

Series: The Trinity

Text: Various

Title: The Trinity (Part 1)

Date: 4/7/24

## [THE TRINITY PART 1]

### 1. Definition

- God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.
- The word “trinity” is never used in the Bible, but although the word is never used, the idea that it represents is taught in many places.

### 2. The Trinity in the Old Testament

- The doctrine of the Trinity is not explicitly found in the Old Testament; several passages suggest or even imply that God exists as more than one person.
- **[Genesis 1:26]** 26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...
  - Cross References: Genesis 3:22, 11:7; Isaiah 6:8.
  - Some say the usage of “us” and “our” are plurals of majesty, such as when a king would say, “We are pleased to grant your request.” However, no evidence in Old Testament Hebrew of a monarch using such language exists.
  - Some say that God is speaking to angels. However, this can’t be true because angels are not made in God's image.
- **[Psalm 45:6-7]** 6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness; 7 you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;
  - The first two mentions of “God” refer to the same person, and the third refers to another person.
  - In the New Testament, the author of Hebrews quotes this passage and applies it to Jesus (Hebrews 1:8).
- **[Psalm 110:1]** 1 The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”
  - The NT applies Psalm 110:1 to Jesus in Acts 2:34-36 and Hebrews 1:13.
  - The first, “LORD,” refers to the Father, and the second refers to Christ, the Messiah. Who else would sit at the father’s right hand?
  - Jesus used Psalm 110:1 to stump the Pharisees in Matthew 22. Matthew 22:46 says that, “And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.”
  - Jews, to this day, do not have a convincing response to this verse.
  - Jews deny the doctrine of the Trinity.

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- **[Isaiah 48:16]** 16 Draw near to me, hear this: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there.” And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit.
  - The “Lord God” has sent out Isaiah and his “his Spirit” meaning there is a distinction in personhood between God and his Spirit.
  - Isaiah 63:10 says that the people of Israel, “grieved his Holy Spirit.”

### 3. The Trinity in the New Testament

- We have a more complete teaching of the Trinity in the NT.
- **[Matthew 3:16-17]** 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”
  - Here, we have three members of the Trinity performing three distinct activities.
- **[Matthew 28:18-20]** 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
  - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit express that all three persons are distinct and fully God.
- Cross References: 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:4-6.

### 4. God is Three Persons

- The fact that God is three persons means that the Father is not the Son, the Father is not the Holy Spirit, and the Son is not the Holy Spirit.
- **[John 1:1]** 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
  - The word “with” shows the distinction in persons. We know “the Word” is Jesus because John tells us a few verses later that “the Word became flesh” (v. 14).
- **[1 John 2:1]** 1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
  - The fact that Jesus advocates for believers before the Father requires distinction in persons.

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- **[John 14:26]** 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.
  - Here, we see a distinction between all members of the Trinity. The Father is sending the Holy Spirit, who will teach the disciples all that Jesus has already taught them.
- Is the Holy Spirit a person or force?
  - JW's believe that the Holy Spirit is a force and not a real person.
  - The Holy Spirit is not an "it."
  - The terms helper, counselor, and comforter describe the Holy Spirit and are terms of personhood (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).
  - The activities of the Holy Spirit also require personhood: teaching (John 14:16), interceding (Romans 8:26-27), speaking (Acts 8:29), and being grieved (Ephesians 4:30).

### 5. Each Person is Fully God.

- God the Father is Fully God.
  - **[Ephesians 1:3]** 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,
- God the Son is Fully God.
  - **[John 1:1]** 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
    - JW's translate it "and the Word was a God." They also deny the Trinity since they believe Jesus is a god, inferior to God the Father.
  - **[John 20:29]** 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."
    - Thomas calls Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus does not correct Thomas.
  - **[Isaiah 9:6]** 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- God the Spirit is Fully God.
  - **[Acts 5:3-4]** 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? 4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your

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disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

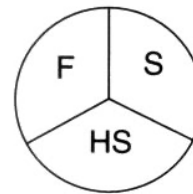
- According to Peter to lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God.

### 6. There is One God

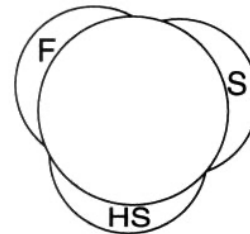
- **[Deuteronomy 6:4-5]** 4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
- **[James 2:19]** 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!
- Summary: God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.

### 7. What is the Relationship between the Three Persons and the Being of God?

- As stated above, God is one in being and three in persons.
- **First, God's being is not divided into three equal parts.**



- **Second, God's being is not added to.**



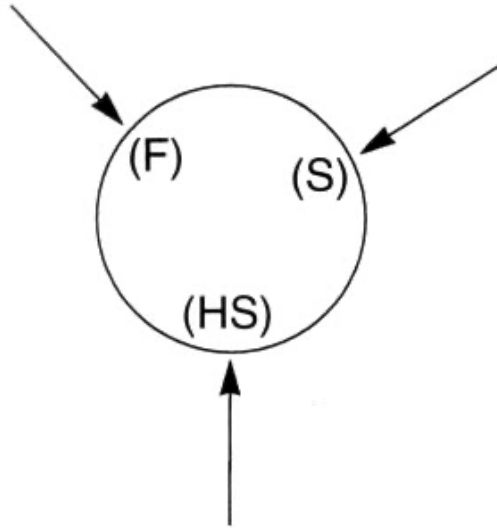
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- **Third, God's being is not viewed in three different ways.**
  - The person of the Trinity is not three different ways of looking at God (modalism).



through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known<sup>3</sup> to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- First, salvation. Salvation is a trinitarian matter. Here, the Father chooses, the Son redeems, and the Spirit seals.
- Second, Worship! The salvation of the Triune God is – all to the praise of his glory!

- So, how are we to understand the relationship then between the three persons and the one being of God?
  - We must say that the Father, Son, and Spirit possess the whole being of God. The Father is all of God's being. The son is all of God's being. The Spirit is all of God's being.
  - The differences or distinctions between the persons of the Trinity is not a difference of "being" but a difference of "relationships." The only difference between the persons of the Trinity is how they relate to one another and to creation.

#### 8. Why is the Doctrine of the Trinity Important?

- [Ephesians 1:3-14] 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption