divine beings without a real Father-Son relationship. We will quote a sample to demonstrate this fact:

- “A plan of salvation was encompassed in the covenant made by the Three Persons of the Godhead who possessed the attributes of Deity equally.... *One of the divine Beings accepted and entered into the role of the Father, another the role of the Son...*” (Adventist Review Oct. 31, 1996 p.12, week of prayer)
- “The Father–Son relationship in the Godhead should be understood in a *metaphorical sense, not in a literal sense*”. (Max Hatton, *Understanding the Trinity*, p. 97)

Accordingly, a belief in the trinity is really a denial of the true Father-Son relationship. This is according to the teachers and leaders who promote this idea about God. Christ’s instruction in Matthew 28:19 was to safeguard His church against such notions and ideas that destroy the very fabric of the Gospel. The reason we say so is as follows:

“Go ye therefore, and *teach all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matthew 28:19

Before baptizing we are commanded to “teach all nations”. What are we to teach them?

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and *preach the gospel* to every creature. He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark 16: 15, 16

According to Jesus Himself, we are to teach them the Gospel. Well what is the Gospel? We all know the best verse the summarizes the Gospel:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his *only begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

When Jesus said in Matthew 28:19 “teach all nations” He commissioned us to teach all people that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

But we saw the Trinitarian view actually denies the true Sonship of Christ and true Fatherhood of God the Father. They admitted, as quoted above, that this relationship is merely a metaphor and a role-playing. This alone is enough to show us that believing in the trinity totally contradicts the commission that Jesus gave us in Matthew 28:19

Furthermore, if we go to Mark 16:16, we read “He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned”. What is it that must be believed before baptism? One story answers the questions very plainly.

The Eunuch who was baptized by the Apostle Philip answered this question in Acts 8:37. (Please read the verse in context.) Philip, moved by the Spirit of God had to make sure that the Eunuch believed something with all his heart *before* he could baptize him:

“And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I *believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*”

This furnishes us with positive proof that a fundamental instruction that must precede baptism is the teaching regarding the Son of God. Jesus commissioned His followers, in order to protect His church from false beliefs, to teach all people the gospel and make sure that they believe with all their hearts the

fact that He is the Son of God. Dear reader, this is serious. Our Lord and Master said plainly that “he that believeth not shall be damned” Mark 16:16.

In fact, while preaching the gospel to Nicodemus, Jesus said:

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is *condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of *the only begotten Son of God*.” John 3:18

We deny the divine sonship of Christ when we reduce it to a mere metaphor or a role-play. Christ gave a very serious and solemn warning to all those who might be tempted to question His divine sonship. Let all take heed to the words of the Master.

“He that believeth on *the Son of God* hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath *made him a liar*; ***because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son***. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is *in his Son*. He that *hath the Son hath life*; and he that *hath not the Son of God hath not life*. These things have I written unto you that *believe on the name of the Son of God*; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and *that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God*.” 1 John 5:10-13:

Dear reader, to deny the true relationship between the Father and the Son by calling it a metaphor, to deny the true Fatherhood of God the Father, and the true Sonship of Jesus Christ by calling it a role-play, is considered denying the Father and the Son. This is why Jesus told His followers to teach people the truth before baptizing them. False ideas about God originate from the enemy of God:

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is *antichrist*, that *denieth the Father and the Son*.” 1 John 2:22

“The Saviour has given the promise of His presence to all who labor in the spirit of true service. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth," He says; "go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy, Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." As you present the Word to your hearers, claim this promise of Christ's presence. There is no day, no hour of the day, when He will not be near you by His Holy Spirit. He is in every meeting that is held in His name. His promise is given for as long as time shall last.” {AUCR, December 30, 1907 par. 3}

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Question 10 (John 1:1):

One of the clearest texts proving a trinity is John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” How do you explain this?

Answer:

This text is much misunderstood and has been misused to support a teaching that totally opposes what the text actually says. Let us examine the text briefly in the original Greek:

εν 1722 In	αρχη 746 beginning	ην 2258 was	ο 3588 the	λογος 3056 Word	και 2532 and	ο 3588 the	λογος 3056 Word
ην 2258 was	προς 4314 with	τον 3588 the	θεο v 2316 God	και 2532 and	θεο ς 2316 God	ην 2258 was	ο 3588 the
λογος 3056 Word							

A very casual look at the original text tells us that the two words translated as “God” in that text are not identical. The first one is a *noun* (Θεον) referring to the Father, and the other is an *adjective* (Θεος) which refers to Jesus. You can tell the difference between the two by looking at the last letter of the two words. It is for this reason that many translations render the verse in a way that recognizes this fact. For example, translations by James Moffatt, Hugh J. Schonfield and Edgar Goodspeed render it:

“...and the Word was divine.”

Other variations also exist. Today's English Version reads: *“...and he was the same as God.”*
The Revised English Bible reads: *“...and what God was, the Word was.”*

As you can see, different translations give it a meaning in harmony with the original. Thus this text is telling us is that the Word, Christ, is *divine* just like the Father (possessing the ‘God-nature’). It does *not* tell us that Christ is God the Father, one and the same person.

However, the question that we need to address is “what beginning is this text talking about?” Was this the beginning of earth? Was it the beginning of creation? The answer is No. The reason being that creation is not mentioned in the verse at all. That comes in v.3 “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made”

Thus, if all things were made by him (Christ the Word) then the beginning in v.1 must be *before* creation. Our parallel text is found in Proverbs 8: 22-30. This passage is divided in 2 parts. The first part talks about the birth of Christ in heaven before anything was created. While the second part tells us who was with God during the creation:

*“The LORD possessed me in the **beginning of his way**, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, **from the beginning**, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.” 22-26*

Christ was possessed/set up/brought forth in the *beginning* of God’s ways. Colossians 1: 15 puts it this way “Who is the image of the invisible God, *the firstborn of every creature*.” This beginning was “before his works of old”, before “the earth was”, “when there was no depths”, “when there were no fountains”, “before the mountains were settled, before the hills”, “While as yet he had not made the earth...etc” Christ is saying that He was brought forth in the beginning before these creative acts.

The second part of the passage in Proverbs 8 says:

“When he prepared the heavens, *I was there*: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then *I was by him*, as one brought up with him: and *I was daily his delight*, rejoicing always before him;” v.27-30

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his section tells us that Christ, the Word, was with God during the creation. The RSV renders v.30 this way “then I was beside him, like a *master workman*; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always,” which brings out the point that Jesus was a workman in the creation of the world, or as John 1:3 puts it “All things were made *by him*; and without him was not any thing made that was made” Colossians 1: 16, 17 says the same thing “For *by him* were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: *And he is before all things*, and by him all things consist”

Here are the three references side by side:

John 1: 1 – 3	Colossians 1: 15-17	Proverbs 8: 22-30
<p>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 1</p> <p><i>All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 3</i></p>	<p>Who is the image of the invisible God, the <i>firstborn of every creature</i>:</p> <p>For <i>by him were all things created</i>, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether <i>they be</i> thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:</p> <p>17 <i>And he is before all things</i>, and by him all things consist.</p>	<p>“The LORD <i>possessed</i> me ... I was <i>set up</i> from everlasting, ... <i>I was brought forth</i>;” 22-26</p> <p>“When he prepared the heavens, <i>I was there</i>: ... when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was beside him, like a <i>master workman</i>; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always;” 27-30</p>

Thus, John 1: 1-3 not only does not support the trinity, but properly understood, teaches and supports the divine sonship of Christ.

Spirit of Prophecy:

In addition to that, here is what E. G. White had to say:

“Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than fifty years, yet His divine life could not be **reckoned by human computation**. The existence of Christ before His incarnation is not measured by figures.” {*Signs of the Times*, May 3, 1899 }

“Angels of God looked with amazement upon Christ, who took upon Himself the form of man and humbly united His divinity with humanity in order that He might minister to fallen man. It is a marvel among the heavenly angels. God has told us that He did do it, and we are to accept the Word of God just as it reads. **And although we may try to reason in regard to our Creator, how long He has had existence, where evil first entered into our world**, and all these things, we may reason about them until we fall down faint and exhausted with the research when there is yet an infinity beyond.” {7BC 919.5 }

“The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, **existed from eternity, a distinct person**, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the Commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right. This was no robbery of God. "The Lord possessed me in the **beginning of his way,**" **He declares, "before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,** or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. **When he prepared the heavens,** I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth."” {RH, April 5, 1906 par. 7 }

“The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. *He had an associate--a co-worker* who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." John 1:1, 2. Christ, the Word, *the only begotten of God*, was one with the eternal Father--one in nature, in character, in purpose--the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” {PP 34.1 }

Here are two statements from E. J. Waggoner and Uriah Smith that confirm to us what we have seen:

“The word was ‘in the beginning.’ The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten” E. J. Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, p.9

“God alone is without beginning, at the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, appeared the Word ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ John 1:1” Uriah Smith, *Looking Unto Jesus* 1898, p. 10

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Question 11 (John 8:58):

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” John 8:58.
Kindly explain this verse.

Answer:

This text is very easily explained. “I am” is God’s name (Exodus 3:14, 15) and Christ was simply claiming the name of His Father for it is His by inheritance. This identified Him as the divine Son of the Living God.

“Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath *by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*” Hebrews 1:4

“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: *for my name is in him.*” Exodus 23: 20, 21

These verses plainly teach that Christ inherited the name of the Father. This inheritance took place when He was brought forth before all creation (not at Bethlehem). It is certainly true that it was Christ who spoke to Moses from the burning bush and it was Christ who spoke to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is also true that Christ was the direct communication between God and the fathers. He is the *Word* of God, the communication of God to man. His words are a confirmation that His Father is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Acts 3:13 “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, *hath glorified his Son Jesus*; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.”

Spirit of Prophecy:

The following inspired statement clarifies this point. Notice who is called the great I AM in these passages.

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:19.

All through the pages of sacred history, where the dealings of *God* with His chosen people are recorded, there are burning traces of *the great I AM*. . . . In all these revelations of the divine presence, *the glory of God was manifested through Christ*. Not alone at the Saviour's advent, but through all the ages after the fall and the promise of redemption, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. Since the sin of our first parents, there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man, and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God. *All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ*. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man's Substitute and Surety. . . .” {TMK 102.2}

As you can see, God the Father is the great I AM, it is His name. Since sin there has been no direct communication between God and man. Everything has to go through Christ, the mediator of the world. That is why Jesus is the Great I AM to us:

“In Christ Jesus is a revelation of the glory of the Godhead. All that the human agent can know of God to the saving of the soul, is the measure of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to which he can attain; for *Christ is he who represents the Father*. The most wonderful truth to be grasped by men is the truth, "Immanuel, God with us." Christ is the wisdom of God. *He is the great "I AM" to the world.*" {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 5}

Let us allow the prophet to comment on this much misunderstood verse (John 8:58):

“With solemn dignity Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM." Silence fell upon the vast assembly. *The name of God*, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, *had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi*. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, *He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity."* Micah 5:2, margin. Again the priests and rabbis cried out against Jesus as a blasphemer. *His claim to be one with God* had before stirred them to take His life, and a few months later they plainly declared, "For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." John 10:33. *Because He was, and avowed Himself to be, the Son of God, they were bent on destroying Him.*” {EGW, DA 469, 470}

Micah 5:2 is a prophecy about the Son of God, the King of Israel whose goings forth (origin) is from the days of eternity (everlasting). By claiming the name of God, Jesus was claiming to be the promised Messiah, the Son of the most High God. The Jews understood that.

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Question 12 (John 14:16):

Didn't Jesus teach plainly that the Holy Spirit is a different being to Himself when He promised to send us "another Comforter"? "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;" John 14:16

Why do you insist that the word "another" does not really mean another *different* person to Jesus Christ?

Answer:

What *did* Christ mean when He said "another Comforter"? Was He talking about someone different to Himself? Only He can answer that question for us:

Jesus explains what He meant just two verses later. He says plainly "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." John 14:18. This "other Comforter" is none other than Christ Himself in *another* form (Spirit form). He is not seen (physically) as He was when He was here on earth. This is exactly what He said, Notice: "Yet a little while, and **the world seeth me no more; but ye see me**: because I live, ye shall live also." V.19. He is removed from the eye of sense, but He is still with us in Spirit. The Bible confirms this conclusion (that the Lord Jesus is that Spirit, not someone else) when it tells us "**Now the Lord is that Spirit**: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Corinthians 3:17

How did the disciples understand "another Comforter"? Did they understand that Christ was talking about someone else? Let them answer:

"Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, **how** is it that **thou** wilt manifest **thyself** unto us, and not unto the world?" John 14:22.

Very plain! Judas clearly understood that it was Christ who will come to them, not someone else.

Notice His question is not "*Who?*" but it is "*How?*" Judas was not wondering *who* will come to them as another Comforter, but he did wonder *how* Christ was coming back to them. Notice he also says "thou" and "thyself" regarding Christ, not someone else. That is clear enough. It is not a strange thing for our Lord to come in another form. He demonstrated that on the way to Emmaus: "After that he appeared **in another form** unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country." Mark 16:12

When Jesus appeared in "another form" it was still Him. When Jesus talks about "another Comforter" why should it be strange that it also could be Him? "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." John 14:18; Matthew 28:20. Praise the Lord! It is so clear and simple. Jesus is withdrawn from the eye of sense but His personal presence (His own Spirit) is with us still.

While the above is sufficient evidence it is further confirmed by going deeper into the Word. Let us compare what Jesus said about Himself with what He said about the other comforter. We will read verses 15 – 21

Jesus

"the world seeth me no more" Vs 19

"but ye see me" Vs 19

Jesus was with them at that time

"I in you" Vs 20

"I will come to you" Vs 18

"Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world" Matt 28:19

Another comforter

The world "seeth him not" Vs 17

"but ye know him" Vs 17

"he dwelleth with you" Vs 17

"shall be in you" Vs 17

"give you another comforter" Vs 16

"he may abide with you forever" 16

So from the above we can see the similarity between the role that the other comforter was to take, and what Jesus said He, not someone else, will do.

Yet the word that stands in the way in many people's minds is "another". It is the understanding that we have of this word that leads us to believe that it must be another being, someone else other than Jesus Himself. But is this true? Is it a correct understanding of the word? Is this the message that Jesus wanted to relay to His disciples?

Let us use the Bible as our interpreter. In 1 Samuel 10:6 we read what the prophet Samuel tells Saul: "And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into *another* man."

Now the question is, did Saul become a different being? Certainly not! The term "another man" simply meant that he will be another in the sense of filled with the Spirit of God, but he is still the same being, not someone else. As you can see, not every time the Bible uses the word another, it must mean that it is another being.

With this understanding, if we go back to John 14:16 and apply the principle, we can see that Jesus was talking about Himself in the third person. It was "another comforter" in the sense of 'in another form'. Jesus was with them in human flesh, bodily form, but He was coming in another form, a Spirit form. (In fact the Bible tells us that Jesus was made a life giving Spirit, see 1 Corinthians 15:45) That is why He said about the comforter "he dwelleth with you and shall be in you".

Who was dwelling with them at that time? It was Jesus.
Who was to be in them? It is Jesus (verse 20)

Having said that, please notice the following. If we follow Jesus' words to "love Him and keep His commandments" the following will happen:

1. The Father will give you another comforter (John 14:15, 16)
2. Jesus will manifest Himself to us (John 14:21)
3. 'we'; the Father and the Son 'will come unto him and make our abode with him' (John 14:23)

To someone it might appear that if we 'love Jesus and keep His commandments' three different things will happen, either another comforter will come, or Jesus Himself will come, or the Father and the Son will come. But if we understand the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit of Jesus Himself, and knowing that the Father and the Son share the same Spirit/life (Romans 8:9; John 5:26) and are therefore "two in individuality, yet **one in spirit**, and heart, and character." {YI, December 16, 1897 par. 5} then we can understand and harmonize the 3 different results. The other comforter is the Spirit of Jesus Himself, which is the Spirit of the Father as well. That is why when the comforter comes, we will have the Father and the Son abiding with us (John 14:23).

Spirit of Prophecy:

When we examine the Spirit of Prophecy we find clear and positive confirmation. It leaves no room for questioning in our minds regarding whether the Holy Spirit was Jesus Himself or another God-being:

"Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. **The Holy Spirit is Himself** *divested of the personality of humanity* and independent thereof. He would represent **Himself** as present in all places by **His** Holy Spirit, as the

Omnipresent. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall (*although unseen by you*), [THIS PHRASE WAS ADDED BY ELLEN WHITE.] teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" [John 14:26]. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will come not unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you" [John 16:7]." {14MR 23.3}

It cannot get any clearer than this. The prophet of the Lord is telling you that "the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ Himself but divested from the personality of humanity."

The word "divested" means: *Stripped; undressed; deprived.* (Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary)

Who is the only divine being that took on humanity? It was Jesus Christ. So according to the Spirit of Prophecy, the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ *divested* of the personality of humanity, or without His human form. In other words, unseen by human eyes:

"When trials overshadow the soul, remember the words of Christ, remember that *He is an unseen presence in the person of the Holy Spirit*, and He will be the peace and comfort given you, manifesting to you that He is with you, the Sun of Righteousness, chasing away your darkness. "If a man love me," Christ said, "he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Letter 124, 1897." {DG 185.2}

In addition to all the above, the word comforter comes from the Greek word [3875 *parakletos*] which is used 5 times in the New testament (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; 1 John 2:1) One of which is translated as Advocate.

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an **advocate** < *parakletos* > with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" 1 John 2:1

The same verse tells us that our *parakletos* (advocate or comforter) is Jesus Christ the righteous.

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Question 13 (John 16:13):

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” John 16:13. Doesn’t this verse prove that that Holy Spirit is an individual being different to Christ because “he” is used in reference to him?

Answer:

This is a good question. The answer depends on our understanding of how Jesus spoke sometimes. Let us look at a few examples and see what we can learn.

Matthew 13:41 “The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;”

Matthew 16:27-28 “ For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then *he* shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in *his* kingdom.”

John 9:35-37 “Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen *him*, and it is *he* that talketh with thee.”

In these examples we see Jesus speaking of Himself in the third person. He refers to Himself as ‘he’ many times rather than saying ‘I’. This was a common mode of speaking in those days (see also Matthew 13:37, 20:18 etc.) This is the case we have with the verse in question. Christ was referring to Himself in the third person. This is confirmed when we examine the expression “spirit of truth” and see that it could only refer to the spirit of Christ who said “I am the way, the truth and the life” John 14:6. The Spirit of truth is the spirit of Jesus and he (Jesus by His spirit) will lead us and guide us into all truth. The Bible is very clear on that. It is Christ’s spirit that dwells in us, not someone else.

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the *Spirit of his Son* into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Galatians 4:6

It is Christ that fills our hearts:

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might *fill all things*.” Ephesians 4:10

The Bible clearly tells us the Lord Jesus is the Holy Spirit:

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; *the last Adam was made a quickening spirit*.”

The RSV puts it this way “the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit”

Spirit of Prophecy:

While it is true that the Spirit is referred to as “he” yet the Spirit is also referred to as “it”. Such an expression could not be used if the Spirit was an individual being like the Father and Son. Here are some examples from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy:

“The Spirit *itself* beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God”, “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit *itself* maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”, “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when *it* testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”, “And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and *it* abode upon him. Romans 8:16, 26; 1 Peter 1:11; John 1:32

“When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, *it* transforms the life.” {EGW, DA 173.1}

“The Holy Spirit seeks to abide in each soul. If *it* is welcomed as an honored guest, those who receive *it* will be made complete in Christ; the good work begun will be finished; and holy thoughts, heavenly affections, and Christlike actions will take the place of impure thoughts perverse sentiments, and rebellious acts.” {EGW, 18MR 47.3}

“Instead of being repressed and driven back, the Holy Spirit should be welcomed, and *its* presence encouraged.” {EGW, NPU Gleaner, May 26, 1909 par. 4}

As clearly shown both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy use ‘it’ when talking about the Spirit, while when speaking about the Father or the Son, ‘it’ is never used.

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Question 14 (Acts 5:3, 4; Ephesians 4:30):

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” Acts 5: 3, 4. In this passage we are plainly told that the Holy Spirit *is* God. How do you explain this obvious Trinitarian passage?

The Bible warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit. “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30. Isn’t this further proof that the Holy Spirit is an individual being who can be *grieved*?”

Answer:

These are good and popular questions. We will deal with them together as they are closely related. There is an important principle that will help us understand these verses. The question that we need to ask ourselves is ‘When the Holy Spirit is grieved, who *exactly* is grieved? Is it God and Christ or is it someone else called ‘God the Holy Spirit’?’

“And the **LORD** said, **My spirit** shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. And it repented **the LORD** that **he** had made man on the earth, **and it grieved him at his heart.**” Genesis 6:3, 6.

This is a very plain text. We must always remember that the Spirit belongs to God; it is the Spirit *of* God for it proceeds from Him (John 15:26). When we grieve the Spirit *of* God we are actually grieving God Himself. In Acts 5 we are plainly told that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit *of* the Lord.

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to **lie to the Holy Ghost**, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, **but unto God**. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to **tempt the Spirit of the Lord**? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.” Acts 5:3, 4, 9.

In the story of Ananias and Sapphira the same truth is again demonstrated, that when we lie to the Spirit *of* the Lord we are really lying to and grieving the Lord Himself, for the Lord is that spirit. Notice:

“**Now the Lord is that Spirit**: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17

This text clearly tells us *who* that Spirit is. Therefore, what Peter said to Ananias was really this: ‘by lying to God’s spirit you have not lied to men, but to God Himself!’ Peter was *not* informing Ananias that he had lied to a “God the Holy Spirit”. Rather, Ananias had lied to God (the Lord) Himself, not someone else! When we grieve the Spirit we grieve God Himself in His heart, not someone else.

The prophet Isaiah records for us an account that confirms this truth further:

Isaiah 63:9-11 “In all their affliction *he was afflicted*, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and *vexed his holy Spirit*: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?”

Spirit of Prophecy:

“How can you, oh, how can you *grieve your Redeemer*? How can you dishonor Him before His angels and before men? *How can you grieve the Holy Spirit of God*? How can you crucify the Lord of glory afresh, and put Him to open shame? How can you give occasion for Satan and his angels to exult and triumph over those who claim to be loyal subjects of Jesus Christ?” {TM 431.1}

Grieving the redeemer = grieving the Holy Spirit of God. This refers to Christ Jesus for the Spirit is His life.

“The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of **the life of Christ**.” {DA 805.3}

“Christ declared that after his ascension, he would send to his church, as his crowning gift, the Comforter, who was to take his place. **This Comforter is the Holy Spirit,--the soul of his life**, the efficacy of his church, the light and life of the world. With his Spirit Christ sends a reconciling influence and a power that takes away sin.” {EGW, RH, May 19, 1904 par. 1}

This means that the Holy Spirit is the life and glory of Christ, not another individual being:

“Jesus is seeking to impress upon them the thought that in giving **His Holy Spirit He is giving to them the glory which the Father hath given Him**, that He and His people may be one in God.” {EGW, 2MR 36, 37}

Thus the Holy Spirit is the life, the soul, the glory and presence Jesus Christ. This is what Ellen White means when she speaks of the Spirit of God. It is the invisible personal presence of God and Christ. The Spirit of God and Christ is *their* own person, not *another* person. Notice “God is a person and Christ is a person.” {1SAT 343}. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the person of God and Christ. It is the omnipresence of them; notice “**He [Christ] would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent**.” {14MR 23}

Thus, “**This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter**.” {14MR 179}, and so “**By the Spirit the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you**.” {BEcho, January 15, 1893 par. 8}.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love **me**, he will keep my words: and **my Father** will love him, and **we will come unto him**, and make our abode with him.” “Behold, **I** stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear **my** voice, and open the door, **I** will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with **me**.” John 14:23; Revelation 3:20

It is through the Spirit that we have a bond with the Father and Son “The sinner then stands before God as a just person; he is taken into favor with Heaven, **and through the Spirit has fellowship with the Father and the Son**.” {3SM 191}

“John, in the assurance of a living experience, said: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and **truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ**.” **Christ, through his Spirit, is working to draw men to himself**; and we, the human agents, are to co-operate with Christ; it is his power that gives efficiency to our labors.” {RH, January 6, 1891 par. 10}

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Question 15 (Romans 8:26, 27):

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.*” Romans 8: 26 – 27. According to this text the Holy Spirit is also our intercessor before the Father. This is clear proof that the Holy Spirit is an individual being who intercedes for us like Christ. Please comment.

Answer:

This text is used to suggest that God the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf before God the Father. But the verse does not mention the words ‘before the Father’. The comments of Paul, in the body of Romans 8, are very clear as to the *identity* of this Spirit who intercedes for us.

Romans 8:27 “And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, *because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*”

Romans 8:34 “Who is he that condemneth? *It is Christ* that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, *who also maketh intercession for us.*”

Paul plainly states that Christ is our intercessor. It is Christ who searches our hearts (Revelation 2:23) and it is Christ who alone is qualified to be our intercessor for He alone is our High Priest (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1). Only Christ can help our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15; 5:2). Paul tells us further that Christ Jesus is the *only* mediator between us and God; there can be no other mediator or intercessor (1 Timothy 2:5).

The verse in Romans 8 is simply telling us that Christ, by His Spirit, intercedes for us and helps us to know what to pray for. These prayers, inspired by His Spirit, are presented to the Father by our only intercessor. Thus Christ is doing a twofold work of intercession. He is physically in heaven and by His Spirit He is in our hearts. Only thus can Christ be a true mediator and intercessor (Ephesians 2:18).

Finally, Paul defines exactly what that Spirit is that he is referring to. In the same chapter we read:

Romans 8:9-11 “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not *the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. And if *Christ be in you*, the body is dead because of sin; but the *Spirit is life* because of righteousness. But if *the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead* dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies *by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*”

Spirit of Prophecy:

Listen to what the prophet of the Lord had to say:

“We have **only one channel** of approach to God. Our prayers can come to him through **one name only**, -that of the Lord Jesus our advocate. **His Spirit** must **inspire** our petitions. No strange fire was to be used in the censers that were waved before God in the sanctuary. **So the Lord himself** must kindle **in our hearts** the burning desire, if our prayers are acceptable to him. **The Holy Spirit within** must make intercessions for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.” {EGW, RH, February 9, 1897 par. 10}.

Wonderful statement! The Holy Spirit is not “interceding for us before God” as many have suggested. No, the prophet plainly says that the Holy Spirit is “within” making intercessions for us. Our prayers come through only **ONE** channel, not two! That one channel is our Lord Jesus. The spirit **of** Jesus, “His Spirit”, inspires us as we pray. It is “the Lord himself” who kindles our hearts! Who is this “Lord”? It is Jesus, not anyone else! It is clear that only Christ is the one who inspires our petitions. He draws them out and He presents them before His Father in heaven.

“While **Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above**, *He* is still *by His Spirit* the minister of the church on earth.” {DA 166}

How many ministers are mentioned here? Is it not only the one minister, the Lord Jesus? Yes, “For there is one God, and **one mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” 1 Timothy 2:5. This one mediator works on two levels. He is in heaven **in the flesh** interceding before the Father, and He (the same one: Jesus) is in our hearts **by His Spirit**. But it is the one and the same Jesus in both cases who is in heaven and who is also in our hearts. (see Colossians 1:27; 3:11, Galatians 1:16, John 5:56, John 14:17, **18**, 20, 23, John 15:4, John 17:23, Romans 8:10 etc.) In every one of those texts it plainly says that Christ is in us, **not** someone else. Yet Christ is not in us in His physical flesh form, but He is in us by His Spirit for He is both flesh (John 1:14) and He is also Spirit (1Cor. 15:45). We do not have two intercessors; only one, the man Christ Jesus

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;”

1Timothy 2:5

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Question 16 (1 Corinthians 13:14):

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen” 2 Corinthians 13:14. This classic greeting of Paul is a clear demonstration of his Trinitarian belief. Why else would he mention all three if he did not mean the trinity?

Answer:

It must be first noted that this is *not* a classical greeting of Paul. The classical and habitual greeting of Paul (and others) can be found in the introduction of the epistles where the consistent greeting is along these lines “Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” 1Corinthians 1:3 (see also Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 1:3; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 John 1:3).

The text speaks of:

- 1) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2) The love of God.
- 3) The communion of the Holy Ghost.

In this verse the title God is used only once and it is used in reference to a specific person. Obviously, it is God the Father whose love is spoken of in this verse, and, according to John 3:16, He loves us so much that He gave His only begotten Son to give grace to us that we can be drawn into communion with them both *through* the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:18 “For through him we both have access *by* one Spirit unto the Father.”

Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” John 14:23.

How will the Father and the Son be with us and in us? “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that *God’s Spirit dwells in you?*” 1Corinthians 3:16

Please observe that Paul did not say we would commune *with* the Holy Ghost, but he speaks “of the communion *of* the Holy Ghost.” What does he mean by this? When Paul spoke of the communion *of* the Holy Ghost, he was showing how our communion would be. It would be by the means of the Holy Spirit that we would commune or have fellowship *with* God and Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:3 states, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: *and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*”

According to John, we have fellowship *with* the Father and with his Son, *through* the Holy Spirit. Paul wanted this experience to remain with the Christians in Corinth and also with us today, an experience of true fellowship with the Father and with his Son through the Holy Spirit.

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Question 17 (1 Peter 1:21):

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:21. It was the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets. Doesn't this prove that He is the author of the scriptures and therefore a divine being?

Answer:

The scriptures were indeed given by the Holy Spirit. Peter plainly explains the identity of the Spirit that inspired the prophets:

“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when *it* testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” 1 Peter 1:10, 11

This is a wonderful testimony to the truth that Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. The scriptures were inspired by *His* Spirit and are therefore the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Spirit of Prophecy:

“*The Saviour had spoken through all the prophets. "The Spirit of Christ which was in them" "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:11.*” {DA 234.1}

“The blessed Bible gives us a knowledge of the great plan of salvation, and shows us how every individual may have eternal life. *Who is the author of the book? -- Jesus Christ.* He is the True Witness, and He says to His own, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."” {FE 308.2}

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Question 18 (1 John 5:7):

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” 1 John 5:7. This is a clear and plain text proving that the Father, Son and Spirit are one God. How can you continue to reject the Trinity in light of this evidence?

Answer:

The text from 1 John 5:7 lists the three and says they are one. The Trinitarian will understand that to mean that they are one God. This is done by supplying the word ‘god’ after ‘one’ when the Bible places a full stop. But this is not what is stated there. The actual verse explains that the ‘one’ applies to the *record* that is borne, not to the persons of God. They are all one in bearing the same *record*. From the context of the chapter (the whole epistle even) we learn that John is not expounding on the doctrine of who is God (or how many persons/beings). The immediate context of that passage offers the simple answer. Let us read verse 8 where another ‘three’ are listed:

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

The oneness spoken of in this verse does not refer to the nature of the spirit, water and blood. It is rather a oneness in agreement. They are one in that they all bear the same testimony: “agree in one”. This is obvious to any reader. This is exactly what John means in verse 7. He uses almost the same words, elaborating more on them in verse 8. “These three” (Father, Word, Spirit) he says, “are one”. Not one God (or Godhead, as some call it), as many would like to believe, but **ONE IN TESTIMONY**. They all agree in giving the one testimony, *in bearing one record*. This is the plain meaning of the text.

What *is* that testimony that occupies John in this chapter?

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

What is the record that God gave of His Son? What is that record that is testified to in heaven and earth? What is that record that “these three are one” in bearing? Please notice how the Father, the Word, and the Spirit bear the same record:

The Father testified:

Matthew 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
Matthew 17:5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

The Son of God testified:

John 10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

The Spirit also testified through the Apostles (John 15:26; 1 John 5:10):

Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

Acts 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Acts 9:20 And straightway he [Paul] preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

(and many, many other similar testimonies given by men moved by the spirit of God)

Therefore, it is not dividing the word of truth correctly when we attempt to use that text to teach that there are three co-equal, co-eternal divine persons or beings. We are also breaking John's testimony when we deny that the Son of God was begotten (John 3:16) of the Father from the days of eternity (Micah 5:2) being so far back in the ages of eternity that it cannot be computed or calculated (7BC 919, ST, May 3, 1899 par. 4). To teach 3 co-equal, co-eternal beings is to deny the Father-Son relationship. It is to deny that Jesus *is* the Son of the living God, reducing that noble and ineffable relation to a mere metaphor and role-play! People who use this text to teach a trinity (denying the Son of God) only serve the purpose of obliterating the testimony that heaven is trying to reveal to us!

Now, having answered the verse plainly from the Bible, allowing the Bible to interpret itself, let us have a look at what some Bible commentaries say regarding this verse:

“The disputed words found their way into the KJV by way of the Greek text of Erasmus. It is said that Erasmus offered to include the disputed words in his Greek Testament if he were shown even one Greek MS that contained them. A library in Dublin produced such a MS (known as 34), and Erasmus included the passage in his text. It is now believed that the later editions of the Vulgate acquired the passage by the mistake of a scribe who included an exegetical marginal comment in the Bible text that he was copying. The disputed words have been widely used in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, but, in view of such overwhelming evidence against their authenticity, their support is valueless and should not be used. In spite of their appearance in the Vulgate, *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* freely admits regarding these words: “It is now generally held that this passage, called the *Comma Johanneum*, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries.” (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951, p. 1186) (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 675)

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Question 19 (Revelation 1:4, 5):

“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” Revelation 1: 4, 5. Please explain why this verse cannot be used to support the Trinity?

Answer:

This has been a puzzling verse to a number of people. Why does John send a greeting “from the seven Spirits which are before his throne?” We need to allow the Bible to explain itself and the difficulty will vanish. Some questions that we need to answer are:

1. What is meant by the seven Spirits?
2. Why are the *seven* Spirits mentioned in the greeting?

Let’s start with the first question. The seven spirits are mentioned 4 times in the Bible. Remember that the number seven is a number that represents perfection. It is seen throughout scripture many times. Let us see what we can learn as we look up the other instances regarding the seven Spirits:

Revelation 3:1 “And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith *he that hath the seven Spirits of God*, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.”

Revelation 4:5 “And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were *seven lamps* of fire burning before the throne, *which are the seven Spirits of God*.”

Revelation 5:6 “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and *seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*.”

From this we learn that Christ has the seven Spirits of God. It is also called seven lamps and seven eyes. Christ has the seven Spirits of God. But what do the seven lamps and eyes represent?

In Zechariah 4: 1-10 we read that the seven lamps also represent the Spirit of God “And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his *seven lamps* thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:.....Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but *by my spirit*, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Then in verse 10 we are told “For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; *they are the eyes of the LORD*, which run to and fro through the whole earth.”

So as we can see, the seven lamps are the eyes of the Lord, representing the Spirit of God. It is by the Spirit that God is present in all places. Other passages use this symbolism to represent this truth.

2 Chronicles 16:9 “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”

Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”

By His Spirit God is everywhere present; as shown above, the seven spirits of the Lord mean or represent the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. This is not referring to another person, for Christ *has* the seven Spirits.

Now to our second question: why are the *seven* Spirits mentioned in the greeting? The answer lies in the greeting itself. Notice, the greeting is directed to the *seven* churches. These seven churches are addressed individually in chapters 2 and 3. God has bestowed a special portion of His spirit to each church. Through that Spirit God ministers His grace to the seven churches. This, naturally, is brought out every time God addresses the churches when He says “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the *Spirit* saith unto the churches.” (see Revelation 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22). This occurs seven times in the book of Revelation, once for each church, and it is for this reason that John mentions the seven Spirits which are before the throne.

“*John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*”

This form of greeting is very common in the New Testament. Here are some examples:

“Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 1:2

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:2

(see also Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 1:3; 1 Peter 1:2).

“Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, *the Son of the Father*, in truth and love.” 2 John 3

As can be seen, all the writers, including John the Revelator, used the greeting of grace and peace from the Father and the Son. In Revelation 1:4 John adds “the seven spirits” which, as we saw, is the Holy Spirit. The Grace and peace of God come *through* the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5; 15:13). It is called the *seven* Spirits because there are *seven* churches being addressed each time by the Spirit. This beautiful truth shows how intimately and personally God’s spirit operates. Christ, who has the seven Spirits, is personally interested in every individual member in His church and He come to us by *His* Spirit.

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Question 20 (Revelation 4:8):

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” Revelation 4:8. Surely this text is referring to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Why else would it say Holy, holy, holy?

Answer:

This is a common question that is very simple to answer. It is perhaps out of desperation that some have tried to use this text to prove a trinity by suggesting that “Holy, Holy, Holy” is referring to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The answer is so simple and it lies right in the heart of the text. The verse describes the infinity and eternity of God in the threefold expression:

- Which was
- And is
- And is to come

He is the God of the past, the present, and the future. The eternal God is thus praised and worshipped in the words “Holy, holy, holy”. This is further confirmed when we examine the context of the chapter where we learn that the throne is occupied by only one person “And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and **one** sat on the throne.” Revelation 4:2.

The parallel text in the book of Daniel puts it this way:

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and **the Ancient of days did sit**, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7: 9, 10

After the Bible records the four beasts saying “Holy, holy, holy” we read in verse 9 and 10 the following:

“And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to **him** that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before **him** that sat on the throne, and worship **him** that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying...”

It is obvious from the verses mentioned that there is only One Being sitting on the throne, and from Daniel chapter 7 and Revelation chapters 4 and 5 we know that this Being is the Father. The Bible clearly presents to us the Father on the throne and Jesus, the Lamb, before the throne.

Thus this verse does not prove a trinity at all; rather it confirms to us that the One God of the Bible, who sits on the throne of the universe, is the Father.

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